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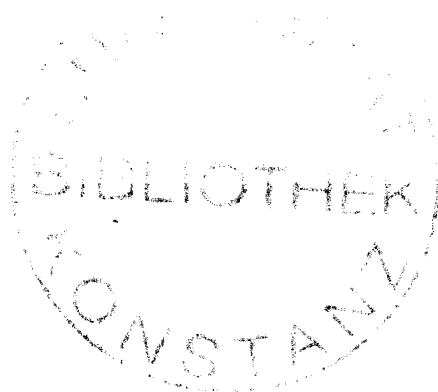
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SABAIC GRAMMAR

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## FOREWORD

In the Foreword to my earlier essay on the present topic (Beeston 1962 (1)), I wrote, 'It is incumbent on the specialists from time to time to survey the present position in this field, while cautioning the reader against acceptance of this summing-up as definitive; for the continuing progress of these studies will certainly entail modifications of our present positions'. The forecast began to be fulfilled almost immediately, since it was only a few months later that there appeared the substantial body of texts from Mahram Bilqis (Jamme 1962); and further new materials have continued since then to be published at an ever increasing tempo. One result of this has been that the proportion of our Sabaic materials is now even greater in relation of the total epigraphic stock than was the case in 1962. For this reason, it seems appropriate to treat Sabaic as a language in its own right (as has been done in the quadrilingual *Sabaic Dictionary* by Beeston, Ghul, Müller and Ryckmans, Louvain 1982), rather than attempting, as I did in 1962, to conflate the data from that and the associated languages; the latter are here relegated to an Appendix noting their principal divergencies from Sabaic. But while the broad outlines of Sabaic grammar can now be somewhat more confidently sketched, the caution voiced in my earlier work, as quoted above, still remains valid; there remain points of detail in which we must await further evidence before considering them assured.

In one technical matter I have adopted a new method of proceeding. In the transliteration of Semitic alphabetic writing into Latin script, the nineteenth century scholars employed the Greek 'spiritus lenis' and 'spiritus asper' marks for noting respectively the first and sixteenth letters of the northwest Semitic alphabet. In the present century this practice has become increasingly incommodious, partly because no typewriter unless specially modified has these two contrasting symbols, partly because in typography they are frequently very difficult to distinguish, thus giving rise to misprints. Latterly, it has come to be a common practice with authors to avoid these difficulties by replacing the spiritus asper mark with a letter c, raised to correspond with the raised position of the spiritus

asper mark. Yet if the use of a typographic c (not now used for any other Semitic letter) is conceded, I can see no point whatever in retaining its raised stance; it would be more convenient typographically to place it on the line, as is done in one of the accepted systems of transliteration for Somali, which does not hesitate to write e.g. *Sacd*, and this system I have here adopted. An associated matter is the fact that I see no virtue in insisting on a strict transliteration for well-known proper names when used in an English context; it would be absurdly pedantic to insist on ‘Umar Ḥayyām instead of the accepted Omar Khayyam, and I can see no objection in the case of the commonest South Arabian names to e.g. *Athtar* for *cAṭtar*, in an English context.

The sigla used for referring to inscriptions are those used in the quadrilingual dictionary mentioned above, and are explained here in the Index of Inscriptions Cited. However, *Micsāl* 9 has not yet appeared in print, though the text was circulated in typescript by Dr C. Robin at the Arabian Seminar meeting in July 1982; and I am indebted to him for allowing me a pre-publication view of the texts *Micsāl* 2-5.

A.F.L.B.

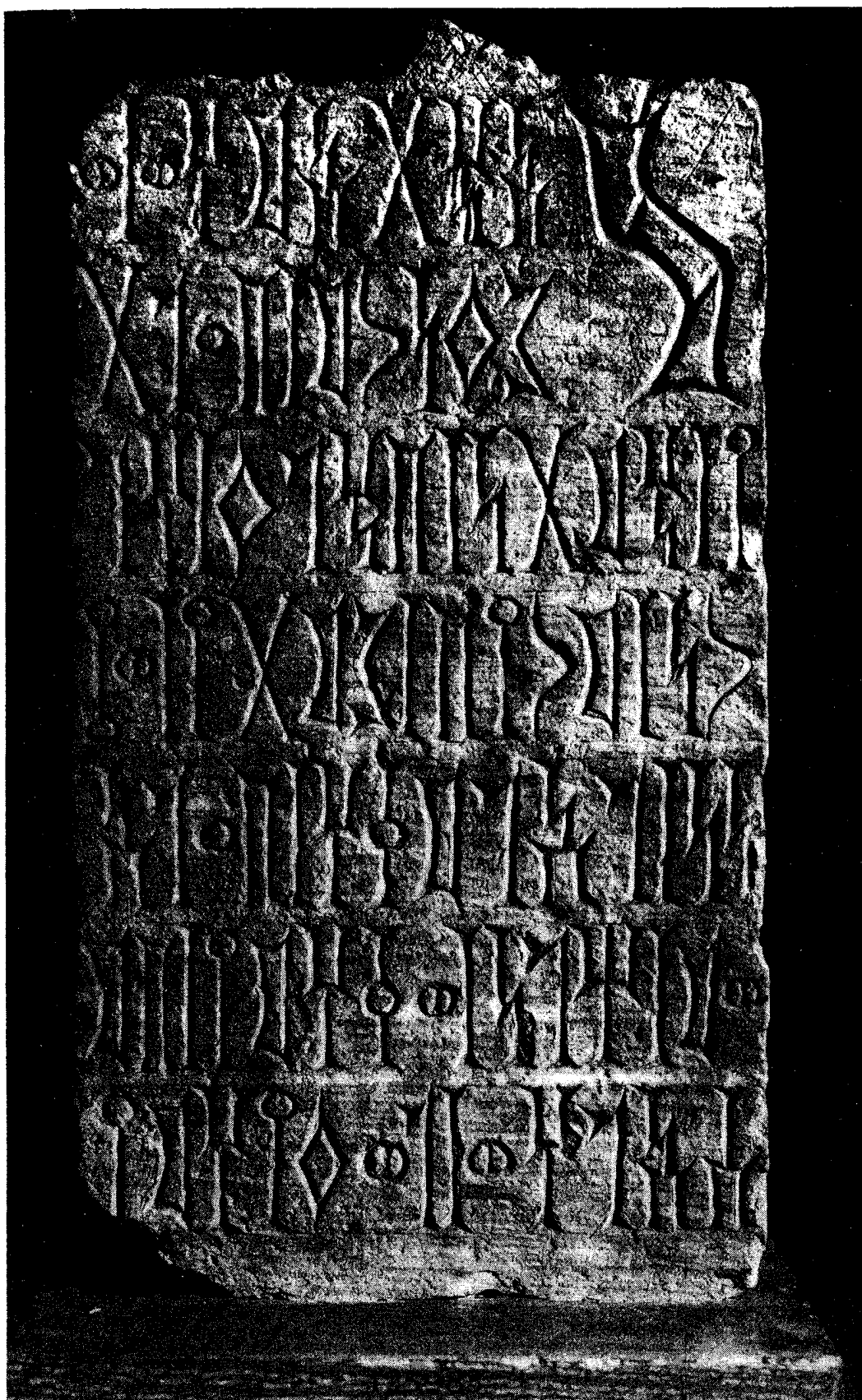
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Specimen of a mid period script; C 389  
(photo by courtesy of the British Museum).

[symbol of 'LMQH, § 1:16]

'*ḥt'**mbw*/*w* | *s*<sup>2</sup>*f**nrm*/*bclt* | *y*/*ḥmtn*/*bḥlf*/*hg* | *rn*/*mryb*/*s*<sup>2</sup>*mty*/*wṭ* | *nn*/*l'**lmqb*/*bcl'* | *wm*/*hgn*/*wqbmy*/*bm* | *s*<sup>1</sup>*'lhw*/*lwfyhmy*

“‘HT-’MHW and S<sup>2</sup>F-N-RM [§ 23:1], the ladies of ḤMTN in the district of Marib, set up the stela to ‘LMQH lord of ‘Awā [14:2] as He bade them [verb *wqb*; see § 2:4] in His oracle, for their well-being”.



## ABBREVIATIONS

Ar	Arabic
arc	archaic phase
du	dual
fem	feminine
Had	Hadramitic
Har	Sab dialect found only in and near Haram
mas	masculine
mid	middle phase
Min	Minaic
n.pr.	proper name
nn.pr.	proper names
pl	plural
Qat	Qatabanic (Qitbanic)
Rad	Radmanite dialect
rec	recent phase
Sab	Sabaic
sg	singular
s.o.	someone
s.t.	something

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## INTRODUCTORY

The pre-Islamic inscriptions of southwestern Arabia are clustered very thickly in the oases, wadis and montane plains draining towards a tract of sand desert lying in the inner angle of the coastal mountain ranges, which was called by mediaeval Arab geography the Ṣayhad. In areas draining towards the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, the spread of similar inscriptions is very thin, and the majority even of these belongs to a late period, in the 4th to 6th century A.D., when the political dominance of the Himyarite dynasty had extended to the whole of the southwest of the peninsula. For these reasons, I suggest that an appropriate designation for the languages of the inscriptions might be Sayhadic (on the analogy of Chadic for the languages around Lake Chad)<sup>1</sup>, and more convenient than the somewhat cumbrous 'Epigraphic South Arabian' current hitherto.

Among them, we can discern four principal languages, which have come to be designated by scholars as Minaic (or Minaean), Sabaic, Qatabanic (though the name of the folk is probably to be vocalised as Qitban) and Hadramitic, on the basis of the statement by the 3rd century B.C. Greek geographer Eratosthenes, that there were four principal 'nations' (*ethnē*, which carries a connotation of a linguistic group) whom he calls Minaioi, Sabaioi, Kittibanoi and Atramotitai. It is not known how the languages were designated by the speakers themselves. That this categorization does not, however, exhaust the linguistic variety of the area is shown by one or two inscriptions in language as yet undeciphered. But by far the greatest bulk of our presently available inscriptions are Sabaic in character, and it is therefore this language which must be the foundation of any grammatical description; with the rest one cannot profitably do much more than register their most notable divergencies from Sabaic.

<sup>1</sup> On modern maps this sand-tract appears under the name Ramlat al-Sab'atayn, but to form an adjective from this would be troublesome because it could be (and in fact has been in the literature) confused with an adjective formed from Saba', with which it has nothing whatever to do.

The domain of Sabaic speech (insofar as epigraphically attested) down to the early 4th century A.D. lay westward from the longitude (45° 20' E) of the main Sabaeen centre Marib as far as the Red Sea draining watershed; with a maximum north-south extension from the Saadah area to a little south of Dhamar (both now politically in North Yemen, the Yemen Arab Republic). In the 4th to 6th centuries A.D. its limits extended to include the region around Zafar, the Himyarite centre, not far from Yarim (south of Dhamar), and eastward to cover the former Qatabanic and Hadramitic areas, since these languages had by then ceased to be used for epigraphic purposes.

Chronologically, the span of Sabaic is enormous. The earliest substantial body of inscriptions has been dated to the 6th century B.C. or even somewhat before, and they continue almost to the traditional date of the birth of the Prophet in 570 A.D. In this vast span there were certainly linguistic changes, and their occurrence in the texts suggests an approximate phasing into an archaic period down to the beginning of the Christian era, a middle period (the best attested in our materials), and a recent one covering the period of Himyarite dominance in the 4th to 6th century A.D. It seems likely that the Himyarites' native language was not Sabaic, but that they continued to use it for writing because of its antique cultural prestige, just as the Palmyrenes used Aramaic; one or two of the features which distinguish recent from middle Sabaic could thus be seen as due to Himyaritic influence, specially since such features tend to appear already in the middle period in texts from the southern border of Sabaic speech, adjacent to the Himyarite area.

In addition to these chronological variations, there were geographically distributed dialectal varieties in Sabaic. The most notable of these were firstly, the language of the Radmanite folk in the region of modern Rida, in the southeast of the Sabaic area (since this is adjacent to the Qatabanian area, it is not surprising that one or two of the Radmanite peculiarities resemble Qatabanic); and secondly a handful of texts from Madinat Haram and nearby, in the eastern half of the Jawf valley, which display a few wholly abnormal features. Aberrant features also occur in some texts from the northern and southern peripheries of the Sabaic area; such texts are too few for any satisfactory geographical plotting of the features.

## INTRODUCTION

The total body of known inscriptions has increased enormously in the past few decades, and is still increasing at a remarkably rapid rate. Any linguistic description must therefore be regarded as temporary, and liable to be modified by subsequent discoveries of new texts. It is a regrettable fact, moreover, that many of the texts are preserved only in fragmentary condition, with the result that conclusions drawn from them are bound to have a certain degree of speculativeness. In addition to all this, the nature of epigraphy itself places limits on the completeness of a description based on the inscription; the drafting of monumental texts follows conventional lines which leave out some areas of the living speech, so that for instance our knowledge of the first and second person forms is exiguous in the extreme.

# TRANSLITERATION TABLE

Pharyngals and laryngals	ḥ ,	ḡ h	o c	ψ h
Velars	ḡ h	ḡ ḡ	φ q	
Palatals	ḡ k	ḡ g		
Dentals and interdentalals	ḡ t	ḡ d	ḡ t	ḡ d
Sibilants	ḡ s¹	ḡ s²	ḡ s³	ḡ z
Emphatics	ḡ ṭ	ḡ ḍ	ḡ ṣ	ḡ ḏ
Labials	ḡ f	ḡ b		
Liquids and nasals	ḡ l	ḡ r	ḡ m	ḡ n
Semivowels	ḡ w	ḡ y		

## SCRIPT

§ 1:1 The Sayhadic inscriptions employ a script generally known as 'monumental South Arabian', which has close affinities on the one hand with the scripts of pre-Islamic north Arabia (Lihyanite, Safaitic and the so-called 'Thamudic'), and on the other with Ethiopic script. The script was used not only in southwest Arabia but also for some of the oldest inscriptions of Ethiopia; on the east Arabian coast from al-Hasa down to Oman, for the rendering of various local languages; and in Qaryat al-Faw (near Sulayyil on the trade route linking Najran with al-Hasa)—perhaps also in Najran—for rendering Arabic<sup>2</sup>.

§ 1:2 The monumental texts were executed by skilled craftsmen. Graffiti, and texts engraved by unskilled hands, are simply poor attempts at imitating the fine monumental style, just as modern European graffiti are normally in badly-formed capitals. But beside the monumental style, there was a true cursive, used for writing with a stylus on strips of wood; this differs from the monumental style quite as much as a Persian shikaste hand differs from the naskh of Ibn-Bawwāb, and there are correspondingly great difficulties in deciphering it, since only two major documents of this kind have survived, on which Professor Mahmud al-Ghul was working when he died.

§ 1:3 The South Arabian script is an alphabet comprising 29 letters; their conventional order can in part be reconstructed from several graffiti containing alphabetic sequences. The earlier part of the alphabet is fairly securely placed, but there is still some obscurity about the precise order of the latter part. The latest attempt at reconstruction is that of J. Ryckmans,<sup>3</sup> which runs: *h l ḥ m q w s<sup>2</sup> r b (ḡ) t s<sup>1</sup> k n ḥ s<sup>3</sup> f' c ḍ g d ḡ(b) ṭ ẓ d y ṭ s/ẓ*.

§ 1:4 The direction of writing in post-archaic inscriptions was consistently from right to left, but a number of archaic ones are written 'boustrophedon', with the direction alternating between right-to-left in the odd-numbered lines and left-to-right in the even-numbered ones. In the even-numbered lines of

<sup>2</sup> See Beeston 1979.

<sup>3</sup> Ryckmans 1981.

boustrophedon inscriptions, letters that are not bilaterally symmetrical are usually reversed.

§ 1:5 The transliteration-table (p. 4) exemplifies the style of archaic texts. It is a style in which artistic effect is secured by careful proportioning of the letters and a 'classical' simplicity reminiscent of the best Greek uncials of the 5th century B.C. In the middle period (see p. viii) a tendency towards more ornateness set in, with the ends of strokes finished off with serifs, right-angles giving place to acute angles, and straight lines becoming slightly bowed—tendencies already foreshadowed to some extent at the end of the archaic period. The recent style is distinctly baroque in appearance, with earlier trends pushed to an exaggerated extreme.

§ 1:6 In most cases, a letter form is easily recognisable through all these stylistic developments; but a few special cases need notice, since they have sometimes given rise to misreadings.

(a) Archaic *g* and *l* are clearly differentiated, but in the post-archaic periods there was an increasing tendency for the two letters to become totally indistinguishable.

(b) The archaic lozenge-shaped *f* tended later to have its top and bottom squashed into single vertical lines, thus producing a figure which is difficult to distinguish from *q*.

(c) In some inscriptions of the post-archaic periods *z* was written like a *k* with a circle added to its top line, and has sometimes been mistaken for *k*.<sup>4</sup>

(d) In recent inscriptions, *b* developed a median horizontal.

(e) Occasionally, in recent texts *g* has an aberrant form with only a single vertical and a gibbet-like cross piece.

(f) A few of the very earliest texts show other aberrant forms.<sup>5</sup>

§ 1:7 A vertical line divides each two words of a text.<sup>6</sup> However, single-consonant words are written as part of the following word, unless two or more come together, in which case they may be grouped together with a divider following, e.g. *bt'lb* "by Ta'lab" but *wb|dt|zbrn* "and by Dāt Zhrn".

§ 1:8 The alphabet is exclusively consonantal, and no vowels

<sup>4</sup> Thus for example Yusuf Abdullah 1979.45-6, where the editor has in YMN 13/12 read *nkr*, though parallel phraseology elsewhere has *nzr*.

<sup>5</sup> Pirenne 1956.100.

<sup>6</sup> This was noticed by the great mediaeval Muslim scholar al-Hamdānī (Hamdani/Anastas 1931.141).

are indicated, except for the probable use of *w* and *y* ambivalently for either consonant or vowel notation. The spelling of the pronoun suffix *-hmw* almost certainly indicates a pronunciation ending in *-ū*; and when we encounter in one and the same text variant spellings like *ywm* and *ym*, it is difficult to avoid thinking that both are facultative variant orthographies for a single pronunciation (such as *yōm*). Similarly with *y* which might represent *ī* or *ē* in 'full' spelling or be omitted in 'defective' spelling. Naturally, one must also allow for the possibility of the full spelling sometimes representing a diphthong, *aw/ay*.

§ 1:9 There is no notation at all for *ā*, and the letter ' notes only the consonantal glottal stop (Ar *hamẓ*). The point was remarked on by Hamdani,<sup>7</sup> who writes 'They drop the *alif* [of prolongation] when it is in the middle of a word, as in Hamdān, Ri'ām, and write R'm<sup>8</sup> and Hmdn, a practice followed by Quranic scribes in words like *Rahmān* and *insān*'. This makes no mention of word-final position, but there can be little doubt that the same was true there also; at all events, there are no words ending in ' where this could plausibly be considered as representing *ā*, with one significant exception, the personal name "Yahuda" spelt *yhw'd*,<sup>9</sup> by a calque on Aramaic orthography. No satisfactory explanation has yet been found for two aberrant spellings B. Ašwal 1/4 *'ym'n* and YM 358/10 *'h't'r* for normal *'ymn*, *'h'tr*; but the second ' in these two forms is most unlikely to represent *ā*.

§ 1:10 There is no indication that Sayhadic orthography employed ' as the mark of an anaptyctic vowel (Ar *hamẓat al-waṣl*) at the beginning of a word to avoid an initial consonant cluster, i.e. in words such as *s'm* "name" and *tny* "two".

§ 1:11 Lengthened consonants are not marked in Sabaic (nor elsewhere in Sayhadic with the possible exception of a handful of verbs in Minaic<sup>10</sup>): e.g. *kdt* "Kindah" must represent */kiddat/* with assimilation of the *n* (see § 2:6). One should, however,

<sup>7</sup> Hamdani/Anastas 1931.141.

<sup>8</sup> This is a slight error, since the epigraphic spelling is in fact *rym*.

<sup>9</sup> B. Ašwal 1/1, see Müller 1974/1.118.

<sup>10</sup> It is a point in dispute whether the doubling of the letter indicates the presence of an intervening vowel, as many contemporary South Arabists have tended to think, or represents a lengthened consonant. If the latter were the case, one would probably have to explain it as a calque on Greek usage, due to the close trading contracts between the Minaeans and the Mediterranean world. See Beeston 1982(2).10.

note the case of the addition of the *n* verbal termination of plural imperfects in verbs of which the third root letter is *n*: the variant spellings C 609/5 *yknnn* and C 392/5 *ykn* (both of them plural) suggest the possibility of a pronunciation such as *[yikon-nun]* spelt in the former case 'analytically' and the later phonetically.<sup>11</sup>

§ 1:12 In the archaic period, numerals could be expressed by repetitions and combinations (on the same principle as Roman numerals) of single strokes for unities, and the initial letters *h* for 5 (*hms<sup>1</sup>t*), *c* for 10 (*cs<sup>1</sup>rt*), *m* for 100 (*m<sup>1</sup>t*) and ' for 1000 (*'lf*), together with an *m* lopped of its lower angle for 50; these are set off from the rest of the text by being enclosed within dividers of a special kind (usually two vertical lines with a zigzag between them). In the post-archaic periods, this system was no longer used, and all numbers are written out in words.

§ 1:13 In arcR 5102/3 the isolated letter *w* might perhaps represent a numeral (if we were to assume a use of alphabetic order for this purpose, it would be here 6).

§ 1:14 In midC 570/2 a symbol congruous with the letter *n* is used as a cipher for *'mt* "cubit".

§ 1:15 The *k* with a small *h* inside it in arcR 5102/3 could be an acronym for *kbr/hll* "kabir of the Khalilids". As a decorative device, the letters of a n.pr. may be combined in a monogram.

§ 1:16 In the polytheistic periods, a text is often preceded by the symbol of a divinity, which may approximate in shape to an alphabetic letter, though it is not a letter (see Grohmann 1914).

## PHONOLOGY

§ 2:1 The frequency with which *ṣ* and *ṣ̣* appear as variant spellings in the same word suggests that the phonemic distinctiveness of these two letters was, to some extent at least, lost.

§ 2:2 In the arc and mid periods, however, the orthographic consistency in the use of the letters *ṣ<sup>1</sup>*, *ṣ<sup>2</sup>*, *ṣ<sup>3</sup>* shows that they were all three still phonemically distinct; though in texts of the rec

<sup>11</sup> Though both spellings could be phonetic and represent what in Ar would be distinguished as pronunciations with *iddigām* (full assimilation) and with *iḡhār al-nūnayn* (separate articulation of two identical letters which happen to come together).



period we find sporadic spellings with  $s^1$  instead of earlier  $s^3$ , indicating a tendency towards merging those two phonemes. The actual phonic identity of the three sounds has been much debated.

One thing that seems certain is that  $s^3$  noted the sound /s/, since where a word spelt with  $s^3$  has a recognisable cognate in another Semitic language, the cognate has /s/, and in Hebrew *samek*. The same is true of all post-archaic loanwords: northern *samek* or Greek /s/ is represented by  $s^3$  (once only by  $s^{12}$ ).

In words spelt with  $s^2$ , the cognates show Arabic *šin*, Hebrew *šin*, and the Mahrah group a sibilant with lateral articulation,<sup>13</sup> to a preponderant extent. But it would be wrong, I submit, to assume that Sayhadic  $s^2$  represented the modern pronunciation of Ar *šin*, namely /ʃ/, since Sibawayh<sup>14</sup> makes it abundantly clear that in his time this letter had a totally different articulation from the modern one: modern *š* has a point of closure between the tongue-tip and the hard palate, together with retroflexion of the tongue-tip (which distinguishes it from /s/), whereas Sibawayh's *š* had a point of closure 'the same as for *g* and *y*, between the centre of the tongue and the soft palate' (i.e. similar to the German Ich-laut). It is hence extremely likely that  $s^2$  was not /ʃ/, though it remains uncertain whether it could be regarded as an Ich-Laut or as a lateralised sibilant. Some small hint in favour of a lateralised articulation may perhaps be found in Had R 3459/3 *ks<sup>2</sup>dy* "Chaldaean".

The schema resulting from all this, namely:

Sayhadic	Arabic (modern)	Hebrew	Mahrah group
$s^1$	s	š ( <i>šin</i> )	š
$s^2$	š	ś ( <i>šin</i> )	lateral ś
$s^3$	s	s ( <i>samek</i> )	s

is validated for the etymological cognates discernible in over 85% of the cases,<sup>15</sup> though there is undoubtedly a small residuum of instances where it does not hold good.

<sup>12</sup> Sh 31/11 *qtwsf* "Ctesiphon" (Müller 1974/2.156).

<sup>13</sup> This phoneme closely resembles Welsh *ll*.

<sup>14</sup> Sibawayh 1881/9, ii.453.

<sup>15</sup> This has been contested by Magnanini 1974, who claims that these correspondances hold good in only 50% of the cases, a figure from which no significant conclusions could be drawn. He goes on to cite eleven instances in which he alleges that the schema is controverted, and says that these 'could

§ 2:3 The rec Sab tendency to merge  $s^3$  with  $s^1$  (§ 2:2) is to be seen in the mid period in a text from the Haram area, C 523/6  $'ks^1wt$  "garments" against standard Sab J 555/4  $ks^3wy$  "clothing"; from Haram too is a case where  $t$  of standard Sab is spelt  $s^3$ : R 3956/7  $ys^3wbn$  against the standard Sab root  $twb$ .

§ 2:3a Pliny's Latin *carfiathum* "autumnal" based on Sayhadic *brf* "autumn" indicates that, as elsewhere in the South Semitic area, original  $/p/$  was realised as  $f$ .

§ 2:4 There is a series of random instances where one of the three letters  $'$ ,  $c$ ,  $b$  is missing from the graphic form in a place where it would normally have occurred. The fact that this phenomenon is particularly noticeable in these three letters indicates that we are not dealing with simple engravers' mistakes (as has sometimes been assumed), but with a genuine phonetic trend towards reduction of these back-of-the-throat sounds to zero; e.g. C 335/4  $y\mathfrak{z}$  for normal  $y\mathfrak{z}'$ ; C 532/9 imperfect  $ts^2r$  against perfect  $s^2crt$  immediately before; C 1/1  $rt\mathfrak{d}twn$  compounded with the divine epithet normally appearing as  $thwn$ ; etc. It is under this heading that one should register cases where  $'b$  "(my) father" and  $'l$  "(my) god" are reduced to  $b$  and  $l$  in compound personal names, such as J 631/26  $l-c\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{z}-m$ ; one should note too the Muslim rendering of epigraphic  $s^2rh'l$  as *Šarahīl*.

§ 2:5 Fluctuation between the weak letters  $w$  and  $y$  is seen from time to time, e.g. J 601/10  $kyn$  against normal  $kwn$ ; also between  $'$  and a weak letter, as in R 2867/6  $w\mathfrak{h}r$  against normal

easily be multiplied'. Out of those eleven instances, nine are invalid (one is a misreading and eight cannot be regarded as acceptable cognates), and an exhaustive survey of the whole material (see Beeston 1977) reveals that the statistic which I have here cited is justified.

For the benefit of non-Hebraists it is desirable to give a brief explanation of the Hebrew *śin*. Early Hebrew had only one letter *śin*, which in mediaeval and modern Hebrew is sometimes pronounced as  $s$  and sometimes as  $\mathfrak{z}$ ; the mediaeval Massoretes distinguished the two pronunciations by diacritics (and European  $\acute{s}$  and  $\mathfrak{z}$  reflect these diacritics). Now the high degree of correspondance between words spelt with *śin* (and now pronounced with  $/s/$ ), and those which show Ar *śin*, Sayhadic  $s^2$ , and the Mahri group the lateral sibilant, led Brockelmann and those who follow him to conclude that this cannot be arbitrary, but that early Hebrew *śin* must have been an ambivalent sign noting two distinct sounds, one of which is represented by later  $\mathfrak{z}$  ( $\mathfrak{f}$ ), and the other merged later with the  $s$  sound represented by the letter *samek* (and indeed, Syriac orthography uses *samek* in these words). The recent attempt by Magnanini and others to controvert this view fails by reason of the incorrect statistics used. See further Beeston 1962(2).

*ḥr*, J 560/14 *ḥwtw* against normal *ḥ'tw*, R 4964/3 *tṣl'n* from the root normally attested as *ṣlw*. N 74 shows a tendency to replace *w* by *y* at the beginning of words. There is, however, no trace in Sayhadic of the regular Arabic practice of substituting ' for *w/y* after *ā* (\**jāwiz* > *jā'iz*, \**ijrāy* > *ijrā*).<sup>15a</sup>

§ 2:6 A very frequent feature is the assimilation of *n* to an immediately following consonant, resulting in a lengthened consonant which is not noted as such in the script (§ 1:11). Assimilated and non-assimilated spellings both occur freely, but it is not possible to determine whether the assimilation was merely facultative, or whether the non-assimilated forms represent historical and analytic spellings and not the actual pronunciation. Letters before which assimilation is not (so far) attested are ' , *c*, *h*, *ḥ*, *ḡ*, *m*.

§ 2:7 Assimilation of *d* occurs in several numeral forms: in the fem *ḥt* < \**ḥdt* "one", and in mid/rec *s't(t)* "six", *s'ty* "sixty" against arc *s'dt(t)*, *s'dty*. However, recR 5085/11 *s'ty* should be regarded as dialectal and not standard Sab, since the provenance is the W. Rakhayle in Hadramite territory.<sup>16</sup>

§ 2:8 Apocope of a divine name forming the last element of a compound personal name, by loss of the last letter, is frequent in the case of Athtar, so that one has forms like *whbctt* etc.; and specially in the rec period, even *-ct* as in *lhyc*. Other possible cases are E 34 *rf'nṭw* analysed by Ryckmans 1975.61 as having the divine epithet *ṭḥwn* as last element; and F 87/1 *n'dnns'* having the divine name *ns'r* as final element.

§ 2:9 A feature (probably dialectal) which first makes an appearance in some mid period texts from peripheral areas, and in rec periods texts, is metathesis in the *ḥcl* plural of nouns, e.g. *'lwd* beside normal *'wld* "children". In mid period texts from Maḥram Bilqis/Awā the verb forms *ḥṭb* and *ṭḥb* occur in such closely similar contexts that the possibility should be envisaged of the latter being a metathesis of the former (notwithstanding that the root is *ṭwb* and the *ḥ* a stem-formant).

<sup>15a</sup> Unless one explains the late and extremely anomalous *s'w'd* (§ 10:12) thus.

<sup>16</sup> Cf Appendix, § H 18:1; also note 61.

## VERBAL AND NOMINAL ROOTS

§ 3:1 The vast majority of verbs and nouns are based on trilateral roots. But there is one noun consisting only of a single consonant, *f* “(mouth >) authority”, and several biliterals, such as *ʾl* “god”, *ʾḥ* “brother”, *yd* “hand” etc. The latter can be expanded into trilaterals in the formation of derivatives, usually by the addition of a ‘weak’ letter, as in the verb *tʾḥw* “be allied”.

§ 3:2 Secondary trilateral verbs may perhaps be created by treating an originally non-radical *t* of a noun as radical, thus *sʾft* “promise” perhaps from *\*sʾf-t* “lip” (a biliteral root with affirmative *-t*).

§ 3:3 Quadriliteral roots are common in proper names, but otherwise extremely rare. The only attested quadriliteral verb-form is C 432/6 *yhsʾmln*.<sup>17</sup> Among nouns we find some reduplicated biliterals, e.g. *fdfdt* “saturation”, *sʾcsʾc* “summer” and a few others. Doubling of the third consonant is found in *ḡrbḡ* “grapes”. Apart from these special cases, the very few remaining quadriliteral nouns are in several cases loanwords, e.g. *ʾfklt* “priests” from Sumero-Akkadian *apkallu*, Micsāl 2/13 *dḡlmt* “bracelets, ornaments” from Geez *dəḡalma*.

## VERB STEMS

§ 4:1 Graphically distinguishable verb-stems are *fcl*, *ḥfcl*, *tfcl*, *ftcl*, *sʾtfcl*.<sup>18</sup> But there is a strong presumption that other stems existed, characterised by consonantal or vocalic lengthening (as with Ar *facala* and *fācala*), unmarked in the script.

§ 4:2 In the case of the base-stem *fcl*, the existence of at least one other stem besides *facala* is indicated by semantic contrasts, such as that between “come” and “bring” for the homograph *ʾtw*. The existence of a *fācala* stem is suggested by a mediaeval Yemeni verb-form *kāwana* (totally unknown in classical Ar) in the same sense, “aid, support, back up s.o.”, as *kwn* has in some

<sup>17</sup> The text R 5065 is probably not Sab, but linguistically north-Arabian, and the word *hsʾmhr* not a Sab verb but a noun with the northwest Arabian definite article *h-*.

<sup>18</sup> There is no reliable attestation of a verb-stem *\*nfcl*: R 4829 is an inscription of dubious authenticity, so that its *wl-tncly* cannot be accepted as evidence. All other occurrences of *nfcl* are nouns.

Sab contexts. But whether *faccala* also existed in Sab is not altogether certain, in view of the fact that the Mahrah group of languages have only one stem corresponding to both Ar *faccala* and *fācala*.<sup>19</sup>

§ 4:3 The spellings of verbs from roots with *w/y* as middle radical do not help us to disentangle these forms, since it is manifest that graphic retention of the weak letter does not necessarily indicate a secondarily derived stem: *kwn* in the sense “be” must be a *facala* form like Geez *kona*.

§ 4:4 Conversely, in the case of *tfcl*, spellings of words from roots with *w/y* as middle radical do point to the existence of a *tafacla* stem (as found in Geez), for while C 337/5 *ts<sup>2</sup>ym* could theoretically represent *tafacla* or *tafācala* or *tafaccala*, the apparently synonymous Gl 1209/6 *ts<sup>2</sup>m* can only be interpreted as *tafacla*.

§ 4:5 No conclusions can be drawn about possible variants of the other stems.

§ 4:6 The *t* of *ftcl* remains unaltered (in contrast with Ar) when the first root consonant is emphatic, e.g. Gl 1321/3 *dtrrn*.

§ 4:7 In roots with *n* as first consonant, the facultative assimilation of the *n* (cf § 2:6) produces a form like R 4150/4 *tḏc* < *\*ntḏc*.

§ 4:8 Rob Maš 1/1 *tqbw* seems to be a *ftcl* stem from root *wqb* (cf Ar *ittasafa* etc.).

§ 4:9 The *hfcl* stem retains its *h* in all inflectional and derivational forms, hence imperfect *yhfcl*, participle *mhfcl*.<sup>20</sup>

## THE FINITE VERB: MORPHOLOGY

§ 5:1 The ‘finite’ verb is a type of predicate which is capable of morphological inflections with a variety of semantic values: pronominal indications of 1st or 2nd person subjects; indications of the gender and number of the subject; and indications of tense/aspect, voice and mood. Some of these are poorly attested in the inscriptions, partly because of the nature of the texts, partly because of lack of vocalization in the graphic forms.

<sup>19</sup> Bittner 1916.20.

<sup>20</sup> Even classical Ar has instances of this, e.g. the verb *harāqa yuharīqu muharāq*.

§ 5:2 Epigraphic style demanded an almost exclusive use of the 3rd person, so that 1st person forms are not attested at all, and 2nd person forms only with extreme rarity: e.g. recRy 508/11 *rhmk* "Thou art merciful", and perhaps ibid. *trhm/clj/kl/clm/rhmn* "mayest Thou have mercy on all the world, O God",<sup>21</sup> together with R 4088/1 *tqsw* "beware!".<sup>22</sup> What follows here is therefore concerned only with 3rd person forms.

§ 5:3 The 'voice' differentiation between active and passive certainly existed, e.g. C 334/13 *wfyt* which can only be interpreted as a passive, "(the camp) was saved". But the differentiation does not appear in the graphic form, and must have been marked (if marked at all) by vowel variation. Modal differentiation, if it existed, cannot be reliably deduced from the attested graphic forms (see § 5:12).

§ 5:4 There are two tense/aspect forms, one conventionally called 'perfect', and marked to correspond with the subject in gender and number by means of suffix morphemes only, as follows:

	sg	du	pl
mas	- <i>θ</i>	- <i>y</i>	- <i>w</i>
fem	- <i>t</i>	- <i>ty</i> /(- <i>tw</i> )	(- <i>n</i> , - <i>y</i> )

The alternative fem du ending *-tw* is attested only in J 686/2 and YM 441/1. The fem pl is not well attested: a possible example of *-n* ending seems to be J 735/9 *tcrbn* with subject *rqt* "sorceresses";<sup>23</sup> in the case of R 4176/6 *k-s'tnhšn* "when they are pregnant", the form could be regarded as either perfect or imperfect (see § 5:5, 8). Until recently, the only recorded examples of fem pl in *-y* were C 330/3, C 581/4, but C. Robin notes that it is found also in E 34 and Gar ISA 4/4.

§ 5:5 The other tense, conventionally called 'imperfect', shows prefix morphemes either plus or minus suffix ones. This

<sup>21</sup> This interpretation is based on the immediate contiguity of this phrase with the 2nd person verb-form *rhmk* (as in some modern Yemeni dialects which have *facalka* for *facalta*); but Ryckmans 1964.438 takes *trhm* as a 3rd person form of the T-prefix stem (which is attested in the participial form *mtrhmn* "the Merciful"), "may God have mercy". It might also be imperative.

<sup>22</sup> Here too, it is doubtful whether the form is really 2nd person, and not e.g. an infinitive of the T-prefix stem (cf. French 'défence de passer').

<sup>23</sup> See Ryckmans 1973.385.

has two subvarieties, the simple imperfect and the -N imperfect. The simple imperfect shows:

	sg	du	pl
mas	<i>y-...</i>	<i>y-...-y</i>	<i>y-...-w</i>
fem	<i>t-...</i>	<i>t-...-y</i>	<i>(y-...-n?)</i>

Here again, the fem pl is only dubiously attested; a possible example is C 518/4 *ytlwn* with *'rd* as subject, "lands which belong to...";<sup>24</sup> on *k-s'tnhšn* see § 5:4.

§ 5:6 In both perfect and simple imperfect, the terminations *-y* and *-w* are most commonly deleted from the graphic form when an object pronoun is added;<sup>25</sup> retention of the vowel letter, though attested, is decidedly rare.

§ 5:7 The -N imperfect shows:

	sg	du	pl
mas	<i>y-...-n</i>	<i>y-...-nn</i>	<i>y-...-nn</i>
fem	<i>t-...-n</i>	<i>t-...-nn</i>	<i>y-...-nn</i>

The mas du is attested in J 745/10 *yrtcnn*, fem du J 649/21 *thdcnn*, fem pl Rad Mical 3/3 *ys'mnn* "(towns, *'hgr*, which) are named" (fem subject, see § 11:2).

§ 5:8 Prefixing of the jussive/optative particle *l-* (§ 7:8) to a verb occasionally entails graphic deletion of imperfect *y-*. This could not have been detected from the sg forms, which might be (and in the past usually have been) interpreted as infinitives; but the authenticity of the phenomenon is guaranteed by pl forms such as J 720/14 *wbn/ddbyn/lhdrnn* "let the Banu *Ḍ* beware", J 669/14 *lbwfrnn/tthmw/wbnhbmw/cdy/mbrmn* "their wives and children must make pilgrimage to the temple".

§ 5:9 It appears from MAFY Hamida 3/5 *wkgybhmw* that the subordinating conjunction *k-* (§ 32:1) permits a similar graphic deletion of *y-*: the only possible rendering here is "and that He should protect them", since Sab *k-* functions prepositionally only in the sense "like" and not "for", so that the infinitive interpretation is here excluded.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> This implies, of course, that *'rd* is here a pl (cf Ar *'arādī*); the interpretation as a sg (the *-n* being then that of the -N imperfect) would involve a gender incongruity, since the noun is certainly fem.

<sup>25</sup> This was already detected by Mayer-Lambert 1908.320.

<sup>26</sup> It is the usage here stated which allows the possibility of interpreting *k-s'tnhšn* as an imperfect, § 5:4.5.

§ 5:10 The base-stem imperfect of roots having *w* as first letter does not retain the *w*, e.g. *wrd* - *yrd* etc.<sup>27</sup>

§ 5:11 In roots with *w/y* as second or third letter, it does not seem possible to predict the inflectional forms, nor in roots with doubled second letter; the distribution of full and defective writings in the former, and of single and double writing of the second root consonant in the latter, do not respond to easy analysis of principle. The only feature that seems strongly marked is that the sg of the base-stem of roots with *w/y* as third letter retains the weak letter, as in *bny*, *cdw*.<sup>28</sup>

§ 5:12 An instance such as Ra 42/12-13 *kymwtn/dymw[t]n/wlymtn* might well have led to the conclusion that there was a modal differentiation between an indicative, in the 'full' form *ymwtn*, and a jussive (Ar *majzūm*) 'short' form in *ymtn*; but no satisfactory correlation between the graphic forms and the syntactic positions has hitherto been established in other cases, and we may be forced to conclude that the differences in the weak root imperfects are purely graphic and not morphological.

§ 5:13 In roots with *n* as third letter, the *-nn* imperfect termination may be written in full, as in C 609/5 *yknenn*, or assimilation may take place as in C 392/5 *ykn* (with pl subject).<sup>29</sup>

## THE FINITE VERB: SYNTAX

§ 6:1 In general, the finite verb shows strict concord in gender and number with its subject, irrespective of whether the subject precedes or follows the verb, and irrespective of whether a pl subject denotes persons or non-persons.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> R 435 1/1 *yws'cn*, which has a transitive sense, is likely to be a derivate stem and not the base-stem, and the same could be the case with Hakim 2/1 *ywb*, C 603b/29 *ywd'n*, Rob Maš 1/10 *ywgrn*.

<sup>28</sup> In the pl, and in derivative stems, there is some variation. While the full form *hqnyw* is very common indeed, there is one example in Tourisme 2 of *hqnw*; and some instances where *cdw* appears to be pl.

<sup>29</sup> It is not clear whether the same applies in the sg, which would have the result that a seemingly simple imperfect might in fact be an -N imperfect with assimilation. It would consequently be wise, in any attempt at plotting the distribution of the two types of imperfect, to disregard roots with *n* as third letter.

<sup>30</sup> This syntactic form, though alien to classical Ar, was known dialectically, and is referred to by the grammarians as the *'akalūnī l-barāgīt* tournure. There are one or two anomalous instances in Sab of the classical Ar form



§ 6:2 A limitation of this principle is that the verb may appear as sg when it has a subject phrase consisting of two or more nouns linked by *w*, the first of them being a sg, e.g. J 665/23 *mtc|bn|bmt|'hḏrn|'s'm|rkbm|wtlt|rglm* "of those Hadramites, one mounted man was saved and three footsoldiers", Gl 1720/1-2 *bhy|wbyrhmw|...rd|cttr* "B and H have entrusted to Athtar".

§ 6:3 The verb *kwn* seems occasionally to be used without the expected gender concord, e.g. J 610/5 *kl|dct|kwn|bmfnthmw* "every unwatered field which is in their estate", C 570/1 *kwn|lnhln|...dt|kltn* "the palmgrove has ... this measurement" (the formal subject being *kltn*).

§ 6:4 As regards the placing of the finite verb in relation to the subject and other complements, two principles operate. At the beginning of an inscription, the verb practically never first.<sup>31</sup> Most frequently it is preceded by the subject; sometimes by a deictic expression, as in C 601/1 *kn|htb|ykrbmlk* "Thus has Y decreed", or by the 'deictic' *w* (§ 31:4).

§ 6:5 Elsewhere in a text, the commonest form is for the verb to precede both subject and other complements. But raising of a subject or of an adverbial expression to initial position is not rare, e.g. C 334/12 *whrt|mr'bm[w|s<sup>2</sup>cr|m|'wtr|'whms<sup>1</sup>]yhw|wwfyt* "and as for the camp of their lord S.A. and of his two armies, it was saved", J 568/14 *wbcdnhw|fdb'w* "and subsequently they made war". As can be seen in these two examples, the verb is in such cases often (though not obligatorily) introduced by *w*- or *f*-.

§ 6:6 Raising of a direct object to initial position is extremely rarely attested in standard Sab; but one example at least is found in arcR 3945/16 *whgrn|ns<sup>2</sup>n|ybh<sup>1</sup>rm|bn|mwftm* "but the town N he forbade to be burnt". Some of the Rad texts, on the other hand, show a certain fondness for this structure, e.g. Micsal 3/12 *dh'wl|bn|'frs'hmw|cs<sup>2</sup>r|'hym|wtlt|hr<sup>1</sup>gw|wm'tm|rkbm|'wlw* "what was brought back of their mares was ten alive, but three they slew; and one hundred riding camels they brought back".<sup>32</sup>

using the sg, J 631/24 *ycdwn* with "the Habashites" as following subject, Rad Micsāl 5/7 *dt|...s<sup>2</sup>cbn* "that which the tribes got".

<sup>31</sup> In two apparent instances of a verb beginning a text, C 555 and ZI 71, it is dubious whether in fact there is not a word or a line missing at the beginning.

<sup>32</sup> The form of the numerals 'ten' and 'three' shows that females are alluded to (see § 19:1), hence it is not possible to interpret the mas pl *hr<sup>1</sup>gw* as a passive with the mares as subject.

§ 6:7 With verbs of 'giving', the personal object commonly precedes the non-personal one, as in the common form *hqny/lmqh/dn/slmm* "dedicated to 'MQH this statue".

§ 6:8 Impersonal verbs (lacking subject) are found in J 735/6 *brq* "there was a storm", ib/12 *dnm* "it rained".

§ 6:9 In Rob Maš 1/3 *yhgrnn*, the editors have interpreted the pl verb as having an indefinite subject, "on réservera / people shall reserve"; this, though plausible in principle, is not an obligatory analysis in this passage, where the subject could be the authors of the text.

§ 6:10 A passive with a noun-clause as surrogate subject is found in J 665/40 *srh/lhmmw/k-* "an alert was given to them that..." (Ar. *šuriha lahum 'anna...*).

§ 6:11 In a series of two or more clauses consisting of verb plus object and coordinated by *w*, it is normal for all the verbs to be grouped together and then followed by all the objects; an English parallel would be the replacement of 'he ate the bread and meat and drank the wine' by 'he ate and drank the bread and meat and wine'.

§ 6:12 The use of a 'cognate' accusative (Ar *mafcūl mutlaq*) is particularly common, so that the English form "offered firstfruits" would be represented by *frc/frc(m)*; this is especially so in relative clauses (§ 26:1, 4, 6b), e.g. *frc/frc* "firstfruits (which) he offered".

§ 6:13 The use of *kwn* as a full predicate (Ar *kāna l-tāmmah*) and not as a predicative copula (*kāna l-nāqisah*) may perhaps be found in J 628/7-8 *kcbrnmw/lmqh/kwn/hdg/tw/s'qym* which I would suggest analysing as "that, by favour of (the deity) 'LMQH, there was a spate which brought irrigation". So too in Rad Micsāl 4/9 *kwn/tqdmn* "the battle took place".

## THE FINITE VERB: TENSE/ASPECT AND MODALITIES

§ 7:1 The 'perfect' is a multivalent form with no mechanism for distinguishing between the semantic implications of Ar *facala*, *qad facala*, *kāna facala* and *kāna yafcalu*, or English "was doing, has done, had done, did". It may convey,

(a) a present situation arising from a past punctual act; thus most commonly in the principal verb of a text, e.g. *hqny/dn/slmm*

“has dedicated this statue”, *s'tr/dn/ms'ndn* “has written this inscription”.

(b) a past punctual event which could be regarded as either past in relation to the time of writing (i.e. a simple preterite “did”), or as past in relation to the main verb of the text (i.e. pluperfect “had done”), e.g. J 581/5 *hqny/...hmdm/bdt/t'wly/mr'yhmw/bwfyw* “has dedicated ... in gratitude because their two lords returned / had returned in safety”.

(c) an event anterior to the time of the immediately preceding clause (this being other than the principal verb of the text). In this case, *w-fcl* corresponds to an Ar *hāl* structure *wa-qad fa'ala*, and should be rendered by an English pluperfect. This usage is not always easy to detect, but it has important consequences for the understanding of a text, since it means that we cannot automatically assume that the sequence of presentation of verbs *A w B w C* represents the temporal  $A \rightarrow B \rightarrow C$ , but on the contrary the temporal sequence may be  $B \rightarrow A \rightarrow C$ , with clause B understood as a *hāl*.

(d) a past durative situation within which an act or series of acts described in the preceding clause took place (English past durative, “was doing”), e.g. J 631/5-7 *cs'm/tqdm/tqdmw/...bkn/s'wcv/mr'hmw* “a number of expeditions which they made ... while they were serving / were in the service of their lord”.

(e) a universally valid situation without restriction of time, e.g. Ry 508/11 *rhmk* “Thou art merciful”, C 570/1 *kwn/lhln* “the palmgrove has ...” (see § 6:3).

§ 7:2 The imperfect may present various degrees of futurity (relative either to the time of writing or to some anterior event), with or without modal overtones.

A simple non-modal (indicative) use is found e.g. in J 736/11 *wyz'n/bwfyw/s'lmn* “and he will offer additional [see § 9:2, 3] statues”, and frequently in relative clauses as in the formula *kl'ml'ys'tml'n* “all the petitions which he (in future) makes”.

§ 7:3 In noun-clauses the imperfect implies futurity in relation to the time of the main verb, e.g. Rob Maš 1/1-3 *tqbw/ws'twddn/...kyhgrnn* “they have agreed and consented ... that they should reserve”. Contrast between the perfect and the imperfect is found in J 577/9 *thbbmw/kyswynn/mr'hmw/mlk/s'b'/kbs'mw/hht'n* “(the Najranites) answered them that they (the Sabaeans) should notify their lords the kings of Saba that they (the Najranites) had aggravated the offense”. Coordination with an infinitive is seen in ST 1/14-16 *tgzm[w]...lhtbn/wkhyw/*

[...] *dnn/rtd'wm/w's'dhw/w'l/ygb'nn/ls'[lm]* "they swore to achieve an exemplary defeat and (that they) would [put to flight?<sup>33</sup>] R and his troops, and would not conclude peace".

§ 7:4 A future perfect occurs in J 736/6, 12 *yhmrbhw* "he should / shall have granted him".

§ 7:5 The imperfect preceded by *w* sometimes presents a situation envisaged as a consequence, or as a concomitant result of a preceding past-time act, e.g. R 3945/2 *sdq/cttr/w'lmqb/hghmy/wyhtb/mwy/dbbhwy/rymn/wykn/fnwtm/fnwtm/wdyrm/dyrm* "he performed for Athtar and 'LMQH their due, by reorganising the irrigation-system of his alluvial land R, so as to have alternating channels and silt-fields", ib/16 *ctb/bn/ns<sup>2</sup>n'/l'...* *wybrgw* "he marked down those of the Nashanites who ..., so that they should be slain".

§ 7:6 However, the imperfect can also present a simple narrative sequence of past-time acts, e.g. J 577/11 *wbcdhw/fydb'n/bclyhmmw/mlkn* "subsequently, the king conducted military operations against them". This usage, while markedly frequent in a dozen or so mid period texts, is otherwise rare.

§ 7:7 An imperfect denoting a situation without restriction of time (cf § 7:1e) is found in C 555/1 *ymbrw/l'n/wtnn/ns'r/ms<sup>2</sup>rqn* "these boundary stones face towards the east ...".

§ 7:8 It is doubtful whether any direct-address imperative is attested (see § 5:2 and note 22), but jussive (describing what must or ought to happen) and optative (describing what it is hoped may happen) uses of the imperfect are common; these are normally preceded by the particle *l-*. e.g. R 4782/1 *wl/yhbt'n/l'lh'n/fhdm* "must offer to the god a haunch", N 74/13 *wl/ydcdbn* "so let him be punished"; J 572/14 *wlys'cdnhmy/ncmtm* "and may He grant them grace". (For another jussive form see § 28:7).

§ 7:9 An optative imperfect without *l* is rare, but attested in J 736/13 *wyhmrbhw* ib/16 *wyntcnhmmw* "and may He grant them ... and may He deliver them".

§ 7:10 Apart from cases of a recognisable imperfect, there are not a few instances of an alternative usage for the jussive/optative. In some of these, the verb could, on the basis of its graphic form, be regarded as either perfect or infinitive but not imperfect; in others it could be either infinitive or imperfect but not perfect; hence the most economical hypo-

<sup>33</sup> Contrary to the analysis which I earlier proposed (Beeston 1976.56), I now think that the mutilated word is more likely to be a verb than a noun.

thesis is that the alternative to the imperfect is the infinitive. The former (imperfect) use should be recognised in cases where the verb has the pl termination *-nm* although the initial *y-* may be graphically deleted (§ 5:8); the infinitive use is guaranteed by verbs from roots with initial *w* (cf § 5:10). Thus we find both *lwz'* and *lyz'*. But in most cases of the form *lfcl(n)* with a mas sg subject, either parsing is possible.

§ 7:11 A question which could be debated is whether, in the series of aspirational clauses which ordinarily conclude a votive text, these are to be regarded as independent sentences, in which case the *l-* is equivalent to Ar *lām al-'amr wa l-ducā'* (with *jazm*); or whether they are subordinated to the main verb "dedicated", in which case *l-* would be equivalent to Ar *li-* (with *naṣb*) "in order that". However, in some cases these clauses show fronting of the subject (e.g. J. 572/11 *w'lmqhbcl'wm/fl/yhmrn* "and may (the deity) grant ...", which clearly marks the clause as a fresh sentence (Ar *isti'nāf*); hence it is simpler to regard all such clauses as independent optative sentences.

§ 7:12 An extremely difficult problem is the usage of the simple versus the -N imperfect. A rather general impression is that the simple imperfect occurs in main sentences and the -N imperfect in jussives and subordinate clauses of all kinds, including relative clauses.<sup>34</sup> But there are so many cases controverting such a principle that it is probably unwise to adopt that hypothesis. One may have to admit that the use of the -N imperfect is purely optional: notice the contrast between the two forms in J 736/13, 16 cited above § 7:9, where the syntactic status of the two verbs is absolutely the same. Cf the optional use of the -N infinitive, § 8:3.

§ 7:13 On the problem of a 'shortened' form of the jussive imperfect see § 5:12.

## INFINITIVE AND PARTICIPLE

§ 8:1 The 'infinitive' is a verb-form lacking the indications of person, tense, voice and mood that characterise the finite verb. The Sab infinitive is the bare stem of the verb, with or without an added *-n*. This has two distinct usages: it may function as a

<sup>34</sup> It should be remembered that in Akkadian, the verb of a relative clause has a 'subjunctive' form, distinct from the indicative.

verbal-noun (Ar *maṣdar*), e.g. J 612/6 *hmr/...cbdhw/...hwfynhw/bml'/s'tml'/bcmhw* “(the deity) vouchsafed to His servant ... to gratify with (every) favour he sought from Him”, J 590/4 *hmr/cbdyhw/...t'wln/bwfyw* “He vouchsafed to His two servants ... to return in safety”.

§ 8:2 In the second usage, however, the morphological infinitive is semantically equivalent to a finite verb: in any series of two or more closely coordinated verbs, it is normal for only the first to be a finite form, while the succeeding ones are infinitives, e.g. J 631/8 *bcdw/wbbcln/wbrg/ws'by/wgnm/wmtlyn* “they carried off and (they) seized, and (they) killed and (they) captured and (they) plundered and (they) looted”, Rob Maš 1/3 *kyhgrnn/wcrbn* “that they should reserve and (they should) dedicate”, C 532/2 *tnhyt/wtnḏrn* “she confessed and did penance”. Examples of finite verb-forms in such series are rare.

§ 8:3 The use of the -N infinitive is to a large extent optional; the last term of the series usually has it, but in intervening terms it seems to serve only the purpose of a punctuation mark, to break up the series into phrases punctuated by slight pauses (like the English comma in such circumstances). It is relatively rare to find, as in F 3, a series in which all the terms are -N infinitives.

§ 8:4 Patterns of verbal-nouns other than those showing the simple verb-stem are included below under the heading of noun stems (§ 10).

§ 8:5 The Ar *maṣdar* neutralises the ‘voice’ contrast between active and passive, so that *qatl* represents both “killing” and “being killed”; and it would be wise to assume the same to have been the case in Sab. And (as is the case both in Semitic and in European languages) the verbal-noun is capable of semantic extension into a concrete: *hqnyt* can be either “act of dedication” or “thing dedicated”.

§ 8:6 The subject of an infinitive or verbal noun, if expressed, is most often an attached pronoun or a substantive in genitival position, i.e. immediately following. But the subject can appear separated from the infinitive/verbal noun, and in that case has nominative status,<sup>35</sup> as appears from the nominative form of the

<sup>35</sup> The Ar grammarians permit both *ḏarbu ẓaydin camran* “Zayd’s striking of Amr” and *ḏarbu ẓaydin camrun* “Amr’s striking of Zayd”, and the latter form is authenticated in a Tradition of the Prophet, *manaca l-nāsa min muḥābatihī ‘aḥadun bi-sayyid* “he gave people a directive against anyone’s addressing him as lord”.

demonstrative (see § 24:1) in R 4815/7 *bn/hyc/lhmw/h'/fnwtn* "from the flowing, for them, of that canal".

§ 8:7 Participial forms from verb stems other than the base-stem show prefixed *m-*, e.g. *mhnkr* "one who damages", *mtrhm* "merciful". One would assume that semantically this covers both active and passive (or other<sup>36</sup>) senses, and that these were distinct in their vocalisation, but this cannot be demonstrated.

§ 8:8 In the base-stem we find both *fcl* and *mfcl* in a passive sense, e.g. mid *'hd* "prisoner of war" (Ar *'ahīd*) and J 544/4 *mrđy* "approved". There is also some possibility that both forms may be used in the active sense, since *mnsf* "servitor" appears in the Ar lexica in the form *minṣaf/manṣaf* with the gloss *hādīm*.

## AUXILIARIES

§ 9:1 An auxiliary verb is one which syntactically occupies the position of the main verb in the clause, but semantically describes a modification (usually expressed adverbially in European languages) of a following verb.

§ 9:2 In Sab, the second verb normally appears as an infinitive, e.g. NNAG 1/8-10 *wl/wz'/'lmqb/hwfy[n]/cbdbw/...wl/tlwn/hcnnhw* "and may 'LMQH in future grant to His servant ... and may He continually help him", J 585/7 *kydw/'hbs²n/hgzn/grb/'bhmw* "the Habashites nearly put an end to their father's life" (Ar *kādū yunjizūna calā 'abīhim*), Ry 533/12 *wycdw/[q]mc/qrytnhn* "and they ultimately<sup>37</sup> crushed al-Qaryatayn".

§ 9:3 In one case at least, the second verb is presented as an asyndetic finite verb, F 74/2 *wwz'w/s²rcw/bythmw/tty/(l)b'n/dhbm* "and they equipped their house additionally with two lionesses in bronze" (Müller 1976.63).

§ 9:4 It does not appear that *kwn* is used as an auxiliary; it occurs only with non-verbal complements, as in C 315/7 *dr/ds²t'/'wkwn/bkl/'rdn* "the war which broke out and took place in

<sup>36</sup> I.e. nouns of action, place or instrument which are homophones of the passive participle of secondary verb-stems. While there is no clear evidence of these in Sab, the possibility that they might occur should not be overlooked.

<sup>37</sup> Cf Ar *cāda* in a phrase used by Ibn al-Dawādārī, *cādati l-'ahsā'u madīnata l-bahrayn* "al-Ahsa ultimately became the capital of Bahrayn" (which it had not been previously).

the whole land", Rob Riyam 1/2 *ywm/kwn/rs<sup>2</sup>w/t'lb* "when he became priest of Ta'lab", or (in the absolute sense "occur, take place") without complement (cf § 6:13).

## NOUN STEMS

§ 10:1 Noun stems from trilateral roots are here treated under the three heads of: sg stems; secondary sg stems derived from the former; internal or 'broken' pl stems, formed by direct derivation from the root and not by addition to the sg stem.

§ 10:2 The graphic forms of sg stems certainly conceal a much wider variety of morphological patterns distinguished by vocalisation: *mlk* in the two senses of "king" and "realm, property" must have differed vocally just as Ar *malik* and *mulk* do. Besides this simple *fcl* form, the graphically distinguishable patterns are:

(a) *fclt*, very common (and see also § 10:4a). The *-t* occurs also in some verbal-nouns both of the base-stem and of derived stems.

(b) *cl* and *clt*, in verbal-nouns from roots with *w* as first letter, e.g. *qh* and *qht* "command", the corresponding verb being *wqh*.

(c) *fcln*, as in C 308/15 *'hwn-hmw* "their alliance" and R 4646/14 *dn/hmrn-n* "this concession"; as can be seen from these examples, this stem consists mainly of abstracts or verbal-nouns.

(d) *fcl*, as in *lly* (root *lyl*) "night", *'nty* "female", *lbny* "frankincense", etc. (see also § 10:4b)

(e) *fclyt* seems to be a form used with 'doubled' roots (with second and third letter the same), to judge by NNAG 15/5, where *g<sup>2</sup>lyt* "wrath" echoes the verb *g<sup>2</sup>ll*.

(f) *fclw* occurs in the place-name *šncw* "Sanaa", otherwise only dubiously.<sup>38</sup>

(g) *fcl'* is a doubtful form, attested only in J 720/9 *dfr'* and J 750/7 *z'd'* (if indeed the latter is a correct reading<sup>39</sup>).

(h) *fycl* is found in *hykl* and *bykl*, but both are probably loanwords ultimately going back to Sumero-Akkadian *ekallu* "palace".

<sup>38</sup> C 523/3 *brmw* "menstrual period" should perhaps be analysed as *brm-(h)w* with attached pronoun (fem, see § 23:2).

<sup>39</sup> But see Beeston 1969.229.



- (i) *fwcl* is found in *hwlm* “dream” (*kwkb* “star” is probably based ultimately on a biliteral reduplicated root \**kbkb*).
- (j) *fcyl* is found in the rec spelling *hryf* for earlier *hrf* “year”; it is particularly common in nn. pr.<sup>40</sup>; and perhaps a diminutive in R 4674/4 *šlym* “statue(tte?)”.
- (k) *fcwl* is mainly a broken pl stem, but also occurs in nn. pr., e.g. *šrwḥ* “Širwāḥ”.
- (m) *tfcl* and *tfclt* are widely used for abstracts and verbal-nouns, though semantic evolution into concretes must be allowed for (cf § 8:5).
- (n) *nfcl* is attested for Sab only in *nhql* “with the exception of” or “in particular”<sup>41</sup> (the two contrary significations were probably distinguished dialectally or chronologically).
- (o) *mfcl* and *mfclt* have the widest possible range of usage, including verbal-nouns (*maṣḍars*), nouns of agent, place, etc.
- (p) *’fcl* corresponding to Ar *’afcal* is very common in nn. pr., otherwise rather rare, but we have *’qdm* “front (local), s.t. previous (temporal)”, and Har C 547/12 *’hr* “another time, again”.

§ 10:3 In the post-archaic period, the biliterals *bn* and *’h*, when followed by an attached pronoun, sometimes have an extended sg stem *bny-*, *’hy-*, as conclusively shown in e.g. N 19/16 *clhn/wbnyhw/s<sup>2</sup>mrm/mlky/s<sup>1</sup>b* “A and his son S, the two kings of Saba”, C 398/15 *’ls<sup>2</sup>rh/yḥdb/w’hyhw/y’zl/byn/mlky/s<sup>1</sup>b* “I Y and his brother Y B the two kings of Saba”.

§ 10:4 Secondary noun stems are formed by the addition to a primary stem of:

- (a) *-t*, for the designation of the female counterpart of the referent of a mas stem, as in *mlkt* “queen”, *wrtt* “female inheritor”; graphically identical with this is the external fem pl

<sup>40</sup> In nn. pr. it is susceptible of various explanations, and it is rarely possible to make a decision in any particular case. *hmyr* survives as “Himyar” in Ar, but the Greek *’Ομηριται* suggests a diminutive of the *fuayl* pattern or something approximating to it; in the case of the tribal centre of the Sabaeans, the arc and early mid texts have the spelling *mryb*, which according to the Greek and Latin rendering should be Maryab, while the later texts have the spelling *mrḥ* corresponding to Mārib (I would point out here that the current practice of spelling it Ma’rib is a piece of ‘learned’ hypercorrection, occasioned by the grammarians’ inability to accept a form which superficially implied a non-existent root \**mrḥ*; in fact there never was a *hamz* in the name).

<sup>41</sup> See Beeston 1978.195.

morpheme as in *bnt* “daughter” or “daughters” (though in many cases it would be impossible to distinguish this from broken plurals of types mentioned in § 10:6).

(b) *-y*, corresponding to the Ar *nisbah* form in *-iyy-*, most commonly signifying an individual member of a social group,<sup>42</sup> e.g. *šrwby* “man of Širwāḥ”. Other examples are somewhat scarce, but we have *mcrby* “western”, rec *mlyky* “pertaining to a king (or, a petty king [see § 10:2])?”, and a few others. The very common title *mqtwy* “lieutenant, personal assistant” probably belongs here, since the Ar lexica register it with the vocalisation *maqtawī* and explain it as a *nisbah* from *maqtā* = *ḥidmah* “service”. A similar ‘professional’ use of the *nisbah* may perhaps be found in *grby* “stonemason(?)” (cf *grb* “hewn stone”). A special case is *ngs<sup>2</sup>y* “Negus (of Ethiopia)”, Ar *Najāšī*, for which no primary stems occurs, either in Sab or in Ar.

(c) *-ny*, used as a *nisbah* termination in *’lwny* “man of Alw” (cf Ar *Ṣancānī*), *ṭmhny* “upstream” based on the adj *ṭmh* “upper” (cf Ar *fawqānī*).

§ 10:5 The use of broken plurals is more pervasive in Sayhadic than in any other Semitic language, inasmuch as it extends even (contrary to Ar practice) to the *nisbah* e.g. *’srḥ* “men of Širwāḥ”, J 577/10 *’gr* “men of Najran”, J 665/23, E 13 § 8 *’ḥdr* “Hadramites”,<sup>43</sup> *mqt* and *mqtwt* pl of *mqtwy* (§ 10:4b).

§ 10:6 By far the most frequently used broken pl stem is *’fcl* which accounts for something like half the total number of pl stems attested. Others are *fcl*, *fclt*, *fcwl*,<sup>44</sup> *fcyl*, *fcwlt*, *fcylt*, *’fclt*, *’fclw*, *fclw*, *fcln*, together with those discussed below.

§ 10:7 There seems to be some tendency (it cannot be rated at more than that) for a sg stem *mfclt* to have a pl *mfcl*, and a sg *mfcl* to have pl *mfclt*. In roots with *w/y* as second letter, the pl appears in both full and defective spellings: *mqmt* and *mqymt* are

<sup>42</sup> The group designation in these cases is most often a ‘tribe’ (*s<sup>2</sup>cb*), while membership of a clan is usually expressed by *bn/X*, though in some cases it is not apparent which type of group is designated by the name.

<sup>43</sup> A possible alternative form for “Hadramites” is C 140/5 *ḥḍrm* (*ḥaḍārim*?).

<sup>44</sup> W.W. Müller has noted that some present-day Yemeni dialects use *’afcūl* in place of standard Ar *’afcāl* and *fcwal* in place of standard *fucūl* and suggests that epigraphic *’fcl* and *fcwl* may have been vocalised similarly; also that in Sab the pl *fcwl* seems to be late, and may represent Himyaritic influence.

used indifferently as pl of *mqm*. J 576/3 *mr's* "chiefains", perhaps cf Ar *mašāyih*?

§ 10:8 In the case of the pl *tfclt*, it is impossible to determine whether it should be reckoned as a broken pl or as morphologically an external fem pl (§ 10:4a). But there is a balance of probability that it is the latter in the case of a verbal-noun such as *tqdm*, pl *tqdm̄t*.

§ 10:9 *fcln* must be recorded as a broken pl in J 560/11, J 643/10 *hlfn* (with a genitive following), and possibly in other instances; but it is uncertain whether C 570/1 *'mn* "cubits" is a broken pl or an external mas pl of the fem sg form *'mt* (cf Ar *sanah* with pl *sinūn*). Cf also § 18:8 on the problem of *m'n*.

§ 10:10 Singulars in *-t* may have a pl without it, as in sg *bltt*, pl *blt* "(unit of currency)".

§ 10:11 Pl stems in *-h* are found in *'bh* "fathers", *'mh* "female clients, female serfs" (sg *'mt*); and, with the addition of an external fem pl morpheme, in *'mht* "mothers" (cf Ar *'ummahāt*).

§ 10:12 Anomalous pl forms are *'l't* "gods",<sup>45</sup> and rec J 10312/3 *s'w'd* apparently synonymous with *s'dt* (root *s'wd*) "chieftains".

§ 10:13 In a few cases the pl stem has no corresponding sg from the same root: *cbd* "servant, client, serf" is found only in the sg and du, while the pl in similar contexts is *'dm*/*'dwm̄t*/*'dym̄t* which has no sg. Another term with no attested sg is *'s'd* "warriors, fighting men".

## NOUNS: GENDER

§ 11:1 In general, nouns with a sg stem ending in *-t* are fem, those without it mas. But there are exceptions in both cases. One mas noun with a *-t* stem is attested: the very late (and perhaps a loanword from Ar) *hlft* "viceroys".

§ 11:2 Fem nouns without *-t* are: *'m* "mother", *hyd* "menstruous woman", *hgr* "town", *rgl* "leg, foot", *nfs* "self" and its homograph "woman in childbed", *qbr* "tomb", *'rh* "affair", Har C 547/14 *hyn* "time", *dr* "time (occasion)".

§ 11:3 *nhl* "palmgrove" seems to be attested in both genders;<sup>46</sup> the same is probably the case with *lb* "lion/lioness".

<sup>45</sup> The pl YM 382/16 *'lbt* is based on an extended root *'lh*, attested also in sg form *'lb*. The rec Ry 508/10 *'lh-n* "God" is evidently a calque on the Hebrew pseudo-pl Elohim, since the text is Jewish.

<sup>46</sup> Mas in R 4815b/2, fem in R 4172/2.

§ 11:4 Broken pl stems have pl concords in the gender of the sg, e.g. mas *hmt/ʾwrḥn* “those months”, fem *hnt/ʾhgrn* “those towns” (§ 24:1).

## NOUNS: THE CONSTRUCT STATE

§ 12:1 A noun followed by a genitival qualifier, either noun or attached pronoun, is said by the Ar grammarians to be *mudāf*; but since the English equivalent of this, ‘annexed’, can be misleading, I have thought it preferable to use here the term commonly used by general Semitists, ‘construct’. In Sab, a sg or an external fem pl or a broken pl noun in the construct state has the bare stem form with no additional termination.

§ 12:2 There are some grounds for thinking that the construct form could also be used before other types of closely dependent expression, such as a prepositional phrase or an asyndetic relative clause (§ 26:4).<sup>47</sup> The phenomenon is not unknown in Ar, though there restricted to head-words connoting time, e.g. *ḥīna māta* “the time he died”. Sab instances of a head-word in the bare stem form before such qualifiers may well be analysed in this way.

§ 12:3 It is permissible in Sab for two or more construct nouns to be grouped together before a single genitival noun or group of nouns, i.e. ‘the {A and B} of X (and Y)’; this is the normal procedure, though there are one or two cases where the classical Ar form (‘the A of X and its B’ and not ‘the A and B of X’) is used.

§ 12:4 The construct du has -y added to the stem; but this is capable of graphic deletion before an attached pronoun, e.g. J 649/21 *rglhw* “his two legs” (subject of a verb which is not sg).<sup>48</sup>

§ 12:5 Because of the heavy dominance of broken plurals (§ 10:5) external mas plurals are exceedingly rare, and in all cases there are broken pl forms as an alternative. In one case,

<sup>47</sup> The ground for this suggestion lies in cases where the head-word is a du and exhibits the characteristic construct du termination, or an external mas pl, on which see § 12:5.

<sup>48</sup> The du form R 5085/3 *bnhy* is a late text from a peripheral area with a Hadramitic substratum, and form is possibly due to Had influence (Appendix § H 12:4).

that of "son", we have two construct pl forms *bnw* and *bny* (on which see § 16:2,3). Otherwise, only the *-y* stem is attested in standard Sab: *'by* "brothers", *mw'y* "waters" and probably J 550/2 *brfy* "years";<sup>49</sup> but in one late and peripheral text VL 23/5 we have a *-w* form, *'qwl/wmbrgw/s<sup>2</sup>cbn* "qayls and leaders of the tribes".

§ 12:6 As with the construct du (§ 12:4), the pl ending may be graphically deleted before an attached pronoun.

## NOUNS: THE DETERMINATE STATE

§ 13:1 A noun which is neither a proper name nor in the syntactic situation of a construct can be made 'determinate' by a morpheme which in the sg, external fem. pl and broken pl is a termination *-n*. This corresponds to the English "the" and to the Ar specifying article (*lām al-tacrīf*) *al-*; the equivalence of this Sab morpheme to Ar *al-* was clearly recognised by Arabic writers.<sup>50</sup>

§ 13:2 The du of the determinate state is marked in the great majority of instances by the termination *-nhn*. In post-arc texts, there are occasional variants which are probably orthographic only: C 326/1 *s<sup>2</sup>cb-ynhn*, C 40/1 *s<sup>2</sup>cb-ynbyn*, Micsāl 3/5 *s<sup>1</sup>r-ynyhn*, W. Tawq/2 *s<sup>2</sup>cb-ynybyn*, all of which could represent (along with the normal *-nhn*) *-enehen*; J 716/3 *s<sup>2</sup>cb-nn*, R 4659/4 *slmt-ynn*, which could represent *-enen*.<sup>51</sup>

§ 13:3 For the external determinate mas pl we have one

<sup>49</sup> Jamme has taken the noun here as a du and renders *kl/brfy* by "the two whole years" (with asyndetic relative clause following, "(when) he performed military service"); but the fact that earlier in the same line of text we have a reference to the same individual commanding the Sabaeen forces in a war for seven years, makes it virtually certain that *brfy* is pl, "all the years he served".

<sup>50</sup> Thus in the list of Himyaritic month names (Beeston 1974), the epigraphic *-n* termination is consistently transposed into *al-*, so that for example epigraphic *d-qyṣ-n* "June" appears in the list as *dū l-qiyāṣ*.

<sup>51</sup> Rob Umm Laylā *kryfyn/yḡl/wbrn*, from the extreme northern periphery of Sab (60 km northwest of Ṣacdah), is certainly non-standard, either in having an altogether anomalous form of the determinate du, or in contravening the stylistic rule of standard Sab (see § 13:4) by having an absolute form before the two proper names. Note however the occurrence of this determinate form in Hadramitic, § H 13:2,3.

example, Gl 1533/9 *'rbctn/m'nhn* "the four hundred";<sup>52</sup> in other cases identification as du or pl is less certain.

§ 13:4 It is a stylistic principle of standard Sab that a descriptive noun followed by its proper name should be in the determinate state, with the proper name in apposition to it, e.g. *hgrn/mrb* "the town Marib".<sup>53</sup>

## NOUNS: THE ABSOLUTE STATE<sup>54</sup>

§ 14:1 The 'absolute' state is that of a noun which is neither construct nor determinate (in the sense described above). In the sg and broken pl it is frequently marked by a morpheme which has been termed the 'mimation', namely the termination *-m*. This, however, is not used in the du (mas and fem) or the external mas pl, though it is found in the external fem pl (insofar as that can be identified<sup>55</sup>).

§ 14:2 Mimation is extensively used in proper names, just as *tanwīn* is in Ar proper names. But in those of the *'fcl* (*'afcal*) pattern, over 90% lack mimation, suggesting a parallel with the Ar diptosis of this pattern, which excludes *tanwīn*.

§ 14:3 There are two classes of noun which normally lack mimation: names of points of the compass, and seasons of the

<sup>52</sup> This form seems to be most satisfactorily analysed as showing an external mas pl termination *-nhn* graphically undistinguishable from that of the determinate du; the use of a mas termination is paralleled by Ar *mi'ūn*. But see further § 18:8.

<sup>53</sup> There are, however, instances of a descriptive noun in the absolute state followed by a proper name introduced by *d-*. It might be preferable in such instances to take *d-* as the 'genitival periphrasis' (§ 27:1) implying "belonging to", so that the proper name would not actually be that of the feature described. One controversial instance is J 574/6 *kdnn/dwdftn/wwdyfn* where Jamme takes *kdnn* as a determinate sg, with the comment that 'a series of proper names may be introduced by a sg noun which indicates that the following names are those of cities [etc.]', but the examples he cites do not convince me; here, I will only mention one of them, J 585/5 *hgrn/s'wm/ws'brtn*, rendered by Jamme as "the two cities ...", whereas it is well established that the second name is not that of a 'town', *hgr*, but of a district. In J 574/6, therefore, *kdnn* should be seen as an absolute du ("two hills, (one) of W and (one) of W").

<sup>54</sup> I have preferred this term rather than 'undefined' or 'indeterminate' because the term has to be applicable both to indeterminate common nouns (Ar *nakirah*), and to proper names, which are semantically determinate.

<sup>55</sup> See § 10:4a.

year, e.g. *cdy/s<sup>2</sup>mt* “northwards”, and *dt'/wbrf* “spring and autumn”. But it may be that these were regarded as proper names.

§ 14:4 It is not certain what was the Sab equivalent for the Ar generic article (*lām al-jins*), but there is one case in which we find mimation where Ar would require the generic article: Rob Maš 1/10 *whmrm/lyw[.]rn* “but as for an ass, it shall be [left alone]”, Ar *wa 'ammā l-himaru fal-...*

§ 14:5 Mimation is also found in a few cases of a noun which is logically ‘defined’, e.g. J 577/12 *btltm/ywmm* “on the third day (= next day but one)”, which has a parallel in Ar *ḡada* “tomorrow” with *tanwīn* (though semantically definite).

§ 14:6 The absolute du is marked by *-n* (the graphic identity of this with the determinate sg can lead to confusion, and contextual considerations must decide which interpretation should be adopted in a given instance).<sup>56</sup>

§ 14:7 Rad has an anomalous (for Sab) absolute du in Micsāl 3/22 *tny/frs'nyw* “two horsemen” and Micsāl 4/10 *'lfnyw* “two thousand”.

§ 14:8 For the absolute external mas pl we have again only one secure example, *bn-n* (e.g. J 736/7 *bnn/'dkrm* “male children”). But there is a strong probability that J 550/2 *s<sup>1</sup>bct/hrfn* “seven years” should be recorded as an external rather than a broken pl, in view of the following construct form *hrfy* (see note 49); and see § 18:8 for the problem of the word “hundred”.

§ 15 To sum up the data of the preceding three sections, the number and ‘state’ terminations of the noun are (subject to the exceptions noted in detail above):

	Construct	Determinate	Absolute
sg, broken pl and external fem pl }	<i>-θ</i>	<i>-n</i>	<i>-m</i>
du	<i>-y</i>	<i>-nhn</i>	<i>-n</i>
external mas pl	<i>-y(/-w)</i>	<i>-nhn</i>	<i>-n</i>

<sup>56</sup> In J 720/16 *s<sup>2</sup>hn*, Höfner 1967.113 (with whose interpretation of the text I am in agreement on the whole, as against that of Jamme) has rendered this word as a determinate sg, “die Ziege”, but the context (an instruction to sacrifice *s<sup>2</sup>hn*) makes a determinate word unsuitable, and I think a rendering as absolute du preferable, “two goats”.

## NOUNS: CASE

§ 16:1 To what extent, if any, Sab possessed case distinctions in nouns<sup>57</sup> is an almost unanswerable question, partly because of the lack of vocalisation in the script, and partly because the one grammatical feature in which such distinctions would be expected to show up, namely the construct external mas pl, presents us with only ambiguous evidence.

§ 16:2 The extreme rarity of external mas pl forms means that for the purpose of this discussion we are limited to the contrast between the two forms *bnw* and *bny* (the highly aberrant form Ra 14/1 *bnwy* is not readily explicable owing to the defectiveness of the context). Here one must observe that a fairly frequent formula in the votive texts from Mahram Bilqīs is to have the subject of the verb ‘dedicated’ presented as “X (etc.) and his/their son(s)<sup>58</sup> – *bnyhw/bnyhmn* – (etc.), *bnw* Z”; but the explanation of this apparent incongruity is far from easy. It could be due simply to a morphological principle of dissimilation from the attached pronoun; or the “and” could be regarded not as a coordinator which would require case congruity between the two terms, but as something like the Ar *wāw al-maciyyah* “together with” (which governs the accusative).

§ 16:3 There are however one or two instances where the form adopted is clearly not explicable otherwise than by a loss of feeling for case differentiation: on one hand J 618/2 where the clan name of all the dedicators is presented in the form *bny* standing in apposition to their individual names which form the subject of the verb; on the other, R 3991/17-20 *hzy/wrdw/’mr’bmw/... bnw/s’hymm* “the favour and goodwill of their lords the Sukhaymids”. The conclusion which seems necessary is that, if there had been at some earlier time a case differentiation between *bnw* and *bny*, this had by the mid period become merely vestigial, and that there was no longer a fully functioning case system in nouns.

<sup>57</sup> There was a case-system in the demonstratives (§ 24:1), but this has no evidential value for nouns (English has retained the pronominal case system for nearly a millenium after losing all trace of a case-system in nouns).

<sup>58</sup> On the admissibility of interpreting *bny* as a sg stem see § 10:14. For one example of the formula see J 585/1 *ysbh/s’wc/w’hyhw/crbm/bnw/dcblm* “Y A and his brother A, clan dū cbl”.



## ADJECTIVES

§ 17:1 The morphology of adjectives is in all respects the same as that of substantive nouns. They admit both broken and external plurals, so that for “healthy children” we find both *'wldm/bn'm* (with broken pl of both words) and *'wldm/bn'n* (external mas pl of the adjective).

§ 17:2 The adjective matches its substantive in gender (i.e. the gender of the sg of the substantive), number and status (absolute or determinate).<sup>59</sup>

§ 17:3 The normal place of an adjective is following its substantive.<sup>60</sup>

§ 17:4 An alternative structure, specially favoured in the case of *sdq*, is that of presenting the adjectival concept as an abstract preceded by a construct substantive e.g. *'tmr/sdqm* “fine crops”, comparable with Hebrew *mišpetey sedeq* “judgments of righteousness = righteous judgments”.

§ 17:5 In a further possible structure, the qualifying concept is presented as a construct before the qualified one, e.g. C 174/1 *n'd/'tmrm* “luxuriant crops”. This could be analysed either as exhibiting an abstract sense of the construct word (i.e. literally “luxuriance of crops”), or as a structure parallel to the quite common Ar one exemplified in Shanfarā's expression (in his *Lāmiyyat al-carab*) *mustawḍacu l-sirri ladayhim* = *al-sirru l-mustawḍacu ladayhim* “the secret confided to them”.

## NUMERALS: CARDINALS (MORPHOLOGY)

§ 18:1 The standard Sab cardinal forms attested from 1 to 19 are:

	<i>ø</i> -stem	<i>t</i> -stem
one	<i>'bd</i>	<i>'bt</i>
two	<i>tny</i>	<i>tty</i>

<sup>59</sup> The apparent incongruity of C 376/4 *bltm/mšcm/by'lytm* (where *blt* is the broken pl of a fem sg *blt*) can be explained by taking *mšcm* as a broken pl.

<sup>60</sup> In E 13 § 10 *ys'tqynn/qllm/s'qym* “they had very little to drink”, it is probably preferable to take *qllm* as the direct object and *s'qym* as a ‘specifying’ term (“little in the way of drink”). On C 461/5 see § 20:2.

three	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} s^2lt \\ tlt \end{array} \right.$	arc (§ 18:2)	$s^2l\bar{t}t$
		mid and rec	$t\bar{l}t$
four	$'rbc$		$'rbct$
five	$hms^1$		$hms^1t$
six	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} s^1dt \\ s^1t \end{array} \right.$	arc (§ 18:2)	$s^1d\bar{t}t$
		mid and rec	$s^1t\bar{t}$ <sup>61</sup>
seven	$s^1bc$		$s^1bct$
eight	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} tmny \\ tmn \end{array} \right.$	arc and Har	$tmny\bar{t}$
		mid and rec	$tmnt, tmt$ (§ 18:3)
nine	$ts^1c$		$ts^1ct$
ten	$cs^2r$		$cs^2rt$
eleven	$'hd/cs^2r$		
twelve	$tny/cs^2r$		
thirteen		mid and rec	$t\bar{l}t/cs^2r$
fourteen	$'rbccs^2r$		$'rbct/cs^2r$
fifteen			$hms^1t/cs^2r$
sixteen	$\left\{ \right.$	arc	$s^1d\bar{t}t/cs^2r$
		mid and rec	$s^1t\bar{t}/cs^2r$
seventeen		rec	$s^1bct/cs^2r$
nineteen			$ts^1ct/cs^2r$

§ 18:2 The two normally arc forms  $s^2l\bar{t}$  and  $s^1d\bar{t}$  turn up also in the mid period text J 644/22, 25, and the latter also in C 581/4 (see § 20:3).

§ 18:3 C 457/4  $tmt$  is better regarded as an assimilated form of *tamant* than (as Höfner 1980. 157 proposes) an engraver's error.

§ 18:4 For 20 we have  $cs^2ry$ ; 30-90 are formed by adding  $-y$  to the  $\emptyset$ -stem of the corresponding unit numeral, though beside the regularly formed mid C 46/2  $tmny$  "80" there is also rec C 357/9  $tmnyy$ .

§ 18:5 Rad texts display, alongside standard forms, also Micsāl 9/5  $tntn$  "two"; Micsāl 4/3  $tmnw$  and ib/12  $tmnwt$  "8"; decads ending in  $-hy$ , e.g. Micsāl 4/3  $cs^2rhy$ , ib/12  $'rbchy$ .

§ 18:6 The numerals from 3 to 99 are capable of being made determinate by the addition of  $-n$  for the units and  $-nhn$  for the

<sup>61</sup> Höfner has taken mid Gl 1533/2  $'ly/s^1t/qyn/srw\bar{h}$  as exhibiting a doubly assimilated ( $s^1d\bar{t}t > s^1tt > s^1t$ ) form of the numeral "six", and renders "Angehörigen der sechs *'aqyān* von *Širwāḥ*". But does her 'Angehörigen' here mean "constituent members of" or "subordinates of"? In the former case,  $'ly$  seems otiose; in the latter it is given an otherwise unattested implication. My instinct is to take  $'ly$  in the sense "possessors of" and  $s^1t$  as a noun meaning something like "(comparable) status" (Beeston 1976/2.409).

decads. A determinate “the two...” (insofar as not expressed simply by use of the determinate dual of the enumerate) is replaced by “both the...” in the forms arc *kl'y* (J 557 *kl'y/mhfdnbn* “both the towers”), mid *kl'y* (E 14 § 3 *kl'y/mlkybmw* “both their kings”), fem *kl'ty* (J 672/1 *kl'ty/bhtnbn* “both the votive objects”).

§ 18:7 “Hundred”: sg *m't*, *m't-m*; du *m'tn*, *m'tyn* (rec); pl *m'-m* (arc), *m'n*, *m'n-m* (mid), *m't*, *m't-m* (mid and rec). These are absolute forms; there is one instance of a determinate in Gl 1533/9 *bnt/rbcn/m'nbn/blt-m* “those 400 *blt*-coins”.

§ 18:8 Analysis of the mid form *m'n* presents an insoluble problem. On one hand, comparison with the determinate form would suggest that the absolute *m'n* is an external mas pl (as with Ar *mi'ūn*);<sup>62</sup> on the other, the form with mimation would suggest that *m'n* is a broken pl stem.

§ 18:9 “Thousand”: sg *'lf-m*; du *tny/'lf-m* (!) (arc), *'lfn* (mid and rec); pl *'lf-m* (arc), *'lf-m* (mid and rec). There is one example of a possibly external mas pl in arc R 3943/1 *'rbct/'lfn*.

§ 18:10 In compound numerals, the digits are consistently arranged in ascending order of magnitude, and *w* is placed between each power of ten in numbers above 20, e.g. C 540/98 *hms't/ws'ty/w\_hms'/m'tm* “565”, ib/98 *'rbcy/wtlt/m'tm/w\_hms't/'lfm/wts'cy/wtty/m'tyn/'lfm* “295, 340”.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>62</sup> For a possible further example of a ‘heteroclite’ mas pl of a fem sg cf *'mn* “cubits” with sg *'mt* (§ 10:9).

<sup>63</sup> Höfner 1943.132 cited a form *s'bc/wcs'r* “17” but without reference; she informs me that she cannot now trace where she saw it, so that it remains uncertain whether it is even Sab.

The late and peripheral MAFY Bani-Zubayr 2 is non-standard, and its use of numerals in the dating formula *tt/wcs²rt/w\_hms'/m'tm* is, as Robin remarks, ‘déroutante’. Not only are *w* before ‘ten’ and a *t*-stem in the latter irregular by standard Sab criteria, but the first numeral is an otherwise unattested form. If it is “two” the gender is incongruous, since the implied enumerate is mas “year” in normal datings; could it be an unusual variant of *s'tt* “six”?

The extraordinary sequence C 541/118 *hms'y/'lfm/wtmn/m'tm/ws'dtm* defies analysis: it is hardly credible that in this very late text *s'dt* can be a cardinal, and the ordering of the digits is totally unlike that of the many other numbers given in the text.

## NUMERALS: CARDINALS (SYNTAX)

§ 19:1 “One”, “two”, “eleven” and “twelve” use the *o*-stem in association with *mas* enumerate nouns, the *t*-stem with *fem* ones. In 3-10 and 13-19 the *o*-stem is used with *fem* enumerates and the *t*-stem with *mas* ones. Decad numerals have no gender differentiation. “Hundred” (*fem*) and “thousand” (*mas*) rank as enumerates, so that a preceding numeral between 3 and 19 conforms to the above rules.

§ 19:2 The enumerate is placed after the numeral,<sup>64</sup> and is *du* with “two”, *pl* with *all* higher numbers. In the absolute state the enumerate normally has mimation;<sup>65</sup> a determinate enumerate requires the mark of determination in the numeral also, e.g. C 573/2 *'rbctn/wcs<sup>2</sup>rnbn/šlmn* “the 24 statues” (though Mü 1/2 has *hms<sup>1</sup>t/šlmn* “the five statues”).

§ 19:3 It is surprising that in standard Sab the usual marks of the absolute state (§ 14:1, 6) are almost entirely lacking in numerals below a hundred: in 3-19 *-m* is found in the special idiom described § 19:5, but otherwise only in one or two highly anomalous cases,<sup>66</sup> while in “two” and the decads the *-y* form occurs irrespectively of whether or not an enumerate follows (hence, to explain the *-y* of these form as marking a construct would be very difficult).<sup>67</sup>

§ 19:4 Since “hundred” and “thousand” do have the normal marks of an absolute (§ 18:7, 9), the following enumerate must be regarded as either an appositive (*badal*) or a ‘specifying accusative’ (*tamyīz*).

§ 19:5 In day-datings, *o*-stem cardinals may be used, as evident in e.g. C 461/5 *b'rbcm* “on (day) four”, C 601/18 *bywm/tmny* “on the day of eight = on the eight day” (but see also § 20:3).

<sup>64</sup> An exception is F 74/1 *b(h)rfm/ḥd* “in one year” (thus in an excellent photograph taken by Monsieur Cadoux); Fakhry’s erroneous copy (omitting the *-m*) has led G. Ryckmans to take the phrase as meaning “in the year of one = in the first year”.

A further exception is Rad Micsāl 9/5 *hmrtn/tntn* “two female slaves” (cf colloquial Ar *tinten*); see Beeston in *Raydan* 5 (in press).

<sup>65</sup> Observe however R 4176/8 *b'ḥdhrf* “in one year”, contrasting with ib/3 *b'ḥd/ywmm* “in one day”.

<sup>66</sup> C 350/9 and J 649/37 *cs<sup>2</sup>rm*; J 649/39 *s<sup>1</sup>t/wcs<sup>2</sup>rm* (if not merely an error for *wcs<sup>2</sup>ry* “26”) has the further anomaly of *w* in one of the teens (§ 18:10).

<sup>67</sup> It is interesting to note E 12 § 5 *s<sup>1</sup>bcy/wm<sup>1</sup>n/s<sup>1</sup>dm* “270 warriors”, with marking the exact reverse of Ar *sabcūna wa mi'atā muqātilin*.

§ 19:6 In year-datings, the units are expressed by *t*-stem cardinals, e.g. Ry 520/10 *dd'wn/dlbryfn/dl'rbct/ws'bcy/wbms'* *m'tm* “(month) Dū Di'āwān of the year 574”.

## NUMERALS: ORDINALS

§ 20:1 The only attested term for “first” is *qdm* (perhaps strictly “former”, opposed to “latter”). Ordinals from 2 to 10 are: *tny*, *s<sup>2</sup>lt/tlt*, *'rbc*, *hms'*, *s'dt*, *s'bc*, *tmn*, *ts'c*, *cs<sup>2</sup>r* in the mas and with an added *-t* in the fem. Against the normal fem *tnyt* we find J 576/11 *drm/tntm* “a second time”. Ordinals above 10 are not attested.

§ 20:2 Since the ordinals are adjectives, they normally follow the substantive. The syntactic analysis of C 461/5 *'tw(hw)/tnym/t'twm* is unclear: it is not necessary to suppose that *tnym* qualifies *t'twm*, since it could be an independent adverbial, “secondly, again”. See also § 20:3 for an exception.

§ 20:3 In counting days or nights elapsed from a event, ordinals appear to be used, but with a variety of syntactic forms: J 577/12 *btltm/ywm* “on the third day (le surlendemain)”, Rad Micsāl 3/17, 19 *ltlt/bwt/ywm* “on the third day from that day”, C 581/8 *blly/s'dtm* “on the sixth night (thereafter)”.

## FRACTIONS AND ITERATIVES

§ 21:1 Apart from Gl 1361/2 *fqb* “half”, the fractions “one *n*-th part” have the pattern *fcl* with pl graphically the same. This seems to be grammatically fem, to judge by R 4995/1 *'ht/cs<sup>2</sup>r* “one tenth”, N 29/3 *tty/cs<sup>2</sup>rhw* “two tenths of it” and MAFY Hamir 6/3 *hms'/cs<sup>2</sup>rhw* “five tenths of it”. But the pl form *mfclt* is mas in C 605/4 *s<sup>2</sup>ltt/mhms't* “three-fifths”.

§ 21:2 There are also idiomatic ways of expressing fractions, e.g. C 640/2 *'shcm/bn/tmny* *'shc* “one finger from eight fingers = one eighth”; C 369/1 *'ht/'shcm/bn/tty/yd/cs<sup>2</sup>r/qbrn* “one finger from two hands, one-tenth of the tomb”; Gl 1138/6 and Gl 1664/2 *tty/ydy*... “two parts of... (*scil.* two-thirds)”.<sup>68</sup> In Gl 1363/3

<sup>68</sup> See Höfner 1981.9, Beeston 1981.65.

'*šbcm* it is not clear what fraction is meant (one-fifth, one-quarter, one-eighth, one-tenth?).

§ 21:3 One method of expressing "n-times" is with a cardinal followed by *du* or *pl* of the verbal noun, e.g. N 74/5 *ʔcmh/...tltt/ʔcmm* "her thrice-made proclamation".

§ 21:4 A cardinal unit followed by '*d*' appears to mean "on an n-th occasion, for an n-th time", e.g. Gl 1677 *s<sup>2</sup>ltt'd*, Sch/Marib 19A/4 *s'dt'd* (note the variation between the *o* and the *t*-stem).

§ 21:5 "Once" is expressed as (*ʔt*)*drm* "on one occasion".

## PRONOUNS: ISOLABLE

§ 22:1 A first person isolable pronoun is perhaps found in Gl 1782 '*n*'; a second person sg in recRy 508/11 '*t*'. Third person forms are the same as those of the 'remoter' demonstratives (§ 24:1); we have one instance of *hw* in C 518/3, contrasting with the normal demonstrative form *hw'*, but this could be regarded as due merely to reduction of the *hamʔ* (see § 2:4).

§ 22:2 Isolable pronouns function as subject of a verbless sentence, thus Ry 508/11 *mr'/t* "Thou art lord", Gl 1782 *bnhw/n* "...(?)...". It is not possible to decide whether the fact that the pronoun occupies second place in both examples is accidental or a general principle.

§ 22:3 A third person isolable pronoun may function as fronted subject (cf § 6:5) of a finite verb; the verb is then normally introduced by *f-* (C 2:7 *whmw/fhmdw* "and they have praised", J 702/15 *wh'/fl/s'yf*; but an occasional exception may be found, e.g. J 584/11 *wh'/hmr-* "and He vouchsafed ...").

§ 22:4 Instances of the above structure in subordinate clauses are not altogether easy to identify. In J 720/13 *k-mhn/h'/hlʔhw* it is problematic whether *h'* is an isolable pronoun functioning as subject, or as a copula (Ar *fāṣilah*), "what might be his malady", or alternatively a demonstrative, "what might be that malady of his" (contrary to the classical Ar rule of placing the demonstrative after the noun in such cases). In a relative clause we have C 518/2-3 *bqlh/s'yr/hgrn/brm/dhw/by(d)n/dqlhn/wdmhfdn* which might (tentatively) be rendered as "at the *qlh* of the town-field of Haram which is between the *qlh* area [on this use of *d-* see § 27:2] and the tower-area" (cf. note 107).

§ 22:5 In cases where one of these forms plus a coordinated noun serves as recapitulation and expansion of a preceding

pronoun, it is not possible to say whether the form should be regarded as an isolable pronoun or as a demonstrative; there is also a somewhat perplexing fluctuation between the 'nominative' and 'non-nominative' (§ 24:1) forms, e.g. J 564/12 *wqhbhmw/...h'/w'hyhw* "he commanded them, namely him and his brother", J 649/27 *wqhbhmw/...hwt/ws'bcy/wm't/s'dm* "he commanded them, namely him and 170 troops". If in the former case we identified *h'* as a pronoun, its quasi-nominative form would be a parallel to the Ar recapitulatory pronoun (Reckendorf 1921 § 170.5) *bacatani 'anā wa l-zubayra* "he sent me and al-Zubayr".

§ 22:6 J 584/11 *hmrhw/h[...]/hw/h'/w'hyhw* is difficult to analyse syntactically because of uncertainty of reading (and hence meaning) of the second word.<sup>69</sup> In the syntax envisaged by Jamme, and by Ryckmans 1966.478, the first attached pronoun is object of an infinitive *h[...]/*, and *h'* emphasizes it (as Ar isolable pronouns emphasize attached ones), with *w'hyhw* as an additional object; but it would also be possible to take *h'/w'hyhw*<sup>70</sup> as subjects of the infinitive (§ 8:6) and the first *-hw* as object, "the (placating?) of Him by her and her brother".

## PRONOUNS: ATTACHED (ENCLITIC)

§ 23:1 No attached second person pronouns are attested in monumental Sab inscriptions, though one may expect to find them in the epistolary style of the cursive texts (§ 1:2). A first person occurs only as an element in certain proper names of women, such as E 34 *s<sup>2</sup>f-n-ns'r* (analysable as 'Nasr has regarded me'<sup>71</sup>).

§ 23:2 Forms of third person pronouns attached to nouns and verbs are:

	sg	du	pl
mas	<i>-hw, (-h)</i>	<i>-hmy</i>	<i>-hmw, (-hm)</i>
fem	<i>-h, -hw</i>	<i>-hmy</i>	<i>-hn</i>

<sup>69</sup> Jamme's text reads *h(nm)l*, but his round brackets indicate that this is his own emendation.

<sup>70</sup> On the possibility of regarding *'hy* as a nominative see § 16:2.

<sup>71</sup> See Ryckmans 1975.

The fem use of *-hw* is extremely prevalent in the middle period; but the use of *-h* as mas is rare (attested e.g. Gl A 682/2), as is the use of mas pl *-hm*. An otherwise unattested sg fem form *-hy* seems to be found in J 629/29.

§ 23:3 Functionally, attached pronouns serve as genitival attributes of substantives, as object complements of finite verbs, as objective or subjective complements of infinitives and verbal nouns, and after prepositions.

§ 23:4 An attached pronoun may be followed in apposition by an explanatory noun, provided that the referent of the pronoun has already been mentioned previously in the text,<sup>72</sup> e.g. J 576/10 *wy'dbhmw/hmt/'hmrn* "and they (challenged?) them, namely those (aforementioned) Himyarites" (see also § 22:5).

## DEMONSTRATIVES

§ 24:1 Demonstratives of remoter deixis ("that, those") have distinctive forms for nominative (subject) and non-nominative (object and genitival) syntactic positions:

		sg	du	pl
nominative	mas	<i>h', hw'</i>	<i>hmy</i>	<i>hmw</i>
	fem	<i>h', hy'</i>	<i>hmy</i>	<i>hn</i>
non-nominative	mas	<i>hwt</i>	<i>hmyt</i>	<i>hmt</i>
	fem	<i>hyt, (hwt)</i>	<i>hmyt</i>	<i>hnt</i>

The sg fem *hwt* is attested in Gr 24/8 *bn/hwt/qhtn* and Gr 40/4 *hwt/b'rn* (thus! although the text continues immediately with *wkwnt/hy'/b'rn*): is it possible that the gender ambivalency of the attached pronoun *-hw* (§ 23:2) has here infiltrated into the non-nominative demonstrative?

§ 24:2 These morphemes function as demonstrative adjectives with an accompanying substantive, and also as isolable pronouns (§ 22:1). They are the usual way of referring back to a substantive already mentioned in the text.

§ 24:3 The accompanying substantive follows the demonstrative and shows the mark of determinate status (§ 13:1, 2).

<sup>72</sup> The usage is therefore not strictly comparable with the Syriac usage of a proleptic or anticipatory pronoun before an object substantive which has not previously been mentioned, since in the Sab usage the referent of the pronoun has already been mentioned.



But there is one instance of a proper name being qualified by a demonstrative, J 576/11 *b's<sup>2</sup>mr* "that man Shammar".

§ 24:4 Demonstratives of nearer deixis ("this, these") do not show case differentiation:

	sg	du	pl
mas	<i>dn</i>	<i>dyn</i> , ( <i>'ln</i> )	<i>'ln</i>
fem	<i>dt</i> , ( <i>dtn</i> )	?	<i>'lt</i>

In the mas du, *'ln* is attested in arc R 4781/1 *'ln/nhlnhn*.<sup>73</sup> Fem sg *dtn* is very rare as compared with normal *dt*, but occurs in Gl 1537/3 and J 652/23.

§ 24:5 These morphemes, when functioning as demonstrative adjectives, are accompanied like the remoter demonstratives by a determinate substantive. Genuine pronominal usages are rare, but we have arc R 3946/1 *'lt/'hgrm* "these are towns ... (which) ...", and slightly less cogently mid J 562/23 *hqny/dtn* where one might suspect an engraver's omission (or an ellipse?) of *hqnytn* "he made this dedication".

§ 24:6 On the peripheral and late form *t-* for standard *dt* see § 25:2.

## THE RELATIVAL ANTECEDENT<sup>74</sup>

§ 25:1 The relative antecedent is either indeclinable without gender and number differentiation (as with Aramaic-Syriac *d-*), or declinable as follows:

	sg	du	pl
mas	<i>d-</i>	<i>dy</i>	<i>'ly</i>
fem	<i>dt</i>	<i>dty</i>	<i>'lt</i>

<sup>73</sup> Thus in the original publication, though misprinted in the Répertoire.

<sup>74</sup> Semitists will be aware that the strategy of the Semitic languages in respect of relative (adjectival) clauses differs from that of European languages. In the latter, the pronoun within the relative clause which refers to the antecedent outside the clause shows a distinctive morphological form (the non-relative proposition 'his hair is white' converts to 'the man whose hair is white'); in Semitic, the pronoun within the clause is morphologically identical with one not in a relative clause, and the status of the clause as relative is either unmarked, or marked by a pronominal antecedent. In Ar, the proposition *šacru-hu 'abyaḏ* 'his hair is white' remains unchanged in the relative clause, whether this be in the form *raḵulun šacru-hu 'abyaḏ* "a man whose hair is white" or *alladī šacr-hu 'abyaḏ* "he whose hair is white" or *al-raḵulu lladī šacru-hu 'abyaḏ* "that man whose hair is white".

I make these rather trite remarks in order to explain my terminology here.

## § 25:2 Rarer forms are:

sg fem *t-*, only in a very few texts from the rec period or from the southern periphery of Sab speech, e.g. R 4194/3 *t-b-s'rn* “which (is) in the valley”.<sup>75</sup>

pl mas *'l*, attested reliably only in arc R 3945/16 *'l/wd't/s<sup>2</sup>fthmw* “those concerning whom (the order?) had gone forth”, though Har C 532/8 *'l/... 'l* could be understood in this way (§ 28:8); *'lw* in R 4416/2; *'lt*, *'lht*, common only in rec texts; *l-* in Rob Umm Layla 1/5 *hbs<sup>2</sup>n/l-mz'w/rd<sup>h</sup>mw*, rendered by the editor as “the Habashites who had marched into their country”, and possibly in *mn/l-* attested in the mid period as an alternative for *mn/d-* (§ 26:9, 28:4).

The generalised *hn-mw*, *hl-mw* “whatever” have one attestation each, BR M. Bayhān 5/15 *hn-mw/yqb<sup>h</sup>nmw/mr'bmw* “whatever their lord commands them”, R 3966/5 *hl-mw/wqb<sup>h</sup>w/mr'bmw* “whatever their lords command”.

pl fem *'lhn* only in Rad Micsāl 3/3.

§ 25:3 These morphemes function (a) as pronominal or adjectival antecedents of a relative clause (§ 26:1), or (b) in the periphrastic genitival structure (§ 27:1-3).

§ 25:4 On the pronominal relative antecedents *mn* (personal) and *mhn* (non-personal) see §§ 26:9, 28:3.

## RELATIVE CLAUSES

§ 26:1 Relative clauses are linked to an antecedent substantive either *asyndetically* (as with the Ar *ṣifab*), or *syndetically* by the adjectival use of a relative antecedent (Ar *mawṣūl* plus *ṣilah*) of which the forms are described in § 25:1. Where there is no antecedent substantive, the relative antecedent is a pronoun equivalent to “he (who) / “that (which)”.

§ 26:2 An antecedent substantive in the determinate state (including determination by means of an attached pronoun) is in most instances *syndetically* linked to the relative clause, e.g. *slmn/d-s<sup>2</sup>fthw* “the statue which he had promised Him”, J 664/8 *hqnythw/d-s<sup>2</sup>fthw* “his offering which he had promised Him”.

<sup>75</sup> See Beeston 1976(3).

§ 26:3 A mimated antecedent substantive may be linked either syndetically (J 635/31 *'frs'm/d-hrgw* "horses which they slaughtered"), or asyndetically (R 3946/1 *'hgrm/w'bḏcm/gn'/whfṭn/...l'lmqb/wl/s²b'* "towns and territories which he walled and assigned to the Sabaean state").

§ 26:4 An antecedent in the bare stem form seems to be usually linked asyndetically (J 590/18 *kl/'ml'/ys'tml'n* "all the favours for which he may beg"), and in these instances the antecedent should perhaps be regarded as construct,<sup>76</sup> with the clause as syntactically equivalent to a genitive; this is suggested by J 550/2 with the contrast between *hrfy* followed by a relative clause, and *hrfn* without one. For a syntetic linkage see § 9:4.

§ 26:5 The relative pronoun proper (Ar *cā'id*) is not morphologically different from a pronoun in a non-relative clause. As subject it may be incorporated in the verb-form. While it may sometimes retain in the relative clause the same position as it would occupy in a non-relative clause, there is a distinct tendency towards shifting to the head of the clause a relative pronoun governed by a preposition, e.g. J 642/5 *mrḏ/bḥw/'tw* "the malady with he came back".

§ 26:6 Deletion of the relative pronoun is frequent. We find it both

(a) when its function in the clause is that of a subject with a prepositional phrase, and not a verb, as predicate, e.g. Gl 1209/9 *mṣrbn/wmqṭrnbn/db/'twtm* "the *mṣrb*-altar and the two *mqṭr*-altars which are in Itwat"; and

(b) when its function is that of an objective complement of a verb: this covers all types of such complement, not only the direct object (Ar *mafcūl bihi*, which also allows deletion of the relative pronoun as in *ṣay'un ra'aytu*) e.g. J 635/31 *'frs'm/dhrgw* "horses which they slaughtered", but also the 'cognate' object (Ar *mafcūl mutlaq*) e.g. *s¹b't/s¹b'w* "expeditions which they made", and the adverbial complement (*mafcūl fīhi*, where standard Ar allows deletion only after antecedent substantives with a temporal value, as in *ḥīna māta* "at the time he died") e.g. J 631/10 *s¹b't/s²wcv/mr'hmw* "expeditions in which they served their lord".

These extensive possibilities of deletion mean that the only case where the relative pronoun is obligatorily expressed is that in which it is a genitival attribute of a substantive in the clause.

<sup>76</sup> Cf § 12:2.

§ 26:7 When the antecedent substantive has other qualificatives, an asyndetic relative clause structure may be achieved by repeating the substantive, e.g. C 376/3 *'lfm/bltm/ mscm/hy'lytm/blt/chdy/...* "one thousand current Hay'ilite *blt*-coins, for which X and Y had covenanted".

§ 26:8 A generalising, non-specific use of the fem relational antecedent pronoun *dt* is found in the recurrent formula *dt/ncmt/wtncmn* "all that has been or will be favourable".

§ 26:9 The pronominal antecedents *mn* and *mhn* most frequently have a conditional implication (§ 28:3); but non-conditional use is found in J 720/12 *mrđm/...d'l/mn/s<sup>2</sup>cr/kmbn/h'/hlzhw* "a sickness ... of which there was nobody who knew what might be his malady" (cf § 22:4).

## PERIPHRASTIC GENITIVE

§ 27:1 The morphemes listed in § 25:1 can precede a simple noun-phrase, instead of a relative clause; they then serve as a periphrastic alternative for the construct plus genitive, if preceded by a substantival antecedent, e.g. *šlmn/ddhbn* "the statue of bronze", C 555/4 *m'tmn/dbn/crqbn* "the estate of the Bani cUrqub".

§ 27:2 Without a preceding substantival antecedent, they function as pronouns, e.g. J 576/16 *hbrr/drydn/wmsyrt/hmyr* "he of Raydan (= the Raydanite chieftain<sup>77</sup>) together with the Himyarite forces made a sortie".

§ 27:3 In the adjectival function the morpheme may be either inflected or uninflected (see § 25:1). In pronominal function the uninflected morpheme has a pl allusion at least in the idiom *dbn* "some of".

## CONDITIONALS

§ 28:1 The simple conditional particle "if" in standard Sab is *hm*, occasionally *hmy*. But in Har C 548/2 we find *hn/l-*.

§ 28:2 In the Mahram Bilqis inscriptions, two morphemes *mcn-mw* and *mhn-mw* occur in similar contexts, and seem to have

<sup>77</sup> One might also gloss it as "the Raydanite" on the analogy of Scottish usage in which "the Mackenzie" means the chief of the Mackenzie clan.

the same semantic value of “if-and-when (in the future)” like Ar *’idā*,<sup>78</sup> e.g. J 717/5 *s<sup>2</sup>ftthw/...k-mcn-mw/yhmrnhw/hyw/lhw/wldm/thqnynhw* “she promised Him that, if and when He should have granted her the life of a child of hers, she would make a dedication to Him”, J 669/9 *s<sup>2</sup>ftw/...k-mbn-mw/yldn/lhmmw/bnm/...fyhqnynn/slmm* “they promised that, if and when a son should be born to them, they would dedicate a statue”.<sup>79</sup> A different usage is attested in Radmanite, see § 32:17.

§ 28:3 Two pronouns, *mn* referring to persons and *mbn* referring to non-persons, are syntactically relative antecedents like the pronominal usage of the morphemes listed in § 25:1, but semantically they usually incorporate a conditional element, “anyone who... (= if anyone)”, “anything that... (= if anything)”. See also, however, § 26:9.

§ 28:4 Both these pronouns often appear with a following *d-* or *l-*, of which the origin and function are unclear; given the usual assumption that Ar *man* and *mā* (and similar morphemes in other Semitic languages) owe their relational use to an extension from original interrogative use, one could see a formal relationship between the Sab forms and the Ar interrogatives *man dā* and *mā dā*, but the origin of the Ar morpheme *dā* in these cases is equally obscure.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>78</sup> In spite of the semantic convergence, they may have different origins. *mcn* is attested as a noun in Rad Micsāl 2/5 *cd/mcn/ywmn* “until the end (?) of the day”, and the evolution of conjunctive forms based on nouns is a well-known phenomenon (cf English ‘because’ and French ‘afin que’). *mbn* could possibly be a pronominal form (§ 28:1) having some analogy with Ar *mā al-daymūmah* “as long as”, or alternatively evolved from the noun *mbn* “period of time” attested in Rad Micsāl 3/20 *dt/mbn* “for some time” (syntactically parallel to Ar *dāta marratin*).

<sup>79</sup> In both these citations, the introductory *k-* is the particle signalling a noun clause (§ 32:3), and is represented by the “that” of the English versions.

<sup>80</sup> A view that has been expressed to me personally by J. Ryckmans is that in these cases *d-* and *l-* are ordinary relational antecedents, and that the redundancy in *mn/d-* etc. is a parallel to European clefting expressions such as “I don’t remember who it was who said so”, “qu’est ce que” etc. My hesitation to accept this explanation arises from the fact that relational *l-* is attested reliably only in a peripheral text (§ 25:2), whereas *mn/l* is common in standard central Sab, which otherwise shows no sign of this particular relational form.

The proposed explanation would, on the other hand, be acceptable in the case of the second *d-* in N 74/11 *mnd/d-yctqwn*, but this would in itself demand

§ 28:5 Gar ISA 5/10 *mbmyw* in place of *mhn* is of uncertain analysis.

§ 28:6 A group of morphemes *'hn*, *'hnn*, *'hn-mw*, *'hnn-m*, *b-'hn-m* has approximately the semantic value “whenever = if ever”; these are most common in a legal formula with the verb *cker*, “if at any time objection be raised”.

§ 28:7 The conjunction *ln* has usually been regarded as a temporal one (§ 32:15), but in one example at least it seems to have a decidedly conditional flavour, C 603b/26 *ln|'l|lhw|qny|w'l|y's'r|...* “if he has no property, then [see § 28:9] he shall not be bound...”.

§ 28:8 It is uncertain whether Har C 532/8 *'l|...w'l* should be registered as a conditional particle “whether ... or” (Ar *'immā... wa'immā*), or as a relational antecedent (see § 25:2) “those (which) ... and those (which) ...”. The rendering “whether ... or” adopted by the Corpus for the *'l* in C 603b/26 (see the preceding paragraph) is almost certainly wrong.

§ 28:9 Conditional apodoses are marked off from the protasis by *w-* or *f-* or zero.

§ 28:10 A protasis with ellipse of the apodosis is often used in English (with the conditional particle “if only”), and in Ar, for the expression of a hope or wish, as *'in ra'ā l-maliku 'an yafcala* “if only your majesty would see fit to do so!”. A similar usage appears to be present in J 567/10 *s'tml'w|bcm|'lmqb|k-hmy|bsdqm|wbkn| <hkn| > hwt|hlmn* “they besought 'LMQH, |(saying) ‘If only He would in truth and reality bring to pass this dream!’”; see in detail Beeston 1981.57-8, also note 92 below.

a different explanation of the first *d*, since a triple redundancy is hardly possible to envisage.

Mention must also be made of F 64/6 *mn|dnmn|bs²'mtm|* (followed by a lacuna in the text), interpreted by G. Ryckmans as “whoever, in a sale-contract ...”; but this is strange not only morphologically, but also syntactically in having a prepositional phrase (other than one incorporating the relative pronoun, § 26:5) at the head of the clause. I feel forced to surmise that the text is corrupt; it could possibly be emended to *mn|d(y)mn|* i.e. normal *mn/d-* followed by a verb which could be either from the root *ymn*, “give the right hand = pledge oneself”, or from *mn* in the sense “grant, concede” (Ar *manantu calayhi bi-kadā*).

## NEGATIVES

§ 29:1 The universal negative particle in standard Sab is 'l, with perfect or imperfect verb.

§ 29:2 'l immediately preceding a noun or pronoun is an existential negative, cf Ar *lā li-nafy al-jins*, e.g. J 561/26 'l/dfqdw/bn/s<sup>2</sup>rchmw “there was nothing that they lost out of their equipment”,<sup>81</sup> J 720/13 'l/mn/s<sup>2</sup>cr “there was nobody who knew”,<sup>82</sup> NNAG 12/11 'l/mhn/hr'yhbmw “there was nothing that He showed them”.<sup>83</sup>

§ 29:3 The form described in the preceding paragraph is often used with a jussive sense, e.g. J 2856/4 'l/hftbhnw/kl/ftbm “let there be no instituting of any legal proceeding against him”. Particularly common is the formula 'l/s<sup>1</sup>/s<sup>1</sup>'l or 'l/ds<sup>1</sup>'l “let there be nobody who raises a claim”; probably so too in the form 'l/s<sup>1</sup>'l and C 570/7 'l/hs<sup>1</sup>'l “let there be no raising of a claim”.

§ 29:4 The particle *d'*, occurring in a few texts of the recent period (C 540/66, C 541/12, 50, Ry 507/7) is probably to be understood as a negative,<sup>84</sup> since we find *d* (or *dk*) as a negative element in the Radmanite preposition *dk-b-mw* “without” (§ 34:1).

§ 29:5 The negative particle *lm* with a following imperfect verb is found only in four texts from the Haram area: C 523/7 and C 533/4 *lm/yḡts<sup>1</sup>'l* “he had not washed”, C 548/6 *hm/lm/ydmw* “if he has not bled”, C 532/8 *lm/ts<sup>r</sup>* “she has not been aware”.<sup>85</sup>

§ 29:6 Adjectives are negated by *ḡyr*, e.g. *ḡyr/ṭhr* “impure”.

## ENCLISIS

§ 30:1 The term ‘enclitic’ has come to be conventionally applied to a morpheme *-m* or *-mw* which is facultatively attached to the end of a word, without perceptibly modifying the sense of the word or the sentence.

<sup>81</sup> Beeston 1978.206 (where by oversight the *d* was omitted from the citation).

<sup>82</sup> Höfner 1973.109-10.

<sup>83</sup> Drewes apud Ryckmans 1968.269.

<sup>84</sup> An alternative proposal, that it is to be regarded as meaning “already” (on the basis of geez *wäd'ä*), is better now discarded.

<sup>85</sup> Cf § 2:4.

§ 30:2 Most often, the enclitic is attached to a word in close juncture with what follows, namely between a preposition and its governed noun, e.g. C 975 *bn-m/nhln* “from the palmgrove”, N 19/7 *b-mw/bwt/hrfn* “in that year”, or between a subordinating conjunction and its clause, e.g. J 669/10 *mcn-mw/yldn* “if and when there should be born...”.<sup>86</sup>

§ 30:3 The arbitrary nature of this insertion can be seen from the contrast between N 19/7 cited above and ib/5 *b-bwt/hrfn*. But the morpheme is probably not altogether vacuous semantically: one could assign some degree of emphasis to its use, as for instance by glossing the second occurrence of the phrase, in which the enclitic occurs, by “in that year too” or “in that same year”.

§ 30:4 So far as Sab is concerned, occurrences of an enclitic in other syntactic positions than those described in the preceding paragraph are rare; but we find e.g. R 3946/4 *wys<sup>3</sup>f-mw/bw<sup>3</sup>hw* “so as to swell the numbers of his serfs”.

§ 30:5 A variant form of the enclitic seems to be found in C 336/7 [*m*]*cn-my*.<sup>87</sup>

## COORDINATIVE AND DEICTIC PARTICLES

§ 31:1 The particle of simple coordination *w-* “and” covers also adversative coordination “but”, and disjunctive “or”, e.g. Ra 42/8 *mn/s<sup>1</sup>/w<sup>1</sup>ntt* “if anyone, (be it) man or woman”. Disjunction can also be expressed explicitly by *'w* or *f-'w*.

§ 31:2 Coordinative *f-*, linking two clauses of equal syntactic status, is found in several texts from the Haram area, in which it has the same type of semantic implication as Ar *fa*, e.g. R 3957/5-6 *s<sup>1</sup>lht/d<sup>1</sup>dnh/fgz<sup>1</sup>m/s<sup>1</sup>w<sup>1</sup>/ds<sup>1</sup>mw<sup>1</sup>* “she had rendered her followers impure, and (so) the ill-will of (the deity) Dū Samawi was entailed”. But in standard Sab this usage is not reliably attested, practically all examples of *f-* being usages described in § 31:3; where Ar has sequential narrative *fa*, Sab normally uses only *w-*.

§ 31:3 Both *w-* and *f-* are commonly used as markers to set off (a) a predicate after a fronted subject or other complement of the verb, see § 6:5, or (b) a conditional apodosis, see § 28:8.

<sup>86</sup> There is an obvious parallel here with the Ar ‘otiose’ *mā* (*mā al-ḡā'idah*) as in *bi-mā raḥmatin min allāh*, and in the conditional particle *'imma* < *'in-mā*.

<sup>87</sup> Thus restored by Jamme 1956.179; and see § 28:5.



§ 31:4 There are one or two texts which are unquestionably complete and not lacking anything at the beginning, and yet begin with *w-*. The particle must then be understood as having some sort of deictic force e.g. in R 4782 (of which Glaser says, 'not a letter is missing'), and C 570 where the Corpus editor's assumption of something missing at the beginning is certainly unfounded.

§ 31:5 It is disputable whether the first *w-* of a series can have the sense "comprising, consisting of"; this usage is attested for Akkadian, Hebrew and Qat,<sup>88</sup> but in Sab some possible instances cannot be authenticated,<sup>89</sup> while one case where it might have been validated has been given diverse interpretations: E 32 § 9 *'nmrm/...wrbct/...w'fsy/...wgs'm* etc., which W.W. Müller renders "some chieftains, consisting of Rābicat and Afşay and Guşam etc.", while J. Ryckmans understands *'nmrm* as a sg proper name, making the following *w-* a normal coordinative, "Anmar and Rābicat and Afşay and Guşam etc."

§ 31:6 Asyndetic coordination is rare in the Sayhadic inscriptions; there are a few examples in Qat, but it would be difficult to find an uncontrovertible case in Sab.

§ 31:7 Several legal enactments of the arc period (R 3951, C 601, C 131, Ra 42) begin with a deictic particle *ken* "thus (has decreed ...)", resembling Hebrew *ken* "thus". Whether this is to be found in the mid period also is unclear: J 702/1 *kenmw* could be analysed as *ken* plus the 'enclitic' *-mw* (§ 30:1), but the text is not a legal one and its whole content is extremely obscure; and the restoration by Rhodokanakis of the beginning of mid R 3910 as [*ken/*]*wqh* is certainly unjustified.<sup>90</sup>

§ 31:8 The parallel introductory formula in mid period legal enactments is sometimes based on the morpheme *hg* (for a further discussion of which see § 34:15), e.g. Rob Maš 1/1 *hgn/ke-tqhw* "As has been agreed by (the Madarite townsfolk)".

§ 31:9 The morpheme *r'* (frequently followed by *k-*) no doubt derives from a verb meaning "see", but it has a specialised function as a particle emphasizing the factual accomplishment

<sup>88</sup> In Hebrew Num ix.14 *lakem welagger ule'exrah ha'areš* "for you, including both the stranger and the indigene"; for Qat Folkard 1/4 *ldtn/ 'bytn/wl'htbs'm/wms'wds'm/wsrhts'm* "for these houses, namely for their ground-storey rooms and their guest hall and their upper rooms".

<sup>89</sup> The reason being in most cases lexicographical uncertainty whether or not the first noun includes the rest of the series.

<sup>90</sup> See on this text Beeston in *Raydan* 5 (in press).

of something desired, e.g. J 721/5 “she had besought Him for a child, and now He has in fact granted her (*wr’/hmrhw*) a child”.

§ 31:10 On a possible deictic use of *l-* see § 28:1, 4.

## SUBORDINATE CLAUSES (SUBSTANTIVAL AND ADVERBIAL)

§ 32:1 Markers of subordinate clauses (other than adjectival, i.e. relative, ones) are *k-* (in rec Ry 507/7 spelt *ky*), and a series of complex forms having that element as core, namely *kl*, *kn*, *bkn*, *kd*, *km*, *kdm*, *lkd*, *klkdy*.<sup>91</sup>

§ 32:2 The semantic values of these morphemes are as various as those of Hebrew *ki*, but they are not distributed in any discernible correspondance with the morphological forms: one must expect to find any form in any of the semantic values.

§ 32:3 Substantival clauses introduced by one of these particles are most commonly objects of a main verb implying ‘speech’ of any kind, and the particle in these cases corresponds to English “that” and Ar *’an*, *’anna* e.g. R 4176/1 *bhr/t’lb/...lkd/’llyctnn/s’mcy* “Ta’lab has ordained, that (the tribe) S should not neglect.”. In some instances, however, English “that” would be redundant, and the Sab particle must be left untranslated or glossed in some other way, e.g. *k-hmy* in J 567/10 (see citation in § 28:7).<sup>92</sup> The *k-* which sometimes accompanies *r’* (see § 31:9) perhaps belongs in this paragraph.

§ 32:4 Adverbial clauses are broadly categorizable as either temporal/causal<sup>93</sup> (usually with a perfect verb in the clause) “when/because”; or final/consecutive<sup>94</sup> (usually with an imperfect verb) “in order that/so that”. E.g. C 81/3 *bkn/mtchw* “when/because He had delivered him”, C 80/10 *bkn/yfqln* “so that/in order that he may gather the crops”.

§ 32:5 A substantival clause introduced by *k-* etc. may also occur after a preposition, and in many such instances the combined form is best regarded and translated as a conjunction,

<sup>91</sup> J 647/11 *k-bkn-mw* cannot be satisfactorily analysed because the context is fragmentary.

<sup>92</sup> Early Ar shows a somewhat comparable usage where (to our feeling) there is a redundant *’an* preceding a direct imperative, as in *’amaranī ’an ifcal* “he ordered me, (saying) ‘Do it!’”.

<sup>93</sup> This ambivalency is found also in Ar *lammā*.

<sup>94</sup> The same ambivalency in Ar *hattā*.

e.g. R 3945/2 *bn/ḵd/td'n* ('to the exclusion of the possibility that it might flow out' >) "so that it should not flow out".

§ 32:6 Prepositions may be made to function as subordinating conjunctions by the addition of *d-* or *dt* (where the *d-*, *dt* corresponds to the Ar *mā al-masdariyyah*), e.g. C 314/17 *bcd/ds'tsr* "after he had summoned aid", Ry 535/9 *cdy/dt/hmlhmw/hgrn* "until they drove them into the town".

§ 32:7 Use of a preposition in the function of a conjunction without this addition is difficult to identify, because it is so often impossible to be sure whether the following verb is finite or infinitive, as in C 407/22 *cdy/hmlhmw/bhrn* "until he drove them to the coast" (cf Ry 535/9 above!). But a possible instance seems to be J 633/12 *ln/tkwn/dt/hqnytn* "from (the time when) this dedication takes place", where *tkwn* certainly looks like a finite verb (contrast ib/5 *ln/d'tw* "since he came back"); cf § 32:15.

§ 32:8 A redundant *k-* is sometimes found after another subordinating conjunction (as in the now obsolete English forms "when that", "if that" etc.), e.g. J 736/6 *mcnmw/kyhmrnhw* beside J 717/5 *mcnmw/yhmrnhw* with no difference in meaning (see § 28:5).

§ 32:9 To our feeling, *k-* before an indirect question would similarly be reckoned redundant, as in J 720/13 *s<sup>2</sup>cr/k-mbn/h'/hlzhw* "knew what was his malady".

§ 32:10 The lexeme *ywm*, *ym* "day, time" may have evolved from a syntax in which it functioned as an adverbial, and with an asyndetic adjectival clause added, into a virtual subordinating conjunction in the temporal/causal sense "when/because". In arc and in many mid texts it is commonly employed to mark a fresh clause in the *narratio* subordinated to the principal verb (see Ryckmans 1974); though in the most recent texts it seems to be replaced by *k-* (cf. § 32:1, 4).<sup>94a</sup>

<sup>94a</sup> I am now inclined to doubt, however, whether in these recent texts, the *k-* necessarily has a temporal value: in several cases the leading verb means "wrote (this inscription)", which would just as well admit the interpretation of the *k-* as "(to the effect) that" (§ 32:3). Nor is it even certain that it is necessarily subordinating, since it is hard to see how the *narratio* of J 1028 can be, properly speaking, subordinated to the leading verb which is an optative "may God bless". In this instance it would be more satisfactory to regard the particle as a non-subordinating introductory deictic particle like Ar *'inna*; that is to say, the particle in rec usage could show the same

§ 32:11 Similarly *brt*, attested as a noun in the sense “place” seems to have evolved into a conjunction not only in the obvious sense “where” (E 28 § 1) but also perhaps the final/consecutive “so that” (rec C 541/48<sup>95</sup>), and “when” (e.g. Gl 1440/6). In the form BR M. Bayhān 5/4 *brtn* “when”, the *-n* must not be regarded as a mark of determination but as a morpheme of similar character to the prepositional *-n* (§ 33:3).

§ 32:12 A non-standard use *’d* “when” (for the standard use see § 21:2) occurs in Har C 547/4 and the very peripheral Ko 4/3.

§ 32:13 Also non-standard is Har (*b*)*bn* in C 523 *tnby/ wtndrn/ ...bhn/...whn* “confessed and did penance because/when ... and because/when ...”.<sup>96</sup>

§ 32:14 There are difficulties in accepting the explanation of rec Ry 510/4 *lhm* as morphologically equivalent to Ar *lammā* “when”, and for an alternative analysis (as preposition *l-* and noun *hm* “affair, business”) see Beeston 1982(1), 310-11.

§ 32:15 Some obscurity surrounds the conjunction *ln*, and the compound forms (cf § 32:6) *ln/d-* and *ln/dt*. The parallelism between Gl 1209/4 *ln/s’tyfc* and ib/6 *ym/s’tyfc* (cf § 32:10) would suggest that *ln* is a temporal lexeme with the value “when”, and a survey of other contexts shows that this would be acceptable elsewhere. But because the preposition *ln* means “from”, there has been some tendency to prefer a rendering “since” or “after” for the conjunctive forms. We might either suppose that *ln* is ambiguous, or that even if rendered “when” this should be interpreted as implying “when (= after) it had happened” rather than “(at the moment) when it happened”.<sup>97</sup>

§ 32:16 In J 628/7 *kcbrnmw/’lmqb/kwn/hdg/’tw/s’qym/cdy/hwt/ m’hdn*, Ryckmans 1966.483 has taken *kcbrnmw* as a temporal/consecutive conjunction, rendering “up to the moment when (?) ’LMQH permitted the irrigation water to

ambivalency as there is in colloquial Ar *’inn*, *’inno*, corresponding both to classical subordinating *’anna* and to non-subordinating *’inna(hu)*.

<sup>95</sup> Beeston 1976(2)408.

<sup>96</sup> This could, however, be regarded as a conditional particle; close relationship between conditional and causal particles is found in some languages, as in German ‘wann’ and ‘wenn’.

<sup>97</sup> One should not forget that in standard Ar usage this is the case with *lammā*, which always implies anteriority of the clause to the main sentence, and not simultaneity.

penetrate into that *m'hḏ*"<sup>98</sup>: but this I find syntactically dubious, and would prefer to interpret *k-* as the conjunction meaning "so that" and *cbrn-mw* as preposition (§ 34:8) in the sense "by the act/agency of" (or perhaps French "de la part de" would come closer), and render "so that, by agency of (the deity), there was a spate which brought irrigation-water into that *m'hḏ*".

§ 32:17 A purely temporal use of *mcn* (contrasting with the conditional use, § 28:2) is found in Rad Micsāl 4/9 *wmcnmw/kwn/tqdmn/fs'ht/'hḏrn* "as soon as battle was joined, he routed the Hadramites".

§ 32:18 Insofar as *w-* can be identified as having the 'circumstantial' value of Ar *wāw al-ḥāl* (see § 7:1, c), it would have to be recorded as a subordinating conjunction.

§ 32:19 A conjunction *tw* with the sense "until, so that" is found in two texts of the rec period, Ry 507/9 and C 541/68.

## PREPOSITIONS

§ 33:1 The basic prepositions of standard Sab. are *b-*, *k-*, *l-*, *bn* and *ln*.<sup>99</sup> However, the prepositional use of *k-* is decidedly rare in Sab (it is much more often a conjunction, § 32:1).

§ 33:2 Several texts from Haram and its neighbourhood have a preposition *mn* (otherwise completely lacking throughout Sayhadic) in lieu of *bn*.

§ 33:3 A range of other prepositions<sup>100</sup> have both a base-form and forms enlarged by the addition of *-n* or *-y*, namely *ʿtr*, *cbr*, *cd*, *cm*, *bcd*, *blt-* (unattested in base form), *byn* (also defect-

<sup>98</sup> Jamme adopts the same syntactic analysis, but takes the conjunction as having the 'final' sense "in order that". But in both cases I find it difficult because I know no other instances of a subject preceding the verb in subordinate clauses of these types.

<sup>99</sup> In Ugaritic, both *b* and *l* can have the sense "from" (Aistleitner 1965.44, 162) as well as (respectively) "in" and "to". It seems highly probable that Sab has inherited these usages, but has differentiated the "from" interpretations by the addition of *-n*. On the other hand, Ar and Hebrew *min*, Geez *ʿemna*, have no connection with this *b* morpheme, but are probably nouns meaning "outside" (cf the Ar place-name Minā and *mina* "seminal emission").

<sup>100</sup> All, however, ultimately stemming from nouns used adverbially; this is why they admit the prefixation of 'basic' prepositions (§ 33:4), which would not otherwise have been possible. The facultative prepositional *-n*, however, is not to be confused with the determinative *-n* of nouns (§ 13:1).

ively spelt *bn*), *hng* (most commonly defectively spelt, *hg*), *ns'r*, *qbl*, *tht* and the problematic form discussed in § 34:19. There is a general tendency (by no means without exceptions) for the base forms to be characteristic of the arc period, and the enlarged forms of the mid and rec periods, when a noun follows; but with an attached pronoun the unexpanded forms (or spellings) can occur in all periods. In one instance, that of *cl*, we have a mid period form *clw-* (in J 643/29 and Hakim 2/4) alongside the normal post-arc form *cly*.

§ 33:4 All three forms of the pronouns listed in the preceding paragraph can co-exist with a preceding *b-*, *bn* or *l-*.

§ 33:5 Other lexemes which might appear as prepositions in a European language translation, such as C 547/13 *crt* “(in exchange) for”, can be relegated to the sphere of lexicography.

## PREPOSITIONAL USAGE

§ 34:1 *b-* covers the semantic range of standard Ar *fī* as well as *bi* (this is also the case in some Najdi dialects, see Ingham 1982.250). It is used locally for “in, at (a place)”, temporally “in, on”, instrumentally “by (means of)”, and sociatively “with”. In Radmanite the negative form Micsāl 2/12 *dk-b-mw* “without” is evidently based on the sociative use of *b-*. A variety of the instrumental is the use in connection with transactions involving an exchange, where the English is “for”. Texts frequently end with invocations of the authority of a deity (or king, or tribe), presented by this preposition. Some verbs govern their object by means of this preposition (the Ar *bā al-tacdiyāh*).

§ 34:2 *k-* in its rare prepositional usage is the equivalent of “as, like” (Ar *ka*) e.g. R 3945/1 *k'hd* “(like one man >) unanimously”.

§ 34:3 *l-* covers the semantic range of standard Ar *'ilā* as well as *li*. It is used locally and temporally for “to”; and there is a temporal locution in which it renders “on” (as with Ar *li talātin ḥalawna min šafar* “on the 3rd of Šafar”), e.g. J 649/41 *l-dmhr* “on the morrow”, J 631/28 *ltltm/ywmm* “on the third day” (contrasting with J 577/12 *btltm/ywmm*). It is also employed in a dative use “to, for”<sup>101</sup>; and this rather broad categorisation may be

<sup>101</sup> Arc R 4905/2 *ḥny/kl/bcl/s'bcn/dn/m'hdn* is exceptionally problematical.

taken to include "belonging to" (e.g. Ist 7626/1 *wtfn*... *lds'mwy* "this *wtf*-land belongs to *dS*."), "due to" (e.g. C 376/1 *s'hly/wchd*...*lyhfr*...*'lfm/bltm* "acknowledged 1000 *blt*-coins as due to Y."), and "with reference to"<sup>102</sup> (e.g. R 3910/2 *kl/s<sup>2</sup>mt* "in respect of every purchase"). However, it is not at all certain whether we really have instances of this preposition serving to mark an object after an infinitive or verbal-noun (as in Ar); we only have at best one or two possible cases, where in fact this might be the normal government of the verb (e.g. C 74/13 *gtnnn/lhmt* *'s'rrn* "the harvesting of those agricultural lands").

§ 34:4 *bn* covers both Ar *min* and *can*,<sup>103</sup> in the senses "from; away from", locally and temporally. Other uses include the partitive (Ar *min li l-tabcīd*), specially in the locution *dbn* "some"; and explanatory (Ar *min li l-tabyīn*), e.g. R 3910/2-3 *kl/s<sup>2</sup>mt*... *bn/'nsim/w'blm/wtwrm/wbcr* "every purchase (consisting of) a slave or camel or ox or small cattle". For an exclusive or prohibitory use we have e.g. R 3945/16 *hgrn/ns<sup>2</sup>n/yhbhrm/bn/mwftm* "the town of N. he forbade to be

Jamme 1962.249 renders *kl* as a verb, "built (and) achieved", which assumes a following "this retaining dam (for) the Lord of S.". To this Robin 1980.137 object that a double accusative government of these two verbs is unlikely; their own interpretation is (disregarding the *bny* as a dubious reading) "every inhabitant of S., this reservoir". My original proposal had been that *kl* should be analysed as the expected preposition *l-* ("built this retaining dam for the Lord of S.") plus a *k* of uncertain function, but perhaps in some sense 'deictic'; on this Robin 1980 remark that 'a deictic particle followed by a preposition is without parallel'. This is certainly the case in Sab, yet I cannot help being reminded of the English parallel "as from tomorrow", a phrase disliked by purists precisely on the score of the redundancy and lack of identifiable function in the "as" (though even purists would hardly object to Bunyan's "who sweeps a room as for His sake"). In the interpretation proposed by them, I find it difficult to accept *bcl/s<sup>2</sup>bcn* as meaning "inhabitant of S.", firstly because S. is frequently attested as a sanctuary of the Sabaeen national deity, only once as a clan-house, and never as a town; secondly because, while the collectivity of 'inhabitants' of a place constitute its owners, one could hardly use the same term for one individual inhabitant.

<sup>102</sup> However, I emphatically reject Rhodokanakis' consistent evaluation of *lkd* (noted above as a conjunction, § 32:1, 3) as a preposition in this sense ("betreff"). This error in evaluating the function of the morpheme has led him to interpret an immediately following *'l* as a pronoun, whereas it is in practically all the cases a negative; hence the overall understanding of the texts has been gravely impaired.

<sup>103</sup> No prepositional use of *cn* is attested in Sayhadic. J 570/6 *wgwy/cnbw* in a fragmentary and very obscure context affords no justification for regarding *cn* here as an otherwise unattested preposition.

burnt", W. Tawq/4-5 *bn/qtbr/ bhmw/ 'rmym* "to the exclusion of any gentile being buried there".

§ 34:5 *mn* in some texts from Haram corresponds to standard Sab *bn*.

§ 34:6 *ln* occurs only in the basic local and temporal uses of *bn*; does not occur in rec texts; and in arc and mid texts most commonly precedes a correlative "to". From all of which data one might well conclude that its use as a synonym of *bn* was obsolescent already in the arc period.

§ 34:7 *b'try* is "after (temporally)" in NNAG 15/13, and so in R 3951/5 *'tr* (or *'tr[y]*?). In J 575/4, 660/11 *b-'tr* could be understood either as a local preposition or as a noun meaning "track".

§ 34:8 *cbr*, *cbrn*, *lcbr* seems to be based on a noun meaning "side"; it is used in a local sense "towards, in the direction of" (Ar *jihata*, *min jihatī*), and a variety of semi-concrete usages. It resembles French "auprès de" in contexts referring to despatch of diplomatic missions and to pleading before a judge or deity; in the seemingly hostile sense of "against" it is perhaps in itself a neutral "with respect to" (French "en égard à") coloured by the context, e.g. E 13 § 2 war waged *bcbr* the kings of Saba, N 12/27 misdeeds committed *bcbr* the deity; the contrary sense "in favour of" in J 577/8 (Najranite revolt against Saba *bcbr* the Habashites) stems from the primary "towards". In J 643/15 *'l/cbrnhw/hyc/mngt/...* I would suggest the rendering "the occasioning of the incident ... was not on his responsibility" (Ar *min jihatihī*), and with this cf J 628/7 cited and discussed § 32:16. The legal formula *bcbr/wbcl* (C 600/7, C 609/2) is obscure because of doubt whether the two terms are synonyms or antonyms. In J 784/9 *hydchw/bcl/hrnm/bcbr/'hyhw* "the Lord of H. gave her a declaration *bcbr* her brother" it is uncertain whether the preposition implies "with respect to" or "through the agency of" (Ar *min jihati 'ahihā* would be equally ambiguous). There is an idiomatic use in J 578/20 *t'wlw/... 'ys'm/cbrhw/s'htm/cdy/'rdthmw* "they returned to their own countries in rout, each one by his own way" (Ar *kullu 'ahadin calā jihatihī*).

§ 34:9 *cd*, *cdy* (and once peripherally Rob Hamir 1/5 *cdn*)<sup>104</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Schaffer 1972.13 has taken Gl 1136/1 *cdw* as a variant of *cdy*; but the positioning of a prepositional phrase, rather than the expected verb, immediately after the author's name at the beginning of a text would be extremely strange, and not easily acceptable.



has the local value “up to, into, as far as” and the temporal value “until” (Hebrew *cad*).<sup>105</sup> In some contexts it is customary to render it by simple “in”, but one might suspect that in all cases it retains some connection with the idea of motion “into” (as with English ‘put it in (= into) the box’) e.g. in the formula “dedicated to the deity X in (*cdy*) His sanctuary Y”.

§ 34:10 *cl, cly, cln, bcl, bcly, bclw* correspond to Ar *calā*, with the primary sense “on, upon”, both concretely and abstractly (as in R 4176/13 *clybʒr/t’lb* “on the basis of T. reserving...”). A temporal usage is found in rec Ry 510/4 *cly/mhns’b’tm* “during the course of an expedition”. Very often it connotes the exposure of somebody or something to hostile or detrimental action (making war on, imposing tribute on, inflicting overwork on an animal, registering a debt against, etc.).

§ 34:11 *cm, cmn, bcm, bcmn* corresponds to Ar *maca, cinda, min cindi*, and means primarily “together with”. But in transactions involving giving and taking<sup>106</sup> it indicates the donor or vendor; with verbs implying fighting it indicates the adversary (as is the case in English “with” and Ar *maca*).

§ 34:12 *bcd, bcdn* is “after” both temporally and locally.

§ 34:13 *bltn, blty* (and once in rec R 5094/3 *bly*) is “without”; it has a morphological cognate in Hebrew *bilti* (though the latter differs somewhat in syntactic usage, being mainly conjunctive).

§ 34:14 *byn, bn* is “between, among”; but since Ar *bayna X waY* can also imply “(including) both X and Y” it seems possible that J 633/8 *byn/hms’nbn* might be interpreted as “in both the two armies”.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>105</sup> A morphological connection between this and Ar *cattā* (Hudhalite dialect for standard *hattā*) is likely; though one would hardly agree with Rabīn 1951.40 that ‘the Sab form may have arisen under the influence of Ar *hattā*’!

<sup>106</sup> This includes all forms of ‘asking’ and ‘requesting’.

<sup>107</sup> The somewhat problematic C 518/3 *bydn* can hardly be explained as prepositional *b-* plus a noun *yd* “hand”, since this would require construct status for the noun, which is incompatible with the *-n*. It should be better regarded as a preposition in its own right, with the characteristic prepositional ending *-n*, and either read as *by(n)n* the normal preposition “between”, or without emendation compared with Ar *bayda* (which, although in origin a noun, is used exclusively in a prepositional function). See Beeston in *Raydan* 5 (in press).

It is dubious whether Ry 366/3 *bynbt* should be registered as preposition or noun.

§ 34:15 *hg, hgn, bhg* “according to” must be related to the Himyaritic form *hing* cited by Nashwān al-Himyarī (Nashwān 1916.39) as equivalent to Ar *mitl*, as is shown by the spelling *hngn* in two places (where, however, its function is conjunctive), J 753 1/2 and VL 25/4.

§ 34:16 *ns'r, ns'rn, bn/ns'r, bn/ns'rn* “towards” is of uncertain origin.

§ 34:17 *qbly, lqbl, lqbly* is local “in front of” and temporal “before”, probably also causal “because of”, and once J 671/24 “during”.

§ 34:18 *s'n, s'nn, s'wn, s'n, bs'n*<sup>108</sup> “towards”.

§ 34:19 *tht, thty, thtn, bttht, bn/tht, bn/thty* have the local sense “beneath”, but also an abstract “on the authority of”.

## THE VERBLESS SENTENCE

§ 35:1 Sentences in which the predicate is not a finite verb occur, as they do in other Semitic languages; such predicates are for the most part prepositional phrases, only occasionally substantives or adjectives.

§ 35:2 The statistical incidence of such sentences is not sufficient to enable us to form any clear idea of the principles governing the relative order of subject and predicate. One would expect to find normally the order subject – predicate, as in Arabic, with the proviso that a predicative prepositional phrase incorporating a pronoun may be placed at the head of the clause (also as in Arabic) e.g. C 40/2 *bs²h[d]hw/kryfm* “opposite it is a cistern”.

§ 35:3 It is uncertain whether the late form Ry 508/11 *mr'/'t* “Thou art lord” reflects genuine Sabaic usage or is a calque on Hebrew syntax with subject pronoun following a non-verbal predicate (as in *'ahat hi* “unique is she”).

## APPENDIX

The three non-Sabaic languages of the Sayhadic group are attested in a much smaller range of texts than is Sab, and in the case of the Min texts there is the additional difficulty that a

<sup>108</sup> This word is one of the very few in which spelling fluctuation between *s¹* and *s³* is found already in the mid period.

relatively high proportion of them is available so far only in the unreliable copies of the Halévy collection.<sup>109</sup> Full descriptions of these three languages are thus hardly possible, and the following notes record only their most salient features. The numbering of the paragraphs here matches the numbering of the relevant paragraph in the earlier part of this work, with the distinctive letters M, Q and H added.

All three of these languages share one common feature: they have a verb-stem *s'fcl* where Sab has *hfcl*, and *s'* is the base for pronouns and similar forms where Sab has *b*. Nevertheless, sporadic *b* forms occur throughout these languages, particularly noticeably in the verb *hqny* which occurs not uncommonly, as well as *s'qny*. In one Qat text (unpublished) two forms occur in immediate juxtaposition, *mhnkrm/wms'fym*! Moreover, personal names virtually always show *b* forms and not *s'* forms, both in verb-stems and in pronouns, e.g. in Had R 2640/1 *hbs'l*, CT 31/1 *hmbmw*.

## I. MINAIC

This is geographically attested only in Khirbat Macin (ancient *Qrnnw*), Khirbat Baraqish (ancient *Ytl*), together with a handful of texts from other sites in the east end of the Yemeni Jawf; in the Minaean trading settlement at al-cUla (ancient Dedan, in the northern Hijaz); and in a few scattered texts right outside Arabia, resulting from Minaean trading activities. Chronologically, the spread covers only a period roughly coextensive with the Ptolemaic age—fourth to second centuries B.C.—and thus wholly within the Sab archaic phase; consequently, features characteristic of the middle and recent Sab phases are absent from Min texts.

§ M 2:2 Although *s'* and *t* remained distinct phonemes, it is *t* that is used for the rendering of a non-Semitic */s/*, as in R 3570/3 *dl̄t* “Delos”, R 3427/1 *tl̄myt* “Ptolemaios” and ib/3 *'tr̄hf* “Osarapis”.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>109</sup> Albeit they should probably not be emended so very freely as some editors have done; where good photographs have subsequently become available, they tend to invalidate some of the emendations.

<sup>110</sup> Cf Gairdner 1925.19: ‘The most noticeable difference between these Arabic sibilants and the corresponding English ones is that in Arabic the hiss is much stronger and more sibilant than in English. So weak and in-

§ M 2:10 Specially notable in Min is the appearance of a phonetic (non-etymological) *h*, in pronouns and particles and in noun-terminations; but it is not found in verb forms, nor in noun stems other than the pl stems *bhn-* "sons" and *bhnt-* "daughters"<sup>111</sup> and the numeral *thmn-* (§ M 18:5).

§ M 4:2 The Sab verb-stem *hfcl* is represented in Min by *s'fcl*, with the exception of a handful of instances of the Sabaizing form *hqny*.

Half a dozen or so verbs exhibit a stem *fccl*, which has given rise to a diversity of interpretations. Semantically, these verbs are factitives or denominatives, and do not differ from normal Sayhadic *fcl* = *faccala* (and in some cases the two spellings *fccl* and *fcl* both occur); but on this problem see note 10.

§ M 5:4 The verbal terminations *-y* and *-w* hardly occur at all, so that du and pl are homographs of the sg.<sup>112</sup> The only reliable occurrence of a distinctive pl seems to be R 3016/1 *qnyw*.

§ M 5:5 As with the perfect, there seems not to be any graphic differentiation between mas sg and pl in the simple imperfect: thus, R 3306A/2 *bn|dbbh|ys'crb|mcn|wbbhnts'm* "from the sacrifice which the Minaeans and their womenfolk offer".

§ M 5:7 N-imperfects do occur, but very much more rarely than in Sab, and they are not easy to analyse. There are one or two cases of a du *yfclyn*, e.g. R 3458/1 *ys'mcyn*; but the contexts in which we find *yfcln* do not allow certain identification of the forms as sg or pl, except in one or two cases, e.g. R 3306A/5 *bn|'dbbh|mcn|wbbhnts'm|'hl|ys'crbn* where the verb must be pl, irrespective of whether the last two words mean "which they offer" or "which are offered". It is of course possible that, insofar as *yfcln* functions as a mas pl, it could be regarded as a 'simple' imperfect of the Qat pattern (§ Q 5:5).

It is possible that the fem pl imperfect may (in contrast with Sab and Ar) have the initial morpheme *t-*, but the only evidence lies in R 3306A/5-6 *trdnn*, *t'ntnn*.

determinate does our hiss often appear to Orientals that pronunciation teachers often annoy their pupils by accusing them of having made θ [t] instead of s'.

<sup>111</sup> Possibly in the du also, if one can rely on R 2879/1 *bhnys'm* (followed by two names).

<sup>112</sup> It is worth remarking in this connection that in Jibbali, the sg and pl of the 3rd person mas of verbs are complete homonyms (Johnstone 1981.xvii).

§ M 5:7a There are sporadic instances of imperfects with the prefix *b-* (cf § Q 5:7a), but the fragmentary nature of the contexts makes it impossible to define their syntactic usage.

§ M 8:1 N-marked infinitives do not seem to occur.<sup>113</sup>

§ M 12:1 A construct sg or broken pl noun frequently (but not invariably) displays a termination *-h*, usually when it is syntactically in a genitival position,<sup>114</sup> i.e. following a preposition or another construct noun. Thus, e.g., R 2814/2 *bmbwlb/ṣltn* "in the surrounding wall of the portico", ib/7-8 *ctny/...ḡwt/s<sup>2</sup>ymb/mḥwln* "attended to the repair of the structure of the surrounding wall", R 2965/3 *bn/mqmhs'm* "from their own potential", R 2975/4 *bn/ydwhs'm* "from their hands".

§ M 12:2 The presence of this *-h* before an asyndetic relative clause (as in R 3306A/2 cited in § M 2:10) or a dependent prepositional phrase is one of the reasons for regarding the governing word in such instances as a construct.

§ M 12:4 The construct du ends in either *-y* or *-hy*.<sup>115</sup>

§ M 12:5 On the external pl forms of *bn* see § M 2:10. Of other construct external mas pl forms we have R 2869/3 *'hhs'm*, R 3010/2 *ydyhs'm*, R 3421/1 *ywmby*, R 2980 bis/7 *s<sup>2</sup>ymbhy*, R 2774/6 *ywmy*. Construct external fem pl forms show the termination *-ht* or *-hty*.

§ M 13:2 The determinate du ends in *-nhn* or *-nyhn*.

§ M 14:1 Min use of the mimation is so erratic that we must conclude that it has virtually no semantic or syntactic value, but is purely an ornament of diction. Contrast

<sup>113</sup> D.H. Müller's supposition that R 2754/2 *bny/wgmtn* shows a consecutive infinitive in the second word is extremely dubious, in view of the lack of comparable cases; it would be better to treat the word as a noun from root *wgm*, as the Répertoire commentary does (at the same time, it can hardly be construct, since a stem-formation *ḡltn-* would be surely unparalleled in Semitic; *ms'qyt* is hence not genitive but appositional).

<sup>114</sup> The syntactic status of R 3285/2 *'wldh/wd* is uncertain, because of the fragmentary nature of the text. The Répertoire takes it as a direct (accusative) object of the immediately preceding *ṛtd*, but in that case, who is the subject of the verb? What sort of individual could have placed the whole Minaean community under the protection of the deity? One would rather have expected a subjective interpretation, "the 'children of Wadd' placed [themselves] under divine protection"; but could this be a subjective genitive, with *ṛtd* as an infinitive?

<sup>115</sup> R 3012/13 *mḥfdny/(yt)l* "the two towers of *Ytl*" is an erroneous reading for *mḥfdn/yḡl* "the tower *Yḡl*", as in Nami's text reproduced in M 236/4. Unlike the genitival *-hy* (§ M 12:1), this as a du termination occurs both in genitival and non-genitival syntactic contexts.

R 2789/2 *dbb|cttr|dqbd|'dbb|*

R 2771/5-6 *dbb|cttr|dqbdm|b'hdr|'dbbm|*

R 3535/2 *dbb|cttr|dqbd|b'hdr|'dbb|wcttr|dyhrq|bytl|'dbbm|*

§ M 14:6 The absolute du is marked by *-ny*.

§ M 14:8 R 3318/ *ymhn* is perhaps an example of an absolute external mas pl.

§ M 16 There are one or two instances where what could be regarded as an adverbial or a 'specifying' (*tamyīz*) accusative is marked with *-h* or *-hm*: R 3022/3 *s'lmhm|wwfyh|* "in peace and safety", and after numerals for which see § M 19:2. But it is dubious whether this can properly be called a case marking, since it does not usually occur in direct objects.

§ M 18:1 In the unit numerals, the forms of "three" and "six" correspond to those of arc Sab. For "one" we have both R 3707/6 *cs't* and M 401/3 *'hd*.<sup>116</sup>

§ M 18:5 In the decad numerals we have on one hand R 3458/4 *cs'ry*, M 401/4 *s'lt'y*, R 3318/1 *'rbcy*, and on the other M 401/3 *'rbchy*, R 2965/4 *thmnhy*. This makes it doubtful whether in R 2959/2 we should restore [*s'lt'h*]y or [*s'lt*]y (the "thirty" is validated by the accompanying numerical symbols).

§ M 18:7 For the pl of "hundred" we have only R 3705/2 *hms'*<sup>117</sup> *|m'h|* "500".

§ M 18:10 There is insufficient evidence regarding compound numerals to allow the formulation of a principle; one can only take notice of R 3318/1 *d'bhy|b'rbcy|ws'bc|ws'r| ymhn* which, however, still resists any plausible interpretation.<sup>118</sup>

§ M 19:2 It is unclear whether the rule of a pl enumerate after all higher numerals was rigidly applied in Min. R 2959/2 *hrfhm* (after "30") could be either sg or broken pl, but it would not be

<sup>116</sup> A few words before this we read *'rbct|kbwdt*, which suggests that *kbwdt* is the pl of a mas noun (§ 19:1); but a sg *kbwdt* here is puzzling – is the *-t* an engraver's error to be secluded, or is the word genuinely a mas ending in *-t* (§ 11:1), or is the syntax that of a construct plus genitive, "(each) one of (the) *kbwdt*" as envisaged by Nami (in spite of the lack of mark of determination)?

<sup>117</sup> Thus in the photograph. The erroneous transcription *hms'* of Jaussen and Savignac has unfortunately been repeated in the Répertoire and in M 365.

<sup>118</sup> The syntax and interpretation of the whole passage *d'bhy|b'rbcy|ws'bc|ws'r|ymhn|dl|ngw|ks'|b'slwt* are highly obscure owing to the lack of preceding context. Word-for-word it runs "... (the month) *d'bhy*, ?in/with/by? forty and seven [the numeral implying a fem enumerate], and other days when it is prescribed for him by the document". It is hardly possible that '47' is meant.

easy to envisage *rb(m)* in R 3458/4 ("25") and R 2965/4 ("180") as anything except morphologically sg.<sup>119</sup>

§ M 23:2 The attached pronoun forms are, for the mas sg, most commonly *-s'*, but occasionally *-s'w*; for the du *-s'mn*; for the pl *-s'm*. Defective contexts make it difficult to identify fem forms with certainty; a possible fem pl may be found in R 3902.132/3 *b-s'n*.

§ M 24:1 No demonstratives corresponding to the Sab set of remoter deixis are attested in Min, with the possible exception of R 3700/7 *k-s'wt/s²*[...] "? for that ...?".

§ M 24:4 Adjectival demonstratives corresponding to the Sab set of nearer deixis are also very poorly attested: mas du R 2923/7 *dn/lnhn* "these two gods", mas pl R 3015/2 *'hl/mbfdtn* "these towers", R 2965/2 *'hl/mbntn* "these buildings".<sup>120</sup>

§ M 25:1 Relational forms are,

	sg	du	pl
mas	<i>d-</i>	<i>dy</i>	} <i>'hl, hl, (dl)</i>
fem	<i>dt</i>	<i>dtyn</i>	

Since it seems likely that *hl* is only a reduced form of *'hl*, I have noted the two as of common gender, though the available evidence is insufficient to decide the question.<sup>121</sup> I omit mention of some other morphemes which have been thought to function as relational antecedents, but which occur in contexts too obscure for satisfactory analysis.

§ M 28:1 Conditional particles are perhaps attested in R 2948A/2 *hm* and R 3306A/2 *hn*, but in both cases in problematic contexts.

§ M 28:3 The personal relational *mn* is perhaps attested in R 2833/2, but with the perplexing morpheme *hl* preceding; and the several occurrences of *hn/mb(m)* in R 2791/5, R 3318/1, R 3702/4, M 464/2 are equally puzzling.

§ M 29:1,5 Negative particles are poorly attested, and we find only *lhm* and once *l'* (F 14/14).

§ M 30:1 An enclitic *y* is fairly frequent, sometimes in the

<sup>119</sup> The fact that the word is a counting unit, "mina", may affect the usage, as it does in German ('drei Pfund' versus 'drei Bücher').

<sup>120</sup> The sg in both cases is mas.

<sup>121</sup> It has to be noted that Rhodokanakis' interpretation of R 3306A/3 requires acceptance of *hl* there as having a sg reference; but the syntax of the passage is too obscure for certainty about this. With *dl*, attested only in R 3318/1, one might perhaps compare colloquial Ar pl demonstrative *dol*.

position of Sab *m* and in at least one instance additionally to it, R 3306A/1 *b-m-y/cqbb/slwt* "in pursuance of the written regulation".

§ M 31:7 Specially characteristic of Min (and not found elsewhere) is an apparently deictic *s*<sup>2</sup> prefixed to the particle *k-* in the various usages of the latter, both as an introductory *s*<sup>2</sup>*ken* "Thus" in decrees (R 2813/1, R 2886/1, R 3902.132/1), and in the conjunctive usages (§ 32:1), e.g. R 2980/13 *bn/s<sup>2</sup>ked* corresponding to Sab R 3945/2 *bn/ked* "from (the possibility) that".

§ M 32:15a A temporal conjunction "when" is attested as *mty*.

§ M 33:1 The normal preposition for "to, for" is *k-* (and not *l-*).

§ M 33:3 Prepositional forms enlarged by *-n* do not occur; and the vocalic ending appears (though relatively rare) in the form *-hy*, e.g. R 2827A/11 *bn/fqhy* "above", R 2771/5 *hby* "in front of". Besides *b-cm* we have e.g. R 2886/2 *b-cmh*. For "between" we find (before pronoun) *bynht-*.

## II. QATABANIC

The provenance of the Qat language monumental texts is an area embracing the Wadi Bayhan, the Wadi Harib adjacent to it on the west, and the plateau to the south of the two wadis. The chronological spread is from the 5th/4th century B.C. to the 2nd century A.D.

§ Q 4:2 The Sab verb-stem *hfcl* is represented in Qat by *s'fcl*.

§ Q 5:4 The pl fem of the perfect is securely attested in the form *fcln* in AM 177+208/3 *s'qnyn*, ib/7 *s<sup>2</sup>ftn*. Du mas *fclw* in J 340/1.

§ Q 5:5 Inflections of the imperfect match those of the Sab simple imperfect, except in the mas pl, where Qat has *yfclwn*.

§ Q 5:7 There are no N-imperfect forms in standard Qat, though in the most recent texts there is an occasional instance (presumably due to Sab influence) such as R 4324/3-4 [*ys'*]*my*n "(a son who) is named...".

§ Q 5:7a The indicative imperfect normally shows a prefix *b-*, e.g. R 3688/2 *kbrm/bykbr* "any kabir who holds office". Without this prefix the imperfect is usually a jussive, as in R 3854/7 *wl/y/sq* "let him prosecute", or conditional as in ib/8 *hmm/y/s'lb* "if he neglects", or in some other way non-indicative as in



R 4337C/10 *ybnwn/lyshb* “let people keep away until day dawns” (a context where Ar would use *hattā* with the subjunctive).<sup>122</sup>

§ Q 8:1 N-marked infinitives do not occur.

§ Q 12:1 A construct termination in *-h*, reminiscent of Min (§ M 12:1), is found in R 3566/20 *bnclw/mqmh-s'm*.

§ Q 12:4 Besides the usual construct du termination *-y*, there are also *-h* and *-hy* (J 343/4 *nfs'h-* and Honeyman 5/7 *mqmhy-* both plus pronoun affix), *-yw* (R 3591/2 *bnyw*), and *-w* (R 4094/3 *mlkw*).

§ Q 12:5 For the construct external mas pl we have attested *-h* (cf § Q 12:4) in R 4336/4 *'hb-* (with pronoun following).

§ Q 13:2 The determinate du ending is *-nyhn* (e.g. J 342/2 *slmnyhn*).

§ Q 14:6 The absolute du is marked by *-myw* (e.g. J 343/4 *tnw/hms'myw* “two fifths”).

§ Q 18:1 For “two”, in lieu of Sab and Min *tny*, Qat has *tnw*, as in R 3858/10 *tnw/nhlmyw*, and J 343/4 cited in § Q 14:6. In R 3858/8, 11 “three” and “sixteen” match the arc Sab forms *s<sup>2</sup>l<sup>1</sup>tt*, *s<sup>1</sup>dt<sup>1</sup>/cs<sup>2</sup>r*. “Eleven” is found in R 3858/10 *td/cs<sup>2</sup>r*.

§ Q 18:5 Among the decads, R 4337A/26 *hms'y/dhbm* “fifty in gold” is worth notice, for since here it would seem most probable to understand “in gold” as a *tamyīz* ‘specifying’ term and not a genitive, it tends to support the hypothesis that the decad numerals are not syntactically construct, although their morphology is identical with that of a construct (dual or external mas pl); cf § 18:3,4.<sup>123</sup>

§ Q 23:2 Third person attached pronouns are:

	sg	du	pl
mas	<i>-s<sup>1</sup>, -s<sup>1</sup>ww</i>	<i>-s<sup>1</sup>my</i>	<i>-s<sup>1</sup>m</i>
fem	<i>-s<sup>1</sup>, -s<sup>1</sup>yw</i>	<i>-s<sup>1</sup>my</i>	<i>-s<sup>1</sup>n</i>

In the sg forms, the shorter one is attached to a sg or broken pl noun, the longer one to a du or external pl noun; with verbs, only the shorter form is known.

<sup>122</sup> On the other hand, we do find R 3854/1-2 *s<sup>1</sup>hr/...kdm/byfrwn* “has decreed... that they shall cultivate the fields”, where one might have expected a non-indicative form.

<sup>123</sup> R 3958 presents a problem: its provenance is Qatabanian—the Jabal Qarnayn in W. Bayhān (Jamme 1972.63)—but the author, who records the acquisition of an estate there, is a Radmanite chieftain. Most of the text is Sab, but the dating formula runs *wrbs<sup>1</sup>/syd/dl'rbct/w'rbchy/wm't/hryftm* (thus Jamme 1976.111). In the circumstances, should the forms here exemplified be classed as Radmanite or Qatabanian?

§ Q 24:1 Demonstratives of remoter deixis insofar as attested are,

		sg	du	pl
nominative	mas	<i>s'w</i>		<i>s'm</i>
	fem			
non-nominative	mas	<i>s'wt</i>	<i>s'myt</i>	<i>s'mt</i> <sup>124</sup>
	fem	<i>s'yt</i>		

§ Q 24:4 Attested demonstratives of nearer deixis are sg mas *dn* and sg fem *dt*; and for pl mas R 3689/10 *dn!/'s'dn*, ib/8 *dtm/'s'trn*, Folkard 1/3 *dtm/'bytn*; the gender of R 3566/21 *dtw/gzwmn* remains uncertain, since we do not know what the sg of the noun is.

§ Q 25:1 Attested forms of the declinable relational antecedent are,

	sg	du	pl
mas	<i>d-</i> , <i>dw</i>	<i>dw</i> , ( <i>dn</i> )	<i>dtw</i> , ( <i>'wlw</i> ), ( <i>'l?</i> )
fem	<i>dt</i>		( <i>dtw?</i> )

The form *'wlw* is met with only in R 4337/6. The form *dtw* occurs in AM 177+208/2 (and the parallel text AM 757/2) with female referents, but since the text contains some mas verbs (referring, as Pirenne remarks, to the clan rather than the individuals), we cannot regard the femininity of this form as assured. The extremely complex legal R 3566 (not yet satisfactorily analysed) seems to afford with reasonable probability a du *dn* in /10, but the grammatical status of *'l* in /11, 14, 17, 18 remains dubious<sup>125</sup>; in R 3884 bis/5 *'l s'n* we certainly have a negative (§ 29:1) “it is not permitted” and not a relational.

<sup>124</sup> In R 3566/16, Rhodokanakis' translation—and punctuation—indicate that he regards *s'mt/'fthn* as the beginning of a new sentence, and hence in subject position (like *s'm/'fthn* in ib/18 which is certainly subject); but it would be more satisfactory to seek some syntactic analysis which would allow a non-nominative function for *s'mt*, than to assume a functional identity between the two forms. A parallel problem arises in R 3015/2 *s'm/ws'mt/mlkn*, which the Répertoire interprets as showing respectively mas and fem relatives in the function of introducing a genitive (§ 27:1), “those (scil. towers *mbfdt*, mas) and those (scil. curtain walls *shft*, fem) belonging to the king”; but a fem pl *s'mt* is improbable, and it might be better to render “those (comprehensive mas implying ‘buildings’) which are the king's *ws'mt*”.

<sup>125</sup> The passage where this interpretation looks most plausible is

§ Q 25:4 Besides *mn* we seem to have a relational *y*, e.g. R 3654/4 *y|y|s'dm* "whoever"<sup>126</sup> and perhaps R 3566/4 *y|fth|ws'hr|fth|wmhrtm* "whatever decrees and ordinances are passed".

§ Q 28:1 The simple conditional particle "if" is attested in R 3854/8 *hmv*.

§ Q 29:1 No other negative particle than *ʔ* is reliably attested.

§ Q 30:1 Enclitics in the forms *-m*, *-mw* and *-y* are common to a particularly noteworthy degree, and attached to all parts of speech, including (which seems not to be the case in Sab) nouns and adjectives.

§ Q 31:6 In several cases, a sentence beginning with *rṭd* is introduced asyndetically, e.g. R 4704/2, R 4336/4<sup>127</sup>; in the titulature of some Qatabanian rulers, *q̣r/qyn/rs²w* is now generally accepted as an asyndetic cumulation of coordinated terms.

§ Q 32:15 *mṭy* "when" (cf § M 32:15a) is attested in R 4337A/13, 16.

§ Q 33:3 Prepositional forms which in Sab end in *-y* tend in Qat to show *-w*, e.g. *cdw*, *clw*; forms with attached *-n* do not seem to occur in Qat. Against Sab *byn* we find Qat R 3566/6 *bynhty-s¹m*.

### III HADRAMITIC

Apart from the royal residence Shabwa, there is barely a handful of other sites which have produced Had inscriptions; and these are scattered very widely, including a trading settlement at Khor Rori (anc. Samhar) on the Mahrah coast (near mod. Salalah). The relatively small number of available texts, as well as the wide scatter, is probably attributable to the fact that the Wadi Hadramawt proper has continued to be densely populated down to the present day, so that ancient monuments

/14 *ʔ|s¹knw|wʔ|bys¹knwn* "those which they have decreed and those which they in future decree"; but it is less so in /18 *dtm|ʔ|bys¹knwn* (Rhodokanakis "die (Erlässe) seien, welche Recht schaffen", involving the coexistence of two pronominal antecedents).

<sup>126</sup> The second *y* here is probably enclitic (§ Q 30:1).

<sup>127</sup> In this text, Rhodokanakis' rendering is certainly wrong; the words *mtc|ʔbrtc|cbds¹* belong to the preceding sentence.

have either been destroyed or may be irretrievably buried under the modern towns. The chronological spread is from roughly the 4th century B.C. to the end of the 3rd century A.D.

§ H 2:2 The sounds noted by *s*<sup>3</sup> and *t*, which are elsewhere distinct phonemes, have in Had fallen together into a single phoneme noted indifferently by either letter. The same may have happened in the case of *z* and *d*, though here seems to be a preference for noting the sound as *d*, e.g. *'lcd* "Eleazos" (Sab *'lcz*).

§ H 4:2 The Sab verb stem *hfcl* is represented in Had by *s<sup>1</sup>fc<sup>1</sup>*.

§ H 5:7 There are no N-imperfects in standard Had.

§ H 7:8 The jussive/optative can be introduced by *l-*, as in R 3869/3 *wl/yntsr/kebr/ykebr*<sup>128</sup> "let the kabir who is in office appeal for aid", or by *h-* as in AM 245/5, 7 *hynh<sup>1</sup>, hys<sup>1</sup>s<sup>2</sup>m*.

§ H 8:1 N-marked infinitives do not occur.

§ H 12:4 The construct du termination is normally *-y* (or graphically zero before a pronoun); possibly *-hy* in a few instances, e.g. R 2689/3 *gs<sup>1</sup>mby/gn<sup>1</sup>/q<sup>1</sup>lt* "the two sections of the wall of Q" (i.e. those on each side of the gateway).

§ H 12:5 Construct external mas pl R 3512/3 *bnby*.<sup>129</sup> A construct form which is morphologically an external fem pl is found in R 2687/3 *'bhty* (cf Heb *'abot*). On the possibility of an external mas pl of *gn<sup>1</sup>* see § H 13:2,3.

§ H 13:1 The mark of determination in sg and broken pl is *-hn*. However, texts of the later centuries begin to show a mixture of *-hn* and *-n* forms.

§ H 13:2, 3 The determinate du ending is *-yhn* (occasionally *-yn*, e.g. J 961/2 *crbyty<sup>n</sup>*). This ending may perhaps also function as pl, if we allow that in Had *gn<sup>1</sup>* used an external pl: the evidence for this is R 3869/7 *gn<sup>1</sup>yhn* referring back to the construct form two lines before, *gn<sup>1</sup>hy/myfct/wmh<sup>1</sup>fds<sup>1</sup>m* "the walls of M and their [pl !] tower".

§ H 14:6 The absolute du is marked by *-nyw*, e.g. Ing 1/2 *fbdnyw* (cf § 14:7).

§ H 16 An absolute termination in *-hm* is occasionally found, but only in adverbial syntax (cf § M 16), e.g. R 2697/4 *qrnhm* "by way of defence", R 2687/5 *gs<sup>1</sup>mhm* "solidly".

§ H 18:1 Among the cardinal numerals, "three" is *s<sup>2</sup>ls<sup>3</sup>t*, *s<sup>2</sup>ltt*,

<sup>128</sup> For the correct text see Pirenne 1956 Fig 13 (opposite p 220).

<sup>129</sup> For the reading see Rhodokanakis 1936.55; but I can see no reason for accepting his interpretation of the form as a du in this context.

*s<sup>2</sup>/t*. "Six" (with fem enumerate) Ing 1/3 *s<sup>1</sup>/t*. "Eight" (with mas enumerate) J 949/3 *t<sup>1</sup>mnwt*.

§ H 18:5 Attested decad numerals are *cs<sup>2</sup>ry* "twenty", *s<sup>2</sup>/ty* "thirty", on one hand, and *t<sup>1</sup>mnby* "eighty" on the other.

§ H 18:7 "Hundred", sg *m<sup>1</sup>/t*, du *m<sup>1</sup>tnyw*, pl *m<sup>1</sup>/h*.

§ H 20:1 For the ordinals we have (determinate) R 2687/5 *s<sup>3</sup>nybn* "second", and (determinate) CT 10/3 *s<sup>2</sup>/s<sup>1</sup>bn* "third".

§ H 20:3 In CT 4/5 *bs<sup>3</sup>nym/ywmds<sup>1</sup>mw<sup>1</sup>y*, the morphology (with mimation) indicates that we do not have an absolute cardinal, but an ordinal "on the next (day) to the festival of *dS*".

§ H 23:2 Attached pronouns are,

	sg	du	pl
mas	- <i>s<sup>1</sup></i> , - <i>s<sup>1</sup>ww</i>	- <i>s<sup>1</sup>mn</i>	- <i>s<sup>1</sup>m</i>
fem	- <i>s<sup>3</sup></i> , - <i>t<sup>1</sup></i> <sup>130</sup>		

The long form -*s<sup>1</sup>ww* is found after du and external pl nouns, as in Qat. The two fem forms are used indifferently (§ H 2:2).

§ H 25:1 For the relatives we have mas *d*, fem *d<sup>1</sup>t*, and a form *d<sup>1</sup>by* which seems to be mas du in AM 758/1, 3; but in R 2687/5 and CT 10/3 *d<sup>1</sup>by* introduces an eponym dating and its morphological analysis is dubious (see § H 30:1).

§ H 29:1 The only attested negative particle is *ʾ*.

§ H 30:1 Alongside the enclitics -*m* and -*mw*, it has been claimed that Had shows also -*by*, but the evidence for this is very thin, and it must be regarded as still speculative.<sup>131</sup>

§ H 31:6 One example of asyndetic coordination may perhaps be found in R 2693/1 *'dn/qny/mlkn* "retainer (and) slave of the king".

§ H 32:4 Conjunctive *kmw* "as" is found in R 2693/1.

§ H 32:15a *mt* "when" is regularly spelt in this way in Had (cf § M, Q 32:15a *mt<sup>1</sup>y*).

§ H 33:1 Of the basic prepositions, *b-* and *bn* are common,, but *l-* is found only in R 3512/2 *d-ls<sup>1</sup>m*, being otherwise represented in Had by *b-*.

<sup>130</sup> R 4839, which the Repertoire describes as Had, was bought in Sanaa and its probable provenance is the Jawf; hence it is classed as Min in M 387. In any event, the text is to a considerable extent illegible, and its *b<sup>1</sup>mrt*, if taken as meaning "by his command", would be anomalous whether in Min or in Had. In R 2640/2 *bnt* could be understood as "part of it (the town, *hgr*, fem)" rather than "his son".

<sup>131</sup> Apart from instances where it may represent a construct du ending (§ H 12:4), it occurs only in *d<sup>1</sup>by* (§ 25:1).

§ H 33:3 One preposition shows a form enlarged by *-n*,  
 AM 245/8 *thtn*. Prepositional forms distinctive of Had are,  
*h-* equivalent to Sab *l-* "to, for"  
*hn* equivalent to Sab *ln* "from"  
*'d* equivalent to Sab *cd* "to"  
*clhy* equivalent to Sab *cl(y)* "on"  
*'by* R 2640/2 "? beside?".

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