The Mehri Language of Oman

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The Mehri Language of Oman

By

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BRILL

For Kim

With Love

CONTENTS

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And finally, to Kim, my wife, my best friend, my chief editor, and primary inspiration, I thank you for everything. This book, like everything in life, is far better because of you.

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
AAL	*Afroasiatic Linguistics*, Johnstone 1975a (see Bibliography)
Ar.	Arabic
C	consonant
cf.	compare
com.	common (gender)
cp	common plural
cs	common singular
cstr.	construct
def.	definite
dimin.	diminutive
d.o.	direct object
du.	dual
f.	feminine
fd	feminine dual
fp	feminine plural
fs	feminine singular
G	guttural letter (ʾ, ʿ, ġ, h, ḥ, or x)
gemin.	geminate
glott.	glottalic
gutt.	guttural
HL	*Ḥarsūsi Lexicon*, Johnstone 1977 (see Bibliography)
intrans.	intransitive
i.o.	indirect object
JL	*Jibbāli Lexicon*, Johnstone 1981 (see Bibliography)
lit.	literally
m	masculine
md	masculine dual
mp	masculine plural
ms	masculine singular
ML	*Mehri Lexicon*, Johnstone 1987 (See Bibliography)
MSA	Modern South Arabian

n.	note
o.a.	one another
obj.	object
OSA	Old South Arabian
pl.	plural
sg.	singular
s.o.	someone
s.t.	something
trans	transitive
V	vowel
var(s).	variant(s)

X > Y	X develops into Y.
X < Y	X derives from Y.
X → Y	X becomes Y; this symbol is used for derived forms, such as forms with the definite article or a possessive suffix.

*	An asterisk marks a reconstructed or underlying form.
**	A double asterisk indicates a non-existent or ungrammatical form.

TEXT CITATION

All Mehri examples cited in this book are taken from the texts collected by T. M. Johnstone, as published in the book *Mehri Texts from Oman: Based on the Field Materials of T. M. Johnstone*, edited by Harry Stroomer (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz), 1999. Passages are cited by text number and "line" number, so 35:11 refers to Text 35, "line" number 11. I put the word "line" in quotation marks, because the numbered "lines" in Stroomer's edition often run more than one line on the page. Verse may be a more appropriate term, though this word can imply other things.

A NOTE ON TRANSCRIPTION

The transcription of Mehri in Johnstone's texts is very inconsistent. Not only does the transcription as published in Stroomer's edition differ from Johnstone's typewritten versions, which in turn differ from his handwritten notes (see the samples in Stroomer 1996, 1999), but the transcription is internally inconsistent in the published edition. For example, in the published edition, the 1cp independent pronoun is transcribed *nḥā*, *nəḥā*, or *ənḥā*; the ms imperative 'eat!' is transcribed *tɛ̄*, *tɛ́h*, or *tē*; the particle *tē* is sometimes transcribed *tā*, *ta*, or *tá*; and the verb 'he gave him' appears as *wəzəmīh*, *wəzəmēh*, *wzəmēh*, *wzmēh*, *wəzəmə́h*, *wzəmə́h*, and *wəzmə́h*! Hundreds of variant transcriptions could be listed. We find that *ī* and *ē* are very often interchangeable, as are *ū* and *ō*, and the syllables *əC* and *Cə* (see further in §2.2). In this grammar, I have for the most part not altered this inconsistency, and so I present the texts largely as they were published. Any changes that I did make are listed in the Appendix entitled "Corrections to Stroomer's Edition of Johnstone's Texts". I have, however, felt free to alter the English translations of Johnstone's texts, as I felt necessary. There are scores of places in which the translations found in Stroomer's edition are inaccurate, or at least awkward in style.

As for the system of transcription used for individual consonants, I have followed Johnstone except in a few cases. The differences are:

Johnstone	This Book
e	ə
ḏ	ð
ḏ̣	ð̣

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Mehri is a Semitic language spoken in Yemen, in the easternmost governorate of Al-Mahra, and across the border in Oman, in the western part of the governorate of Dhofar, in the high desert plateau (Nagd) north of the coastal mountains. The total number of Mehri speakers is probably around 100,000, with well over half of this group living in Yemen.

Mehri is one of six languages known collectively as the Modern South Arabian (MSA) languages, which in turn are part of the Semitic language family. In addition to Mehri, the MSA languages are Jibbali (or Śḥeri), Ḥarsusi, Soqoṭri, Hobyot (or Hobi), and Baṭḥari.[1] Mehri, Jibbali, and Soqoṭri in turn have a number of dialects.[2] The term 'Modern South Arabian' can be misleading, since these languages are not to be closely connected with Arabic or the set of languages collectively called Old South Arabian (OSA). The linguistic domain of the MSA languages is restricted to eastern Yemen, western Oman, and the island groups of Soqoṭra and Kuria Muria. None of the MSA languages has a tradition of writing.

1.1. Dialects of Mehri

Mehri can be divided into two basic dialect groups. There is a western group spoken in Yemen, which can be called Yemeni Mehri or Southern Mehri, and there is an eastern group, which can be called Omani Mehri, Dhofari Mehri, or Nagd Mehri. In Omani Mehri, the language is natively called *məhráyyət*. The political boundary between Yemen and Oman probably does not perfectly correspond to the dialect boundary, but the terms Yemeni and Omani Mehri are sufficiently accurate. Within Yemeni Mehri, we can also distinguish western and eastern (or *sharqiyya*) dialects.[3] It is unclear if there is any dialectal

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[1] Overviews of the MSA languages and dialects can be found in Johnstone (1975), Lonnet (1985; 2006), and Simeone-Senelle (1997).

[2] Counted among the Soqoṭri dialects is that of ʿAbd-el-Kuri, on which see Wagner (1959).

[3] On the Yemeni dialects, see further in Simeone-Senelle (2002: 388).

variation within Omani Mehri, but it seems that there is none of any significance. This is not unexpected, since, compared to Yemeni Mehri, Omani Mehri is spoken by a smaller population in a smaller geographical area.[4]

1.2. Previous Scholarship on Mehri

The existence of the Modern South Arabian languages was first brought to the attention of Europeans by James Wellsted, a British Lieutenant in Her Majesty's Indian Navy. In 1835, Wellsted published a list of words in Soqoṭri, which he had collected during his survey of the island in 1834.[5] However, it was Fulgence Fresnel, the French consul in Jeddah, writing on Jibbali in 1838, who first recognized the existence of a new branch of the Semitic language family.[6] Fresnel's work really marks the beginning of Modern South Arabian studies.

The first published information on Mehri was a short word-list given by Wellsted in his popular travel narrative, *Travels to the City of the Caliphs*, published in 1840.[7] A longer word-list was published soon after by a missionary named (Johann) Ludwig Krapf (1846), who included the Mehri numbers and some short phrases, as well as the first published Mehri "text", a translation from Arabic of Genesis 24:1-7. H.J. Carter, a surgeon who had traveled with Wellsted, published an even longer list of Mehri words and phrases (1847), providing also some discussion of phonology. Heinrich von Maltzan, known for his travels in the Arab world, published two grammatical studies of Mehri (1871, 1873b) and a short comparative word-list (1873a). Additional Mehri words can be found scattered in a few other nineteenth century publications.[8] Unfortunately, none of the nineteenth-century data on Mehri or any other Modern South Arabian language was collected by a linguist, and so the value and scope of these publications is often limited.

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[4] Johnstone's texts 59, 71, and 80 (published in Stroomer 1999) deal specifically with misunderstandings due to dialectal differences in vocabulary.

[5] Wellsted (1835a). Wellsted briefly discusses the language on pp. 211-12, and a word-list appears on pp. 220-29. Much of the data, with abundant printing errors, is found also in Wellsted (1835b: 165-66).

[6] Discussion of classification appears in Fresnel (1838a: 513ff), but more detailed grammatical discussion appears in Fresnel (1838b, 1838c). Annotated versions of these and other works of Fresnel can be found in the fine study by Lonnet (1991).

[7] The list of thirty-seven words appears on pp. 26-27.

[8] See Leslau (1946) for a complete bibliography of MSA studies until 1945.

A major turning point in the field of Modern South Arabian studies came in 1898, when a scholarly expedition to Southern Arabia was launched by the Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, now called the Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Fieldwork on MSA was carried out by the Austrian scholars David Heinrich Müller, Alfred Jahn, and, a couple of years later, by Wilhelm Hein. Two informants, one from Yemen and one from Soqoṭra, were also brought to Vienna, where they spent much of the year 1902. The result of this team's efforts was a great wealth of textual material in Mehri, Jibbali, and Soqoṭri, published between 1902 and 1909, which greatly advanced the field of MSA. For Mehri, the most relevant publications are Jahn (1902), which includes a substantial glossary, Müller (1902, 1907), and Hein (1909).[9] From this material also came the grammar of Jahn (1905), the important five-part (published in seven) grammatical study of Bittner (1909-15), and the short linguistic study of Rhodokanakis (1910). These remain the most comprehensive grammatical studies of Mehri to date. It must be pointed out that the Mehri texts collected by the Austrian expedition all represent the Yemeni (southern) dialect of the language.

In 1937, Bertram Thomas published a sketch of four MSA languages, one of which was Mehri.[10] This included the first new data on MSA collected in over thirty-five years. Thomas had had no previous knowledge of the material collected by the Austrian expedition, and so he provides an important independent witness to the languages. Unfortunately, Thomas was not a trained linguist, as he himself readily admits. Like so many of his nineteenth century predecessors, he was simply an adventurous traveler with a keen interest in language.[11] Thomas does have one significant distinction, in that he was the first to collect and publish data on Ḥarsusi and Baṭḥari, two MSA languages that were previously unknown to the scholarly world. In fact, Thomas's work remains to this day almost the only published work on Baṭḥari.

In 1953, Ewald Wagner published his excellent study of Mehri syntax, the most detailed grammatical study of Mehri from the time of Bittner until today. Wagner's data all came from the publications of

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[9] Hein died in 1903, at the age of only 42, but his materials were edited and published by Müller.

[10] See also the study of Thomas's data by Leslau (1947).

[11] Thomas (1932) is a fascinating account of his travels in Arabia, including his time among speakers of Modern South Arabian languages. Interestingly, Johnstone's texts 42, 75, and 76 (in Stroomer 1999) are similar to stories that Thomas recounts on pp. 246-51, 239-42, and 219-22, respectively.

the Austrian expedition (Müller, Jahn, and Hein) and from Thomas's sketch. His work remains indispensable for the study of Mehri and the other MSA languages.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Thomas Muir Johnstone of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, carried out fieldwork in Oman. The results of his efforts were dictionaries of three MSA languages (Ḥarsusi, Jibbali, and Mehri), a number of important articles, and two posthumously published text collections, on Mehri and Ḥarsusi (see Bibliography).[12] Much of Johnstone's Mehri material was collected in 1969-70 in Dubai. Afterward, he was able to bring his most productive informant, Ali Musallam, to London for a year, and he continued to work with Ali in Oman on subsequent visits in the mid-1970s. Johnstone's Mehri data all reflect the Omani dialect, in contrast with the Yemeni material collected by the Austrian expedition and by those researchers who have come after Johnstone (see below). This makes Johnstone's already weighty contributions to Mehri studies all the more valuable.

Sadly, Johnstone died in 1983, just one week shy of his fifty-ninth birthday. He managed to see the publication of his Ḥarsusi and Jibbali dictionaries, which appeared in 1977 and 1981, respectively, but his *Mehri Lexicon* was published only after his death, in 1987. With nearly five hundred pages of Mehri-English entries (often including comparative MSA material), a one hundred and forty-page English-Mehri word-list, fifty pages of verbal paradigms, and an additional ten pages of grammatical discussion, the *Mehri Lexicon* was a massively important contribution to the field of Semitic studies. Unfortunately, as Johnstone was not able to oversee the publication of his incomplete manuscript, the lexicon is filled with an enormous amount of typographical and other errors. The Mehri texts collected by Johnstone were edited and published in 1999 by Harry Stroomer, and it is on these texts that this grammar is based (see below, §1.5).[13]

Around the same time that Johnstone was active in the field, a Japanese researcher named Aki'o Nakano was also pursuing field research. The results of visits to Yemen in 1971 and 1974 and a stay in Oman in 1974 were a comparative lexicon of Yemeni Mehri, Jibbali,

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[12] Johnstone also collected about eighty Jibbali texts, but these have not been published.

[13] Stroomer (1996) is a preliminary publication of the first five of Johnstone's Mehri texts, though the transcription of the texts differs from that of the 1999 edition. The earlier publication, however, includes a greater number of textual notes, nearly all of which are references to entries in the *ML*.

and Soqoṭri, published in 1986. The lexicon has some value, but unfortunately, the book is riddled with errors and must be used with great caution.

Subsequent to the work of Johnstone there has been some activity in the research of Yemeni Mehri. Beginning in 1983, two French scholars, Antoine Lonnet and Marie-Claude Simeone-Senelle, made several trips to Yemen to do fieldwork on Mehri, Soqoṭri, and Hobyot. The result has been a number of important investigative articles and surveys, published both as a team and individually, which have added much to the field of MSA studies.

Between 2001 and 2004, a young Austrian scholar named Alexander Sima collected a large corpus of Mehri texts, both from an informant he brought over to Germany and from informants in Yemen. Sima published several important articles on Mehri, and wrote the bulk of a grammar, which he intended to submit for his Habilitation. Sadly, in late 2004, Sima was killed in a car accident in Yemen, only a few months before completing his work. He was just thirty-four years old. His text corpus was published in the summer of 2009 (as the present book was in its final stages), edited by Janet Watson and Werner Arnold. These texts are a goldmine of information, and greatly expand the available data on the language. It is hoped that Sima's grammar will also appear.

Janet Watson, who did much to prepare Sima's texts for publication, has also done fieldwork in Yemen and Oman, and is currently preparing her own grammar of the Yemeni *Sharqiyya* dialect. Given her expertise in Yemeni Arabic, this grammar is sure to be of high quality.

Finally, there was a recent dissertation on Yemeni Mehri poetry by Samuel Liebhaber (2007). Though the topic of the dissertation is not purely linguistic, a number of poetic texts are included, along with valuable commentary. Liebhaber is also publishing a separate edition of some of the poetic texts he has collected (Liebhaber forthcoming a). In this edition, the texts are given both in Roman transcription and in a modified Arabic script. Though this is not the first publication to use Arabic script to transcribe Mehri,[14] this is probably the first intended partly for a native Mehri readership.

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[14] Cf. Simeone-Senelle, Lonnet, and Bakheith (1984).

1.3. The Position of Mehri Within MSA

At present, there exists no modern comprehensive grammatical study, synchronic or diachronic, of any MSA language. The grammars of Baṭḥari and Hobyot are especially poorly known. Therefore, the internal subgrouping of the MSA languages cannot yet be determined with certainty. However, it is clear that Ḥarsusi and Baṭḥari—each of which have speakers numbering only in the hundreds—are very closely related to Mehri, as they share a number of innovative features. For example, in these three languages the active participle has developed into a future tense, while Jibbali and Hobyot have developed other means of expressing the future, and Soqoṭri has no such development.[15] Ḥarsusi and Baṭḥari are even intelligible by Mehris, and so they could be considered dialects of Mehri.

There are several morphological isoglosses between Jibbali and Soqoṭri that suggest that these two form a group. For example, they share the conditioned loss of prefixed *t-* in certain verbal forms, as well as remnants of certain productive feminine forms ending in *-i*.[16] Hobyot, discovered by scholars only thirty years ago, shows heavy influence from both Mehri and Jibbali, but it exhibits independent innovations as well.[17] Its exact classification remains difficult, however, in no small part because of the almost total lack of published data on this language. The languages may be tentatively classified as in the figure below, which is based on Lonnet (2006):

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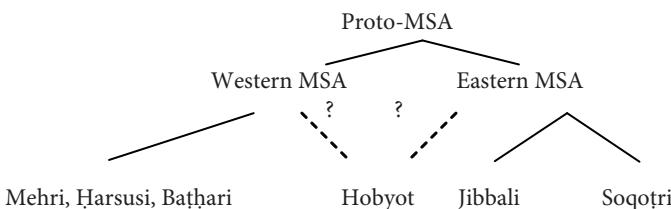
[15] On this development in Mehri, see Rubin (2007).

[16] On the loss of *t-*, see Johnstone (1968, 1980), Testen (1992), and Voigt (2006). Both Johnstone (1980) and Testen note the importance of this feature in grouping these two languages. On feminine marking with the suffix *-i*, see Lonnet (2008).

[17] The existence of Hobyot was first mentioned by Johnstone (1981: xii) and almost no data on the language have ever been published. Some data can be found in Lonnet (1985) and Arnold (1993); bits of data from various publications of Simeone-Senelle can also be found in her 1997 outline of MSA.

1.4. The Position of MSA in Semitic

The Semitic family of languages is one of the longest attested, most widely studied, and, thanks to Arabic, most widely spoken in the world. Yet with regards to the proper subgrouping of the Semitic family, a consensus has not been reached among scholars, and probably never will be. The following figure illustrates the subgrouping of the Semitic language family as it is best understood given the facts available to date.[18]
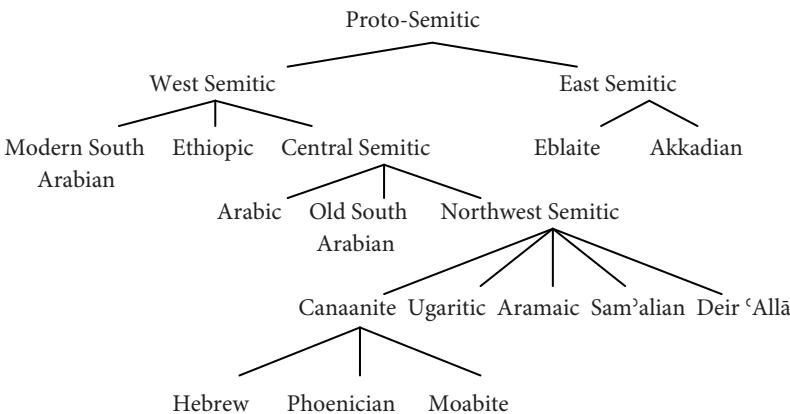
The exact position of MSA within West Semitic is unclear. It is probable that, like the Ethiopian branch, MSA is distinct from Central Semitic, since it did not participate in the innovation of the indicative *yaqtulu* form.[19] But do MSA and Ethiopian stem from a single node? Many have argued just this. They share many features—most of which are also shared by Arabic and/or Old South Arabian—but these features are mainly shared retentions from Proto-Semitic or are the result of areal phenomena (e.g., the leveling of *k*-suffixes in the perfect). The most important morphological feature shared by MSA and Ethiopian to the exclusion of Arabic and OSA is the presence of the imperfective form *yaqattəl*; this, however, is also a retention from Proto-Semitic (as

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[18] For a comprehensive discussion of the subgrouping of the Semitic languages, see Rubin (2008a).

[19] A minority of scholars, most notably David Cohen and his students, have suggested that the MSA imperfective form (e.g., Mehri *yəkūtəb*) does in fact stem from *yaqtulu*, and not from the Proto-Semitic **yVqattVl*; cf. Cohen (1974; 1984: 68-75) and Lonnet (2005: 187-88). See Goldenberg (1977: 475-77; 1979) for an argument against this scenario.

attested by its presence in Akkadian), and is therefore of no use in clas-sification. At present, MSA should be considered an independent branch of West Semitic.

From the first discovery of the MSA languages in the nineteenth century until quite recently, it was assumed by most scholars that the Old South Arabian languages must be the ancestors of the Modern South Arabian languages.[20] Both groups are attested in Southern Arabia; both groups preserve the three Proto-Semitic sibilants (*s*, *š*, *ś*), in contrast with almost all other Semitic languages; both make broad use of internal (broken) plurals; and the languages share a number of lexical items. But N. Nebes has shown, based on the orthogra-phy of forms made from weak verbal roots, that the OSA languages, like Arabic, possessed an imperfective of the Central Semitic type.[21] J. Huehnergard has since given further evidence in favor of the clas-sification of the OSA languages as Central Semitic.[22]

The recognition that the OSA languages should be classified as Central Semitic has made it clear that the MSA languages cannot be derived from the OSA languages. However, even without this fact, the innovations present in OSA and lacking in MSA should have made this clear, for example the presence of a suffixed definite article *-(h)n* in all OSA languages.

It has been suggested that Ḥaḍramitic—in some respects the most divergent of the OSA languages—may still in fact be connected with the Modern South Arabian languages. Ḥaḍramitic is the most easterly of the OSA languages, and its homeland (the Ḥaḍramawt, in central Yemen) approaches the Mahra, the westernmost area of present-day Modern South Arabian territory. More importantly, Ḥaḍramitic ex-hibits some curious isoglosses with MSA, namely the contrasting ini-tial consonants of the third person pronouns, the preposition *h-* 'to', and some possible lexical items.[23] Despite these connections between Ḥaḍramitic and MSA, there are a number of features of Ḥaḍramitic that preclude it from being the ancestor of the modern languages, most importantly the merger of *s* and *θ*, and possibly also *z* and *ð*,

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[20] Although many scholars made such a connection with accompanying doubts, it was the short article of Porkhomovsky (1997) that has been most influential in dis-proving this assumption.

[21] Nebes (1994). Nebes also provides discussion of the history of the debate.

[22] Huehnergard (2005).

[23] Noteworthy isoglosses can also be cited for MSA and other OSA languages. For example, the MSA word for 'one' that is reflected in Mehri *ṭād* is found outside of MSA only in Qatabanic (*ṭd*).

each of which are distinct in the modern languages;[24] the use of the common OSA preposition *bn* 'from', versus Mehri *mən*, Soqoṭri *mən*, etc.;[25] and the presence of the suffixed definite article in Ḥaḍramitic, versus the prefixed article (or complete lack of article) in Modern South Arabian. Therefore, it seems safest to say only that the similarities between Ḥaḍramitic and MSA may be due to language contact.[26]

1.5. The Grammar

The grammar described in this book is based on the Omani Mehri texts collected by Johnstone, as published by Stroomer (1999). Topics in phonology, morphology, and syntax are covered, though the coverage is disproportionate compared to what is found in most grammars. Because the system of transcription is imperfect, because the audio versions of these texts are also imperfect (see below, §1.7), and because an excellent overview of Mehri phonology has already been written by scholars with first-hand field experience,[27] phonology is treated here only briefly. Those features of phonology that most affect the morphology are discussed. With regard to morphology, all of the basic topics are covered, but in the realm of verbal morphology I have chosen to restrict the scope of my treatment. This is in part because fifty pages of verbal paradigms can be found already in Johnstone's *ML*. Mehri verbal morphology is immensely complex, due to the large number of "weak" root letters that have resulted in various phonetic changes, and there simply are not enough verbal forms attested in Johnstone's texts to provide complete paradigms for most verb types; Johnstone himself had to elicit verbal forms in order to complete his paradigms. Therefore, a thorough treatment of verbal morphology would simply be a re-hashing of what Johnstone has already printed. In my treatment of the verbal system, I have spent more time discussing the derived stems and the use of the tenses, both areas in which Johnstone left much to be said. A large part of this grammar is devoted to the syntax of Mehri. There are certainly areas in which more could have been said, but I have chosen to focus on those features which are most remarkable or most practical for reading Mehri texts. Each fea-

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[24] Beeston (1984: 68). Note that the interdentals and dental/alveolar stops have fallen together in some dialects of Mehri and in Soqoṭri (i.e., *θ* > *t* and *ð* > *d*), but this is an internal development.

[25] Arguably, the modern preposition could be explained as an Arabic borrowing.

[26] For further on this issue, see Rubin (2008a).

[27] Lonnet and Simeone-Senelle (1997).

ture described is well illustrated with examples from the texts. An index of these textual examples is included at the end of this volume.

I have restricted myself in this book to the Omani Mehri of Johnstone's texts, to the exclusion of other published Mehri material. This was done for a number of reasons. First, Johnstone's texts reflect a different dialect than the large corpus of material collected by the Austrian expedition, and it seemed wiser and clearer to try and describe well one type of Mehri, rather than try to describe multiple dialects simultaneously. Moreover, the material collected by the Austrians, and the work based on their material (e.g., that of Bittner 1909-15) is not always accurate. Second, Yemeni Mehri has been treated in a number of publications, and several first-rate scholars are currently working on additional descriptions of Yemeni Mehri. Third, other published material on Omani Mehri (namely, that of Thomas 1937) is, though very interesting and important, not very sound in terms of its linguistic method.

My philosophy in compiling this grammar was essentially to deduce as much as possible directly from the texts, without the interference of previous descriptions of Mehri. Of course, previous works were invaluable in their help, but, as much as possible, I consulted these only after forming my own initial theories. To this end, Johnstone made the following remark, in an unpublished manuscript:

> I have not been preoccupied in the course of my own field work to run down errors in the work of my predecessors, since I have found it on the whole easier not to study their publications too closely. Certain of the wrong ideas I did acquire from them did mislead me seriously, and these of course stick in my mind.[28]

Johnstone was referring to the works of the Austrian expedition. Of course, I have many more predecessors than Johnstone did, authors of the far more reliable material of the last three decades (including that of Johnstone himself). Still, in compiling this grammar, I was wary of having too many presuppositions based on earlier publications, preferring to reach my own conclusions. Despite this philosophy, and despite the restricted scope of this grammar, reference will occasionally be made to other corpora, where useful and appropriate.

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[28] This manuscript, entitled "The reliability of the SAE [= Südarabische Expedition] publications on the MSA languages", is in the possession of A. Lonnet, who very kindly allowed me to borrow it for study.

1.6. Johnstone's Texts

The corpus of Johnstone's texts published by Stroomer (1999) includes 106 texts, numbered 1 to 104, with the addition of 14A and 71A. The texts cover a variety of genres. There are conversations, folk tales (often quite humorous, and sometimes bawdy), explanations of cultural practices, tribal histories, biographical stories, and poems. A few of the texts are translations, either from English or from the Yemeni Mehri texts of the Austrian expedition. Overall, the texts are immensely interesting, both as windows into Mehri culture and as entertaining stories.

A number of Johnstone's texts exist in multiple drafts, both handwritten and typed, as Stroomer describes in the preface to his edition. In such cases, the drafts often disagree on issues of transcription. Citations of the texts in the *ML* also often include variants in transcription from what appears in the drafts or in the published versions. Moreover, Stroomer himself made editorial decisions regarding transcription, with no aim at internal consistency. The result is that, as already noted, transcription of the texts is inconsistent, and the reader must be aware of this issue.

1.7. Johnstone's Audio Material

For most of Johnstone's 106 texts, there exist audio recordings, which were made in the 1970s. The original recordings are located in the Durham University Library, to which Johnstone willed all of his papers. Copies of these recordings are held in the British Library Sound Archives (reference C733), which has also transferred the tapes onto compact discs. Mrs. Bernice Johnstone kindly gave me permission to receive copies of her late husband's material, and I obtained CD copies of tapes 115-122.[29] Of the 106 texts printed in Stroomer's edition (numbered 1-104, with 14A and 71A inserted), I was able to consult the audio for 87 texts. The texts for which I did not find audio recordings are 7-11, 43, 78, 86, and 94-104. There are an additional five texts that are missing just some lines or words. Audio probably exists for some or all of these missing texts, but I was unable to find them without going to London and sifting through many more recordings.

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[29] Tape 115 turned out to contain only Johnstone's Ḥarsusi text 3, published by Stroomer (2004).

The recordings of the Mehri texts are of limited value. They are obviously not recordings of natural speech, but rather of a native speaker reading from a transcript.[30] Since Mehri is not normally written, the reading is very unnatural. As he struggles to read his own language (and in many cases, his own words), the reader stumbles, pauses, and corrects himself often. The audio exhibits many deviations from the printed edition, though these are usually minor. The audio is still valuable for hearing the sounds of Mehri, and for cross-checking the many items in the printed edition of the texts that seem to be mistakes (see Appendix). In general, I assume the printed text to be correct, unless a form seems ungrammatical or illogical, in which case I rely on the audio.

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[30] This native speaker is Ali Musallam, Johnstone's primary informant. See the preface to the *ML*.

PHONOLOGY

2.1. Mehri Consonants

The following table illustrates the phonemic inventory of Mehri:

	Labial	Labiodental	Interdental	Dental/ Alveolar	Lateral	Palato- Alveolar	Velar	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Stops									
unvoiced				*t*			*k*		ʾ
voiced	*b*			*d*			*g*		
glottalic				*ṭ*			*ḳ*		
Fricatives									
unvoiced		*f*	*ṯ*	*s*	*ś*	*š*	*x*	*ḥ*	*h*
voiced			*ḏ*	*z*	*l*	*(j)*	*ġ*	*(ʿ)*	
glottalic			*ḏ̣*	*ṣ*	*ź*	*ṣ̌*			
Nasal	*m*			*n*					
Trill				*r*					
Approximant	*w*						*y*		

Notes:
- The consonant *j* occurs only in loanwords. In the texts, it is found in the word *jənbáyyət* 'dagger' (from Arabic *janbiyyat-*).
- The consonant *ʿ* is rare. See below, §2.1.2.
- The consonant *ʾ* is often lost. See below, §2.1.2.
- The phoneme *l* is realized as *w* in some environments. See below, §2.1.4.
- Johnstone classified the phoneme *ź* as voiced, rather than glottalic, but it behaves like the other glottalic consonants. See below, §2.2.1.
- The phoneme *ṣ̌* is very rare. It only occurs in two words in the texts: *ṣ̌ōbəʾ* (var. *ṣ̌ōbaʾ*) 'fingers', and *mənṣ̌əbēt* 'bow'. In at least some Yemeni dialects this phoneme is an affricate, and is thus transcribed *ǯ* in some publications (cf. Sima 2009).
- In Yemeni dialects, *g* is realized as a palatal [ɟ] or [dʒ].

2.1.1. The Glottalics

The consonants *ḏ̣*, *ḳ*, *ṣ*, *ṭ*, *ṣ̌*, and *ź* are glottalic. Another term used for such consonants is "ejective". Semitists often refer to these consonants as "emphatic", a term which is rather vague. In Arabic, these "emphatic" consonants are pharyngealized, while in the Ethiopian languages they are glottalic. Johnstone was the first scholar to recognize that these consonants were in fact glottalics in Mehri (and in the other MSA languages), and his first announcement of this fact in 1970 (published as Johnstone 1975b) was very important to the field of Semitics.

It seems that the glottalic articulation of the "glottalic" consonants is not always present. Johnstone (*AAL*, p. 6) makes two important points:

1. Aspiration of most of the voiceless non-glottalic consonants constitutes an important element in the distinction of glottalic/non-glottalic pairs.
2. The degree of glottalization can vary in strength, depending on a number of factors, such as whether a consonant is initial, medial, or final, and the effect of contiguous consonants.

As Johnstone also notes, it is not completely clear how the glottalic consonants fit into the categories of voiced and voiceless. Johnstone (*AAL*, p. 7) wrote that they are "perhaps best defined as partially voiced". What is certain is that the glottalics pair with voiced consonants when it comes to certain morphological features, for example the appearance of the definite article (§4.4) and the prefix of the D/L-Stem (§6.2). The glottalics also form an isolated category when it comes to certain phonetic changes, though many of these changes are also caused by guttural consonants (see below, §2.2.1).

Recent fieldwork by Janet Watson has resulted in some very interesting data on the glottalic consonants in Yemeni Mehri and her work is certain to greatly improve our understanding on this topic.[1]

It should be mentioned that the consonants *ḏ̣*, *ṣ̌*, and *ź* are transcribed by some scholars as *θ̣*, *č̣*, and *ṣ́*, respectively. The symbol *ṣ́* for *ź* is probably preferable, since *ź* does not make it clear that this phoneme is the glottalic counterpart of *ś*. Johnstone believed this phoneme to be the *voiced* counterpart of *ś*, rather than a glottalic, which explains his

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[1] See Watson and Bellem (forthcoming).

use of *ẓ́*. But *ẓ́* clearly patterns with the other glottalic consonants (see §2.2.1). The question of *č* versus *š* is an open one, and it seems that perhaps this phoneme is realized in different ways among the Mehri dialects. It is not an especially important question when it comes to transcription, since this phoneme only occurs two or three times in all of Johnstone's texts.

2.1.2. The Consonants *ʾ* and *ʿ*

The consonant *ʿ* has in most environments become *ʾ* or zero. For example, in word-initial position, we find the verbs *ʾaygəb* 'love' and *ʾayməl* 'do, make', the noun *ʾāyn* 'eye', the number *ʾōśər* 'ten', and the particle *ʾād* 'still, yet', all of which we know from comparative evidence originally had initial *ʿayin*.[2] In the middle of a word, *ʿ* normally disappears, as in:

> *bād* 'after' < **báʿ(a)d*
> *ṭām* 'he tasted' < **ṭaʿám*
> *ṣāḳ* 'he called' < **ṣaʿáḳ*
> *sēt* '(long) period of time' < **sáʿat*

In a relatively small number of cases, medial *ʿ* becomes *ʾ*. This seems to happen when *ʿ* was preceded or followed by a long vowel or diphthong, as in *bəʾēli* 'owners' (cf. sg. *bāl*), *nəʾaym* 'soft', and *nəʾīt* 'udder'.

In word-final position, *ʿ* is lost in all verbs (e.g., *hūma* < **hūməʿ*; see below, §2.2.2), but for nouns and adjectives it sometimes remains. It is difficult to come to any conclusions on word-final *ʿ* in nouns and adjectives, since there is some inconsistency in transcription. For example, we find *arba* 'four', but *arōbəʾ* 'fourth' (though the one attestation of *arba* [12:10] is pronounced *arbaʾ* on the audio).

In some cases, medial *ʿ* is preserved in transcription and pronunciation. Probably the most common examples are the word *bəʿayr* 'male camel' (cf. *bēr* 'camels') and *ʿaynət* 'a little' (see §5.5.1), but there are several other examples, like *ḳēʿyōt* 'female spirit' (68:13) and *səbʿayyət* 'shawl, loincloth' (85:16).[3] On the effect that the consonant *ʿ* has on certain vowels, see further below (§2.2.2).

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[2] Cf. Arabic *ʿagaba*, *ʿamala*, *ʿayn*, *ʿašr*, and *ʿād*.
[3] The pronunciation of the *ʿ* can be heard clearly on the audio.

The consonant ʾ is normally lost in medial position, as in:

rōh 'head' < **ráʾ(a)h*
fōl 'omen' < **fáʾ(a)l*
sōl 'demand payment of a debt' < **saʾál*

The sequence *aʾ(a)* must have first become *ā*. However, the fact that *aʾ(a)* became *ō* (as in *rōh* and *sōl*), but *aˤ(a)* became *ā* (as in *bād* and *ṭām*), shows that the shift of **ā > ō* happened before the loss of ˤ, and that when *aˤ(a)* became *ā*, the shift of **ā > ō* was no longer operative. That is to say, we can posit a relative chronology for the following sound changes:

  1. **aʾ(a) > *ā* (e.g., **ráʾ(a)h > *rāh*)
  2. **ā > ō* (e.g., **rāh > rōh*)
  3. **aˤ(a) > ā* (e.g., **taˤam > ṭām*)

In initial position, Johnstone's transcription of ʾ is inconsistent. This is especially apparent when prefixed clitics are involved. For example, we find both *ʾəl* and *əl*, *ətēm* and *ʾətēm*, *l-ʾād* and *l-ād*, *w-ʾāmōr* and *w-āmōr*. Even where the ʾ is written, it is usually not pronounced.

In final position, ʾ is usually lost, though we find it, for example, in adjectives of the pattern *CəCayC*, e.g., *bərayʾ* 'free (of debt); innocent', *ðərayʾ* 'strange', and *ṭərayʾ* 'fresh, damp'.

Finally, it should be noted that in the *ML*, ˤ and ʾ are often confused, so one should always be wary of this fact.

2.1.3. The Non-occurrence of h-

The phoneme *h*, when followed by *ə* or no vowel, is lost before *h* or *ḥ*. That is,

$$h(ə)C > C \text{ / } C = h, ḥ$$

This rule affects the preposition *h-* 'to; for' and the *h*-prefix of the H-Stem. So, for example, there are a number of cases in which we expect the preposition *h-* (§8.8) before an indirect object, but it is not present:

amtəwē həbēr 'pasture for the camels' (13:8)
ənḥōm nəḥlēb ḥənfayən 'we should milk for ourselves' (35:20)

ʾāmōr ḥāmēh 'he said to his mother' (42:3)
ʾāmōr hēxər ḥəbrē 'the old man said to his son' (83:2)
ʾāmərk ḥərbātiyɛ 'I said to my friends' (91:4)
səḥaṭ ḥəmətəh 'he slaughtered for his sister-in-law' (94:48)

In at least two cases, we find the expected *h-* in the printed edition, namely, *h-ḥāgərīt* (68:14) and *hə-ḥaywəl* (91:11). But this is simply a difference in transcription; on the audio, the *h-* is not pronounced. The transcriptions in 68:14 and 91:11 would actually be preferable, if we were attempting to standardize written Mehri.[4]

In the H-Stem perfect, which has the pattern *həCCūC*, the prefix *hə-* is lost when the first radical is *h* or *ḥ*. For example, we find the perfects *hmū* 'call, name', *ḥnūṯ* 'make s.o. break an oath', *ḥrūḳ* 'burn (trans.)', *ḥyēʾ* 'cure', and *ḥyīl* 'trick s.o.'. However, this is not especially noteworthy, since the prefix *hə-* is usually lost when the first root consonant is voiceless (see §6.3).

2.1.4. The Loss of l

In Omani Mehri, the consonant *l* is subject to phonetic change when it occurs in the environment *CV__C*, whether or not the final *C* is part of the same syllable. When the preceding vowel is stressed, the sequence *Vl* becomes *ɛ̄* (*ā* after a guttural or glottalic), and when unstressed, the *l* is simply realized as *w*. That is to say:

> *CV́lC > Cɛ̄C or CāC*
> *CVlC > CVwC*

We can see this change in nouns that have the pattern *CVCC*:

> *ʾɛ̄f* '1000' (< *ʾalf)
> *gēd* 'skin' (< *gald)
> *ḥām* 'dream' (< *ḥalm)
> *kawb* 'dog, wolf' (< *kalb) (with unexpected *aw*)
> *kēṯ* 'speech' (< *kalṯ)
> *ḳāb* 'mind; heart' (< *ḳalb)

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[4] The texts of the Austrian expedition are more inconsistent with the transcription of *h-* before *h* or *ḥ*, and this has caused some occasional confusion among subsequent scholars. On this, see the brief discussion in Bittner (1913b: 51-52).

The *l* is present in all of the plural forms of the above words, e.g., *ḥəlawm* 'dreams' and *kəlōb* 'dogs'. We also find this change in marked feminine nouns of the pattern *CVCC-*, as in:

> *ḥəwḳāt* 'ring' (< **ḥəlḳāt*)
> *kəwbēt* 'female dog, wolf' (< **kəlbēt*)
> *kəwṯēt* 'story' (< **kəlṯēt*)
> *ḳəwsēt* 'button' (< **ḳəlsēt*)
> *məwkēt* 'possession of a woman in marriage' (< **məlkēt*)
> *xəwfēt* 'window' (< **xəlfēt*)
> *xəwḳāt* 'mole' (< **xəlḳāt*)

As with the masculine nouns, the *l* is present in the plural forms, e.g., *kəlabtən* 'female dogs' and *xəlōyəf* 'windows'. The loss of *l* can also be seen in a few nouns of other patterns, for example *ġəwḏ̣ayn* 'fatness' (root *ġlḏ̣*), *məwsē* 'rain' (root *lsw*), *məsəwmūt* 'sacrificed animal' (root *slm*), and *səwsəlēt* 'chain' (root *slsl*). Also, even when a noun does not normally meet the conditions for loss of *l*, it may do so when a suffix is added, as in *ḳəbáylət* 'tribe' vs. *aḳəbētkəm* 'your tribe' (38:16, < **aḳəbáltkəm*).

When the syllable *lə-* occurs word initially—as with other syllables of the shape *Cə-* whose initial consonant is a liquid or nasal—it is often realized *əl-*. Consequently, the initial sequence *əl-* often shifts to *əw-*. This affects a small number of nouns and adjectives, like *əwbədēt* 'noise', *əwbōn* 'white', and *əwfōḳ* 'soft cheese curds'.

The shift of *Vl* to *Vw* or *ē* is also very prevalent in verbs that have *l* as a root consonant. From verbs whose first root consonant is *l*, we either find the alternation of *l* and *w* throughout the paradigm (e.g., with G-Stems), or we find *w* consistently (e.g., with H-Stems), for example:

> *əwbūd* 'he hit, shot' (< **ləbūd*, cf. *yəlūbəd* 'he hits, shoots')
> *yəwbōs* 'he wears' (< **yəlbōs*, cf. *lībəs* 'he wore')
> *həwbūs* 'he dressed (s.o.)' (< **həlbūs*, cf. G *lībəs* 'he wore')
> *əwtēġ* 'he was killed' (< **lətēġ*, cf. *lūtəġ* 'he killed')[5]

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[5] The G perfect *əwtūġ* is also sometimes found in place of *lūtəġ*.

From verbs whose second root consonant is *l*, we find forms like:

ḥ**ēmək 'I dreamt' (< *ḥə́lmək, cf. ḥayləm 'he dreamt')
ġəwḳawt 'she looked' (< *ġəlḳáwt, cf. ġəlōḳ 'he looked')
kəwṭūt 'she told' (< *kəlṭūt, cf. kəlūṯ 'he told')
ḥəwbō 'they (two) milked' (< *ḥəlbō, cf. ḥəlūb 'he milked')
yəġākəm 'they look' (< *yəġə́lkəm, cf. yəġawləḳ 'he looks')
təšgēsən 'she argues with' (< *təšgálsən, cf. šəgēləs 'he argued with')
səwbōna 'will wait (ms)' (< *səlbōna, cf. sīləb 'he waited')**

And from verbs whose final root consonant is *l*, we find forms like:

ə**ḥtəwēk 'I went crazy' (< *əḥtəwə́lk, cf. əḥtəwūl 'he went crazy')
śxəwəlēk 'I sat' (< *śxəwələ́lk, cf. śxəwəlūl 'he sat')
śəlēs 'take it!' (< *śələ́ls, cf. śələ́li 'take me!')**

The loss of *l* is blocked before a guttural letter, as in *ṣalḥ* 'safe-conduct; truce', *ləḥām* 'he touched', and *həlḥawḳ* 'he rounded up (animals)'; before *y*, as in *səlyēba* 'will wait (mp)'; and when *l* is followed by another *l*, as in *dəllōna* '(I) will guide' and *də́llək* 'I guided'. There is also one case of the loss of *l* being blocked before the glottalic *ṭ*, namely, *yəlṭōf* (15:10); the loss is not blocked before all glottalics (cf. *ġəwḳawt*, above), but perhaps this is the rule before *ṭ*.

2.1.5. The Loss of t

The prefix *tə-* is sometimes lost in pronunciation when it occurs before the consonants *t*, *s*, *ṣ*, *ś*, and *š*. In several places in Johnstone's texts, the prefix is missing in transcription, although in one of these cases the *tə-* is present in the audio version:

tēyən (15:18) (< *tətēyən*) (*tə-* audible on audio!)
ṭaym (35:5) (< *təṭaym*) (*tə-* not audible on audio)
tīyən (35:12) (< *tətīyən*) (*tə-* not audible on audio)
šēźəm (57:8) (< *təšēźəm*) (*tə-* not audible on audio)
təbēk (94:21) (< *tətbēk*; cf. *tətbēš*, 94:22) (no audio found)

In a few other places, the prefix *tə-* is not pronounced, but is indicated in transcription in parentheses:[6]

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[6] See also the paradigm of the verb *əttūma* 'listen', in the *ML*, pp. lvi-lvii.

(tə)tawyən (7:3) (no audio found)
(tə)šəhēgəs (22:32) (*tə*- not audible on audio)
(t)səyūr (44:9) (*tə*- not audible on audio)
(tə)ṣāri (54:19) (*tə*- not audible on audio)
(tə)ttə́ḳən (64:6) (*tə*- not audible on audio)
(tə)śəlūlən (68:9) (*tə*- not audible on audio)
(tə)šakfi (74:17) (*tə*- not audible on audio)
(tə)ṭōm (75:22) (*tə*- not audible on audio)

A comparison of the transcription with the audio reveals a number of places in which the prefix *tə*- is transcribed, but not heard on the audio, for example:

tətɛ́həh (15:6) (*tə*- not audible on audio)
tətīyən (15:17) (*tə*- not audible on audio)
tṣābərən (27:23) (*tə*- not audible on audio)
tšakf (37:2) (*tə*- not audible on audio)
təsyūrən (37:4) (*tə*- not audible on audio)
təśnɛ̄š (48:7) (*tə*- not audible on audio)
təṭwahi (75:6) (*tə*- not audible on audio)
təsyērəm (89:12) (*tə*- not audible on audio)
təsbēṭ (89:13) (*tə*- not audible on audio)

However, there are also examples where the prefix is found both in transcription and on the audio:

təśɛ́məh (3:12; 85:28) (*tə*- audible on audio)
təsmēḥəm (24:41) (*tə*- audible on audio)
təṣábrən (58:9) (*tə*- audible on audio)
təslɛ́bi (76:17) (*tə*- audible on audio)
təsēmi (83:5) (*tə*- audible on audio)
təślɛli (85:24) (*tə*- audible on audio)

Further investigation in the field is needed to see how regular the loss of *tə*- really is. It should be added that the Mehri numeral '9' (see §9.1.1 for the forms) seems to exhibit this same loss of historical *tə*- before *s*, and that the loss of the *t*- prefix has parallels in Jibbali and Soqoṭri.[7]

Finally, it is relevant to note here the non-occurrence of the particle *ð*- before the prefix *tə*- (see §7.1.10).

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[7] See further in Testen (1988) and the references therein.

2.1.6. Gemination

Consonant gemination exists in Mehri, though it plays almost no role in derivational or inflectional morphology. Gemination is simply lexical in words like *ǵīggēn* 'boy' (vars. *ǵiggēn*, *ǵəggēn*, *ǵīgēn*, and *ǵaygēn*), *ǵəggēt* 'girl', *ḥəllāḳ* 'barber', *bə-ḥəllay* 'at night', *sənnawrət* 'cat', *ʾamma* 'as for' (§12.5.3), *ḳənnawn* 'small', and *xəmmōh* 'five'.

Gemination does not occur word finally, and so a final geminate cluster is simplified. This is most noticeable with verbs whose second and third root consonants are identical (geminate verbs). A few examples are:

> *rəd* 'he came back', cf. *rəddəm* 'they came back'
> *ham* 'name', cf. *həmməh* 'his name'
> *kāl* 'all; each', cf. *kalləh* 'all of it'

Some nouns and adjectives exhibit gemination in the masculine, but not in the feminine; others exhibit gemination in the plural, but not in the singular. An example is *xəddōmət* 'workers' (sg. *xōdəm*). Gemination here is obviously part of the morphology of the plural pattern, but such examples are met infrequently and are mainly (or possibly all) borrowings from Arabic.

There are a number of nouns with the pattern *CəCCōC* or *CəCCāC* that designate occupations. One might suggest that in this pattern the gemination is a feature of derivational morphology. However, these words are most likely just borrowings from Arabic. Examples are *ḥəllāḳ* 'barber', *ṣəyyōd* 'fisherman', *ḳaṣṣāb* 'butcher', *dəllōl* 'guide', and *ḥəddōd* 'blacksmith'.

With some T-Stem verbs, gemination results from assimilation, e.g., *naṭṭəb* 'fall off, drop (intrans.)' (< **naṭṭəb*) and *əttūma* 'listen' (< **əhtūma*). See further in §6.5.1 and §6.5.3.

2.1.7. The Shift of b > m

There is an assimilatory sound change in Omani Mehri **bVn > mVn*. This is seen in the following words in the texts:

> *məndawḳ* 'rifle' < Arabic *bunduq*
> *mənēdəm* 'person' < *bənēdəm* (lit. 'son of Adam')
> *(ʾəm)-mən* 'between' < *ʾəm-bən*

The *ML* (p. 268) also lists a noun *mənnəy* 'builder', which must be from the root *bny* (the *ML* also lists a noun *bənnāy*, p. 50). Forms of the above words with the original *b* are found in Yemeni Mehri dialects, e.g., *beyn* 'between' (Jahn 1905: 125; Bittner 1914a: 12) and *bnādam* 'person' (Sima 2009: 230, text 45:2).

2.2. Mehri Vowels

Mehri vowels are a source of considerable disagreement, and I will leave it to those who have done fieldwork to figure out the system precisely. In Johnstone's system (as outlined in the *ML*), there are six long vowels, two certain short vowels, and four diphthongs:

Long vowels:	*ā ɛ̄ ē ī ō ū*
Short vowels:	*a ə (ɛ)*
Diphthongs:	*ay aw əy əw*

As already noted, the transcription of vowels in the texts (and in the *ML*) is inconsistent. This is in part due to some variation in the pronunciation itself. The vowels *ī* and *ē* are very often interchangeable, as are *ū* and *ō*. This is reflected in the audio, as well. I have tried in this grammar (except when citing passages from Johnstone's texts) to be consistent in the use of either *ī* or *ē*, *ū* or *ō*. The vowels *ī* and *ū* are susceptible to diphthongization (see below, §2.2.1 and §2.2.2) and this fact helps to decide whether a form has an underlying *ī* or *ē*, *ū* or *ō*.

The long vowel *ɛ̄* is in most cases an allophone of *ā*, but as Johnstone points out (*ML*, p. xiii), minimal pairs can be found, e.g., *bār* 'he went at night' ~ *bɛ̄r* 'camels'. The short vowel *ɛ* does not seem to be phonemic. It is used in transcription as a variant of both *ə* and *a*, though more often for the latter. Stressed *ɛ́* is sometimes found in place of *ɛ̄*, just as *á* is sometimes found in place of *ā*. Short *ɛ* is used most consistently in the set of singular possessive suffixes attached to plural nouns (§3.2.2). Note that the short vowel *ə* can, and very often does, carry stress.

The diphthong *ay* seems to alternate with *ā* in the environment *C__r*, as in *ġayr* ~ *ġār* 'except', *xayr* ~ *xār* 'better'. The preposition *ð̣ār* 'on', which has the base *ð̣ayr-* before suffixes (§8.22), also exhibits this alternation, though in a predictable manner.

We also find other vowel symbols in Johnstone's transcription. Stressed *ó* (usually followed by *h*) is a variant transcription of *ō* (e.g., *ṯrōh* ~ *ṯróh* 'two'; *hō* ~ *hóh* 'I'). Stressed *ú* is a very rare variant tran-

scription of ō or ū (e.g., ḥərōhk ~ ḥərúhk 'your head'). Short u (< *əw),
written as an independent word, is often used as a variant of the con-
junction wə- (see §12.1.1). A short i is used in place of ī in predictable
environments: when it occurs word-finally (unstressed) in polysyl-
labic words (e.g., báyti 'my house', tēti 'women (dual)'); when it serves
as a variant pronunciation of the unstressed initial or medial sequence
yə (e.g., ġátiḏək ~ ġátyəḏək 'you got angry'; ð-yəḥōm ~ ð-iḥōm '(that)
he wants'; yəðbōr ~ īðəbōr 'hornets')); and, usually, when it serves as the
linking vowel for the dual and plural possessive suffixes attached to
plural nouns (e.g., ḥázihəm 'their goats'; see §3.2.2). Short i also occurs
as a rare variant of ī in a few words, like ġīggēn ~ ġiggēn, as well as in
the transcription of a few Arabic words and names found in the texts.

Nasalized long vowels occur in Mehri in a very few words, and are
of doubtful phonemic status. The vowel õ occurs in just a single word,
ḥõ 'where?', which plainly derives from *ḥōn (cf. Ḥarsusi ḥōnəh),
which in turn comes from *ʾān (cf. Hebrew ʾān 'where?'). We can find
a near minimal pair, ḥõ 'where?' vs. ḥō 'I', but given that õ occurs in no
other words, we can hardly call it phonemic. A nasalized vowel is also
occasionally used to transcribe the word for 'yes'. So we find, for
example, ʾahã (27:27) or ɛ̃hɛ̃ (80:14) (both confirmed by the audio) in
place of the more common transcriptions ahā and ɛhɛ̄. But this nasal
vowel is no more phonemic than the nasal vowel often heard in English
'huh?' or 'uh-huh'. On one additional case of a nasal vowel, see §11.9.

On the relationship of the vowels and word stress, see §2.3.

2.2.1. The Effects of Glottalic Consonants on Vowels

The glottalic consonants ḏ̣, ḳ, ṣ, ṭ, and ź cause the changes ī > ay, ū >
aw, and ē > ā, when these vowels bear primary stress. (The phoneme ṣ̌
is so rare that there is no evidence for ṣ̌ followed by ī, ū, or ē.) These
changes have the following effects, in synchronic terms:

For ī > ay:

1. The vowel ī in the first syllable of Gb perfects becomes ay, e.g.,
    ḳayrəb 'approach, be near', ḏ̣ayma 'be thirsty' (cf. ṭībər 'break',
    wīḳa 'be, become').
2. The vowel ī which occurs before certain object suffixes on 3ms
    and 3fp perfects (see §3.2.3) becomes ay, e.g., zərḳayh 'he stab-
    bed him' (cf. wəzmīh 'he gave him') and śəbḳaysən 'he tied
    them' (cf. ġəbrīsən 'he met them').

3. The vowel *ī* which occurs in the 3mp perfect of many H-, Š1-, and T2-Stem verbs becomes *ay*, e.g., H *həḳṣaym* 'they spent the afternoon' (cf. *hənsīm* 'they breathed'), and T2 *əntəḳayl* 'they chose' (cf. *əftəkīr* 'they wondered').

4. The suffix *-īta* of the fs active participle becomes *-ayta*, e.g., *shəṭayta* 'will slaughter (fs)' (cf. *kəwṯīta* 'will tell (fs)').

For *ū > aw*:

5. The vowel *ū* which follows the second root consonant in Ga-, H-, and Š1-Stem perfects becomes *aw*, e.g., G *rəṣawn* 'he tied up' (cf. *ġəlūḵ* 'he looked') and H *həbṣawr* 'he saw well' (cf. *həġfūl* 'he cheered up'). In the Ga-Stem, this means that the 3ms and 3mp perfects look identical when the second root consonant is a glottalic.

6. The 3fs suffix *-ūt* of most perfects becomes *-awt*, e.g., *həwṭəḳawt* 'she secured' (cf. *həgəllūt* 'she boiled'), though we find exceptions, e.g., *źāṭūt* 'she took'. There is alternation even within the same verb paradigm, e.g., *ṣaḳōt* 'she called' (64:29), but *ṣaḳawt* 'she called' (99:43).

7. The vowel *ū* which follows the first root consonant in the G imperfect becomes *aw*, e.g., *əḳawdər* 'I can' (cf. *əwūzəm* 'I give').

8. The vowel *ū* in the first syllable of Ga perfects whose final root letter is ʿ, *ġ*, *ḥ*, or *x* (see §2.2.2) becomes *aw*, e.g., *ḳawla* 'he let', root *ḳlʿ* (cf. *nūka* 'he came', root *nkʿ*), and *ṭawrəḥ* 'he let' (cf. *sūbəḥ* 'he swam').

9. The vowel *ū* which occurs before the 2ms object suffix when attached to 3ms and 3mp perfect (see §3.2.3) becomes *aw*, e.g., *ṣaḳawk* 'he called you' (cf. *kəsūk* 'he found you').

10. The plural suffix *-ūtən*, most commonly found attached to active participles, becomes *-awtən*, e.g., *məfḳawtən* 'will let marry (cp)' (cf *gəzmūtən* 'will swear (fp)').

For *ē > ā*:

11. The feminine suffix *-ēt* becomes *-āt*. This applies to nouns (e.g., *fəźźāt* 'silver', *wərḳāt* 'note, paper') and to the forms of some perfects (e.g., G passives *xəwḳāt* 'she was born' and *səbṭāt* 'she was hit').

12. The *ē* of Ga subjunctives and imperatives becomes *ā*, e.g., *yəġźāź* 'he winks' (cf. *yədlēl* 'he guides') and *āḳāf* 'shut up!' (cf. *āzēm* 'give!').

13. The *ē* after the second root letter of G passives becomes *ā*, e.g., *rəṣān* 'he was tied up' (cf. *ḳəbēr* 'he was buried').

This list is not exhaustive, but covers the most important and commonly seen changes. Note that most guttural consonants also cause these changes, but because they also have other effects, they are treated separately below.

As noted above, these changes of *ū, ī,* and *ē* only take place when these vowels bear primary stress. So we find, for example, *źífōn* 'guests', *ṭīhōr* 'pure (mp)', with primary stress on the final syllable, and *ḳēʿəyēti* 'two female spirits', with primary stress on the penultimate syllable.[8]

2.2.2. The Effects of Guttural Consonants on Vowels

Guttural letters (velar and pharyngeal fricatives and the glottal stop and fricative) cause a number of sound changes, though they have their greatest effect on the formation of verbs. The letters *ʾ, ʿ, ġ, h, ḥ,* and *x* can all be considered 'weak' root letters with respect to the verbal system, in that they all cause phonetic changes in the verbal paradigm. However, the gutturals are not a totally uniform group.

The four velar and pharyngeal fricatives (*ʿ, ġ, ḥ,* and *x*) all cause the same changes as the glottalics, that is, *ī > ay, ū > aw,* and *ē > ā*. So, we find:

For *ī > ay*:

1. The vowel *ī* in the first syllable of Gb perfects becomes *ay*, e.g., *ḥaybər* 'be cold' (cf. *ṯībər* 'break').

2. The vowel *ī* which occurs before certain object suffixes on 3ms and 3fp perfects (see §3.2.3) becomes *ay*, e.g., *nəkayhəm* 'he came to them', root *nkʿ* (cf. *kəsīhəm* 'he found them', root *ksʾ*) and *səmḥays* 'he excused her' (cf. *bəgdīs* 'he chased her').

3. The vowel *ī* which occurs in the 3mp perfect of many H-, Š1-, and T2-Stem verbs becomes *ay*, e.g., *həbġayź* 'they hated' (cf. *hənsīm* 'they breathed').

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[8] An exception is *ḳayṣōr* 'short (mp)' (< **ḳīṣōr*), in which unstressed *ī* became *ay*, probably because there are two glottalics in this word.

4. The suffix *-īta* of the fs participle becomes *-ayta*, e.g., *əwtġáyta* 'will kill (fs)' (cf. *kəwṯīta* 'will tell (fs)').

For *ū > aw*:

5. The vowel *ū* which follows the second root consonant in H- and Š1-Stem perfects becomes *aw*, e.g., *həbawr* 'he took out (animals) at night' (< **həbʿawr*) and *həbġawź* 'he hated' (cf. *həġfūl* 'he cheered up'). In the H-Stem, this means that the 3ms and 3mp perfects look identical when the second root consonant is a guttural. Unlike with glottalics (see Rule #5, §2.2.1), this rule does not apply to G-Stems whose second root consonant is a guttural letter; see §7.2.5 and §7.2.6.
6. The 3fs suffix *-ūt* of most perfects becomes *-awt*, e.g., *nəfəġawt* 'she threw' (cf. *fətəkūt* 'she went out').
7. The vowel *ū* which follows the first root consonant in the G imperfect becomes *aw*, e.g., *nəġawləḳ* 'we look' (cf. *nəġūzəm* 'we swear'). There are exceptions, like *yəġōrəb* 'he knows'; it is unclear if this is just an issue of transcription.
8. The vowel *ū* in the first syllable of Ga perfects whose final root letter is *ʿ, ġ, ḥ*, or *x* (see below) becomes *aw*, e.g., *xawda* 'cheat', root *xdʿ* (cf. *nūka* 'come').⁹
9. The vowel *ū* which occurs before the 2ms object suffix when attached to 3ms and 3mp perfect (see §3.2.3) presumably becomes *aw*, though no examples occur in the texts.
10. The plural suffix *-ūtən*, most commonly found attached to active participles, becomes *-awtən*, e.g., *kəláwtən* 'will leave (fp)', root *ḳlʿ* (cf. *gəzmūtən* 'will swear (fp)').

For *ē > ā*:

11. The feminine suffix *-ēt* becomes *-āt*. This applies to nouns (e.g., *fərḥāt* 'happiness') and presumably to the 3fs forms of those perfects ending in *-ēt* (e.g., G passives), though no examples occur in the texts.
12. Rule #12 in the previous section (§2.2.1) does not apply to guttural letters, since the subjunctives and imperatives of all middle

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⁹ The verb *xawda*, which appears in the *ML* but not in the texts, is probably the only verb that has one of the gutturals *ʿ, ġ, ḥ*, or *x* for both its first and last root letters.

guttural verbs have the paradigm vowel *ō* (like Gb-Stems). See §7.2.5 and §7.2.6.

13. The *ē* after the second root letter of G passives becomes *ā*, e.g., *səḥāṭ* 'it (m.) was slaughtered' (cf. *ḳəbēr* 'he was buried').
14. The *ē* after the first root letter of Š2-Stem perfects and imperfects becomes *ā*, e.g., *šəxārəg* 'he interpreted' (cf. *šəhēwəb* 'he imagined'). (This rule presumably applies to glottalic consonants as well, though there are no examples in the texts.)

Verbs whose second or third root consonant is a guttural (*ʾ, ʿ, ġ, h, ḥ,* and *x*) can be divided into a variety of verbal classes, and paradigms can be found for most of these in Johnstone's *ML* (see also the relevant sub-sections of §7.2). Many of the peculiarities associated with these consonants are related to the types of changes discussed above. One major type is missing in the *ML*, however, and the verbs of this type are worthy of some discussion here. These are Ga-Stem verbs whose third root consonant is any of the six gutturals. For these verbs, in place of the normal pattern *CəCūC* of the perfect, we find instead the pattern *CūCəC*. So, in synchronic terms, there is a sound rule:[10]

CəCūG > CūCəG / G = ʾ, ʿ, ġ, h, ḥ, or *x*

So there exist such G-Stem verbs as:

dūbəh 'collect honey'[11]
dūləx 'seize'
fūḳəḥ 'cut in half'
fūtəḥ 'open'
gūdəḥ 'drift to shore'
lūtəġ 'kill' (but cf. n. 5, above)
mūləʾ 'fill' (see §6.1.4, n. 3)
nūfəġ 'throw'
nūgəḥ 'succeed'
nūṣəḥ 'advise'
sūbəḥ 'swim'
sūməḥ 'forgive'

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[10] There are exceptions when the second root letter is a glottalic, e.g., *fəźāḥ* 'be embarrassed' and *məźawġ* 'chew' (variant *mūźəġ*).

[11] However, it must be mentioned that each of the several occurrences of this verb in text 77 sounds like *dəbūh* on the audio. This verb type needs further investigation.

sawrəx 'make a bang, fire (intrans.)'[12]
ṭawbəx 'make a mark'
ṭawrəḥ 'leave, let'

When the final root letter is ʿ (or, in a few cases, ʾ), this consonant is dropped and the preceding vowel becomes *a*, as in:

hūma 'hear'
kūsa 'find'
ḳawla 'let, leave'
ḳawṭa 'cut'
mūna 'hold'
nūka 'come, bring'
rūfa 'go up'
tūba 'follow'

Verbs with final ʿ are treated in Johnstone's paradigms in the *ML*, but it is worth making clear that these are really a subset of the general final guttural type, which exhibits the sound change *CəCūG* > *CūCəG*. This sound change, by the way, is not limited to G-Stem verbs. It also applies to T2-Stems, which normally have the shape *əCtəCūC* in the 3ms perfect (e.g., *əftəkūr* 'ponder'), and to T1-Stems, which normally have the shape *yəCtəCūC* in the imperfect. So we find, for example, T2 *əftūrəḥ* 'he was delighted' (not **əftərūḥ*) and T1 *yəḳtūməḥ* 'he is disappointed' (not **yəḳtəmūḥ*).

H-Stems, which normally have the form *yəhəCCūC* in the 3ms imperfect (e.g., *yəhəbhūl* 'he cooks') are also affected, showing that the sound rule also applies to forms of the shape *əCCūG*. So we find, for example, *yəhənūdəx* 'he fumigates' and *yəhəṣawbəḥ* 'it becomes in the morning' (the latter with the additional change of *ū* > *aw* after the glottalic *ṣ*). H-Stems are not totally consistent with this, however. It seems that masculine plural passive participles, which can have the pattern *məCCūC* (a variant of *məCCōC*) are similarly affected; cf. *məlawtəġ* 'killed' < *məlūtəġ* < *məltūġ*. However, we do not find this rule applying to the H-Stem perfect, which has the basic shape *həCCūC*; instead,

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[12] The unexpected shift of *ū* to *aw* in the first syllable of this verb is either due to the combination of *r* + *x* in this word, or reflects an original glottalic *ṣ* as the first root letter. In fact, the Arabic cognate (from which this verb was presumably borrowed) is *ṣaraxa* 'shout'. In Jibbali, the root is also *ṣrx* (*JL*, p. 242), but Ḥarsusi has *srx* (*HL*, p. 112).

we find perfects of the shape *həCCāG* (e.g., *həṣbāḥ*) or *həCCēG* (e.g., *həndēx*) (see §7.2.8).

Because G-Stem verbs with a final guttural undergo this change *CəCūG > CūCəG*, they wind up looking identical to D-Stem verbs in the 3ms perfect. As a result, these verbs are sometimes conjugated as if they were D-Stems. For example, from the verb *lūtəġ* 'kill', we find both a G-Stem 3mp *əwtawġ* (< *lətawġ*) and a D-Stem 3mp *lətġəm* 'they killed'.

2.2.3. The Effects of Liquids on Vowels

In several places, we find that the changes of *ū > aw* and *ī > ay*, which regularly occur following glottalics and certain gutturals, also take place following the liquids *r* or *l*. In such cases, there is normally a glottalic or guttural consonant elsewhere in the root. Some examples are the verbs *həźrawb* 'be ill', *rayźi* 'to be acceptable', and *həṭlawḳ* 'release'; the past participles *məġrayb* 'well-known' and *məlawtəġ* 'killed (mp)' (< *məlūtəġ < *məltūġ*); and the nouns *ḳarawš* 'money' (plural pattern *CəCūC*) and *śəṭrayr* 'rag, strip of cloth'. We also find the change of *ū > aw* in the environment of two liquids, as in the 3fs perfect form *fərrawt* 'she flew' and the 3ms perfect *əśtəlawl* 'wander aimlessly'.[13]

One possible example in which the word has no glottalic or guttural is the verb *śərawg* 'sew'. In the texts, this verb occurs only in the 3mp perfect, *śərawg* (20:28), where we expect *aw*. In the *ML* (p. 383) the form *śərawg* is given also as the 3ms perfect (for expected *śərūg*), but this may be an error; in the English-Mehri word-list at the back of the *ML* (p. 588), the verb 'sew up' is listed as *śərōg*.

2.3. Word Stress

Most words only have one long vowel or diphthong, in which case the stress falls on the long vowel or diphthong. Johnstone claims in both the *ML* (p. xiii) and *AAL* (p. 10) that long vowels (including diphthongs) can only occur in open stressed syllables or in stressed, word-final syllables ending with a single consonant. If this statement is correct, then one must add, as Johnstone does, that a word can have more than one stressed syllable. So, for example, Johnstone would have to say that in words like *ʾāmōr* 'he said' and *ʾāmərūt* 'she said' the

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[13] There is some inconsistency with these T2-Stems. For example from the root *frr*, the *ML* has in one place the form *əftərūr* (p. lv), and elsewhere *əftərawr* (p. 97).

first and last syllables are stressed, and a word like *ṭāṭīdayən* (24:25) is stressed on all three syllables.[14] On the audio, however, it does not seem to be the case that all long vowels in a word with multiple long vowels are stressed. In words with three long vowels, like *ṭāṭīdayən* (24:25), *āfērōr* (26:8), *ḥītārikən* (26:16), the first and third do seem to carry stress. In words with two long vowels, it is not so clear, and more field research needs to be conducted. We have already seen proof above (§2.2.1) that there are cases in which long vowels must be called unstressed in order to explain certain sound changes.

When a word does not have a long vowel or diphthong, the rules for stress are not so apparent. Stress is usually predictable based on the appearance of a long vowel in other forms of the word. For example, in *ġəbərə́thəm* 'she met them' (31:9), stress on the third vowel is predictable from the unsuffixed form *ġəbərūt* 'she met'. In a similar way we can predict the stress of *nákam* 'they came' (26:20; cf. *nūka* 'he came') and *gəzə́mk* 'I swore' (31:5; cf. *gəzūm* 'he swore'). In other cases, for example in an H-Stem subjunctive form like *təháḳṣəm*, stress position is fixed simply by the verbal paradigm. Stress can also be predictable given that certain syllables never take stress, such as the affixes of the imperfect/subjunctive, the definite article, the suffixes of the perfect, and others.

In Stroomer's edition of Johnstone's texts, stress is not consistently marked, and in some cases is marked incorrectly. In this grammar, when reproducing passages from the texts, stress marking is normally ignored. The exceptions are the vowels *ə́* and *ɛ́*, which I reproduce as in Stroomer's edition. Elsewhere in this grammar, stress is marked where appropriate in the paradigms and grammatical discussion.

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[14] In text 24:25, for example, Johnstone marks the diphthong as stressed: *ṭāṭīdáyən*. Note that the glide here is part of the diphthong, as well as the onset of the final syllable.

CHAPTER THREE

PRONOUNS

3.1. Independent Personal Pronouns

Following are the independent forms of the Mehri personal pronouns:

	sing.	dual	plural
1c	*hō*	*əkay*	*nḥā*
2m	*hēt*	*ətay*	*ətēm*
2f			*ətēn*
3m	*hē*	*(hay)*	*hēm*
3f	*sē*		*sēn*

Notes:
- The 3ms form is transcribed occasionally as *hah*.
- The first and second person dual forms are very rare in the texts; the third person dual does not occur at all.
- The 1cp form is often transcribed as *ənḥā* or, less often, *nəḥā*.
- The 2p forms appear in a very few passages as *tēm* and *tēn*, that is, without the initial syllable.

These pronouns have several functions. Most commonly, they are used as the subject or predicate of a non-verbal sentence (§13.1) or as the subject of a verbal sentence. Examples of such non-verbal sentences are:

hō ġayg fəḳayr 'I am a poor man' (91:3)
hō aġāk 'I am your brother' (34:28)
hēt ḥaywəl 'you are crazy' (94:36)
hēt ḳənnawn 'you are little' (91:15)
hēt ġayg 'you are a man' (93:6)
hē ġīgēn ḥaywəl 'he is a crazy boy' (91:8)
ḥõ sē 'where is she?' (65:9)
nḥā ḳənyawn 'we were children' (89:11)
əkay ġayw 'we (two) are brothers' (74:22)

ətay ḥəbənyε 'you (two) are my sons' (74:23)
hēm xəṣəmhε 'they are his enemies' (64:18)

And examples of verbal sentences are:

ʾəśśōt fənway w-ʾəśśək hō 'she got up before me, and then I got up'
    (97:43)
hō aṣədḳi, ʾār ətēn dəlləkən lā 'I am telling the truth, but you didn't
    know your way!' (99:41) (Note that the phrase hō aṣədḳi is
    non-verbal)
kō hēt təbayk 'why are you crying?' (19:6)
hō ḥōm šūk 'I want (to go) with you' (76:4) (cf. ḥōm šūk, 76:7)

In general, however, pronouns are omitted in the great majority of
verbal sentences. This is even true when the verb is an active participle,
which is not marked for person (§7.1.6). When the pronoun appears,
it can give contrastive emphasis, as in the first two examples above, but
in most cases there is no special reason for its appearance, as in the last
two examples above. Passages in which the pronoun is omitted are
abundant, but a few representative examples are:

ʾāmōr: əl śīnək təh lā 'he said: I have not seen it' (23:14)
nəkōna b-ġəgənōt u xaynīta bīkəm 'you will have a daughter and she
    will betray you' (24:2)
bə-kəm tḥōm təśōm lay aməndawḳək 'for how much will you sell me
    your rifle?' (39:1)
wə-kō əl səyərš lā 'why didn't you go?' (97:22)

An independent personal pronoun can also be fronted, to emphasize a
subject (usually hēt) or the object of a preposition:

hō əl šay ʾar ðōməh 'I have only this' (73:5)
wəlākən ətēm l-ʾəḥād yəḳawdər līkəm lā 'but you, no one could get
    the better of you' (73:12)
hēt əl hēt axayr mənīn lā 'you are not better than us' (61:4)
wə-hēt, əl hēt ḥōkəm lā 'you're not the ruler!' (91:29)
hēt əl hēt ð-əḥtəmk lā 'you can't be sure' (82:3)

An independent pronoun can also be used to clarify a direct object suf-
fix, or it can function as an object in cases where no verb is present:

> *kəsəki, hō w-arībēy, ð̣ə-nəẓ́ḥōk* 'he found us, my friend and me, laughing' (91:22)
>
> *ð̣ōməh yəsdadki, hō wə-ḥāməy, warx u zōyəd* 'this is enough for us, me and my mother, for a month or more' (42:10)
>
> *shayli fənōhən agənēd u məġōrən hō* 'finish the branches first, and then (you can have) me' (42:29)

A personal pronoun can be used to strengthen a possessive or objective suffix, indicating contrastive emphasis. This is rather rare with possessive suffixes, but less so with objective suffixes:

> *abḳāryən nəḥā* '*our* cows (as opposed to his)' (6:8)
>
> *əġōrəb aġāy hō* 'I know *my own* brother' (64:16)
>
> *b-arāyək hēt* '(no,) as *you* please!' (101:3) (in response to *b-arāyək*, 101:2)
>
> *təḥōm tāzəmən ḥəbrēk nətāhəh, aw təhamən əntahk hēt* 'do you want to give us your son to eat, or do you want us to eat *you*!' (2:3)
>
> *tawwək təḳlɛi hō l-əsīr* 'you ought to let *me* go' (20:43)
>
> *təḥaymi hō əl-ṭāf* 'do you want *me* to scout?' (29:13)
>
> *təśhīd ð̣ə-hē kəfayləs awkələy hō śɛ́rəʾ* 'do you bear witness that *he*, her guardian, has empowered *me*, the judge' (100:5)

Finally, the independent pronouns can also follow the genitive exponent ð- (§12.4), in which case they function as possessive pronouns ('mine, yours, ours, etc.'). This is an unusual phenomenon for a Semitic language. The secure attested examples (all of which are first persons) are:

> *ð̣ōməh ð-hō* 'this is mine' (75:21)
>
> *ð̣ōməh adabh ð̣ə-hō* 'this honey is mine' (or: 'this is honey of mine') (77:7)
>
> *ṭrōh ð̣ə-nḥā* 'two of ours' (89:4)
>
> *hē ð̣ə-hō* 'it's mine' (67:8)

In 87:1, we find *ð̣ə-həh* in a poem, translated as 'what was his'. As transcribed in the text, we might analyze the *həh* in this phrase as the preposition *h-* 'to; for' (see §8.8) + the 3ms suffix, i.e., 'to/for him'. But perhaps *həh* is a mistaken transcription for the independent pronoun

hē, in which case we would have *ðə-hē* 'his', paralleling *ðə-hō* 'mine' in the examples above. Both analyses seem to work in this poetic passage.

3.2. Suffixed Pronouns

3.2.1. Suffixes on Singular Nouns

To express pronominal possession, a special suffixed form of the pronoun is attached to the noun. There are two closely related sets of suffixes used with nouns, one used with singular nouns and one with plural nouns. The suffixes that attach to singular nouns are:

	sing.	dual	plural
1c	*-i*	*-(ə)ki*	*-(ə)n*
2m	*-(ə)k*	*-(ə)ki*	*-(ə)kəm*
2f	*-(ə)š*		*-(ə)kən*
3m	*-(ə)h*	*-(ə)hi*	*-(ə)həm*
3f	*-(ə)s*		*-(ə)sən*

Notes:
- A noun with a possessive suffix must also have the definite article (see §4.4).
- The 1cd and 2cd forms are identical, and so must be distinguished by context.
- When a noun ends in a consonant (as is most often the case), the helping vowel *ə* often appears before the suffix (with the exception of the 1cs).
- When a noun ends in a vowel, the 1cs form is usually transcribed as *-y*.

To illustrate the forms of these suffixes, we can use the nouns *ḥayb* 'father' and *ġā* 'brother':

ḥayb: *ḥáybi, ḥáybək, ḥáybəš, ḥáybəh, ḥáybəs, ḥáybəki, ḥáybəki, ḥáybəhi, ḥáybən, ḥáybəkəm, ḥáybəkən, ḥáybəhəm, ḥáybəsən*

ġā: *aġāy, aġāk, aġāš, aġāh, aġās, aġāki, aġāki, aġāhi, aġākəm, aġākən, aġāhəm, aġāsən*

Many nouns alter their shape slightly when adding possessive suffixes. It is usually the vowel of the final syllable that is affected, though first person forms are usually immune to this change (or have a separate change). The most common change is the reduction of the syllable-final vowel to *ə*. So, for example, the noun *bayt* 'house' has the shape *bət-* before all suffixes except the first person:[1]

> *bayt*:   *abayti*, *abə́tk*, *abə́tš*, *abə́təh*, *abə́ts*, etc., *abə́thəm*

Another example is *brīt* 'daughter' (def. *ḥəbrīt*), which has the 1cs form *ḥəbrayti* (var. *ḥəbrīti*), but the base *ḥəbrát-* before all other suffixes. This is typical for many nouns ending in the suffix *-īt*.

> *brīt*:   *ḥəbrə́yti*, *ḥəbrə́t(ə)k*, *ḥəbrə́tš*, *ḥəbrə́təh*, *ḥəbrə́ts*, etc., *ḥəbrə́thəm*

Similar to nouns with the suffix *-īt*, nouns with the (rarer) feminine suffix *-ūt* have a diphthong before the 1cs possessive, but *-ə́-* elsewhere. For example, the forms of *məkəwrūt* 'lover' are:

> *məkəwrūt*: *amkəwrə́wti*, *amkəwrə́t(ə)k*, *amkəwrə́tš*, *amkəwrə́təh*, *amkəwrə́ts*, etc., *amkəwrə́thəm*

Note the irregular nouns *ḥām* 'mother' and *ḥəbrē* 'son', both of which have the 1cs suffix *-ə́y* (variant *-áy*), and the linking vowel *ē* (variant *ī*) before the remaining suffixes.

> *ḥām*:   *ḥāmə́y*, *ḥāmēk*, *ḥāmēš*, *ḥāmēh*, *ḥāmēs*, etc., *ḥāmēsən*
> *ḥəbrē*: *ḥəbrə́y*, *ḥəbrēk*, *ḥəbrēš*, *ḥəbrēh*, *ḥəbrēs*, etc., *ḥəbrēsən*

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[1] This is not representative of nouns with the pattern *CayC*. For example, *ǵayg* 'man' and *xayl* 'uncle' retain their shape before all suffixes.

3.2.2. Suffixes on Plural Nouns

The suffixes that attach to plural nouns are:

	sing.	dual	plural
1c	-yɛ	-iki	-(i)yən
2m	-kɛ	-iki	-ikəm
2f	-šɛ		-ikən
3m	-hɛ	-ihi	-ihəm
3f	-sɛ		-isən

Notes:
- As noted already in §3.2.1, a noun with a possessive suffix must also have the definite article (see §4.4).
- The dual and plural suffixes are the same as those attached to singular nouns, except that the suffixes are preceded by the vowel -*i*-. This -*i*- is sometimes also transcribed -*ī*- (or -*ē*-), except in the 1cp.
- The 1cp suffix is realized either as -*iyən*, with a glide *y* between -*i*- and the suffix -*ən*, or as -*yən*, with the -*i*- being realized consonantally.
- The singular suffixes are occasionally transcribed with a preceding -*ə*- (or -*i*- in the 1cs). This seems to be most common when the noun ends in a glottalic consonant.
- The final -*ɛ* of the singular forms is sometimes transcribed as -*a*.

To illustrate the forms of these suffixes, we can use the nouns *ḥəbōn* 'sons' and *xəlōwəḳ* 'clothes':

ḥəbōn: *ḥəbə́nyɛ*, *ḥəbə́nkɛ*, *ḥəbə́nšɛ*, *ḥəbə́nhɛ*, *ḥəbə́nsɛ*, *ḥəbə́niki*, *ḥəbə́niki*, *ḥəbə́nihi*, *ḥəbə́n(i)yən*, *ḥəbə́nikəm*, *ḥəbə́nikən*, *ḥəbə́nihəm*, *ḥəbə́nisən*

xəlōwəḳ: *xəláwḳiyɛ*, *xəláwḳəkɛ*, *xəláwḳəšɛ*, *xəláwḳəhɛ*, *xəláwḳəsɛ*, *xəláwḳiki*, *xəláwḳiki*, *xəláwḳihi*, *xəláwḳiyən*, *xəláwḳikəm*, *xəláwḳikən*, *xəláwḳihəm*, *xəláwḳisən*

The final -*ən* of external feminine plurals (see §4.3.2) is dropped before adding suffixes, for example:

ʾāyɛ̄ntən 'eyes': *ʾāyə́nt(i)yɛ*, *ʾāyə́ntkɛ*, *ʾāyə́ntšɛ*, *ʾāyə́nthɛ*, *ʾāyə́ntsɛ*, *ʾāyə́ntiki*, *ʾāyə́ntiki*, *ʾāyə́ntihi*, *ʾāyə́nt(i)yən*, *ʾāyə́ntikəm*, *ʾāyə́ntikən*, *ʾāyə́ntihəm*, *ʾāyə́ntisən*

ġawtən 'sisters': *aġə́tyɛ, aġə́tkɛ, aġə́tšɛ*, etc., *aġə́tisən*

ḥādōtən 'hands': *ḥādə́tyɛ, ḥādə́tkɛ, ḥādə́tšɛ*, etc., *ḥādə́tisən*

A singular noun ending in *-ē* may take the suffixes meant for plural nouns, e.g., *aʾə́śēyɛ* 'my supper' (42:26).

3.2.3. Suffixes on Verbs

With perfect tense verbs, pronominal object suffixes are attached only to third person forms. With imperfect, subjunctive, and imperative forms, the suffixes can be attached to any form ending in a vowel or the final root consonant. Participles do not take object suffixes.[2]

There is one set of suffixes attached only to the 3ms and 3fp forms of perfect tense verbs, the two of which are always identical. These suffixes are:

	sing.	dual	plural
1c	*-áy / -ə́y*	*-ə́ki*	*-ī́n*
2m	*-ū́k*	*-ə́ki*	*-ī́kəm*
2f	*-áyš*		*-ī́kən*
3m	*-ī́h*	*-ə́hi*	*-ī́həm*
3f	*-ī́s*		*-ī́sən*

Notes:
- Unlike the pronominal suffixes used with nouns, these suffixes carry stress.
- The initial vowel *ī* of the plural and 3s suffixes is often transcribed as *ē* or *ə́*.
- The initial vowel of the 2ms suffix is rarely transcribed as *ō*.
- The initial vowels of the singular and plural suffixes are diphthongized when following a guttural or glottalic consonant: *ī* becomes

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[2] There is one possible exception to this statement. The form *məhaġfələn* 'cheer us up!' (lit. 'you'll cheer us up', 52:3) must be a ms H-Stem participle of the root √ġfl with a 1cp object suffix. The participle would seem to be functioning here as an imperative, which is perhaps why the suffix is tolerated. However, this transcription is almost certainly faulty. The audio suggests that the correct transcription is *mō háġfələn*, that is, a particle *mō* (§12.5.12) plus an imperative *háġfələn*. If this is the case, then the suffix on *haġfələn* is unproblematic. The particle *mō* may, in fact, go with the preceding imperative *ʾāmēr* 'sing!'. The participle *məġtəbəri* (94:43) is translated 'meet me', as if it had an object suffix, but this is just a mistranslation. This is a md form, and should be translated 'we (two) will meet'; see §6.5.1, n. 13.

ay and *ū* becomes *aw* (see §2.2.1 and §2.2.2). The variant vowel *ɔ́*
is not affected, nor are the 1cs, 2fs, and dual suffixes.

- The initial vowels of the suffixes sometimes become zero or *ə*
  when following a weak verb whose final root consonant is *w* or *y*
  (e.g., *təwū* 'eat', *kəlū* 'bring home (animals)'), and sometimes with
  middle-weak verbs as well. They are never lost, however, after Gb
  verbs with root-final *y* (e.g., *śīni* 'see').
- Before suffixes, there is often a vowel reduction in the verbal stem
  (e.g., *wəzūm* 'he gave' > *wəzəm-*)

Some examples are:

wəzəmáy 'he gave me' (18:6)   *śəllay* 'they (f.) took me' (40:23)
āzəmūk 'he invited you' (22:81)   *səwbáyš* 'he waited for you' (75:7)
bəgədēh 'he chased it' (14A:2)   *šxəbərīh* 'he asked him' (12:7)
śənyīs 'he saw her' (15:10)   *ġəbrīsən* 'he met them' (99:40)
həddəlēn 'he guided us' (60:8)   *wəzəmīhəm* 'he gave them' (10:10)

ṣaḳáwk 'he called you' (20:25) (< **ṣaḳūk*)
həmáyh 'he heard it' (40:8) (< **həmˤīh*)
sḥəṭáyh 'he slaughtered it' (48:23) (< **sḥəṭīh*)
ḳəbṣáyh 'they (f.) bit him' (92:4) (< **ḳəbṣīh*)
kəsīs 'he found it' (22:69) (< **kəsʾīs*)
kəsɔ́ki 'he found us (two)' (91:22) (< **kəsʾɔ́ki*)
nəkáyn 'he came to us' (20:25) (< **nəkˤīn*)
təbáysən 'he followed them' (63:3) (< **təbˤīsən*)

There is another set of suffixes that are attached to 3fs, 3d, and many
3mp perfect tense verbs, as well as all imperfects, subjunctives, and
imperatives that end in a vowel or the final root consonant:

	sing.	dual	plural
1c	*-i / -əy*	*-ki*	*-(ə)n*
2m	*-(ə)k*	*-ki*	*-kəm*
2f	*-(ə)k*		*-kən*
3m	*-(ə)h*	*-hi*	*-həm*
3f	*-(ə)s*		*-sən*

Notes:

- Unlike the suffixes used with 3ms and 3fp perfects, these suffixes are unstressed, with the occasional exception of the 1cs.
- The suffixes can attach to a 3mp perfect verb only if the form ends in the final root consonant (e.g., *wəzawm* 'they gave', 3mp of *wəzūm*). Suffixes do not attach to those 3mp perfects with suffixed *-(ə)m* (e.g., *tabam* 'they followed', 3mp of *tūba*); see further in §3.3.
- When stressed, the 1cs suffix *-i* is diphthongized to *-ay* after a glottalic or guttural consonant. The rarer, variant suffix *-əy* is not affected by glottalics.
- The 2p and 3p suffixes can also be preceded by *ə*, though this is very rare.
- The final *-ō* of the 3d perfect forms is replaced by *ay* before object suffixes (as it is also before the conditional suffix *-ən*).[3]

Some examples of perfects are:

> *ḳarbə́ti* 'she came near me' (36:12)
> *šxəbīrəh* 'they asked him' (3:10)
> *təbátəh* 'she followed him' (15:9)
> *śənyáts* 'she saw her' (15:13)
> *ənkáthi* 'it (f.) came to them' (17:2)
> *ġərbə́thəm* 'she knew them' (48:28)
> *śənyáyəh* 'they (two) saw him' (84:6)
> *śənyáys* 'they (two) saw her' (94:41)
> *wzáwməy* 'they gave me' (4:9) (cf. the variant *wzáwmi*, 20:60)
> *ġəbáwri* 'they met me' (62:4)
> *ʾāzáwmən* 'they invited us' (38:10)
> *šxəbīrhəm* 'they asked them' (72:2)
> *ḥəláwbəsən* 'they milked them' (35:7)

Imperfects/Subjunctives:

> *təlḥámi* 'you (ms) touch me' (22:20)
> *əġárbək* 'I know you' (20:46)

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[3] The form *nkōh*, which is translated in Johnstone's texts as 'they [two] got to him' (74:19) seems to defy this rule. However, this transcription must represent a simple 3md form *nkō*, with no object suffix. Unfortunately, there are just two certain dual forms with suffixes in Johnstone's texts. Both of these are from the verb *śīni* 'see', and are given in the examples below (84:6; 94:41).

    əmdáḥk 'I flatter you' (52:18)
    yəbə́gdəh 'it was chasing him' (95:4)
    tāzə́məh 'you (ms) invite him' (22:66)
    nəwtáģs 'we kill her' (24:9)
    yəsdádki 'it is enough for us (two)' (42:10)
    təháwkəbən 'you (fs.) bring us in' (75:6)
    nəhaddələ́kəm 'we will show you' (60:5)
    əl-sáxbərhəm 'I ask them' (28:6)

Imperatives:

    ərṣáni 'tie (ms) me up!' (24:28)
    ṣāḳəh 'call (ms) him!' (22:24)
    əwbə́ds … u-wtáģs 'shoot (ms) her … and kill her!' (6:10)
    wəzə́mhəm 'give (ms) them!' (37:14)

When a fs imperative or 2fs imperfect form ends in *-i*, this is usually dropped before the addition of an object suffix. This results in some ambiguous forms, such as *āzēmi*, which can be either a simple fs imperative, 'give!' (e.g., 22:60), a fs imperative + 1cs suffix, 'give (fs) me!' (e.g., 32:19), or a ms imperative + 1cs suffix, 'give (ms) me!' (e.g., 53:4).[4] Another example is the form *śələ́li* 'carry me!', which can be either the ms imperative (*śəlēl*) + 1cs (e.g., 46:2) or the fs imperative (*śəlēli*) + 1cs (e.g., 89:14). Other ambiguous forms are *āzəmən* 'give (fs.) us!' (e.g., 32:21), which looks like the fp imperative *āzēmən* (e.g., 20:4), and *təģárbəh* 'you (fs) know him' (e.g., 94:34), which is identical to *təģárbəh* 'she knows him' (e.g., 94:36). In the rare cases when *-i* does not drop, it is realized as *y*, as in *āzēmyəh* 'give (fs) it!' (22:60). Bare 2fs imperfects are often distinguished by ablaut in the verb stem from a form with a suffixed 1cs object, for example *təḥaymi* 'you want' (e.g., 97:37) vs. *təḥámi* 'you (fs) want me' (e.g., 32:19).

   It should be mentioned that when a verb takes a double direct object, either object can appear as a pronominal suffix. Compare the following two sentences containing the verb *wəzūm* 'give':

    wəzmīs ḥāgawrəh 'he gave her to his slave' (85:25)
    wəzmīs adrēhəm 'he gave her the money' (85:5)

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[4] The form *ʾāzə́mi* 'give (fs) me!' is also found (55:4).

3.3. Direct Object Pronouns (t-)

In addition to verbal suffixes, there also exists a set of direct object pronouns, which are built on a direct object marker *t-* plus pronominal suffixes. This particle *t-* occurs only with suffixes. The full set of forms is as follows (with one unattested form in parentheses):

	sing.	dual	plural
1c	*tay*	*tə́ki*	*tīn*
2m	*tīk*	*(tə́ki)*	*tīkəm*
2f	*tayš / tīš*		*tīkən*
3m	*təh*	*tə́hi*	*tīhəm*
3f	*tīs*		*tīsən*

Notes:
- The particle *t-* declines just like the prepositions *b-*, *k-*, and *l-* (see §7.22), except for the special 2ms form *tīk* and the 2fs variant form *tīš*.
- The 2fs forms *tayš* and *tīš* are variants that occur with roughly equal frequency in the texts.
- The 1cs has the rare variant *tī* (e.g., 2:4).

The direct object pronouns are used in complementary distribution with the verbal object suffixes, as they are used only when a verbal suffix cannot be added to the verb form (see §3.2.3). Specifically, the direct object pronouns are used with all first and second person perfects; 3mp perfects that have a suffixed *-m*; imperfect and imperative forms that have an inflectional suffix; and all participles and conditionals. Examples are:

> *wəzəmk təh* 'I gave him' (53:4)
> *kūsəm təhi lā* 'they didn't find them' (23:22)
> *yərdīyəm təh* 'they will throw him' (20:31)
> *haddələm tīn* 'show us!' (60:4)
> *təwyōna tay* 'you will eat me' (99:30)

A verb that takes a double direct object can be followed by two direct object pronouns, for example:

yəṣṣək mən aḳənyawn ð-yəġṣābəm tay təh 'I am afraid that the chil-
   dren will take it away from me' (37:22)
wə-ṣərōməh əl wəzəmk tīn tīhəm lā 'now you (still) have not given
   them to us' (91:30)

3.4. Demonstratives

Mehri demonstratives fall into two classes, near and far. For each class
there is a set of longer forms and a set of shorter forms. The forms are:

Near demonstratives ('this, these'):
ms. *ðōməh*   fs. *ðīməh*   cp. *ʾəlyōməh*
ms. *ðɛ*   fs. *ðī*   cp. (none attested)

Far demonstratives ('that, those'):
ms. *ðə́kəməh / ðákəməh*   fs. *ðə́k(ə)məh*   cp. *ʾəlyákəməh*
ms. *ðēk*   fs. *ðayk / ðīk*   cp. *ʾəlyēk*

While the longer forms of the near demonstrative are very common,
the shorter forms are quite rare, each occurring just a few times. The
ms form *ðɛ* is found as such in just one passage (albeit five times,
48:31). Elsewhere, it is variously transcribed as *ðēh* (77:5), *ðə-* (72:5;
85:37), *əð-* (72:3), and *ð-* (72:3), each of which should be corrected to
ðɛ (with no hyphen). The shorter near fs form *ðī* occurs just three
times in the texts (31:39; 99:19, 20).

In contrast to the near demonstratives, the shorter and longer far
demonstrative sets occur with roughly equal frequency. The longer ms
far demonstrative is nearly always transcribed as *ðə́kəməh*, making it
identical to the fs form; it is just once transcribed *ðákəməh* (37:15),
and once *ðɛ́kəməh* (32:20). The shorter far demonstratives *ðēk* and
ðayk / ðīk also are found a few times as *ðək* (e.g., 52:13, 99:19, and,
according to the audio, 57:14), with a reduced vowel. (On the use of
ðək as an introductory particle, see §12.5.8.)

The demonstratives can be used independently as pronouns, for
example:

ðōməh hē 'this is he' (37:22)
ðōməh śawr gīd 'that's a good idea/advice' (90:6)
ðōməh ð-ʾayməl aḳəssēt ðīməh 'the one who made up this story'
   (48:31)

ðōməh ḥayri 'this is my donkey' (46:12)
ðɛ ḥaybi wə-ðɛ aġay 'this is my father and this is my brother' (48:31)
ðīməh tēṯi 'this is my wife' (46:16)
ðəkəməh yəḵdēr 'that one will be able' (42:47)
ʾəlyōməh ḥəbənyɛ 'these are my sons' (74:23)
ʾəlyēk rəddəm həbērihəm 'those ones took back their camels' (12:14)

Much more commonly, the demonstratives function as attributive adjectives, as in:

amkōn ðōməh 'this place' (10:12)

ḥəwōdi ðīməh 'this valley' (42:17)

aġayg ðɛ 'this man' (77:5)

ḥābū əlyōməh 'these people' (62:13)

aḵā ðəkəməh 'that land' (63:1)

ənhōr ðəkməh 'that day' (54:7)

aġayg ðēk 'that man' (42:47)

ḥābū əlyēk 'those people' (65:6)

tōgər ðōməh 'this rich man' (65:14)

sənēt ðīməh 'this year' (39:12)

ḥəwōdi ðī 'this valley' (31:3)

xəlōwəḵ ʾəlyōməh 'these clothes' (37:5)

aḵāźəb ðakəməh 'that lucerne' (37:15)

agzáyrət ðəkəməh 'that island' (74:3)

hərōm ðīk 'that tree' (94:37)

aġəyōg ʾəlyakəməh 'those men' (41:10)

When used attributively, the demonstrative usually follows the noun and the noun must have the definite article (see §4.4). Examples of the demonstrative preceding its head noun are rare, but examples are: *ðōməh aġəggēn* 'this boy' (76:12) and *ðīməh ḥāmēk* 'this mother of yours' (15:17) (cf. *aġərōyi ðōməh* 'these words of mine', 94:23). For discussion and for other examples of demonstratives preceding their head nouns, see §14.

3.5. Indefinite Pronouns

3.5.1. *ʾəḥād* 'someone'

The pronoun *ʾəḥād* has the meaning of 'someone' or 'anyone'. Combined with a negative, it has the meaning 'no one'. The combination *ʾəl ʾəḥād* is almost always contracted to *l-ʾəḥād*. Examples are:

ʾəḥād lə-hīs tay 'is anyone like me?' (42:3)

hām ʾəḥād mənkēm ḳərbay 'if any one of you come near me' (47:11)

mən ṭawr ʾəḥād yəhātōm ð̣ār aḳōbər 'sometimes someone spends the night by the grave' (54:3)

ʾəl kəsk bīs ʾəḥād lā 'I found no one in it (the valley)' (38:2)

l-ʾəḥād ḥərfōna tīs lā 'no one will move it' (67:5)

wə-l-ād ʾəḥād ð̣əlūm ʾəḥād lā 'and no one was unfair to anyone ever again' (66:10)

w-əl ʾəḥād yəḳawdər yəlḥōm ʾəḥād lā 'no one can touch anyone' (104:38)

In one case (45:5), the initial syllable is elided in transcription, leaving ḥād. This should be corrected to ʾəḥād, which is heard on the audio.

wəlē ʾəḥād ənkaykəm 'has anyone come to you?' (45:5) (Stroomer: wəlē ḥād)

And in one passage, ʾəḥād has the translation 'some' or 'some people':

ʾəḥād yəšbayd w-ʾəḥād yəšəsdūḳ. wə-ʾəḥād yōmər ð-yəḥlōm 'some don't believe it and some believe it. Some think he was dreaming' (92:6)

Note that ʾəḥād, which is clearly derived from the common Semitic numeral 'one', has been completely lost in the numeral system of Mehri, and the root survives only in this usage.

In one passage, the numeral ṭāṭ (var. ṭād) 'one' is used in a negative (partitive) context in place of ʾəḥād , meaning 'no one':

wə-kō əl ṭād mənkēm yəḥawrəf aṣāwər ðīməh 'how come not one of you would move this stone?' (67:8)

On the alternation of ʾəḥād and ṭād/ṭāṭ, see further in §3.5.3.

3.5.2. śī 'something' and śī-lā 'nothing'

The literal meaning of śī is 'thing' (cf. 65:14), but it is most often used with the meaning of 'something' or 'anything', for example:

hō kəsk śī 'I found something' (37:22)

wīḳa lūk śī 'has something happened to you?' (42:7)

hām ʾəḥād yəġōrəb śī 'if anyone knows anything' (65:7)
təḥōm mən hənay śī 'you want something from me' (77:4)
āzɛ́məh śī 'give him something!' (91:10)
hamak tīs ġətəryōt śī 'did you hear her say anything?' (94:17)

There also may be a variant form *śīən*, which occurs once independently (on the compound *kāl-śīən*, see §3.5.4). The audio has just *śī* in this passage, so the transcription is possibly a mistake.

məhaffəḳ təh ḥəbrīti mən ġayr śīən 'I will give my daughter to him in marriage without anything (i.e., without a bride-price)' (42:42) (audio: *mən ġayr śī*)

The negative *śī-lā* means 'nothing', 'anything', for example:

wəzyēma tīkəm śī-lā 'we will give you nothing' (35:14)
əl šəh śī-lā 'he had nothing' (65:1)
wə-l-ʾəḥād yəšānūs yəġətayr śī-lā 'and nobody dared to say anything' (85:17)
əl ḥəssək bə-śī-lā 'I wasn't aware of anything' (103:3)

The hyphenation in the transcription suggests that *śī-lā* is a single word, but in most cases the *lā* (optionally preceded by *əl* earlier in the clause) can be seen as simply negating the entire clause. When 'nothing' is used as a subject, the simple *śī* is used, and the whole phrase is negated with the usual *(əl) … lā* (see §13.2.1):

əl śī yədūm lā 'nothing lasts' (98:15)

In combination with a preceding or following noun in an interrogative sentence, *śī* also has the sense of 'any', for example:

kəskəm mətwē-śī yəmō 'did you find any grazing today?' (26:3)
ʾād wəzyēma tīn śxōf śī 'are you going to give us any milk yet?' (35:13)
wəlē rəḥmēt śī šīhəm sənēt ðīməh 'have they had any rain this year?' (45:3)

Likewise, the negative *śī-lā* can mean 'not any' or 'no', as in:

> *rawn u bēr, wəlākən əbḳār śī-lā* 'sheep and camels, but not any cows'
> (29:15)
> *hām šūk dərēhəm śī-lā* 'if you don't have any money' (86:8)
> *əl wīḳa ḥarb śī-lā* 'there has been no war' (104:28)

Both *śī* and *śī-lā* can also be used existentially, though examples are
very few. Among these are:

> *wəlē śī ʾāyd* 'are there any sardines?' (27:9)
> *əl śī źayga ḳərayb lā* 'there is no shelter nearby' (17:12)
> *hē əl śī-lā ð̣ār ḥəmoh* 'there was nothing at the water' (95:11)
> *əl śī moh fənwīkəm lā* 'there is no water in front of you' (94:37)
> *śī-lā moh bawməh ḳərayb* 'there is no water here nearby' (99:29)

The last two examples show an interesting difference. In the first
(94:37), *śī* is used as an existential, and the whole clause is negated by
əl … lā. In the second (99:29), *śī-lā* is in itself a negative existential.

3.5.3. *kāl ʾəḥād* and *kāl ṭāṭ* 'everyone; each one'

'Everyone' is usually expressed by *kāl ʾəḥād*, as in:

> *kāl ʾəḥād yəšənð̣ūr bə-səlamtəh* 'everyone makes a vow on his safe-
> keeping' (16:4)
> *yāmərəm ḥābū wə-kāl ʾəḥād ð̣ə-ġərbīhəm* '(so) people say and
> everyone that knows them' (104:30)
> *kāl ʾəḥād yəhātūm hāl xaṣməh* 'everyone spends the night with his
> enemy' (104:39)

In a couple of passages, the phrase *kāl ʾəḥād* occurs in combination
with *ḥābū*, and together these can be translated as either 'everyone' or
'all the people', for example:

> *šəwgīś ḥābū kāl ʾəḥād lə-sɛ́kənəh* 'everyone went home' (lit. 'the
> people went, each one to his community') (9:10)
> *mət gəzōt həyawm yəšəwgīś ḥābū kāl ʾəḥād lə-sɛ́kənəh* 'when the sun
> goes down, everyone goes home' (54:3)

The phrase *kāl ʾəḥād* can also be literally translated as 'each one', as in:

hīs ərtawam, kāl ʾəḥād źāṭ arawah 'when they had drawn lots, each
   one took his share' (99:7)

More often, 'each one' is expressed by *kāl ṭāṭ* (var. *kāl ṭād*), for exam-
ple:

kāl ṭāṭ iślūl ṣawri ṭrayt ṭəlōfəf 'each one carries two flat stones'
   (71A:1)
kāl ṭāṭ kəlūṭ bə-ḳəssətəh 'each one told his tale' (74:24)
śəl śāṭayt məsawmər u ṭəḳ kāl ṭāṭ bə-xāf 'he took three nails and
   banged each one into a hoof' (76:16)
kāl ṭāṭ bə-ḥaydəh əškay 'each one (had) in his hand a sword' (104:32)

But in a couple of passages, *kāl ṭāṭ* is best understood as 'everyone', as
in:

kāl ṭāṭ yāgōb yəġrēb agīd mən aḳōməḥ 'everyone wants to know the
   good from the bad' (73:12)
bārəm kāl ṭād h-abətəh 'everyone went home' (lit. 'to his home')
   (97:28)

In one place (35:10), *kāl ṭāṭ* is transcribed *ka-ṭāṭ*, and this loss of *l* is
reflected in the audio version.
   In summary, *kāl ʾəḥād* and *kāl ṭāṭ* are perhaps technically inter-
changeable, though *kāl ʾəḥād* is usually used for 'everyone', and *kāl ṭāṭ*
for 'each one'.
   A few times we also find *kāl* used by itself meaning 'all' or 'every-
one', for example:

kāl ð-nūka yawmər 'everyone who came said' (42:42)
kāl ʾamawr 'everyone said…' (42:43)
sēn bər mōt kāl 'they were all already dead' (99:39)

Notice in the above examples that *kāl* can be treated as grammatically
plural (like English 'all').

3.5.4. *kāl-śīən* 'everything'

The idea of 'everything' is expressed in Mehri with *kāl-śīən*, for exam-
ple:

> *bawməh kāl-śīən ġōli* 'here, everything is expensive' (18:15)
> *aṣābər axayr mən kāl-śīən* 'patience is better than everything' (61:9)
> *ktēbəm hayni kāl-śīən ðə-wīḳa* 'write (down) for me everything that
>   happens' (66:1)
> *hēt fəyazk lay bə-kāl-śīən* 'you have overcome me in everything'
>   (76:17)
> *šīhəm kāl-śīən* 'they have everything' (104:36)

In one case (15:21), a shorter form *kāl-śī* is transcribed, but since the
audio has *kāl-śīən*, this is probably just an erroneous transcription.
And in a few cases, *kāl-śīən* is strengthened by a redundant *kalləh* 'all
of it' (see §5.5.3), for example:

> *tōli ġərawb kāl-śīən kalləh* 'then they understood (knew) every-
>   thing' (67:9)
> *kəlēṯi lay bə-kāl-śīən kalləh* 'tell me everything!' (85:34)
> *kəlōna kāl-śīən kalləh* 'he will leave (behind) everything' (98:11)

3.5.5. Other Indefinite Pronouns

On rare occasion, the words *mənēdəm* 'person' and *ṭāṭ* 'one' have the
function of *ʾəḥād* 'someone', though with *mənēdəm* a literal transla-
tion as 'person' also makes good sense. Examples are:

> *kəlūṯ lay mənēdəm ð-əl yəbayd lā* 'someone who does not lie told
>   me' (57:12)
> *hənēkəm tāmərəm hībō hām wəzəmkəm ṭāṭ ḳəhwēt* 'what do you all
>   say if you give someone coffee?' (59:13)

The word *ḥōgət* 'something' (likely an Arabism) is attested twice, and
seems to be synonymous with *śī*.

> *həġədayk ḥōgət* 'I have forgotten something' (70:6)
> *ʾāmayli ḥənafš tāmayli ḥōgət* 'pretend you are doing something'
>   (94:8)

3.6. Reflexives

Reflexivity in Mehri is occasionally expressed by means of a verbal
pattern, though examples translated with a real reflexive in English are
few. Some examples are:

sē šə́kərawt 'she hid herself' (85:22)
hām šəhwabk 'if you warm yourself (by the fire)' (86:4)
šəbdəs 'separate yourself from her' (94:43)

See further in §6.4 and §6.5. However, Mehri has also developed a reflexive pronoun based on suffixed forms of the noun *nōf* (def. *ḥənōf*). The noun is never used without suffixes. Following are the forms (with unattested forms in parentheses):

	sing.	dual	plural
1c	*ḥənōfi*	(*ḥənfáyki*)	*ḥənfáyən*
2m	*ḥənáfk*	(*ḥənfáyki*)	*ḥənfáykəm*
2f	*ḥənáfš*		(*ḥənfáykən*)
3m	*ḥənáf(ə)h*	(*ḥənfáyhi*)	*ḥənfáyhəm*
3f	*ḥənáfs*		(*ḥənfáyhən*)

Notes:
- The 1cs is transcribed also as *əḥnōfi*.
- The *-áy-* of the plural forms has a variant *-ə́y-*, e.g., 1cp *ḥənfə́yən* (28:14). In fact, the only attested form of the 2mp is *ḥənfə́ykəm* (28:15).
- The duals and plurals are formed as if based on a plural noun, and so they take the suffixes used for plural nouns (see §3.2.2).

Following are some examples of the reflexive pronoun in context:

kšēf ḥənafk 'expose yourself!' (24:40)
ġatri šīs ḥənafs 'he spoke with her herself (i.e., not through an intermediary)' (48:11)
ʾāzēmi ḥənafš 'give yourself to me!' (48:23)
əlūtəġ ḥənōfi 'I will kill myself' (75:24)
hībō təkūsa ḥənáfk 'how do you find yourself?' (i.e., 'how do you feel?') (84:8)

The reflexive pronoun is also used in the idiom *ʾayməl ḥənōf-* 'pretend' (lit. 'make oneself'), which occurs about a half-dozen times in Johnstone's texts. A few of these are:

ʾāməlūt ḥənafs ġayg 'she pretended to be a man' (lit. 'she made her-
　　self a man') (48:27)
gār w-ʾayməl ḥənafh bər mōt 'he fell and pretended he was dead'
　　(64:21)
ṭāṭ yāmōl ḥənafh ðə-gēləw 'one will pretend he is ill' (84:2)
ʾāmayli ḥənafš tāmayli ḥōgət 'pretend you are doing something!'
　　(94:8)

Other, less common idioms that use the reflexive pronoun are səyūr
k-ḥənōf- 'go to the bathroom' (lit. 'go with oneself') (cf. 97:37), səyūr
b-ḥənōf- 'be oneself again, recover' (cf. 25:16), and śnū ḥənafh 'have
one's fortune told' (lit. 'have oneself seen') (cf. 24:1).
　　Also note that a reflexive meaning can be expressed with a simple
pronominal form, as in:

　　śxōf ḥənūk 'milk for yourself (lit. 'for you')' (63:6)[5]

3.7. Reciprocals

Reciprocals are most often expressed by means of a T-Stem verb. For
example:

　　katəwṭəm ḥābū 'the people talked with each other' (63:13)
　　əntawḥəm 'they fought with each other' (70:4)
　　hēm əl ġatərbəm lā 'they did not know one another' (74:9)
　　təḥaym təgtēsəm '(if) you want to argue with each other' (77:8)

See further in §6.5. However, Mehri has also developed a special recip-
rocal pronoun, ṭāṭīday- 'each other', to express reciprocity. Following
are the forms (with unattested forms in parentheses):

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[5] It is true that both the printed edition and the audio have ḥənūk here, but given
that we expect hūk 'for you' in this context (from the preposition h- 'to; for'), rather
than ḥənūk (from the preposition ḥāl 'at, by, beside'), one wonders if this is in fact a
mistake for ḥənafk '(for) yourself'.

	dual	plural
1c	(ṭāṭīdayki)	ṭāṭīdáyən
2m	(ṭāṭīdayki)	ṭāṭīdaykəm
2f		(ṭāṭīdaykən)
3m	ṭāṭīdayhi	ṭāṭīdayhəm
3f		ṭāṭīdaysən

The pronoun *ṭāṭīday-* can be preceded by a preposition where the context requires it. There are about ten occurrences of *ṭāṭīday-* in Johnstone's texts, some of which are:

> ʾāmərō hə-ṭāṭīdayhi: hēt nəgays 'they (two) said to one another: you are impure' (4:17)
> nəḥōm nərṣān ṭāṭīdáyən 'let's tie each other up' (24:25)
> tōli fəhēməm ṭāṭīdayhəm 'then they understood one another' (59:14)
> nakam ḥābū u faskəm tīhəm mən ṭāṭīdayhəm 'people came and separated them from one another' (61:5)
> ayṯayl śəbūḳ arīkōb lə-ṭāṭīdaysən 'the fox tied the camels to one another' (99:52)

In one case a construction 'one' + preposition + 'one' is used in place of the reciprocal pronoun:

> yəṭḳawḳ ṣəwayr ṭayt ðār ṭayt 'they throw stones on one another' (lit. 'one upon one') (16:2)

The only other occurrence of this construction is iterative in meaning.

> agarbəm ṭāṭ bād ṭāṭ 'they tried, one after the other' (50:3)

3.8. Relative Pronouns

3.8.1. Relative ð-

The basic relative pronoun in Mehri is *ð(ə)-* (var. *əð-*) 'who, that, which'. It does not decline for gender or number, and it does not matter if the antecedent is human or non-human. The relative can be followed by a verbal or non-verbal clause. Some examples are:

ṭawyəh ġayg əð-ḏ̣ayma wə-ð-gawya 'a man who was thirsty and hungry came to him' (13:9)

kūsəm məṣār ðə-mīlə' dərēhəm 'they found a turban that was full of money' (68:2)

źəḥākəm ḥābū ðə-hənīn mən aġayg 'the people that were by us laughed at the man' (71:4)

tōli 'āmōr 'āśər ðə-ġayg ðə-yāgōb b-aġəggēt 'then the friend of the man who was in love with the girl said…' (75:6)

həftōk xəlōwək əð-ḏ̣ayrəh 'he took off the clothes that were on him' (75:7)

yəxlīfək ġəyōg ð-axayr mənk 'men who are better than you will replace you' (76:5)

hātəmk b-ḥəwōdi ðə-sərīn 'I spent the night in the valley that is behind us' (80:4)

hō ġayg ð-əl šay ḳawt lā 'I am a man who has no food' (lit. 'I am a man that with me is no food') (92:2)

In some cases, a resumptive subject pronoun follows the relative. In all of these the antecedent functions as the subject of a non-verbal clause within the relative clause. Examples are:

śīnən rawn bāź ð-əl sēn bə-xayr lā 'I saw some goats that were not well' (26:6)

hēm ḏ̣ār rəḥmānōt ð-əl sēh mēkən lā 'they were on vegetation that was not much' (30:1)

ṭāṭ mənkēm ðə-hē ṭəwayl yəsyēr yəḳfēd bərk xan 'one of you who is tall(er than me) should go down into the hold' (91:18)

həgūm əl-sēkən ðə-hē sərīn yəllō 'it attacked the community that is behind us yesterday' (102:4)

If the antecedent is the direct object of the relative clause, then a resumptive object pronoun must be used, for example:[6]

əl kəsk 'əḥād lā ð-əġarbəh 'I didn't find anyone that I knew' (lit. 'that I knew him') (34:20)

kəlūṯ ḥābū bə-ləhān həmayh 'he told the people all that he had heard' (40:8)

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[6] In general, a resumptive pronoun is used whenever a direct object precedes the verb, regardless of whether or not a relative clause is involved. Cf. *kāl ḳəbayli yəḥarbəm təh* 'they fought any tribesman' (104:37).

bə-rḥōyəb ð-əḥakəmsən 'in the towns that I rule' (66:1)

ʾəś aġayg ð-watxəfəm təh aġəyōg 'the man to whom the men had come got up' (73:5) (*watxəf* 'come to' takes a direct object)

ḳərū aḳawt ðə-hərḳays 'he hid the food that he had stolen' (84:5)

A resumptive pronoun must also be used if the relative is in a prepositional relationship with the antecedent, as in:

ʾəś aġayg əð-hātīm hənīh aġəyōg 'the man with whom they were spending the night got up' (73:11)

gəhmō h-arḥabēt ðə-bīs aġəgənōt 'they went to the place where the girl was' (75:4)

hēt sīri bərk xəlōwəḳ ðə-hō nakak bərkīhəm 'you go in the clothes that I came in' (75:8)

The relative can *optionally* be omitted, especially when the antecedent is indefinite. Some examples of this are:

bə-źāfōr xawr hamməh arērī 'in Dhofar is a lagoon whose name is Rawri' (7:7)

ġəlawḳ ʾəḥād yəġōrəb aġərōyi 'they looked for someone who spoke my language' (34:25)

šay ġayg yəḥōm yəṭāf layš 'I have a man who wants to visit you' (38:15)

wəlē əkūsa ʾəḥād yəmzūz 'perhaps I will find someone who smokes' (94:25)

l-agərē ð-aġayg yəhəmē 'on behalf of the man who was listening' (63:13)

kəsōna bū tġarbəhəm 'you will meet people that you know' (37:16)

hām hēt ḥōkəm təḥawkəm bə-ḥaḳ 'if you are a ruler who rules justly…' (74:20)

In the last two passages above (37:16 and 74:20), it is possible that the relative *ð-* is missing for phonological reasons, since *ð-* is normally suppressed before an initial *t-* (see further in §7.1.10.1).

The relative *ð-* can also be used with no antecedent, with the meaning '(the) one who' or 'that/those which'. Examples are rare in the texts, but a few are:

ṣərōməh hēt tāḵā ð-əwbədk ṭāṭ 'now you should (pretend to) be one
  who has shot someone' (72:4)
ð-əl šəh məźawbəṭ lā 'the one who does not have shelter' (87:2)
əl bīhəm ð-ʾāwənīn lā 'there is not among them anyone who has
  helped us' (91:14)
ðə-syūr yəxəlōf ġayrəh 'something else (lit. besides it) will take the
  place of that which has gone' (97:27)
ð-yəḥōm yəkṭaʿan 'the one who wants to cut us off' (98:9)
šərdīd ḥazihəm kalsən, ġayr ðə-bɛr shaṭəm tīsən amhərɛ́ 'they got
  back all of their goats, except for those that the Mehris had
  already slaughtered' (104:34) (Note also the resumptive pronoun
  tīsən)

Keeping with the above use, the relative ð- can also be used following
an independent or interrogative pronoun, with the meaning 'the one
that, the one who', as in:

hēt ðə-ġəbbək ənxāhɛ 'you are the one who defecated under it' (3:18)
hēt ðə-hrəḵək abayrən 'you are the one who stole our camel' (23:10)
hō ð-ləṭġək tīs 'I am the one who killed it' (42:43)
hō ðə-kəsk təh fənōhən 'I am the one who found it first' (77:3)
mōn ðə-xəyūn būk 'who is the one who betrayed you?' (22:89)

However, in most cases in which we find ð- following a pronoun, it is
the verbal prefix ð- (§7.1.10).
   On the use of ð- as a genitive exponent, see §12.4; in conjunction
with some numerals, see §9.1.4 and §9.3; to form possessive pronouns,
see §3.1; and as a verbal tense marker, see §7.1.10.

3.8.2. kāl ð- 'whoever'

The combination of kāl with the relative pronoun ð- has the meaning
'whoever', 'anyone who', or 'the one that'. With an interceding mən,
this construction can also have the meaning 'whoever/whichever (one
of)'. Some examples are:

kāl ðə-ḥərūf aṣāwər … həh agawhərət 'whoever moves the stone …
  the jewel is for him' (67:6)
kāl ðə-yəḥōm xədmēt u məskēn, yənkɛ̄ 'whoever wants work and a
  place to live, let him come' (74:7)

kāl ð̣ə-šəh dərēhəm yəḳawdər yəśəlēl səlēb 'whoever has money can
 carry a gun' (94:28)

wə-kāl ð̣ə-ftōk mən ḥōṭəl, yəlatġəm təh 'whoever came out from the
 tamarisk they killed' (104:20)

kāl mənhēm ð̣ə-ḥərfīs kəsōna hədayyət 'whichever one of them
 moves it will find the present' (67:5)

kāl mənīn ð̣ə-bdō, yəgṣōṣ ḥərohəh 'whoever of us lied will have his
 head cut off' (24:37)

3.8.3. ləhān

Mehri possesses a special relative pronoun ləhān (var. əlhān), meaning
'all that', 'everything (that)', or 'whatever'. It can be followed by a ver-
bal or non-verbal clause. Examples of its use are:

wəzyēma tīk ləhān təḥōm 'they will give you everything (whatever)
 you want' (65:8)

w-əlhān kəsk nxāsɛ hē ð̣-hō 'and whatever I find under it, it's mine'
 (67:8)

šaxbərhəm ləhān ġatəryəm yəllō 'ask them everything (what) they
 said last night' (74:20)

zəgdəm həbēr əlhān kūsəm 'they seized whatever camels they found'
 (lit. 'the camels, all that they found') (104:14)

śētəm amrawkəb w-əlhān bərkīhəm 'he bought the vessels and all
 that was in them' (74:6)

śītəm ləhān šəh 'he bought all that he had' (74:12)

kəlūṭ ḥābū bə-ləhān həmayh 'he told the people all that he had
 heard' (40:8)

The final example above illustrates two important points. First, ləhān
can be the object of a preposition. Second, the verb following ləhān
can have a resumptive pronoun, though this is not usual.

3.8.4. Relative mən hāl

The phrase mən hāl, which as a preposition means 'from (the presence
of)' (see §8.9), is also used as a relative 'where', for example:

ḳərū təwyəh bərk dəḥlīl mən hāl l-ʾəḥād yəśanyəh lā 'he hid his meat
 in a cave where no one would see it' (13:7)

sīrəm bəh ta hāl hərōm mən hāl ḳəbṣə́h yəðbīr 'go with him to the tree where the hornet stung him' (25:13)

nakam kərmaym mən hāl kādēt yəsū́kən 'they arrived at the mountain where Kadet was living' (64:11)

bərk amḥəfərōt mən hāl aġəyōg ḥəfawr 'into the hole where the men had been digging' (88:11)

ṭayt mənsēn təśxəwəlūl ð̣ār ṣāwər mən hāl taḳabələn lay 'one of them would sit on a rock where they could keep an eye on me' (89:3)

Many times *mən hāl* is used without an antecedent, in which case it can mean either 'wherever', '(in/to) a place where', or 'the place where', as in:

səḥāṭ wōz mən hāl təgēr yəśanyəm təh lā 'he slaughtered a she-goat, (in a place) where the merchants could not see him' (4:2)

mən hāl nakak, źəḥayk məni ḥābū 'wherever I came to, people laughed at me' (34:10)

mən hāl aġayg sōfər, təsafrən šəh 'wherever the man traveled, she would travel with him' (74:10) (Stroomer, incorrectly: 'when the man…')

əghōm mən hāl l-ʾəḥād yənūka lā 'I (can) go where no one else can go' (76:1)

haśənən mən hāl śīnək təh 'show us (the place) where you saw it' (95:8)

Mən hāl can also mean 'from where', as in:

hō ḳəfdōna bərk ḥəwōdi mən hāl nakan 'I will go down into the wadi where we came from' (70:6)

sīrō aġayg wə-tēṭəh tē ð̣ār kərəmōt mən hāl yaḳəbəlayən sēkən 'the man and his wife went onto a hill, from where they could watch the community' (94:41)

śīni sḗkənəh mən hāl gəhēm 'he saw the community where he had come from' (98:1)

In one case we find *tē mən hāl*, meaning 'up to where':

śəl aḳādər tē mən hāl ḥārawn təhəḳṣawmən 'he took the pot up to where the goats were out for the day' (1:7)

And in one place we find *mən hāl* combined with the particle *ð-*, but this is probably the verbal prefix *ð-* (§7.1.10) and not the relative:

> *nkā bə-ḥərōh ð-arēśīt mən hāl ð-ʾālēḵ* 'bring the snake's head from where it was hung' (42:43)

3.8.5. ḥəyalla ṭāṭ ð-

There is one attestation in Johnstone's texts of the relative phrase *ḥəyalla ṭāṭ ð-* 'whoever' (lit. 'whichever one that'):

> *hō ð-ġərəbk ḥəyalla ṭāṭ ð-yənkā bawməh ḥərfōna tīs* 'I know that whoever comes here will move it' (67:5)

This phrase is rare enough that it causes the reader on the audio to stumble and read *hām ṭāṭ* for *ḥəyalla ṭāṭ*.

CHAPTER FOUR

NOUNS

4.1. Gender

Mehri has two grammatical genders, masculine and feminine. Masculine nouns have no formal marker. Feminine nouns are sometimes recognizable by the presence of a suffix *-īt*, *-ēt* (*-āt* after glottalics), *-ūt*, *-ōt*,[1] or *-ət*. Feminine nouns frequently lack an explicit feminine marker, however, in which case the gender of an individual noun is simply lexical. Following are some examples of marked and unmarked feminine nouns:

Marked feminine: *bəhlīt* 'word', *bəḳərēt* 'cow', *fəźźāt* 'silver', *ġəggēt* 'girl', *ġəgənōt* 'girl', *kəswēt* 'clothing', *kəwṯēt* 'tale', *ḳəhwēt* 'coffee', *ḳəssēt* 'story', *lawḳat* 'bottle', *məḳśōt* 'dead tree', *nōbēt* 'bee', *rəḥbēt* 'town', *rēśīt* 'snake', *saḥrət* 'witch', *sənēt* 'year', *ṣayġət* 'jewelry', *šənēt* 'sleep', *wərḳāt* 'note, paper', *xədmēt* 'work', *xəwfēt* 'window', *xəlūt* 'paternal aunt', *yəbīt* 'she-camel'

Unmarked feminine: *ʾāgrēz* 'testicle', *ʾāgawz* 'old woman', *ʾārḳayb* 'mouse', *ʾayn* 'eye', *bayt* 'house', *bōkər* 'young she-camel', *dənyē* 'world', *fām* 'leg, foot', *fərhayn* 'horse', *gēzəl* 'boulder', *ḥərōź* 'acacia', *kərmaym* 'mountain', *məndawḳ* 'rifle', *məwsē* 'rain', *maws* 'razor', *məźrāḥ* 'tooth', *rīkēb* 'riding-camel', *ṣāwər* 'rock', *ṭəbərayn* 'hyena', *wōdi* 'valley', *wōrəm* (def. *ḥōrəm*) 'road', *wōz* (def. *ḥōz*) 'she-goat'

It appears that all singular nouns ending in *-t* have feminine gender, even if the *t* is part of the root. For example, both *bayt* 'house' and *ḳawt* 'food' are grammatically feminine. Plural nouns ending in *-(ə)t* are normally masculine, however, as in *zəyawrət* 'jars' (sg. *zayr*); see §4.3.3 for additional examples.

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[1] Johnstone suggested (*AAL*, p. 20) that the *-ōt* suffix is characteristic of trisyllabic nouns, while *-ēt* is characteristic of disyllabic nouns. This does not seem to hold up.

A very few nouns seem to be of variable gender, such as *hərōm* 'tree', *məwsē* 'rain', and *kəlōn* 'bride/groom'.[2] The noun *səwēḥər* serves as the plural of both masculine *sēḥər* 'warlock, wizard' and feminine *saḥrət* 'witch'.[3]

Some masculine nouns referring to animate beings have a recognizable feminine counterpart, while others do not. Feminine nouns referring to humans most often have an explicit feminine-marking morpheme, though there are exceptions, like *ḥāmē* 'mother'.

Masculine	Feminine
ġīggēn 'boy'	*ġəgənōt* 'girl'
gōr 'male servant'	*gərīt* 'female servant'
bāl 'master'	*bālīt* 'mistress'
ḥəbrē 'son'	*brīt* 'daughter' (def. *ḥəbrīt*)
dīd 'paternal uncle'	*dīt* 'maternal aunt'
xayl 'maternal uncle'	*xəlūt* 'paternal aunt'
ḥaym 'brother-in-law, father-in-law'	*ḥəmayt* 'sister-in law, mother-in-law'
ḥayr 'male donkey'	*ḥīrīt* 'female donkey'
kawb 'dog, wolf'	*kəwbēt* 'bitch'
sēḥər 'warlock'	*saḥrət* 'witch'
rībay 'companion'	*rībēt* 'companion'
But:	
ġayg 'man'	*tēṯ* 'woman'
ḥayb 'father'	*ḥāmē* 'mother'
bəʾayr 'male camel'	*yəbīt* 'female camel'
tayh 'male goat'	*wōz* 'female goat'
hēxər 'old man'	*ʾāgawz* 'old woman'

Not all nouns referring to animate females are feminine in gender, however. For example, the nouns *dərhīs* 'one-year old female (goat) kid', *fərayź* 'young she-camel', and *ḥōṭər* 'two- or three-month old female (goat) kid' are all grammatically masculine.

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[2] *Kəlōn* is often qualified to remove ambiguity, and so we find *tēṯ kəlōn* 'bride' (9:7), *aġəggēt kəlōn* 'bride' (75:7), and *aġayg kəlōn* 'groom' (75:10). But cf. *sē kəlōn* 'she is a bride' (75:6) and *nūka ḥəynīṯ təwōli kəlōn* 'the women came to the bride' (9:7).

[3] The common plural form is treated as feminine. The only attestations of *səwēḥər* referring to men are in 7:3 and 7:7, and the accompanying verbs are 3fp. That *səwēḥər* is referring to men is made clear by the use of masculine singular *sēḥər* in 7:1 and 7:4. There is also a noun *sēḥər* meaning 'magic, witchcraft', attested in 7:5 and 7:8.

It should also be pointed out that feminine nouns that are marked in the singular need not be, and usually are not, marked in the plural. For example, the plurals of *bəhlīt* 'word', *nōbēt* 'bee', *rēśīt* 'snake' are *bəhēl*, *nəwēb*, and *rīyēś*, all of which lack a feminine marker. And as a corollary, nouns that lack a feminine marker in the singular can exhibit a suffix -*t* in the plural, as with *məndawḳ* 'rifle', pl. *mənadḳət*. See further below (§4.3.3).

4.2. Duals

Nouns in Mehri possess a distinct dual form, as do pronouns and verbs. Unlike the formation of noun plurals, the formation of the dual is remarkably simple. For almost all nouns, regardless of gender, the dual is formed simply by adding the suffix -*i* to the singular, for example:

warx 'month', du. *warxi*   *tēṯ* 'woman', du. *tēṯi*
ḳawzərət 'date-basket', du. *ḳawzərəti*   *ġīggēn* 'boy', du. *ġīggēni*

In actual use, the dual form of the noun is nearly always followed by the numeral '2' (m. *ṯroh/ṯrō*, f. *ṯrayt*). As when followed by any numeral, the noun lacks the definite article (see §9.1.1). Examples from the texts are:

warxi ṯroh '2 months' (17:11)   *tēṯi ṯrayt* '2 women' (2:1)
ḳōni ṯroh '2 horns' (88:7)   *fərhayni ṯrayt* '2 horses' (24:11)
ḳādəri ṯrō '2 pots' (35:17)   *sənēti ṯrayt* '2 years' (37:18)
ʾāṣəri ṯroh '2 nights' (98:6)   *yəbīti ṯrayt* '2 camels' (32:9)
ġaygi ṯroh '2 men' (104:5)   *ṣawri ṯrayt* '2 rocks' (71A:1)

In speech, this dual ending -*i* is interpreted by Mehri speakers as part of the following numeral. Sometimes this is reflected in Johnstone's transcription, e.g., *ṯawr əṯroh* '2 times' (65:11), in place of *ṯawri ṯroh*.

In a few places, the numeral '2' precedes the noun, in which case the noun is in the plural:

ṯroh śəhawd '2 witnesses' (9:4; 100:1)   *ṯroh ġayw* '2 brothers' (40:1)

Johnstone (*AAL*, p. 21) cites two nouns that exhibit a unique, unpredictable dual, namely *ġayg* 'man' (dual *ġawgi*) and *ġəggēt* 'girl' (dual *ġəggawti*). He also says that these unique dual forms can some-

times be used without an accompanying numeral; the attested example of *aġawgi* 'the two men' (4:14) confirms this. Also note the unusual case of *faḳḥ* 'half', whose dual form *faḳḥi* serves also as its plural, a use which is quite logical, semantically. Dual *faḳḥi* can occur without an accompanying numeral (cf. 65:12, 77:10).

Adjectives do not have a dual form, so a dual noun is modified by a plural adjective, as in:

> *ṣawri ṯrayt ṭəlōfəf* 'two flat stones' (71A:1)

The dual form also does not occur with possessive suffixes. So, when the numeral '2' follows a noun with a possessive suffix, that noun will be in the plural, as in:

> *aġəthɛ ṯrayt* 'his two sisters' (15:1)

In terms of subject-verb agreement, we find both dual verbs with plural noun subjects and plural verbs with dual noun subjects. However, dual noun subjects and dual verbs do not usually co-occur, presumably for reasons of redundancy. Among the few examples of a dual noun subject with a plural verb are:

> *ġīgēni ṯərō watxəfəm* 'two boys came' (35:1)
> *nūka ḳēʿəyēti ṯrayt* 'two female spirits came' (68:6)

This is not connected with word order, as shown by the above examples. Compare the preceding examples to the following, which have dual verbs, but plural nouns:

> *ḳəfdō ṯēgər* 'the (two) merchants went down' (4:12)
> *sīrō ḥəmbərawtən* 'the (two) boys went' (35:16)
> *sīrō ḥāgīrōn* 'the (two) slaves went' (65:10)
> *dərtō ḥāgērtən* 'the (two) slave girls went around' (97:31)

An exception is *aġawgi əḥtəwəlō* 'the two men have gone crazy' (4:14); surely it is not a coincidence that *aġawgi* is one of the two nouns with an unpredictable dual.

Note, however, that when the number 'two' is used independently, it does require a dual verb:

ṭroh rəkəbō bərk hawri 'two (men) got into the canoe' (60:6)
ṭroh ð-yəsīrō 'two (people) were going' (68:1; 72:1)
ṭroh sīrō 'two went' (84:4)

In some cases, all verbs in a narrative sequence remain either dual or plural, as determined by the first verb. For example, in 35:1 (given above), the verb is plural because of the dual noun preceding it. But all of the verbs and pronouns referring to the 'two boys' remain plural for the next several lines, even though the dual noun is not mentioned again. In 35:10, on the other hand, after a short break in the narrative about the 'two boys', we find a dual verb (*śəllōni*), after which the verbs and pronouns are dual for the next several lines. In other cases, we find just one dual verb, followed in sequence by several plural verbs (e.g., 72:2). Many times, however, we find flip-flopping between dual and plural verbs (e.g., 66:3). In short, there seems to be a lot of flexibility in the use of dual verbs.

4.3. Plurals

Mehri exhibits two types of plural marking on nouns. There are external plurals, meaning that an explicit plural-marking suffix is used, and there are internal plurals, meaning that plurality is indicated by means of internal vowel changes, with or without the addition of a suffix. In general, internal plurals are far more common in Mehri than external plurals; for masculine nouns they are used almost exclusively.

A few nouns have a suppletive plural, meaning that they form their plural from a different base. Such are *ġīggēn* 'boy', pl. *(ḥ)əmbərawtən*;[4] *yəbīt* 'she-camel', pl. *bēr*; *nəhōr* 'day', pl. *yūm*; *ḳəhwēt* 'coffee shop', pl. *məḳōhi*.[5] One could argue that *tēṯ* 'woman' (pl. *yənīṯ*) falls into this category from a synchronic perspective, though historically both forms are from the same root, √ʾnṯ. A few nouns occur only in the plural, e.g., *bū* 'people'.

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[4] The definite form of *əmbərawtən* is *ḥəmbərawtən*. It is possible that *ḥəmbərawtən* is once used where we expect an indefinite. See below, §4.4.

[5] *Məḳōhi* (attested in 48:13) is the broken plural of *məḳahōyət*, the Yemeni Mehri word for 'coffee shop', which occurs in text 48:14 (though the audio has *ḳəhwēt* here). The *ML* (p. 227) says that it is also the plural of the Omani Mehri word *ḳəhwēt* 'coffee shop'. On the language of text 48 in general, see §9.3, n. 4.

There are several nouns that can behave as collectives or plurals, including *bēr* 'camels',[6] *rawn* 'goats', *ṣayġət* 'jewelry', *tōmər* 'dates', and *wōz* 'goats'. The words *ṣayġət* 'jewelry' and *wōz* 'goats' can also have a singular meaning, i.e., 'ornament', and 'goat', while *bēr*, *rawn*, and, probably, *tōmər* cannot have a singular meaning.[7] The collective *ðəbbēt* 'flies' can be treated as grammatically singular (e.g., 29:7) or as a plural (29:4); *ðəbbēt* can also, according to the *ML*, have a singular meaning 'fly', for which there is a morphologically plural form *aðbēb* (29:18). The plural noun *hərōm* 'tree' can also be used with a singular meaning, and in fact is more commonly used than its actual singular form *hərmayt*.[8]

4.3.1. Masculine External Plurals

Nouns with true masculine external plurals are very rare in Mehri. According to Johnstone (*AAL*, p. 20), the external masculine plural morpheme is *-īn*. He cites the example *gəfənīn* 'eyebrows', sg. *gəfōn*, which is in the *ML* (defined as 'eyelashes, eyelids'), but this word does not occur in the texts. Plurals in *-īn* are actually exceedingly rare in the texts. Two examples are *kətəbīn* 'books' (25:18), sg. *kətōb*, and *maytayn* 'dead (people)' (40:4), sg. *mōyət*.[9] Other examples can be found in the *ML*, such as *ðənōb/ðənəbīn* 'tail', *ġōb/ġəbbīn* 'excrement', *ḳərōṣ/ḳərəṣīn* 'mosquito', and *zəwōd/zəwədīn* 'supplies'.

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[6] Though *bēr* seems to be the generic word for 'camels', it also serves as the plural of *yəbīt* 'female camel'.

[7] Text 73, entitled "Four starving men and a date", has examples of *tōmər* translated as 'date'. However, though *tōmər* is certainly grammatically singular in this text, there is no evidence (save Johnstone's translation) that it should be translated 'date' rather than 'dates'. In fact, the phrase *ʿaynət tōmər* 'a few dates' (73:5) seems to support *tōmər* as a collective. This phrase is translated as 'a single date' in the printed edition, though elsewhere *ʿaynət* clearly means 'a little' (§5.5.1).

[8] In some cases, it would seem possible that the translation is misleading. For example, in 70:2, we find the phrase *kūsən ġayg bāl ḥārawn ð-yəlūbəd hərōm*, translated as 'they found a goat herder beating a tree'. But in the context, 'beating trees' could be an equally possible translation. However, cf. 70:3, *hərōm ð-yəlábdəh* 'the tree that he was beating (it)', where the 3ms resumptive object suffix makes it clear that *hərōm* is singular. Similarly, we can cite *kūsən hərōm ðə-bəh ḥfūl, wəlākən ẟayrəh īðəbōr mēkən* 'we found a tree that had ripe figs, but there were many hornets on it' (25:3), which has a ms suffix referring to *hərōm* on both *bəh* and *ẟayrəh*. In 94:37, *hərōm* is modified by the singular demonstrative *ðīk*.

[9] The mp form *məxāśərīn* 'mixed' (60:1) seems to be an Arabized form (as noted in the *ML*, p. 451), though it is not clear if this verbal root occurs in Arabic with this meaning. There is a verb *xəśūr* 'mix' in Mehri, however.

In addition to the very rare suffix *-īn*, we find the likewise rare masculine plural morpheme *-ōn*. Examples from the texts are *gīrōn* 'slaves', sg. *gōr*, and *źīfōn* 'guests', sg. *źayf*. We also find this morpheme in the feminine collective *ʾagzōn* 'old women', which can be used as the plural of *ʾāgawz* (e.g., 97:8).

The most common suffix found with masculine plurals is *-ət*, though this is nearly always used in conjunction with an internal plural pattern (see §4.3.3). An example of *-ət* used independently is *dəllōlət* 'guides' (60:8), sg. *dəllōl* (cf. also *ḥəddōdət* 'blacksmiths', sg. *ḥəddōd*, listed in the *ML*, p. 166). A small number of masculine nouns take the feminine external plural marker, on which see §4.3.2.

4.3.2. Feminine External Plurals

The external feminine plural marker is *-tən/-ōtən/-ūtən/-áwtən*. This suffix (in the forms *-ōtən/-ūtən/-áwtən*) is used with many adjectives, including most of those of the pattern *CəCayC* (see §5.2), and with all active participles (see §7.1.6). With nouns, however, it is much less common, though it is found on some frequently occurring feminine nouns, especially those referring to humans and body parts. Feminine external plurals found in Johnstone's texts are:

ʾayn, pl. *ʾāyēntən* 'eye'
brīt, pl. *bántən* 'daughter'
ðayʾ, pl. *ðəyōtən* 'scent' (masculine?)
fīḳā, pl. *fəḳyōtən* 'cover' (masculine?)
gənyōt, pl. *gənnaytən* 'female jinnee'
gərīt, pl. *gērtən* 'slave-girl'
ġayfēn, pl. *ġəfənōtən* 'dress' (masculine?)
ġəggēt, pl. *ġəggōtən* 'girl'
ġəgənōt, pl. *ġəgənawtən* 'girl'
ġayt, pl. *ġawtən* 'sister'
ham, pl. *həmōtən* 'name' (masculine?)
ḥayd, pl. *ḥādōtən* 'hand'
ḥəyðēn, pl. *ḥəyðantən* 'ear'
kəwbēt, pl. *kəlabtən* 'bitch'
źəfīr, pl. *źəfartən* 'plait (of hair)'[10]

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[10] The *ML* gives the plural form as *źəfarūtən*, but the form *źəfartən* occurs in the texts (75:13; 85:10). It is clearly feminine, since we find fs *ṭayt* 'one' referring to this word in 75:13 and fp *bīsən* 'them' in 85:10.

Unfortunately, the attestations of the nouns *ð̣ay'*, *fīḳā*, *ġayfēn*, and *ham* are not in contexts that allow us to know whether they are masculine or feminine.[11] There is at least one certainly masculine noun that exhibits the plural suffix *-tən*, namely:

> *əmbərawtən* 'boys' (def. *ḥəmbərawtən*; used as the plural of *ġīggēn* 'boy')

Some masculine nouns with the prefix *mə-* have plurals in *-ūtən* (e.g., *məhēśən* 'soothsayer', pl. *məśənyūtən*), but these are all historically active participles, and all active participles from derived stems have the common plural ending *-ūtən* (§7.1.6).

Before possessive suffixes (§3.2.2), the plural marker *-tən* is reduced to *-t* and *-Vtən* is reduced to *-ə́t*, as in *ḥəbantsɛ* 'her daughters' (15:4), *aġə́thɛ* 'his sisters' (15:1), *'āyə́ntšɛ* 'your (f.) eyes' (42:27), *ḥādə́thɛ* 'his hands' (75:10), and *aźéfərə́ts* 'her hair' (85:7).

4.3.3. Internal Plurals

As already noted, by far the most common method of indicating the plurality of a noun is changing the vocalic pattern. For the most part, internal plural forms are unpredictable. If we grouped into sets nouns whose singular and plural patterns were the same (e.g., sg. *hēxər*, pl. *hīxār*; sg. *nēḥər*, pl. *nīḥār*), there would be dozens of such groups.[12] In general, internal plurals themselves can be loosely classified according to several types:

> **Type 1**: Internal plurals indicated with the change of a single vowel or diphthong.

> This type includes many quadriliteral nouns of the pattern *CəCCīC* (var. *CəCCayC*; pl. *CəCCōC*):[13] *dəḥlīl* (pl. *dəḥlōl*) 'cave, hole', *dərhīs* (pl. *dərhōs*) 'one-year old female (goat) kid', *gərdīś* (pl. *gərdōś*) 'ground; desert', *kərmaym* (pl. *kərmōm*) 'mountain', *ḳəṭfīf* (pl. *ḳəṭfōf*) 'wing', *məḥlīb* (pl. *məḥlōb*) 'young camel', *məḥṭaym* (pl. *məḥṭōm*) 'camel-rope', *məgrīr* (pl. *məgrōr*) 'beehive', *məndīl* (pl. *məndōl*) 'handkerchief', *śəṭrayr* (pl. *śəṭrōr*) 'rag,

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[11] *Ham* 'name' is masculine in Yemeni dialects; cf. Sima (2009: 230, text 45:1).

[12] See, for example, the extensive coverage of Jahn (1905: 35-63).

[13] This also includes passive participles; see §7.1.8.

strip of cloth', *yəġrayb* (pl. *yəġrōb*) 'crow, raven', *zənbīl* (pl. *zənbōl*) 'basket'

Several masculine kinship terms: *dīd* (pl. *dōd*) 'paternal uncle', *ḥayb* (pl. *ḥawb*) 'father (pl. parents)', *ḥaym* (pl. *ḥawm*) 'brother-in-law; father-in-law; (pl.) parents-in-law', *xayl* (pl. *xawl*) 'maternal uncle'

And others: *ʾāṣər* (pl. *ʾāṣawr* or *ʾāṣōr*) 'night', *ʾāźayź* (pl. *ʾāźawź*) 'bone', *fərayź* (pl. *fərōź*) 'young she-camel', *nīd* (pl. *nōd*) '(water-)skin', *rīkēb* (pl. *rīkōb*) 'riding-camel', *ḥōrəm* (pl. *ḥayrəm*) 'road (def.)'

Type 2: Internal plurals with total pattern replacement.

Examples include: *ʾāgrēz* (pl. *ʾāgōrəz*) 'testicle', *ʾāśər* (pl. *ʾāyśōr*) 'friend', *bōkər* (pl. *bəkōr*) 'young she-camel', *bark* (pl. *bīrōk*) 'knee', *bayt* (pl. *bəyūt*) 'house', *ġayg* (pl. *ġəyōg*) 'man', *hēxər* (pl. *hīxār*) 'old man', *ḥōṭər* (pl. *ḥīṭār*) '(goat) kid', *ḳādər* (pl. *ḳaydōr*) 'pot', *ḳarš* (pl. *ḳərawš*) 'money; Maria Theresa dollar', *ḳayd* (pl. *ḳəyūd*) 'rope', *kawb* (pl. *kəlōb*) 'dog, wolf', *nēḥər* (pl. *nīḥār*) 'wadi', *sēkən* (pl. *səkōn*) 'community', *śab* (pl. *śəbōb*) 'youth', *tōgər* (pl. *təgēr*) 'merchant, rich man',[14] *warx* (pl. *wōrəx*) 'month', *xaṣm* (pl. *xəṣawm*) 'enemy', *źayga* (pl. *źīgē*) 'pen, enclosure'

Type 3: Internal plurals with pattern replacement and an infixed *w*.

Examples include: *ʾāṭər* (pl. *ʾāṭōwər*) 'perfume', *faṭx* (pl. *fəṭōwəx*) 'hit, blow', *mərkēb* (pl. *mərawkəb*) 'ship', *məsmər* (pl. *məsawmər*) 'nail', *məxbāṭ* (pl. *məxawbəṭ*) 'cartridge', *nēðər* (pl. *nəðōwər*) 'vow', *xəlēḳ* (pl. *xəlōwəḳ*) 'cloth, dress (pl. clothes)', *xōtəm* (pl. *xətōwəm*) 'ring'

Type 4: Marked feminine singulars with internal, unmarked feminine plurals (some with infixed *y*).

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[14] The word *tōgər* also has a plural form *təgərēt*. It is unclear if *təgēr* and *təgərēt* are really free variants. *Tōgər* can also function as an adjective meaning 'rich', and it seems that *təgərēt* may be used for the adjective plural (e.g., 65:8), and *təgēr* for the noun plural (e.g., 4:1).

Examples include: *bəhlīt* (pl. *bəhēl*) 'word', *bəḳərēt* (pl. *bəḳār*) 'cow',
dəgərīt (pl. *dēgər*) 'bean', *gəzayrət* (pl. *gəzōyər*) 'island', *hərmayt*
(pl. *hərōm*) 'tree', *jənbəyyət* (pl. *jənōbi*) 'dagger', *ḳəbaylət* (pl.
ḳəbōyəl) 'tribe', *nōbēt* (pl. *nəwēb*) 'bee', *rəḥbēt* (pl. *rəḥōyəb*)
'town', *rēśīt* (pl. *rīyēś*) 'snake', *saḥrət* (pl. *səwēḥər*) 'witch', *ṣəfərīyət*
(pl. *ṣəfōri*) 'pot', *wəhnət* (pl. *wəhōyən*) 'shoulder blade', *xəwfēt*
(pl. *xəlōyəf*) 'window'

Type 5: Internal plurals with suffixed *-t* (some with infixed *w* or *y*).

These are usually masculine nouns, including: *hērəḳ* (pl. *hərawḳət*)
'thief', *ḥōkəm* (pl. *ḥəkōmət*) 'ruler', *ḳəbayn* (pl. *ḳəbawnət*) 'scor-
pion', *məlēk* (pl. *məlaykət*) 'angel',[15] *rībay* (pl. *ərbāt*) 'compan-
ion', *əskayn* (pl. *əskawnət*) 'knife', *əškay* (pl. *əškayyət*) 'sword',
xōdəm (pl. *xəddōmət*) 'worker, servant', *zayr* (pl. *zəyawrət*) 'jar'

A feminine example is: *məndawḳ* (pl. *mənadḳət*) 'rifle'

Certain nouns can be classed as irregular, either because their plural is
formed from a different base (see §4.3 for examples) or because the
base is phonologically altered in the plural. Examples fitting the latter
category are *ḥəbrē* (pl. *ḥəbōn*) 'son', *ġa* (pl. *ġayw*) 'brother', *tēṯ* (pl.
yənīṯ), 'woman', and *wōrəm* (pl. *ʾayrəm*) 'road'. On the similarly irreg-
ular plural bases of 'daughter' and 'sister', see §4.3.2.

4.4. Definite Article

The existence of a definite article in Mehri was for a long time not rec-
ognized, because Mehri dialects differ with regard to this feature. It is
safe to say, however, that a definite article exists in the Omani dialect
of Mehri.[16] The form of the definite article is normally a prefixed *a-*
(occasionally transcribed *ə-*), but with some words the article is a pre-
fixed *ḥ-* or *h-*. Data on the article are complicated by the inconsistent
transcription of Johnstone's texts, and by the fact that many words

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[15] The *ML* (p. 266) lists a plural *məlōkət*, but in the texts (4:9), we find *məlaykət*,
which is confirmed by the audio. It is unclear if *məlēk* 'king' has a different plural than
məlēk 'angel'.

[16] The definite article in Mehri was only first suggested (tentatively) by Thomas
(1937: 243), who was the first to collect data on Omani Mehri. Johnstone (1970a)
published the real description of the definite article in Mehri, and Sima (2002a) is an
important study on the same topic.

cannot take a definite article at all. The rules governing the shape of the article (or its non-appearance) are not hard and fast, and for a number of words the definite form is lexical; that is, the definite form of many words must be learned individually. Nevertheless, we can formulate some general rules. For the article *a-*, we can observe the following:

a. The definite article *a-* is found before the consonants *b, d, ð, ð̣, g, ġ, j, ḵ, l, m, n, r, ṣ, š, ṭ, w, y, z,* and *ź* (voiced and glottalic consonants), though not all nouns beginning with these consonants take the article *a-*. Examples are *bayt* 'house' (def. *abayt*), *dabh* 'honey' (def. *adabh*), *ðəbbēt* 'flies' (def. *aðəbbēt*), *ð̣awma* 'thirst' (def. *að̣awma*), *gəzayrət* 'island' (def. *agzayrət*), *ġayg* 'man' (def. *aġayg*), *jənbəyyət* 'dagger' (def. *ajənbəyyət*), *ḵā* 'place' (def. *aḵā*), *lang* 'launch' (def. *alang*), *məkōn* 'place' (def. *amkōn*), *nəhōr* 'day' (def. *anhōr*), *rībay* 'companion' (def. *arībay*), *ṣadḵ* 'truth' (def. *aṣadḵ*), *šōbəʾ* 'fingers' (def. *ašōbəʾ*), *ṭāba* 'manners' (def. *aṭāba*), *wərēḵ* 'papers' (def. *awrēḵ*), *yəġrayb* 'raven, crow' (def. *ayəġrayb*), *zənbīl* 'basket' (def. *azənbīl*), *źayga* 'pen' (def. *aźayga*).

b. The definite article *a-* is also used with nouns beginning with ʾ, though only when the ʾ derives from etymological ʿ. The appearance of the article is inconsistent. For example, we find *ʾāṣər* 'night' (def. *aʾāṣər* or *ʾāṣər* 'night'), and *ʾāyśē* (def. *aʾāyśē* or *ʾāyśē*). Further research is needed to see how much of this inconsistency is due to the transcription.[17]

c. The definite article *a-* usually does not occur (or, one could say it has the shape Ø) before the consonants *f, h, ḥ, k, s, ś, š, t, ṭ,* and *x* (voiceless, non-glottalic consonants).

It should be pointed out that the vowel *ə* is often deleted in the syllable following the definite article *a-*. For example:

bəḵār 'cattle' → def. *abḵār*
gəzáyrət 'island' → def. *agzáyrət*

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[17] There is some inconsistency with words beginning with other consonants as well, but this is usually a matter of transcription. For example, we find *nəhōr xəwfīt* 'the next day' in 22:48, but *anhōr xəwfīt* in 30:8; on the audio both passages are read with *anhōr*. Similarly, we find *anhōr ðə-gəmēt* 'Friday' in 85:4, but *nəhōr ðə-gəmēt* in 85:10; again, both are read *anhōr* on the audio. In the Appendix, I do not always indicate these inconsistencies, but I do indicate clear mistakes like *ġayg* 'man' for *aġayg* 'the man' in 22:8.

nəhōr 'day' → def. *anhōr*
wərēḳ 'papers' → def. *awrēḳ*

But not:

mənēdəm 'human being' → def. *amənēdəm*
məwsē 'rain' → def. *aməwsē*
ḳərawš 'money' → def. *aḳərawš*

Clusters of three consonants do not seem to be tolerated, though sometimes the transcription suggests otherwise. For example, we find *məsgēd* 'mosque' → def. *amsgēd* (4:13), but the audio confirms that this is pronounced *aməsgēd*. Similarly, we find *kəswēt* → def. *akswēt* (38:8, audio *aksəwēt*), and *wərḳāt* 'note, paper' → def. *awrḳāt* (85:17, audio *awərḳāt*; cf. 85:18).

The articles that have the shape *ḥ(ə)-* or *hə-* are far more complicated. For several nouns, especially those with etymological initial *ʾ*, an initial *ḥ(ə)* has become part of the base of the noun, rather than simply the article. This includes the words *ḥayb* 'father', *ḥām* 'mother', *ḥəbrē* 'son' (but construct *bər*; see §4.6),[18] *ḥōṭəl* 'tamarisk', *ḥəllayʾ* 'night', *ḥəyðēn* 'ear', and *ḥayməl* 'right', each of which can be either indefinite or definite. This initial *ḥ-* of these words may stem from a sound change affecting initial *ʾ*, a change which is seen elsewhere, in words like *ḥõ* 'where' (< *ʾʾān*; cf. Hebrew *ʾān* 'where?') and *ḥāwəlay* 'first' (cf. Arabic *ʾawwal*). In words like *ḥayb* 'father', *ḥām* 'mother', and *ḥəbrē* 'son', therefore, it is not correct to think of the prefix *ḥ(ə)-* as the definite article, since it does not have this specific function with these words.

A definite article *ḥ(ə)-* or *hə-* does appear, however, on a good number of words. Let us begin with the more common article *ḥ(ə)-*, which is found on words whose initial consonants (synchronically-speaking) include *ʾ*, *b*, *d*, *f*, *g*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *r*, *s*, *w*, and *y*. Examples are: *ʾarnayb* 'hare' (def. *ḥarnayb*), *bū* 'people' (def. *ḥābū*), *brīt* 'daughter' (def. *ḥəbrīt*), *dīd* 'uncle' (def. *ḥədīd*), *fərōḳ* 'flocks, camps' (def. *ḥəfrōḳ*), *gōr* 'slave' (def. *ḥāgōr*), *mōh* 'water' (def. *ḥəmōh*), *nōb* 'big (f.)' (def. *ḥənōb*), *nīd*

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[18] Though *ʾ* is not strictly etymological in the noun *ḥəbrē*, we might assume an initial prosthetic syllable, as in Arabic *ʾibn*. Or, perhaps the initial *ḥəbrē* is analogical, as I suggest for *ḥədīd* and *ḥədīt* below. The plural *ḥəbōn* has an indefinite form *bōn*, though the form *ḥəbōn* is also used as an indefinite (cf. 7:3).

'(water-)skin' (def. ḥənīd), nōf- 'self' (def. ḥənōf-),[19] rīt 'moon' (def. ḥārīt), rōh 'head' (def. ḥərōh), rawn 'goats' (def. ḥārawn), səlōb 'arms, weapons' (def. ḥəslōb), wōdi 'valley' (def. ḥəwōdi), wōz 'goat(s)' (def. ḥōz), wōrəm 'road, way' (def. ḥōrəm), yūm 'days' (def. ḥəyūm), yənīṯ 'women' (def. ḥəynīṯ).

Many of the nouns with the definite article ḥ(ə)- have an etymological initial ʾ, which is sometimes reflected in the long ā of the definite article ḥā-. For example, bū is probably from the same root *ʾb 'father'; gōr is cognate with Arabic ʾajīr and Akkadian agru 'laborer'; rīt is probably cognate with Hebrew ʾôr 'light'; rawn is cognate with Syriac ʾarnā 'mountain goat'; and yənīṯ is cognate with Syriac ʾa(n)ṭtā and Hebrew ʾiššā 'woman', as well as with Arabic ʾunṭa 'female'. Definite plurals like ḥəfrōḵ 'flocks, camps' (sg. farḵ) and ḥəgdōl 'feet' (sg. gēdəl), and ḥəslōb 'arms, weapons' (sg. səlēb) must reflect a broken plural pattern *ʾaCCaC.

Many nouns with initial y, like as in yūm, also take a definite article ḥV.[20] Others, like mōh, rōh, nōb, nōf-, and wōz do not have etymological initial ʾ or y, but they do each have the pattern CōC, so perhaps some analogy took place with words of this pattern.[21] The noun wōdi may also fit with these nouns, since the pattern is nearly identical. The noun nīd may also belong here; its plural is nōd, so presumably this attracted the article ḥ(ə)-, which then spread to the singular. Nouns like brīt, dīd, and dīt (def. ḥədīt) perhaps take the article ḥə- on analogy with other kinship terms like ḥayb and ḥām. So, the appearance of an article ḥ(ə)- can be explained in most cases, though it cannot necessarily be predicted.

In some cases, the prefix ḥV- is reinterpreted as part of the base (i.e., not as a definite article), mirroring the words ḥayb 'father', ḥām 'mother', and ḥəbrē 'son'. For example, ḥəmbərawtən is the definite form of əmbərawtən 'boys', and both forms occur in the texts. However, in one place we find ḥəmbərawtən used with a numeral, after which an

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[19] The form ḥənōf- only occurs with suffixes, and so always appears as definite within the texts; see further in §3.6. Nōf is to be connected with Arabic nafs 'soul; self'.

[20] Some nouns with initial y- vary by dialect, and even Johnstone's own data are inconsistent on occasion. For example, for yətīm 'orphan' (pl. yətōm), the ML lists the definite forms ḥəytīm and ḥəytōm. But in the texts we find the definite plural form aytōm (16:2), as well as the definite fs aytəmūt (32:11). See further in Sima (2002a).

[21] Wōz is listed in the ML under the root ʾwz, but must be connected etymologically with Arabic ʿanz, Hebrew ʿēz, etc. It is possible that this word is being treated as if its first root letter were ʾ < *ʿ, or that the article ḥ- is a result of the pattern CōC, as I suggest above.

indefinite noun is required (§9.1). The passage is *śāṯayt ḥəmbərawtən* '3 boys' (84:1); cf. expected *śāṯayt əmbərawtən* (91:1). However, based on the audio, which is not totally clear, there is a good chance that *ḥəmbərawtən* is simply a faulty transcription in 84:1, and that *əmbərawtən* is correct. We also find *ḥōrəm ṯayt* 'one way' (62:4), in both the text and the audio, where the definite form *ḥōrəm* can only be analyzed as indefinite.[22] The indefinite form *wōrəm* does occur elsewhere in Johnstone's texts. As noted above (n. 18), definite *ḥəbōn* appears in place of the expected indefinite form *bōn* in 7:3. It should be mentioned that the *ML* gives a form *ʾēm* 'mother' as the indefinite of *ḥām*, but Johnstone indicates that it is very rare (it is not in the texts).

The article *hə-* (var. *ha-*) is much less common than *ḥ(ə)-*, occurring with a few words, all of them plural. The most commonly met words with *hə-* are *bēr* 'camels' (def. *həbēr*) and *ərbāt* 'companions' (def. *hərbāt*). Analysis of the article *hə-* is complicated by the fact that the data are not so clear. For example, the definite form of the noun *səlōb* 'weapons' is attested in the texts in the form *ḥasəlábhɛ* 'his weapons' (48:26). In the *ML*, no plural is given for the singular (collective) form *səlēb*, but in the *HL* the Mehri plural is given as *hə-slōb*. The audio for 48:26 is inconclusive, since word-initial *h* and *ḥ* are often hard to distinguish. Another difficult case is the plural of *sēkən* 'community', *səkōn*, whose definite is attested in the texts with both *ḥa-* and *ha-*, e.g., *ḥaskənihəm* 'their communities' (76:4; 76:13) and *haskénihəm* 'their communities' (72:6). Audio *seems* to confirm each of these, though, again, *ḥa-* and *ha-* are very hard to distinguish on the audio.[23] We also find in the texts a definite plural form *həśbōb* 'youths' (sg. *śab*, 42:47). The *ML* and *HL* also give the form *həśbōb*, though the audio attests *haśbōb*. So, although the data are not consistent, we have three possible plurals with *hə-*, each with initial voiceless fricatives (*s* or *ś*) and each with the same vocalic pattern: *həśbōb*, *həslōb*, and *həskōn*. Perhaps *ha-/hə-* occurs as a variant of *ḥa/ḥə* before some voiceless fricatives in plurals of this pattern? But this still would not explain the *hə-* of *həbēr* and *hərbāt*.

It should be pointed out that the article *ḥV-* or *hV-* may not appear on all forms of a noun. For example, *sēkən* 'settlement, community' has no definite article in the singular but the plural is *həskōn* (or

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[22] See Appendix, n. 12.
[23] The passage from 72:6 is also cited in the *ML* (p. 346), with the transcription *həskénihəm*. We also find initial *hə-* in 35:22 (*həskənihi*) and 91:1 (*həskényən*) where again the audio has *ḥa-* or *ha-*. The *ML* (p. 346) also lists the definite form as *həskōn*.

ḥəskōn, see above); *rībay* 'companion' has the definite form *arībay*, but plural is *ərbāt* (def. *ḥərbāt*).

Finally, as already discussed (§3.2.1), the definite form of the noun is the form to which possessive suffixes must be attached, for example:

> *ġayt* 'sister' → *aġayti* 'my sister'
> *ḳādər* 'pot' → *aḳādərək* 'your pot'
> *rībay* 'companion' → *arībēkəm* 'your companion'
> *wōz* 'goats' → *ḥazyən* 'our goats'
> *rōh* 'head' → *ḥərōhi* 'my head'

4.5. Diminutives

There are several patterns for forming diminutive nouns in Mehri, though overall diminutives are rather rare. There are less than a dozen different diminutive nouns attested in Johnstone's texts. The attested forms are:

> *ʾākērəmōt* 'little pelvis', dimin. of *ʾākərmōt* 'pelvis' (88:9)
> *ʾāwəddōt* 'small (amount of?) sardines', dimin. of *ʾāydēt* 'sardine' (45:8)
> *ġəyēgīn* 'boy', dimin. of *ġayg* 'man' (8:4)
> *hərmēyēn* 'bushes', dimin. of *hərōm* 'tree(s)' (26:4)
> *kərəmōt* 'hill, little mountain', dimin. of *kərmaym* 'mountain' (88:9; 94:41)
> *rəḥbānōt* 'little place', dimin. of *rəḥbēt* 'place' (60:3)
> *rəḥmānōt* 'little vegetation', dimin. of *rəḥmēt* 'vegetation; rain' (30:1)
> *śəwēhər* 'new moon; first part of the first crescent of the moon', dimin. of *śēhər* 'first crescent of the moon' (82:1)
> *səwānōt* 'little while', dimin. of *sēt* 'long period of time' (18:6; 36:21; 94:19)
> *wəḳētēn* 'little time', dimin. of *waḳt* 'time' (81:4)
> *xədmēnōt* 'little job', dimin. of *xədmēt* 'work, job' (57:4)

Note also the diminutive adjective *rəwāḥāḳ* 'a little ways away' (83:3, dimin. of *rēḥəḳ* 'far'). This small set of forms is not enough to draw any solid conclusions about the formation of diminutives in Mehri. We can simply note some features that apply to two or more forms, such as the use of the suffixes *-ōt* and *-ānōt* (var. *-ēnōt*) and the infixation of

w between the first and second root consonants. For further on diminutives in Mehri and other MSA languages, the reader should consult Johnstone (1973).

4.6. Construct State

The construct state, a characteristic feature of the Semitic language family, has all but disappeared from Mehri, which instead makes use of the particle *ð-* to express a genitive relationship (see §12.4).[24] However, remnants of the older construction survive with a handful of words, usually with a limited semantic function. In some cases a unique construct form of the noun is preserved. These are:

> *bər* (cstr. pl. *bəni* or *bən*) 'son of'; *bərt* 'daughter of': These constructs are limited to two main functions. The first is in conjunction with proper names. In Johnstone's texts, names are almost always substituted by the generic word *fəlān* 'so-and-so', as in *hō bər (bərt) fəlān* 'I am the son (daughter) of so-and-so'. The second use is with the compound family words *bər dīd* 'cousin' (lit. 'son of an uncle'), *bər ġā* 'nephew' (lit. 'son of a brother'), and their feminine equivalents.

> *bət* 'house of': This is restricted to the sense of 'clan, familial line', and is not used when referring to possession of an actual house (which would be expressed as *abayt ð-*).

> *bāl* (cstr. pl. *bəʾēli*; f. *bālīt*): This is the most productive of the construct forms. It is often used in constructions involving professions, e.g., *bāl rawn* 'goat-herder' (f. *bālīt rawn*, pl. *bəʾēli rawn*), *bāl bēr* 'camel-herder', *bāl bəkār* 'cow-herder', *bəʾēli əḥfōy* 'herder of suckling mother-camels', *bāl ʾāyś* 'rice merchant', and *bāl kəswēt* 'clothing merchant'. The construct is also productive in the meaning of 'owner of', as in *bāl ḳəhwēt* 'coffee seller' (also *bāl məḳəhōyət*), *bāl hawri* 'owner of the canoe', *bāl səyyārəh* '(taxi-car) driver', and *bəʾēli abdən* 'the *beden* (boat) owners'; and in the meaning 'people of', as in *bəʾēli arḥəbēt* 'the people of the town', *bəʾēli šarḥ* 'party-goers', and *bəʾēli agəbēl* 'the people of the mountains'. Note also the more idiomatic *bāl xayr* 'a well-off

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[24] Watson (2009) is an important study of the construct state and other genitive constructions in Yemeni Mehri.

person' (47:12), *bəʾēli aṭāba aḵōməḥ* 'those with bad manners' (29:5), and *bāl ḥəmōh* 'the one (cup) with water in it' (22:60).[25]

In addition, a construct phrase is sometimes used in phrases involving quantities (partitives), most commonly with *ʿaynət* 'a little (bit)' (see also §5.5.1). Examples are:

   ʿaynət ʾātərēt 'a little buttermilk' (35:2)
   ʿaynət tōmər 'a little bit of date' (75:3) (Stroomer: 'a single date')
   ʿaynət təmbōku 'a little tobacco' (94:33)

   fīgōn ḳəhwēt 'a cup of coffee' (18:12)
   ḵālēw śxōf 'a bucket of milk' (63:16)
   xayməh rīkōb ḳawt 'five camel-loads of food' (65:15)
   rīkēbi ṯrayt ḳawt 'two camel-loads of food' (98:13)

As elsewhere in Semitic, only the second member of a construct phrase can take the definite article, for example:

   bāl rawn 'a goat-herder' → def. *bāl ḥārawn* 'the goat-herder'
   bəʾēli bəḳār 'cow-herders' → def. *bəʾēli abḳār* 'the cow-herders'

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[25] The feminine *bālīt* is also used in the noun phrase *bālīt aḳāma* 'flintlock' (64:9). In the *ML* (and *HL*), *ḳāma* is glossed as 'percussion cap'. Presumably the feminine *bālīt* is used because *məndawḳ* 'rifle' is a feminine noun.

CHAPTER FIVE

ADJECTIVES

5.1. Agreement

Adjectives can be used attributively (as in 'the good boy') or predicatively (as in 'the boy is good'). In either case, a Mehri adjective will always agree in gender and number with the noun it modifies (with the exception of duals; see below). When used attributively, an adjective will also agree with the noun in definiteness. Adjectives follow the same rules as nouns when it comes to the appearance of the definite article (§4.4). Attributive adjectives follow the noun. Following are some examples:

Attributive adjectives:

> *hēt ġayg ḥaywəl* 'you are a crazy man' (98:7)
> *hēt tēṯ ḥəwəlēt* 'you are a crazy woman' (98:8)
> *watxəfəm b-wōdi nōb* 'they arrived at night in a big valley' (42:15)
> *ḥəbrətk ḥənōb* 'your big (older) daughter' (97:34)
> *wbaysi bə-xəlōwəḱ yədōn* 'put on new clothes' (24:6)
> *wə-kō hēt ḏ̣ələmk aġiggēn fəḱayr* 'why did you wrong the poor boy?' (36:34)
> *šənðərk ð-əl-həwfək aḱayḏ̣ amhaḳbəl* 'I vow I will pay you next summer' (lit. 'the coming summer') (39:16)
> *aġay śōx bə-ḳəṭar* 'my big (older) brother was in Qatar' (34:20)

Predicate adjectives:

> *ḥaybi fəḱayr* 'my father was poor' (34:4)
> *əttēṯ rəḥaymət* 'the woman was beautiful' (38:11)
> *aġəgənōt bərs nōb* 'the girl was already big' (24:5)
> *aġīggēn ḱəway wə-xəfayf* 'the boy was strong and quick' (42:2)
> *aməndawḱək dəwaylət* 'your rifle is old' (39:3)
> *hēt ṣəḥ* 'you (m.) are alive' (20:58)
> *hēt məsəwmēt* 'you (f.) are Muslim' (54:14)

The examples *ġayg ḥaywəl* 'a crazy man' (98:7) and *ḥaybi fəḳayr* 'my father was poor' (34:4), which could be translated elsewhere as 'a man is crazy' and 'my poor father', show that attributives and predicatives are not always distinguishable out of context.

The one exception to the agreement rule is a noun in the dual. Adjectives have only singular and plural forms, so a dual noun is modified by a plural adjective, for example:

> *ṣawri ṯrayt ṭəlōfəf* 'two flat stones' (71A:1)

An adjective modifying the first member of a genitive phrase (see §12.4) will follow the entire phrase. Whether an adjective in such a position modifies the first or second member of the phrase, if not clear from gender/number agreement, must be gleaned from context. Examples are:

> *ḥəbrīt ð-aṣəyyōd ḥənōb* 'the old(er) daughter of the fisherman' (97:33)
> *ḥəbrē ðə-ḥōkəm aḳənnawn* 'the small (younger) son of the ruler' (97:46)
> *ḥayb ð-aġīggēn aməraýź* 'the father of the sick boy' (65:8)

In the first example above, the adjective *ḥənōb* is feminine and so must modify *ḥəbrīt*. But in the other two examples, the adjective agrees in gender and number with either noun. If context allowed it, these last two sentences could be translated instead as 'the son of the young ruler' and 'the sick father of the boy'.

5.2. Declension

Adjectives normally have separate forms for masculine and feminine, though some (e.g., *rēḥəḳ* 'far') have only a common singular form. For those with a distinct feminine form, the feminine will end in either *-ət*, *-īt* (*-ēt*), *-ūt*, or *-t*, (with *-ət* and *-īt* being more common), but the choice of ending is often unpredictable.

Adjectives behave like nouns when it comes to forming plurals, in the sense that one finds plurals of both the internal and external type. Adjective plurals are somewhat more predictable than noun plurals, however. In addition, external plurals are more common with adjectives than they are among nouns. Despite their similarity to nouns,

adjectives need to be treated separately because of the variability one finds in the treatment of gender. For just as some adjectives have a common singular form (that is, one form for both masculine or feminine), so too some adjectives have a common form in the plural. This is not always predictable, since an adjective that distinguishes gender in the singular does not necessarily do so in the plural. We can divide adjectives into four classes, based on the level of gender and number distinction:

Type 1: All genders and numbers distinct.
Examples: *ḳōməḥ* 'bad, evil', fs *ḳámḥət*, mp *ḳəmḥín*, fp *ḳəmḥōt*
rəḥaym 'beautiful', fs *rəḥaymət*, mp *rīḥōm*, fp *rəḥamtən*

This includes adjectives of the common pattern *CəCayC*: *bəray*ʾ 'free (of debt); innocent', *bəxayl* 'mean', *dəwayl* 'worn out', *dəxayl* 'forsworn', *ðəray*ʾ 'strange', *fəḳayr* 'poor',[1] *ġəlayð̣* 'fat', *ġərayb* 'strange', *ġəzayr* 'deep', *həmayg* 'stupid', *ḥəśaym* 'respectable', *kəraym* 'generous', *ḳəṣayr* 'short, low', *ḳəway* 'strong', *mərayẓ́* 'sick', *nəgays* 'unclean', *nəkayd* 'unpleasant',[2] *nəḳay* 'innocent', *rəḥaym* 'beautiful; kind', *rəxayṣ* 'cheap', *səmayḥ* 'flat', *śədayd* 'tough; tiresome', *ṭəhayr* 'pure', *ṭəḳayl* 'heavy',[3] *ṭəray*ʾ 'fresh, damp', *ṭəwayl* 'long', *xəfayf* 'light; quick', *xəlay* 'unmarried; empty-handed', *zəhayb* 'prepared'

Adjectives ending in -*áy* (many of which refer to a cultural group): *ʾənsay* 'human', *ʾāmḳay* 'middle', *ʾārəbay* 'Arab', *fəġəśay* 'well-stocked in milk', *gənnay* 'jinnee', *hənday* 'Indian', *ḥəbəsay* 'Ethiopian', *ḥərsay* 'Ḥarsusi', *ḥāwəlay* 'ancient; former', *məhray* 'Mehri'

Adjectives of the pattern *CəCēC* (several of which refer to a physical defect; vars. *CəCāG*, *ʾāCēC*): *ʾāgēm* 'dumb', *dəkēm* 'blunt', *ð̣əlā*

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[1] In the *ML* (p. 92), the fs form is given as *fəḳayr*, identical to the ms form. This is almost certainly a mistake. Jahn (1902: 177) lists a distinct fs form for Yemeni Mehri. The *HL* (p. 32) also lists a distinct fs form for Ḥarsusi.
[2] In the *ML* (p. 294), no mp form is given. This is presumably just an oversight. The fp form does occur in the texts (87:4).
[3] In the *ML* (p. 416), the fs form is given as *ṭəḳayl*, identical to the ms form (cf. n. 1, above). This is certainly a mistake, and I found a distinct fs form (*ṭəḳlət*) recorded in some of Johnstone's handwritten notes (kindly loaned to me by A. Lonnet). Jahn (1902: 231) also lists a distinct fs form for Yemeni Mehri, as does Nakano (1986: 149).

'crippled', *fəṭā* 'naked', *ṣənēw* 'deaf', *śəḥāḥ* 'sharp', *ṭəfēl* 'lame', *xərēs* 'gap-toothed', *xəṯēm* 'weak, sickly' (exception: *ʾāwēr* 'blind'; see Type 2)

Adjectives of the pattern *CōCəC* (vars. *CōCi*, *CōCa*): *ʾōḵəl* 'wise', *fōsəl* 'lazy', *ġōli* 'expensive', *ḵōməḥ* 'bad, evil', *ḵōsi* 'cruel', *ṣōfi* 'pure, clear', *šōga* 'brave'

Adjectives of the pattern *məCCīC* (var. *məCCayC*): mainly passive participles (see §7.1.8), but also others, like *məskayn* 'poor fellow'

And others: *ʾāgəz* 'lazy', *baydi* 'untruthful, lying', *ḥaywəl* 'crazy', *ḵayśa* 'dry', *əlyōn* 'soft', *məslaym* 'Muslim',[4] *sēhəl* 'easy', *ṣəḥ* 'alive, healthy', *yədīn* 'new'

It must be pointed out that adjectives of the same ms pattern do not necessarily have the same feminine and plural forms. For example, most of the adjectives of the common pattern *CəCayC* have fs forms of the shape *CəCayCət* (e.g., *bəxaylət*, *kəraymət*, *rəḥaymət*, *śədaydət*), but from *həmayg*, we find fs *həmgīt*, and from *xəfayf*, fs *xəfəft*. Most adjectives of this same pattern have mp forms of the shape *CīCōC* (e.g., *bīxōl*, *kīrōm*, *rīḥōm*, *śīdōd*), but from *dəxayl*, we find mp *dəxəlēʾ*, and from *mərayź*, mp *mərwōź*.[5]

Type 2: Gender distinction in the singular, but common gender in the plural.
Example: *gīd* 'good', f. *gə́dət*, cp. *gīyēd*

This includes basic color words: *ʾōfər* 'red, brown', *həźawr* 'green, yellow', *ḥōwər* 'black', *əwbōn* 'white'

And others: *ʾāwēr* 'blind', *gīd* 'good', *ġāhər* 'other, another', *məšēġər* 'second, other', *mətalli* 'other, second; later'

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[4] I do not consider this a passive participle in Mehri, since it is a borrowing from Arabic, and since it does not behave exactly like a passive participle. The fs form is *məsəwmēt*, while passive participles normally have fs forms ending in *-ōt*.

[5] Most of the fs and mp forms discussed in this paragraph are taken from the *ML*, not from the texts.

Type 3: Singular and plural are distinct, but both with common gender.

Example: *ṭəwfīf* 'flat', cp. *ṭəlōfəf*

Besides *ṭəwfīf*, there are no certain examples of this type. We find in the *ML* words like *məġrayb* 'well-known', *məšhayr* 'famous', and *məṣwīb* 'wounded', with no fs, and only a single plural form given (in these cases, all of the shape *məCCōC*). But these are passive participles, which normally decline for gender in both singular and plural (see §7.1.8). It is possible that some of these are gender specific (see below), or, more likely, that the lexicon entry is just incomplete.

Also included (by default) in this category of adjectives that have a single form for both singular and plural are those few adjectives that are used only with masculine or feminine nouns. Those that are used only with feminine nouns usually lack a feminine marker.

Feminine only: *ʾāgawz* 'old' (of people only),[6] *dənyēt* 'pregnant', *mədnay* 'heavily pregnant', *nōb* 'big'
Masculine only: *hēxər* 'old' (of people only),[7] *śōx* 'big'

Most interesting in this latter category is the fact that adjectives for 'big' are gender specific, as are the adjectives for 'old' (of people).[8]

Type 4: No inflection at all (one form for all genders and numbers).

Example: *rēḥəḳ* 'far, distant' (cs and cp)

Others: *ḳərayb* 'near', *ḳāṣəm* 'cold', *maṭḳ* 'sweet', *ṣāfər* 'yellow, green', *wəṭyō* 'inadequate, in poor condition', *xəlēʾ* 'empty, alone'

Most of the adjectives in this category are nominal in origin. Cf. *ḳāṣəm* 'coldness', *ṣāfər* 'brass', and *xəlēʾ* 'desert'.

A final note on declension in general: The type of gender marking exhibited by an adjective is no indication of whether or not one finds

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[6] This is probably nominal in origin, as it is most often used alone as a noun, 'old woman', but its adjectival use can be seen in *ḥāmēh ʾāgawz* 'his old mother' (65:9).

[7] Like *ʾāgawz*, *hēxər* is normally used as a noun, 'old man'. Its adjectival use can be seen in *ḥaybəh hēxər* 'his old father' (64:6).

[8] For inanimate things, one can use the adjective *dəwayl* 'old, worn out' for either gender. Interestingly, Yemeni Mehri has feminine forms of *śōx*, namely, fs *śaxt* (e.g., Sima 2009: 230, text 45:1) and fp *śīyaxtan* (e.g., Sima 2009: 84, text 9:3).

an internal or external plural. So, for example, both *ḳōməḥ* and *ḥaywəl* are classed as Type 1, yet the former has an external masculine plural and the latter has an internal one.

5.3. Substantivation

An adjective can also be used on its own, functioning as a noun. A substantivized adjective can refer to a person, a thing, or an abstract concept:

> *ʾāmōr aḳənnawn … tōli kəlūṯ śōx* 'the young one said … then the
>   elder one said' (74:15)
> *yāmərəm aməhrē* 'the Mehris sing (well)' (84:5)
> *śīnək ḥəwrūt ḏ̣ār aḳōbər* 'I saw something black at the grave' (54:9)
> *kāl ṭāṭ yāgōb yəġrēb agīd mən aḳōməḥ* 'everyone wants to know the
>   good from the bad' (73:12)
> *wərawd ḥəmoh ðəkəməh śōx wə-ḳənnawn* '(both) young and old
>   have gone down to that water' (95:11)
> *fər ʾōfər* 'the brown one jumped' (37:15)

The numeral *ṭāṭ* 'one' can also be used with adjectives as in English:

> *ṭāṭ ḥaywəl* 'a madman' (lit. 'a crazy one') (60:10)
> *ṭāṭ ʾōfər u ṭāṭ ḥōwər u ṭāṭ əwbōn* 'a brown one, a black one, and a
>   white one' (37:14)

Just as adjectives can behave as nouns, so too can nouns look like adjectives. A noun can be used in apposition to another noun (or noun phrase), with the result that it looks like an attributive adjective. For example:

> *aġayg aźayf* 'the guest' (22:62)
> *aġəyōg aźīfōn* 'the guests' (4:3)
> *aġəyōg adəllōlət* 'the guides' (60:8)
> *tēṯ saḥrət* 'a sorceress' (6:9)
> *aġəgənōt aytəmūt* 'the orphan girl' (32:11)
> *wōz tərḳāź* 'a spotted goat' (25:13)
> *ġayg bāl xayr* 'a well-off man' (47:12)

In each of the above examples, the first word of each phrase is seemingly superfluous.

5.4. Comparatives

Comparative forms are quite rare in Johnstone's texts. Several of the attested comparatives have the shape *əCCāl* (vars. *əCCēC, aCCāC*), namely:

> *əkṯēr* 'more' (99:28; 103:2) (see §13.2.7)
> *əḵlāl* 'less, smaller' (41:8)
> *aṭwāl* 'longer' (66:7)

Other comparatives of this shape can be found in the *ML*, e.g., *əḵṣām* 'colder', *əḥrēḵ* 'hotter', and *əshēl* 'easiest'. The pattern has clearly been borrowed directly from the Arabic elative pattern *ʾaCCaC*, and many of these adjectival roots have likewise been borrowed from Arabic. However, if we compare Mehri *əḵlāl* with Arabic *ʾaqallu*, we see that the pattern has been generalized to cover geminate roots in Mehri.

The most frequently occurring comparative in the texts, by far, is *axayr* 'better', the comparative of *xayr* 'good'. Though the base adjective *xayr* comes from Arabic, the comparative *axayr* seems to be a Mehri innovation. In addition to the basic meaning 'better', *axayr* can also mean 'more', and can be used as an adverb 'especially' or 'mostly'. It is also attested three times in the variant form *xār*.[9] Examples of its various meanings are:

> *axayr hīkəm yāḵām sədəḵā* 'it was better for them to be friends' (50:5)
> *hō axayr mənkēm* 'I am better than you' (61:8)
> *aṣābər axayr mən kal-śīən* 'patience is better than anything' (61:9)
> *ḥaybi axayr mənay yōmər* 'my father sings better than me' (52:2)
> *yəxlīfək ġəyōg ð-axayr mənk* 'men who are better than you will replace you' (76:5)
> *xār hūk təhētəm* 'it's better for you to spend the night' (31:3)
> *nāṣāṣəh axayr mən kal-śīən* 'we fear it more than anything' (7:2)
> *axayr āṣər ð-agəmēt* 'mostly on Friday night' (7:7)

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[9] In each of the three attested cases (31:3; 37:18; 42:14), *xār* is followed by the preposition *h-*. However, there are also several examples of *axayr* followed by *h-* (e.g., 28:19; 50:5).

Note that comparative forms do not decline for gender or number (cf. the example above from 76:5), and that the preposition of comparison is *mən* (see §8.13).[10]

The data for the comparative form *(a)xass*, meaning 'worse' or 'less', are problematic. Consider the following three passages in which this word is attested, as they are printed:

> *yəmō əl hē axaṣṣ əlā mən əmšē* 'today is no worse than yesterday' (26:4)
> *xaṣ ꜥaynət* 'a little less' (27:24)
> *wzəməh śāṭayt ðīrēʾ xass mən aðarʾ ðə-ḳənnawn* 'he gave him (on a total of) three yards a yard short' (66:4)

The form in 26:4 is a typographical error in Stroomer's edition, and should read *axass*. In fact, this passage is quoted in the *ML* (p. 448) with the form *axass*. The form in 27:24 cannot be considered a simple typographical error, since this passage appears in the *ML* (p. 449) with the same form *xaṣ*. Perhaps this was a mistaken transcription, prompted by the initial ꜥ in the following word? In the audio for this text, it does sound like the reader says *xass*. In 66:4, the one text in which we find *(a)xass* printed with non-glottalic *s*, the relevant passage is difficult. The translation given above is the one that appears in Stroomer's edition. Another possible translation might be 'three cubits diminished by a child's cubit'.[11] To complicate matters, the *xass* is missing altogether from the audio! Without the *xass*, the passage makes much more sense:

> *wzəməh śāṭayt ðīrēʾ mən aðarʾ ðə-ḳənnawn* 'he gave him three cubits [= forearms], (based) from the forearm of a child [i.e., a shorter cubit]' (66:4, emended)

The form *(a)xass* (with *s*) *seems* secure, based on cognates from the other MSA languages (e.g., Ḥarsusi *xass* 'worse') and from Arabic (*xassa* 'to lessen'). However, two of the three printed examples have *ṣ*, and the one that does not may be a ghost form. Moreover, Jahn (1902:

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[10] An exception is with the noun *zōyəd* 'more', as in *zōyəd əl-faḵḥ* 'more than half' (69:6). On *zōyəd*, see §13.2.5.
[11] This was suggested to me by A. Lonnet.

197) lists the form *ḫaṣṣ* (= *xaṣṣ*) 'weniger, schlechter'. Thus it is difficult to come to any secure conclusion regarding the form of this word.[12]

Finally, mention should be made here of the form *xəyōr* 'best'. This is a noun (cf. 70:7 *xəyōrsən* 'their best (ones)'), and it is unclear if this can ever be used as a superlative adjective.

5.5. *Quantifiers*

5.5.1. *ʿaynət 'a little'*

The word *ʿáynət* means 'a little (bit)'. It can be used on its own as a noun, or as a quantifying adjective before another noun. In this latter use, we can also describe *ʿaynət* as a noun in the construct state (see §4.6), but since the construct has essentially been lost in Mehri, it is perhaps more useful in a synchronic description to call *ʿaynət* a quantifier. All of the examples of *ʿaynət* as a quantifier from the texts are:

  ʿaynət ʾātərēt 'a little buttermilk' (35:2)
  ʿaynət tōmər 'a little bit of date' (73:5) (Stroomer: 'a single date')
  ʿaynət təmbōku 'a little tobacco' (94:33)

5.5.2. *bāź 'some'*

The word *bāź* (< Arabic *baʿḍ*) means 'some', and is indeclinable. As a quantifying adjective, it occurs just a few times in the texts, always following an indefinite plural or collective noun. The attestations are:

  bū bāź 'some people' (38:10)
  rawn bāź 'some goats' (26:6)
  xəlōwəḳ bāź 'some (other) clothes' (37:6)

Bāź can also function as a noun, either used alone or in conjunction with a definite noun. In the latter case, *bāź* is followed by partitive *mən* (§8.13). Examples are:

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[12] Note that we do find alternation of *s* and *ṣ* elsewhere. For example, we find the roots *sdḳ* and *ṣdḳ*, both meaning 'be true'. And even though according to the *ML*, the root is *sdḳ* when used as a verb, in the texts we sometimes find *ṣdḳ* (e.g., 23:3; 40:28). See also Appendix, n. 4.

> *bāź mən amśənyōtən ð-əktəbīn, u bāź yərayb* 'some of the soothsay-
>   ers have books, and some chant while possessed' (25:18)
> *bāź źərūf* 'some (of the goats) are pregnant" (26:8)

On the use of *śī* as 'any, some', see §3.5.2.

5.5.3. *kāl* 'each, every; all'

The frequent word *kāl* is used with both nouns and pronominal suf-
fixes, and has the meanings 'each, every', 'all (of)', and 'the whole'.
Before suffixes, the base *kall-* (*kal-* or *kallə-* before the heavy 2p and 3p
suffixes) is used. Preceding an indefinite singular noun, *kāl* means
'each, every'. Examples are:

> *kāl wōz* 'every goat' (3:7)
> *kāl sənēt* 'every year' (32:13)
> *kāl ʾāṣər* 'every evening' (42:17)
> *kāl mərēź* 'every sickness' (65:7)
> *bə-kāl əmkōn* 'everywhere' (lit. 'in every place') (70:2)
> *kāl ṯroh aw kāl śāṯayt* 'each two or each three' (71A:1)

Following a definite singular noun, and always with a resumptive pro-
nominal suffix, *kāl* means 'the whole'. For example:

> *anhōr kalləs* 'the whole day' (lit. 'the day, all of it') (10:16)
> *ṣayḥ kalləh* 'the whole desert' (23:3)
> *xarf kalləh* 'the whole summer' (25:5)
> *ḥəyawm kalləs* 'the whole day' (36:27)
> *ḥəllaywəh kalləh* 'his whole night' (85:27)
> *aḳəssēt kalləs* 'the whole story' (91:28)

Following a definite plural noun, *kāl* means 'all (of the)'. If the noun
has a pronominal suffix, then *kāl* must have a resumptive pronominal
suffix; otherwise it does not.

> *ḥazihəm kalləsən* 'all of their goats' (11:2)
> *amōləs kalləh* 'all of her property' (32:30)

səwēḥər kāl 'all of the witches' (2:8)[13]
ḥāyrēm kāl 'all of the roads' (23:23)
həbēr kāl 'all of the camels' (29:5)
ḥəyūm kāl 'all (of the) days' (52:12)
ḥābū kāl 'all of the people' (63:1)
təgēr kāl 'all of the merchants' (66:10)
arḥōyəb kāl 'all countries' (74:5)
ḥəmbərawtən kāl 'all of the (other) children' (89:20)
ḥəynīṭ ð-arḥəbēt kāl 'all of the women of the town' (37:11)[14]
bəʾēli arḥəbēt kāl 'all the people of the town' (97:5)

The last two examples show that if *kāl* modifies a noun in a genitive phrase (whether the particle *ð-* or a construct is used), *kāl* must follow the entire phrase, like any other adjective (see §5.1).

We also find *kāl*, with pronominal suffixes, used in apposition to another direct object (nominal or pronominal), meaning 'all of'. Examples are:

ḥəbēsəm tīhəm kalhəm 'lock them all up' (lit. 'lock them up, all of them') (46:17)
kəlēṭi lay bə-kāl-śīən kalləh 'tell me absolutely everything' (85:34)
źəbīw taywihəm kalləh 'they roasted all of their meat' (99:6)
sḥaṭaysən kalsən 'he slaughtered all of them' (99:39)
ʾōləḳ bīs aṣayġət ðəkəməh kalləs 'he hung on it [the tree] all of that jewelry' (99:48)

Related to the above is the use of *kāl* in apposition to the subject of a passive verb. There is one attested example of this:

kəsūt ḥārawn ðə-səḥāṭ kālsən 'she found that the goats had all been slaughtered' (99:42)

Kāl is also used in several pronominal compounds. On *kāl ʾəḥād* and *kāl ṭāṭ* 'everyone; each one', see §3.5.3; on *kāl-śīən* 'everything', see §3.5.4; and on *kāl ð-* 'whoever', see §3.8.2.

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[13] This phrase is translated in the printed edition as 'every witch'. That this translation is incorrect is proven not only by the fact that *kāl* follows the noun, but also because the following verb *yəṣ* is feminine plural.

[14] In the printed edition, the translation incorrectly reads 'the women of the whole town', which in Mehri would be *ḥəynīṭ ð-arḥəbēt kalləs*.

The rare construction *l-ādēd ð-* is synonymous with *kāl* in its meaning of 'each, every'. It is attested only twice, in both cases followed by a plural noun:

> *l-ādēd ð-ʾāṣōr* 'every night' (6:7)
> *l-ādēd ðə-ḥəyūm* 'every day' (17:11)

5.5.4. *mēkən* 'a lot, many'

The word *mēkən* 'a lot (of), many, much' can be used as either an adjective or a noun. When used as an adjective, it follows the head noun, which can be either definite or indefinite. Examples of *mēkən* used as an adjective are:

> *bū mēkən* 'many people' (54:1; 65:6) (but definite *ḥābū* in 9:7; 67:3)[15]
> *rawn mēkən* 'many goats' (99:36)
> *amōl mēkən* 'a lot of property' (34:4; 58:1)
> *ʾayśē mēkən* 'a lot of food' (73:11)
> *ḳərawš mēkən* 'a lot of money' (86:7)
> *ḥīṭār mēkən* 'a lot of kids' (89:2)

Some examples of *mēkən* used independently as a noun are:

> *xəṣəmkɛ mēkən* 'your enemies are many' (10:12)
> *yəlūtəġ mēkən bə-škayəh* 'he killed many with his sword' (69:7)
> *hārōsən wə-xasərən mēkən* 'we got married and have spent a lot' (72:2)

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[15] The passage in 67:3 reads: *hēt ʾəmələk ḥābū mēkən raḥt*. Johnstone translates 'you have given the people great happiness'. However, since *mēkən* everywhere else follows the noun that it modifies, a better translation is 'you have given (lit. made) many people happiness'.

Like other Semitic languages, triliteral Mehri verbal roots appear in a variety of derived verbal stems, each characterized by particular vowel patterns and, in some cases, the addition of certain prefixed or infixed elements. The basic stem is designated the G-Stem (for German *Grundstamm* 'basic stem'), according to the conventions of Semitic linguistics. There are six derived verbal stems: the D/L-Stem, the H-Stem, two Š-Stems (which I call Š1 and Š2), and two T-Stems (which I call T1 and T2). In addition, there are also quadriliteral and quinqueliteral verbs, though these—especially the latter—are very few in number. Each verbal stem will be treated in turn below, with regard to both its form and its function.

For the verbal paradigms given in this chapter, I have had to rely a good deal on the paradigms found in Johnstone's *ML*, though these were all checked and corrected, as much as possible, based on forms found in the texts. As for the sample verbs listed in the sections devoted to meaning, nearly all of these come from the texts themselves.

6.1. G-Stem

In Mehri, the G-Stem is divided into two types, an A type (Ga) and a B type (Gb). There is also an internal passive of the Ga type. The distribution of Ga and Gb verbs is often simply lexical, though in some cases the two types can be seen to have a different function. The meanings of Ga vs. Gb verbs are taken up below (§6.1.4).

6.1.1. Ga-Stem

The Ga-Stem is characterized by a shape $C\partial C\bar{u}C$ (often transcribed $C\partial C\bar{o}C$) in the 3ms perfect. The 3mp perfect of the strong verb is formed by ablaut only. There are distinct imperfect and subjunctive stems. Following is the full conjugation of the Ga verb *kətūb* 'write':

	Perfect	Imperfect	Subjunctive	Conditional
1cs	kətábk	əkūtəb	l-əktēb	l-əktēbən
2ms	kətábk	təkūtəb	təktēb	təktēbən
2fs	kətábš	təkētəb	təktēbi	təktēbən
3ms	kətūb	yəkūtəb	yəktēb	yəktēbən
3fs	kətəbūt	təkūtəb	təktēb	təktēbən
1cd	kətábki	əkətbō	l-əktəbō	l-əktəbáyən
2cd	kətábki	təkətbō	təktəbō	təktəbáyən
3md	kətəbō	yəkətbō	yəktəbō	yəktəbáyən
3fd	kətəbtō	təkətbō	təktəbō	təktəbáyən
1cp	kətūbən	nəkūtəb	nəktēb	nəktēbən
2mp	kətábkəm	təkátbəm	təktēbəm	təktēbən
2fp	kətábkən	təkátbən	təktēbən	təktēbən
3mp	kətáwb	yəkátbəm	yəktēbəm	yəktēbən
3fp	kətūb	təkátbən	təktēbən	təktēbən

Imperative: ms kətēb, fs kətēbi, mp kətēbəm, fp kətēbən

Participle: ms kətbōna, fs kətbīta (var. kətbēta), md kətbōni, fd kətbáwti, mp kətyēba, fp kətbūtən

6.1.2. Ga Internal Passive

The Ga-Stem is the only stem for which there is evidence of an internal passive in Johnstone's texts, though Ga passives are still relatively rare. There are only about forty or forty-five attestations overall. Following are the forms:

	Perfect	Imperfect	Subjunctive	Conditional
1cs	kətábk	əktōb	l-əktōb	l-əktībən
2ms	kətábk	təktōb	təktōb	təktībən
2fs	kətábš	təktáybi	təktáybi[1]	təktībən
3ms	kətēb	yəktōb	yəktōb	yəktībən
3fs	kətbēt	təktōb	təktōb	təktībən

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[1] The *ML* (p. xxii) gives the 2fs subjunctive form as *təktōb* (actually, *tərkōz*, since Johnstone uses the paradigm root √*rkz*), but this is very likely a mistake. The expected form is *təktáybi*, identical with the imperfect. Cf. the Gb imperfect and subjunctive form *təṯbáyri* (§6.1.3). Unfortunately, no relevant forms are attested in the texts.

	Perfect	Imperfect	Subjunctive	Conditional
1cd	kətábki	əktəbē	l-əktəbē	l-əktəbáyən
2cd	kətábki	təktəbē	təktəbē	təktəbáyən
3md	kətbē	yəktəbē	yəktəbē	yəktəbáyən
3fd	kətəbtē	təktəbē	təktəbē	təktəbáyən
1cp	kətēbən	nəktōb	nəktēb	nəktībən
2mp	kətábkəm	təktīb	təktēbəm	təktībən
2fp	kətábkən	təktōbən	təktēbən	təktībən
3mp	kətēbəm	yəktīb	yəktēbəm	yəktībən
3fp	kətēb	təktōbən	təktēbən	təktībən

Imperative: none

Participle: (see §7.1.8)

For further discussion on the use of the G passive, see §7.1.7.

6.1.3. Gb-Stem

The Gb-Stem has several characteristics that distinguish it from the Ga-Stem. These include a 3ms perfect shape $C\bar{\imath}C\partial C$ (var. $C\bar{e}C\partial C$); stress on the initial syllable in nearly all forms of the perfect; a 3mp perfect with a suffix -*əm*, rather than ablaut; ablaut in the 2mp and 3mp imperfect, rather than a suffixed -*əm*; and identical forms of the imperfect and subjunctive (except for the *l-* prefix of the 1cs and 1cd forms). The Gb participle is identical in shape to the Ga participle. Following is the full conjugation of the Gb verb *ṯ*ī*b*ə*r* 'break':

	Perfect	Imperfect	Subjunctive	Conditional
1cs	ṯábrək	əṯbōr	l-əṯbōr	l-əṯbīrən
2ms	ṯábrək	təṯbōr	təṯbōr	təṯbīrən
2fs	ṯábrəš	təṯbáyri	təṯbáyri	təṯbīrən
3ms	ṯībər	yəṯbōr	yəṯbōr	yəṯbīrən
3fs	ṯəbrūt	təṯbōr	təṯbōr	təṯbīrən
1cd	ṯábrəki	yəṯbərō	l-əṯbərō	l-əṯbəráyən
2cd	ṯábrəki	təṯbərō	təṯbərō	təṯbəráyən
3md	ṯəbrō	yəṯbərō	yəṯbərō	yəṯbəráyən
3fd	ṯəbərtō	təṯbərō	təṯbərō	təṯbəráyən

	Perfect	Imperfect	Subjunctive	Conditional
1cp	ṭə́brən	nəṭbōr	nəṭbōr	nəṭbīrən
2mp	ṭə́bərkəm	təṭbīr	təṭbīr	təṭbīrən
2fp	ṭə́bərkən	təṭbōrən	təṭbōrən	təṭbīrən
3mp	ṭə́brəm	yəṭbīr	yəṭbīr	yəṭbīrən
3fp	ṭībər	təṭbōrən	təṭbōrən	təṭbīrən

Imperative: ms ṭəbōr, fs ṭəbáyri, mp ṭəbīr, fp ṭəbōrən[2]

Participle: ms ṭəbrōna, fs ṭəbrīta (var. ṭəbrēta), md ṭəbrōni, fd ṭəbráwti, mp ṭəbyēra, fp ṭəbrūtən

6.1.4. Ga vs. Gb Meaning

Previous scholars have suggested that the Gb pattern denotes 'middle' or 'stative' verbs, but such a blanket statement is inaccurate. It is true that a good number of Gb verbs are statives or middles, such as:

ʾaywər 'be(come) blind'
dayni 'become pregnant'
ǧayma 'be(come) thirsty'
fiǧəl 'break (intrans.), get broken (of teeth)'
gīləw 'be(come) feverish'
ḥaybər 'be(come) cold'
mīləʾ 'be(come) full'
mīrət 'be(come) red-hot'
mīrəź 'be ill'
sīləm 'be(come) healthy, safe'
śība 'be(come) satisfied'
tīgər 'be(come) rich'
wīḳa 'be, become; stay'

However, the Gb class also includes a number of transitive verbs. Some of the more common Gb transitive verbs are:

ʾaygəb 'love'
ʾayməl 'do, make'
fiṭən 'remember'

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[2] Very few Gb imperatives are attested. The fs is normally of the shape ṭəbáyri, but once we find a form corresponding to the shape ṭə́bəri (mə́ṭəli, 102:16). No plural imperatives are attested in the texts.

lībəs 'wear, put on (clothes)'
ḥayləm 'dream'
ḳaybəl 'accept'
śīni 'see'
wīda 'know'
wīṣəl 'arrive at, reach'

There are also Ga verbs that are intransitive or stative, such as *ġəmūs* 'disappear' and *wəḳawf* 'be(come) silent'. So, one can say that many stative verbs fall into the Gb class, but one cannot say that most Gb verbs are statives or that all statives are Gb.

Some roots appear to have both a Ga and Gb type. Often in such cases, the Gb functions as the medio-passive of the Ga, as in:

Gb *bīźək* 'snap, tear (intrans.)' vs. Ga *bəźawk* 'snap, tear (trans.)'
Gb *bīźər* 'tear (intrans.)' vs. Ga *bəźawr* 'tear (trans.)'
Gb *ṭībər* 'break (intrans.), be broken' vs. Ga *ṭəbūr* 'break (trans.)'
Gb *fīḳəś* 'burst (intrans.), explode' vs. Ga *fəḳawś* 'shatter (trans.)'
Gb *mīlə* 'be(come) full, fill (intrans.)' vs. Ga *mōlə* / *məlū* 'fill (trans.)'[3]

In other cases, the Ga and Gb are similar or identical in meaning, for example:

Ga *ḳərūb* and Gb *ḳayrəb* 'approach, be near'
Ga *zəgūd* and Gb *zīgəd* 'seize s.o.'s animals'

6.2. D/L-Stem

The D/L-Stem is characterized by a long vowel following the first root consonant in the perfect and subjunctive, and by a suffix -*ən* on all imperfect forms. The base pattern of the strong verb in the perfect is *(a)CōCəC*. The prefix *a*- appears only when the initial root letter is voiced or glottalic, similar (but not identical) to the distribution of the

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[3] The Ga 3ms form *mōlə* appears in the texts and in the *ML* (p. 265). The 3ms form *məlū* also appears in the *ML* (p. xxxii), and the attested perfects (e.g., 2fs *mōləš*, 97:7) suggest a 3ms form *məlū* (cf. the paradigm for *bənū* in the *ML*, p. xxxi). The form *mōlə* (or *mūlə*) is what we expect for a verb whose final root letter is ʾ (see §2.2.2), but the attested perfects and the imperfect listed in the *ML* (*yəmayl*, p. 265) behave as if its final root letter is *w* or *y*.

definite article (see §4.4). For example, we find 3ms perfect *abōśǝr* and *aḳōbǝl*, but *sōfǝr* and *ḥōðǝr*. Following is the full paradigm of a strong verb in this stem (*arōkǝb* 'put [a pot] on the fire'):

	Perfect	Imperfect	Subjunctive	Conditional
1cs	*arákbǝk*	*arákbǝn*	*l-arōkǝb*	*l-arákbǝn*
2ms	*arákbǝk*	*tarákbǝn*	*tarōkǝb*	*tarákbǝn*
2fs	*arákbǝš*	*tarákbǝn*	*tarēkǝb*	*tarákbǝn*
3ms	*arōkǝb*	*yarákbǝn*	*yarōkǝb*	*yarákbǝn*
3fs	*arkǝbēt*	*tarákbǝn*	*tarōkǝb*	*tarákbǝn*
1cd	*arákbǝki*	*arkǝbáyǝn*	*l-arkǝbē*	*l-arkǝbáyǝn*
2cd	*arákbǝki*	*tarkǝbáyǝn*	*tarkǝbē*	*tarkǝbáyǝn*
3md	*arkǝbē*	*yarkǝbáyǝn*	*yarkǝbē*	*yarkǝbáyǝn*
3fd	*arkǝbtē*	*tarkǝbáyǝn*	*tarkǝbē*	*tarkǝbáyǝn*
1cp	*arákbǝn*	*narákbǝn*	*narōkǝb*	*narákbǝn*
2mp	*arákbǝkǝm*	*tarákbǝn*	*tarákbǝm*	*tarákbǝn*
2fp	*arákbǝkǝn*	*tarákbǝn*	*tarákbǝn*	*tarákbǝn*
3mp	*arákbǝm*	*yarákbǝn*	*yarákbǝm*	*yarákbǝn*
3fp	*arōkǝb*	*tarákbǝn*	*tarákbǝn*	*tarákbǝn*

Imperative: ms *arōkǝb*, fs *arēkǝb*, mp *arákbǝm*, fp *arákbǝn*

Participle: ms *marōkǝb*, fs *markǝbēta*, md *marákbi*, fd *markǝbēti*, cp *markǝbūtǝn*

For verbs that do not have prefixed *a-* in the perfect, the prefix vowel of all other tenses is *ǝ*, not *a*. For example, for the verb *sōfǝr* 'travel', we find imperfect/conditional *yǝsafrǝn*, subjunctive *yǝsōfǝr*, and participle *mǝsōfǝr*. Occasionally, the prefix vowel *ǝ* is found even where we expect *a*. For example, the ms participle of *aḳōṣǝr* 'fall short in generosity; shorten' is found once as expected *maḳōṣǝr* (18:15) and once as *mǝḳōṣǝr* (77:4). This is just due to inconsistent transcription.

6.2.1. D/L-Stem Meaning

It is not possible to assign a productive or consistent meaning to the D/L-Stem. Johnstone called it the intensive-conative stem (*AAL*, p. 12), but this designation is not justified. The two most common, meaningful types of D/L-Stem verbs are denominatives and causatives

of intransitive verbs. A great many must simply be considered lexical. It is also important to recognize that a significant percentage of Mehri D/L-Stems have counterparts in the Arabic D-Stem (Form II, *faʿʿala*) or L-Stem (Form III, *fāʿala*), and many or most of these are likely Arabic borrowings or calques. Among the verbs that are causatives of intransitives, we find:

> ʾāyēś 'look after, keep alive' (cf. G ʾāyōś 'live, survive'; Arabic G ʿāša 'be alive', D ʿayyaša 'keep alive')
>
> abdīd 'separate (trans.)' (no G attested in Mehri, but cf. Arabic G badda 'disperse (intrans.)', D baddada 'disperse (trans.)')
>
> aġwīr 'distract, attract s.o.'s attention' (cf. G ġaywər 'be careless, not pay attention')
>
> ʾōləḳ 'hang (trans.)' (no G in Mehri, but cf. T1 ʾātləḳ 'be hung up', T2 ʾātəlōḳ 'hang (intrans.)'; also cf. Arabic D ʿallaqa 'hang (trans.)')
>
> ḥōðər 'warn s.o.' (cf. G ḥəðūr 'be on one's guard', and the more common T2 ḥaððūr 'be careful'; Arabic D ḥaððara 'warn')
>
> ḥōməl 'load' (cf. transitive G ḥōməl 'carry, bear'; Arabic D ḥammala 'load')
>
> ḥyīl 'trick s.o.' (cf. G ḥəyūl 'be senile')
>
> aḳōdəm 'put in front of, offer (food)' (cf. ḳədūm 'come, go before'; Arabic D qaddama 'put in front of, offer')
>
> aḳōṣər 'fall short in generosity; shorten' (cf. G ḳəṣawr 'be/fall short; run short of')
>
> sōləm 'save, preserve; surrender' (cf. G sīləm 'be safe, be saved'; Arabic D sallama 'save, surrender')
>
> awōṣəl 'take, bring s.o.' (= H həwṣawl; cf. G wīṣəl 'arrive'; Arabic D waṣṣala 'take, bring s.o.')
>
> xōrəb 'spoil, damage' (cf. G xayrəb 'be spoilt'; Arabic D xarraba 'destroy')

As for denominatives, we find:

> ḥōni 'dye with henna' (cf. ḥaynēʾ 'henna'; Arabic D ḥannaʾa 'dye with henna')
>
> aḳōfi 'go away' (cf. ḳəfē 'back', so lit. 'turn one's back to')
>
> arōba 'give s.o. protection' (probably denominative from rībay 'companion, fellow tribesman')
>
> aṣyīḥ 'shout' (cf. ṣayḥ 'voice'; Arabic D ṣayyaḥa 'shout, cry out')
>
> aṭōrəf 'put aside' (cf. ṭərēf 'side')

aṭyīf 'collect aloe' (cf. *ṭayf* 'aloe')

xwīṣ 'collect *xawṣ* for basket-weaving' (cf. *xawṣ* 'palm leaves used for weaving baskets')

A few D/L-Stem verbs seem to be deadjectival:

abōri 'free (from debt or guilt)' (cf. *bəray²* 'free')

kōrəm 'be generous to' (cf. *kəraym* 'generous')

aḳōməḥ 'foil (plans), frustrate; disappoint' (cf. *ḳōməḥ* 'bad')

azhīb 'dress up a woman in finery' (cf. *zəhayb* 'prepared, ready')

A great many D-Stems must simply be considered lexical, such as the following:

²ōbəl 'try, test'

awōðən 'call to prayer' (cf. Arabic D *²aððana* 'call to prayer')

²ōləm 'mark; teach' (cf. Arabic D *ʿallama* 'teach')

²āwēg 'delay, divert'

²āwēn 'help' (cf. Arabic L *ʿāwana* 'help')

²āyēṭ 'cry out; weep' (cf. Arabic D *ʿayyaṭa* 'cry out')

²ōzər 'pester, annoy'

abōrək 'bless' (cf. Arabic L *bāraka* 'bless')

abōśər 'give good news' (cf. Arabic D *baššara* 'bring news')

dōləx 'seize (s.t. small)'

admīm 'grope, feel about' (cf. Q *adamdəm*, with the same meaning)

fask 'separate (people fighting)'

fōxər 'beautify, dress up'

agōrəb 'try' (cf. Arabic D *jarraba* 'test, try')

aġyīð̣ 'anger' (cf. T1 *ġatyəð̣* 'get angry')

hōdi 'divide, share' (cf. Arabic L *hādā* 'exchange gifts')

hōnəd 'feel sleepy' (perhaps denominative from *hənūd* 'drowsiness')

ḥōrəm 'swear (not to do s.t.)' (cf. Arabic D *ḥarrama* 'declare s.t. forbidden; refrain from s.t.')

ḥōṣəl 'acquire, get' (= G *ḥəṣawl*; cf. Arabic G *ḥaṣala* and D *ḥaṣṣala* 'obtain, get')

kōməl 'finish' (cf. Arabic D *kammala* 'finish')

aḳōbəl 'watch, keep an eye on' (cf. Arabic L *qābala* 'stand opposite, face')

aḵwīn 'measure'

amōsi 'kiss'

arōtəb 'arrange, tidy up' (cf. Arabic D *rattaba* 'arrange')

sōfər 'travel' (cf. Arabic L *sāfara* 'travel')

aṣōli 'pray' (cf. Arabic D *ṣallā* 'pray')

śūbəh 'suspect; look like' (cf. Arabic L *šābaha* 'look like')

twīb 'repent'

awdīd 'assign tasks'

awōləm 'prepare (trans.)'

awōkəl 'authorize, empower' (cf. Arabic D *wakkala* 'authorize, empower')

awōṣəf 'describe' (= H *həwṣawf*)

awōsi 'advise' (cf. Arabic D *waṣṣā* 'advise')

xōbəṭ 'cock (a gun)'

xōṭər 'risk, endanger' (cf. *xəṭār* 'danger'; Arabic L *xāṭara* 'risk, endanger')

6.3. H-Stem

The H-Stem is characterized by a prefixed *h* throughout the paradigm. The base pattern in the perfect is of the shape *həCCūC*. Following is the full paradigm of a strong verb in this stem (*hərkūb* 'mount'):

	Perfect	Imperfect	Subjunctive	Conditional
1cs	*hərkə́bk*	*əhərkūb*	*l-əhárkəb*	*l-əhárkəbən*
2ms	*hərkə́bk*	*təhərkūb*	*təhárkəb*	*təhárkəbən*
2fs	*hərkə́bš*	*təhərkáybi*	*təhárkəb*	*təhárkəbən*
3ms	*hərkūb*	*yəhərkūb*	*yəhárkəb*	*yəhárkəbən*
3fs	*hərkəbūt*	*təhərkūb*	*təhárkəb*	*təhárkəbən*
1cd	*hərkə́bki*	*əhərkəbō*	*l-əhərkəbē*	*l-əhərkəbáyən*
2cd	*hərkə́bki*	*təhərkəbō*	*təhərkəbē*	*təhərkəbáyən*
3md	*hərkəbō*	*yəhərkəbō*	*yəhərkəbē*	*yəhərkəbáyən*
3fd	*hərkəbtō*	*təhərkəbō*	*təhərkəbē*	*təhərkəbáyən*
1cp	*hərkūbən*	*nəhərkūb*	*nəhárkəb*	*nəhárkəbən*
2mp	*hərkə́bkəm*	*təhərkīb*	*təhárkəbəm*	*təhárkəbən*
2fp	*hərkə́bkən*	*təhərkūbən*	*təhárkəbən*	*təhárkəbən*
3mp	*hərkīb*	*yəhərkīb*	*yəhárkəbəm*	*yəhárkəbən*
3fp	*hərkūb*	*təhərkūbən*	*təhárkəbən*	*təhárkəbən*

Imperative: ms *hárkəb*, fs *hárkəbi*, mp *hárkəbəm*, fp *hárkəbən*

Participle: ms *məhárkəb*, fs *məhərkəbēta*, md *məhárkəbi*, fd *məhərkəbēti*, cp *məhərkəbūtən*

In the perfect, the initial *h* of the H-Stem is sometimes dropped, especially when the first root consonant is voiceless, but the loss of *h* is not predictable. For example, we find *tmūm* 'finish', but *həthūm* 'imagine'; *frūḳ* 'frighten', but *həftūk* 'take out/off/away'. Loss of *h* is much rarer before voiced consonants, but an example is *mlū* 'fill' (cf. *həmlūk* 'give legal possession of a wife').[4] With verbs that lose the prefixed *h* in the perfect, the *h* reappears in many (but not all) forms of the other tenses (e.g., 3ms perfect *frūḳ* 'he frightened', but 3ms subjunctive *yəhafrəḳ*).

6.3.1. H-Stem Meaning

The primary function of the Mehri H-Stem is as a causative (cf. Hebrew *hiphʿil*, Arabic *ʾafʿala*). The causative meaning is usually derived from a G-Stem verb. Some examples are:

hāśūś 'rouse, wake up (trans.); bear (fruit)' (cf. G *ʾəś* 'rise, get up; grow')
hāwūr 'make blind' (cf. G *ʾaywər* 'be blind')
həbhūl 'cook, prepare' (cf. G *bəhēl* 'be cooked, ready')
həbkū 'make s.o. cry' (cf. G *bəkū* 'cry')
həbḳū 'put aside, save' (cf. G *bəḳū* 'be left over, remain')
həbrūk 'make (camels) kneel' (cf. G *bərūk* 'kneel (of camels)')
həbawr 'take out (animals) at night' (cf. G *bār* 'go out at night')
hādūg 'suckle' (= D/L *ʾōdəg*; cf. G *ʾādūg* 'suck (at the breast)')
hədlūl 'lead, guide' (= G *dəl* 'lead, guide')
hədxawl 'make s.o. swear' (cf. G *dəxāl* 'swear, promise')
həðhūb 'flood (trans.)' (cf. G *ðəhēb* 'be flooded')
həfhūś 'boil (meat and potatoes)' (cf. G *fəhēś* 'boil (intrans.)')
frūd 'frighten (animals)' (cf. G *fərūd* 'stampede, panic')
frūḳ 'frighten' (cf. G *fīrəḳ* 'be afraid')
həftūk 'take out/off/away' (cf. G *fətūk* 'come/go out')
həgawr 'knock down' (cf. G *gār* 'fall')

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[4] The lack of *h* in the perfect *mlū* may have something to do with the confusion of the H-Stem forms with the forms of the G-Stem *məlū* (see preceding note, and *ML*, p. 265).

həglūl 'light a fire; boil (trans.)' (cf. G *gəl* 'be alight; boil (intrans.)')

hwū 'drop, make fall' (cf. G *həwū* 'fall')

həkfūd 'bring/let down' (cf. G *kəfūd* 'go down')

həkśē 'dry (trans.)' (cf. G *kayśa* 'be dry')

hwūb 'warm by the fire' (cf. G *hīwəb* 'get warm')

ḥnūṯ 'make s.o. break an oath' (cf. G *ḥaynəṯ* 'swear a lie, break an oath')

ḥrūḳ 'burn (trans.)' (cf. G *ḥayrəḳ* 'get burnt')

ḥyēʾ 'cure' (cf. G *ḥaywa* 'get better, be cured')

həwbūs 'dress s.o.' (cf. G *lībəs* 'wear')

həwṣawḳ 'stick (trans.), attach' (cf. G *līṣəḳ* 'stick (intrans.), adhere')[5]

mlū 'fill (trans.)' (cf. Gb *mīləʾ* 'be full'; = Ga *mōləʾ*)

həmlūk 'give s.o. legal possession of a woman in marriage' (cf. G *məlūk* 'possess')

həmrūt 'heat red-hot' (cf. G *mīrət* 'be(come) red-hot')

həmwūt 'kill' (cf. G *mōt* 'die')

həndūr 'give milk; suckle' (cf. G *nədūr* 'drink milk (used of babies)')

hənḳawb 'throw off (usually of a mount)' (cf. G *nīḳəb* 'fall off (a mount)')

hərkūb 'mount s.o.' (cf. G *rəkūb* 'ride, mount')

hərwū 'give to drink' (cf. G *raywi* 'drink to repletion')

śnū 'show' (cf. G *śīni* 'see')

tmūm 'finish (trans.), complete' (cf. G *təm* 'be finished, finish (intrans.)')

twū 'feed' (cf. G *təwū* 'eat')

həwkūb 'put in' (cf. G *wəkūb* 'enter')

həwḳā 'put, put down' (cf. G *wīḳa* 'be, become')

həwrūd 'take down to water' (cf. G *wərūd* 'go down to water')

həwṣawl 'take s.o. somewhere' (cf. G *wīṣəl* 'arrive, reach')

xdūm 'employ, give work' (cf. G *xədūm* 'work')

xlūs 'mislead' (cf. G *xəlūs* 'get lost')

həzyūd 'increase (trans.); give more' (cf. G *zəyūd* 'increase (intrans.); be(come) more than')

Other H-Stem causatives have extended or narrowed in meaning, but the derivation can still be seen, for example:

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[5] The *ML* (p. 256) lists *həwṣūḳ*, but this should properly be transcribed *həwṣawḳ*; cf. the 3mp perfect *həwṣayḳ*, attested in 17:9.

həðrō 'let the blood of a goat run over a sick person' (cf. G *ðayrəʾ* 'bleed (intrans.)')

həġfūl 'cheer s.o. up' (cf. G *ġəfūl* 'be carefree', Š *šə́ġfūl* 'be cheerful', *ġayfəl* 'cheerful')

həġwūṣ 'put down one's feet under water' (cf. G *ġōṣ* 'dive')

həḳṣawm 'spend the afternoon (to avoid the heat)' (cf. G *ḳayṣəm* 'be cool')

hərźū 'reconcile with s.o. (usually a wife)' (cf. G *rayźi* 'be agreeable')

həwṣawb 'hit (with a bullet)' (cf. G *ṣawb* 'be/go straight')

Some H-Stem verbs do not have a corresponding G-Stem verb, but might still be seen as causative in meaning. Such are:

hālūḳ 'light (trans.), kindle' (cf. G *ʾālūḳ* 'make a fire')

həðnawn 'imagine' (cf. *ðan* 'thought')

fḳō 'cover' (cf. Š *šəfkō* 'cover oneself')

fūḳ 'give in marriage' (cf. Š *šəfūḳ* 'get married (female subject only)')[6]

həgnē 'warm (trans.)' (cf. Š *šəgnē* 'get warm')

həġyūg 'bear young (of animals)' (cf. *ġayg* 'man')

kawr '(make s.t.) roll down'

hḳū 'give water to' (cf. G *həḳū* 'irrigate; give a drink', anomalous *təḳ* 'drink')

hmū 'call, name' (cf. *ham* 'name')

həndēx 'fumigate, perfume with incense smoke' (cf. T1 *naddəx* 'get smoke in one's eyes', *nīdēx* '(incense-)smoke')

hənḥū 'burn (trans.)' (cf. Š *šənḥū* 'get burnt')

hərbā 'lift/pull/take up' (cf. Š *šərbā* 'climb to the top of s.t.')

hərxū 'release, let go' (cf. Š *šərxū* and T1 *ratxi* 'be untied, be released')

śawḳ 'light (on fire), burn (trans.)' (cf. T1 *śatūḳ* 'miss, long for')[7]

həṭlawḳ 'release, set (a horse) after' (cf. T1 *ṭatləḳ* 'be released')

həwrē 'keep away, hold back (trans.)' (cf. Š *šəwrē* 'back off, stand down')

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[6] On this anomalous verb, see further in §7.2.13.

[7] The form *śawḳ* is difficult to explain, if the root is *śwḳ*. The T1-Stem, assuming it is connected, reflects a root *śwḳ*, though *śawḳ* behaves as if its root were *śʿḳ* (cf. *kawr*). If the root were originally *źwḳ*, as suggested in the *ML* (p. 387), we could perhaps argue for a change of G perfect *źwūḳ > *źūḳ > *źawḳ > *śawḳ*, reanalyzed as an H-Stem on analogy with verbs like *kawr*. The subjunctive form given in the *ML* is *yəhaśə́ḳ*, which can only be an H-Stem.

However, many H-Stems do not seem to function as causatives, and must simply be considered lexical. Some have roots that appear in other stems, while others do not. Many of these verbs that do not function as causatives (and many of those that do, for that matter) must have simply been borrowed from the Arabic C-Stem (Form IV, *ʾafʿala*). Such are:

> *hāmūn* 'trust (in s.o.)' (cf. Arabic C *ʾāmana* 'trust (in s.o.)')
> *hāmūr* 'order' (cf. Arabic G *ʾamara* 'order' vs. Mehri G *ʾāmōr* 'say')
> *hānō* 'decide, intend' (no related verbs; cf. *mānē* 'intent, intention')
> *hārūs* 'marry, get married' (Arabic G *ʿarasa* or D *ʿarrasa* 'get married')
> *hātūm* 'spend the night'
> *həbġawź* 'hate' (cf. G *bəġāź* 'dislike'; Arabic C *ʾabġaḍa* 'hate', but G *baġiḍa* 'be hated')
> *həbṣawr* 'see well' (cf. Arabic C *ʾabṣara* 'see')
> *həbṭā* 'be late, be delayed' (cf. *bəṭayʾ* 'slow, late'; Arabic C *ʾabṭaʾa* 'be late')
> *flūt* 'escape, flee, run away' (cf. Arabic C *ʾaflata* 'escape'; in Mehri cf. D/L *fōlət* 'free oneself', T1 *fatlət* 'be untied')
> *frā* 'begin'
> *frūḳ* 'recover from a fever' (on the homophonous *frūḳ* 'frighten', see above)[8]
> *həfsēḥ* 'stop doing, leave off'
> *həġdō* 'forget, lose'
> *həġṣawb* 'lose s.t. of importance' (there does not seem to be a connection between this verb and G *ġəṣawb* 'disarm, take by force')
> *hḳawṭ* 'give birth (used of camels)'
> *ḥwūl* 'understand (a language)' (probably cf. Arabic C *ʾaḥwala* 'convert, translate')
> *kbūr* 'stay with s.o. to drink milk'
> *həḳbūl* 'arrive, draw near' (cf. Arabic C *ʾaqbala* 'draw near')
> *həmrūź* 'nurse, look after' (this is the opposite of causative; cf. G *mīrəź* 'be ill')
> *hənfēx* 'blow, breathe' (seems to = G *nəfx*)

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[8] This verb is considered an H-Stem in Johnstone's *ML* (based on the imperfect forms listed), but the forms in the texts (84:6, 7, 8) are ambiguous and could be either G- or H-Stems.

həngūd 'go to Negd (in Dhofar)' (denominative from *Nagd*; cf. Arabic C *ʾanjada* 'travel in the Negd')

hənkūr 'feel; understand, realize' (cf. G *nīkər* 'understand, catch on')

hənśūr 'have had enough sleep' (no related verbs; probably cf. Arabic C *ʾanšara* 'resurrect from the dead')

hərgūf 'shiver (with fever)' (cf. Arabic C *ʾarjafa* 'shiver')

hərhūn 'pawn; leave s.t. as a pledge' (cf. Arabic C *ʾarhana* 'pawn; leave s.t. as a pledge')

hərsū 'cast anchor' (cf. Arabic C *ʾarsā* 'cast anchor')

hərxawṣ 'give permission to leave' (cf. Š *šərxawṣ* 'take/want leave'; Arabic D *raxxaṣa* 'permit')

həṣbāḥ 'be/happen in the morning; become' (apparently denominative from *sobəḥ* 'morning'; cf. Arabic C *ʾaṣbaḥa* 'be/happen in the morning; become')

həṣfūr 'whistle' (cf. Arabic G *ṣafara* 'whistle', but Judeo-Arabic C *ʾaṣfara* 'whistle')

həthūm 'think, imagine, suspect'

həwfū 'pay in full' (perhaps cf. *wōfi* 'honest')

həwḥū 'come to help'

həwlū 'go back to, turn towards, direct oneself to' (cf. Arabic C *ʾawlā* 'turn back/towards')

həwṣawf 'describe' (= D/L *awōṣəf*; cf. *waṣf* 'description' (< Arabic))

xṣawb 'send; send for'

həzbūr 'feel pleasure at s.o.'s misfortune'

həźrawb 'be ill'

6.4. Š-Stems

Mehri possesses two stems that are characterized by a prefixed *š*. The one which we will call Š1 is by far the more common of the two Š-Stems. It has the basic pattern *šəCCūC* in the perfect, and its conjugation (in all tenses) is parallel to that of the H-Stem (*həCCūC*). The other Š-Stem, which we will call Š2, has the basic pattern *šəCēCšəC* in the perfect. The Š2, like the D/L and T2, is characterized by a suffixed *-ən* on all imperfect forms. Johnstone refers to both of the Š-Stems as causative-reflexive verbs (*AAL*, p. 13), but this designation is not very accurate, as will be seen below.

6.4.1. Š1-Stem Form

Following is the full paradigm of a strong verb in the Š1-Stem (*šəkbūr* 'consider large'):

	Perfect	Imperfect	Subjunctive	Conditional
1cs	*šəkbə́rk*	*əšákbər*	*l-əšákbər*	*l-əšákbərən*
2ms	*šəkbə́rk*	*təšakbūr*	*təšákbər*	*təšákbərən*
2fs	*šəkbə́rš*	*təšəkbáyri*	*təšákbər*	*təšákbərən*
3ms	*šəkbūr*	*yəšəkbūr*	*yəšákbər*	*yəšákbərən*
3fs	*šəkbərūt*	*təšəkbūr*	*təšákbər*	*təšákbərən*
1cd	*šəkbə́rki*	*əšəkbərō*	*l-əšəkbərē*	*l-əšəkbəráyən*
2cd	*šəkbə́rki*	*təšəkbərō*	*təšəkbərē*	*təšəkbəráyən*
3md	*šəkbərō*	*yəšəkbərō*	*yəšəkbərē*	*yəšəkbəráyən*
3fd	*šəkbərtō*	*təšəkbərō*	*təšəkbərē*	*təšəkbəráyən*
1cp	*šəkbūrən*	*nəšəkbūr*	*nəšákbər*	*nəšákbərən*
2mp	*šəkbə́rkəm*	*təšəkbīr*	*təšákbərəm*	*təšákbərən*
2fp	*šəkbə́rkən*	*təšəkbūrən*	*təšákbərən*	*təšákbərən*
3mp	*šəkbīr*	*yəšəkbīr*	*yəšákbərəm*	*yəšákbərən*
3fp	*šəkbūr*	*təšəkbūrən*	*təšákbərən*	*təšákbərən*

Imperative: ms *šákbər*, fs *šákbəri*,[9] mp *šákbərəm*, fp *šákbərən*

Participle: ms *məšákbər*, fs *məšəkbərēta*, md *məšákbəri*, fd *məšəkbərēti*, cp *məšəkbərūtən*

6.4.2. Š1-Stem Meaning

As mentioned above, Johnstone refers to the Š-Stems as causative-reflexive verbs. This designation does not really apply to more than a handful of Š1-Stems. Among the examples in the texts are:

šāgūl 'hurry (oneself)' (cf. H *hāgūl* 'make s.o. hurry')
šəbdūd 'separate oneself from' (cf. H *abdēd* 'separate (trans.)')

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⁹ The only attested Š-Stem fs imperative in Johnstone's texts is *šāgəl* (94:15), which lacks a final *-i*. However, since a final *-i* appears in the fs imperative of the H-Stem (which, like the Š-Stem lacks a suffix in the 2fs subjunctive form), a suffixed *-i* is expected in the fs imperative of the Š-Stem. Unfortunately, I found no audio for text 94.

šəhwūb 'warm oneself by the fire' (cf. H *hwūb* 'warm by the fire (trans.)')

šəḵḥawb 'play the harlot' (cf. H *həḵḥawb* 'turn a woman into a harlot; seduce')

šərbā 'climb (to the top)' (cf. H *hərbā* 'lift, pull up')

There are a few verbs that might be called causative-passive, since they can be seen as the passive of a corresponding causative (H-Stem) verb. Such are:

šədlūl 'be guided; need directions' (cf. H *hədlūl* 'lead, guide')

šəfūḵ 'get married' (used with female subject only) (cf. H *fūḵ* 'give in marriage')[10]

šəḵwū 'become strong' (cf. G *ḵaywi* 'be strong'; cf. H *həḵwū* 'strengthen')

šəmlūk 'be given legal possession of a woman in marriage' (cf. H *həmlūk* 'give s.o. legal possession of a woman in marriage')

šəwnēx 'rest; be rested' (cf. H *həwnēx* 'give s.o. rest')

šərdūd 'get back; ask for s.t. back' (cf. H *hərdūd* 'give back')

šəwṣawb 'be wounded, be hit (with a bullet)' (cf. H *həwṣawb* 'hit (with a bullet)')

šəwfū 'be revenged for s.o., avenge s.o.; be paid in full' (cf. H *həwfū* 'settle, pay in full')

šəxtūn 'be circumcised' (cf. G *xətūn* 'circumcise', H *həxtūn* 'have a child circumcised')

šəźyūḵ 'get fed up; have trouble' (cf. G *źəyūḵ* 'be fed up', H *həźyūḵ* 'make s.o. fed up')

A few Š1-Stems have a meaning something like 'believe s.o./s.t. is *X*':

šəbdū 'believe s.o. is lying' (cf. G *bədū* 'lie, tell a lie')

šəkbūr 'consider large'

šəkṯūr 'be too much; think s.t. is too much' (cf. G *kīṯər* 'be abundant', H *həkṯūr* 'say/give more')

šəṭḵawl 'find guests unwelcome; (+ reflexive *ḥənōf-*) think oneself a burden' (cf. G *ṭīḵəl* 'be heavy', H *həṭḵawl* 'put a heavy loan on')

šəsdūḵ 'believe s.o. is telling the truth' (cf. G *sədūḵ* 'tell the truth')

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[10] On this anomalous verb, see further in §7.2.13.

However, the great majority of Š1-Stems can only be categorized as lexical. Examples are:

šāðūr 'refuse s.o.' (cf. H hāðūr 'excuse, excuse oneself')

šāfō 'recover, improve in health' (cf. šāfyət 'health')

šāmūn 'believe; fall in with s.o.'s wishes' (cf. H hāmūn 'trust')

šānūs 'dare'

šāsūr 'love, like, be keen on'

šāźō 'be/get worried about'

šōda 'curse, insult' (cf. dāwēt 'complaint')

šədhūḳ 'look, look down'

šədrūk 'survive' (cf. G dərūk 'come quickly to help', D/L adōrək 'save s.o.'s life by giving water')

šəftēḥ 'be mated (female animals)' (cf. G fətḥ or fūtəḥ 'open')

šəghūm 'set off (in the morning)' (cf. G gəhēm 'go, go in the morning')

šəġḥawd 'be(come) convinced' (cf. G gəḥād 'deny, refuse')

šəġbūr 'ask for help' (cf. H šəġbūr 'give help')

šəġlū 'buy s.t. at a high price' (cf. H həġlū 'sell s.t. at a high price')

šəwġawr 'raid'

šəhmūm 'be encouraged, be bold'

šəḥgū 'stand firm; settle a difficulty'

šəhyūr 'be paralyzed with fear' (cf. G ḥəyūr 'be confused, get lost')

šəklūl 'catch (in one's hands)' (cf. H klūl 'catch (s.t. dropping)')

šəklūṯ 'listen to a tale' (cf. G kəlūṯ 'tell')

šəktūb 'have s.o. write (a charm)' (cf. Arabic Ct istaktaba 'have s.o. write s.t.')

šəkrū 'hide (intrans.), hide o.s.' (cf. G ḳərū 'hide (trans.)') (reflexive, but there is no recorded H-Stem of this root)

šəkrawr 'confess' (= G ḳər)

šəḳṣawr 'run out of, run short of' (very close to G ḳəṣawr 'be/fall short; run short of')

šəḳṭā 'become despondent, tired (of a situation)' (cf. G ḳayṭā 'be tired')

šəkźū 'be paid off, receive blood-money' (cf. G ḳəźū 'pay, pay blood-money')

šəmdūd 'take s.t. (from s.o.)' (cf. H həmdūd 'give')

šəmrūź 'fall ill; be ill' (cf. G mīrəź 'be ill'; H həmrūź 'nurse' is not causative)

šəndūm 'renege, ask for s.t. back' (cf. G *nīdəm* 'repent of s.t., be sorry about')

šənðūr 'vow, promise' (H *hənðūr* seems to have the same meaning)

šənḥawr 'complain, lodge a complaint'

šənṣawr 'be victorious' (cf. *nēṣər* 'victory')

šərḥawm 'get rain (in a dry period)' (cf. *rəḥmēt* 'rain')

šəṣfū 'find out, gather news' (cf. *ṣəfōt* 'news')

šəṣḥāḥ 'be(come) healthy' (cf. *ṣəḥ* 'alive, healthy', *ṣəḥḥāt* 'health')

šəṣḥawr 'be branded' (cf. G *ṣəḥār* 'brand')

šəwgūś 'go (in the early evening)' (cf. H *həwgūś* 'take out/bring home beasts in the early evening')

šəwkūf 'sleep, fall asleep' (cf. H *həwkūf* 'let s.o. ill rest on one's shoulder; set up (a stone)'

šəwdē 'keep safe' (cf. H *həwdē* 'give s.o. protection'; Arabic Ct *istawdaʿa* 'entrust, give for safekeeping'; Mehri *abēli šəwədēkəm* (35:15) is probably a calque of Arabic *istawdaʿkumu llāha*)

šəwrē 'back off, stand down' (cf. H *həwrē* 'keep away, hold back (trans.)')

šəxbūr 'ask' (cf. Arabic tD *taxabbara* and Ct *istaxabara* 'inquire')

šəźyūm 'run short of milk' (cf. *źaymət* 'shortage of milk')

It should be noted that while a large number of D/L-Stems and H-Stems have clear Arabic counterparts, most Š1-Stems do not. And when there is an Arabic cognate, the Š1-Stem does not regularly correspond to any one Arabic verbal stem. For example, from the above lists, *šāðōr, šənṣawr, šəxtūn* and, probably, *šōda* correspond to Arabic Gt-Stems (Form VIII, *iftaʿala*); *šəktūb, šəktūr, šəmdūd, šətḳawl*, and *šəwdē* correspond to Arabic Ct-Stems (Form X, *istafʿala*); *šāgōl, šəmlūk, šəwfū*, and *šəxbūr* correspond to both tD- and Ct-Stems (Forms V and X, *tafaʿʿala* and *istafʿala*); *šəḥyūr* corresponds either to a tD- or Gt-Stem (Form V or VIII, *tafaʿʿala* or *iftaʿala*); *šəwġawr* and *šəḳrawr* to C-Stems (Form IV, *ʾafʿala*); *šāmōn* to both a C- and Gt-Stem (Forms IV and VIII, *ʾafʿala* and *iftaʿala*); *šāfō* and *šəźyūḳ* to a tL-Stem (Form VI, *tafāʿala*); *šəkbūr* to both a C- and Ct-Stem (Forms IV and X, *ʾafʿala* and *istafʿala*); and *šəsdūḳ* to a D-Stem (Form II, *faʿʿala*). This can be seen more clearly in the following table:

	D	C	tD	tL	Gt	Ct
šōda					x	
šāðōr					x	
šāfō				x		
šāgōl			x			x
šāmōn		x			x	
šəwġawr		x				
šəḥyūr			x		x	
šəkbūr		x				x
šəktūb						x
šəkṭūr						x
šəḳrawr		x				
šəmdūd						x
šəmlūk			x			x
šənṣawr					x	
šəsdūḳ	x					
šəṯḳawl						x
šəwdē						x
šəwfū			x			x
šəxbūr			x			x
šəxtūn					x	
šəźyūḳ				x		

As evident from the table, the Mehri Š1-Stems most often correspond to Arabic Ct- and Gt-Stems, but without the regularity or predictability we see in the Mehri D/L- and H-Stems.

6.4.3. Š2-Stem Form

Following is the full paradigm of a strong verb in the Š2-Stem (*šənēsəm* 'sigh'):

	Perfect	Imperfect	Subjunctive	Conditional
1cs	*šənásmək*	*əšnásmən*	*l-əšnēsəm*	*l-əšnásmən*
2ms	*šənásmək*	*təšnásmən*	*təšnēsəm*	*təšnásmən*
2fs	*šənásməš*	*təšnásmən*	*təšnēsəm*	*təšnásmən*
3ms	*šənēsəm*	*yəšnásmən*	*yəšnēsəm*	*yəšnásmən*
3fs	*šənəsmēt*	*təšnásmən*	*təšnēsəm*	*təšnásmən*

	Perfect	Imperfect	Subjunctive	Conditional
1cd	šənsámki	əšnəsmáyən	l-əšənsəmē	l-əšnəsmáyən
2cd	šənsámki	təšnəsmáyən	təšənsəmē	təšnəsmáyən
3md	šənsəmō	yəšnəsmáyən	yəšənsəmē	yəšnəsmáyən
3fd	šənsəmtō	təšnəsmáyən	təšənsəmē	təšnəsmáyən
1cp	šənásmən	nəšnásmən	nəšnēsəm	nəšnásmən
2mp	šənásməkəm	təšnásmən	təšnásməm	təšnásmən
2fp	šənásməkən	təšnásmən	təšnásmən	təšnásmən
3mp	šənásməm	yəšnásmən	yəšnásməm	yəšnásmən
3fp	šənēsəm	təšnásmən	təšnásmən	təšnásmən

Imperative: (none attested)

Participle: ms *məšnēsəm*, fs *məšənsəmēta*, md *məšnásmi*, fd *məšənsəmēti*, cp *məšənsəmūtən*

6.4.4. Š2-Stem Meaning

Johnstone, in his *ML* (p. lxiii), claimed that many verbs of the Š2 pattern have an implication of reciprocity, and this claim holds true. That is not to say that these are reciprocal verbs. For example, *šənēwəṣ* 'wrestle with' and *šəgēləs* 'quarrel with' can have a singular subject and direct object. However, the actions referred to (wrestling and quarreling) are reciprocal in nature. Likewise, *šəlēbəd* means 'shoot back at' and takes a singular subject, but the implication is that shots are being fired in both directions. If these were true reciprocals, they would mean 'wrestle with one another' and 'shoot at one another', etc. This kind of explicit reciprocity is normally expressed with a T-Stem (see below, §6.5). Attested Š2 verbs with implied reciprocity are:

šādəl 'bet s.o.'
šədēyən 'borrow' (cf. D/L *adyēn* 'give credit; lend money')
šəgēləs 'quarrel with; scold s.o.' (cf. T1 *gatləs* 'quarrel with one another')
šəlēbəd 'hit, shoot back at' (cf. G *əwbūd* 'hit, shoot')
šənēwəṣ 'wrestle with, struggle with' (cf. T2 *əntəwūṣ* 'wrestle with one another')
šəwēd 'arrange a meeting; promise' (cf. *wēd* 'appointment, promise')
šəzēfər 'struggle with s.t.'

Other Š2 verbs have no implication of reciprocity, and must simply be considered lexical. Such are:

> *šəgēməl* 'take all of s.t.' (cf. G *gəmūl* 'buy the whole of s.t.', *gəmlēt* 'total')
> *šəhēwəb* 'imagine, think'
> *šəxārəg* 'read; interpret' (cf. Arabic D *xarraja* 'interpret, deduce' and Ct *istaxraja* 'deduce')

As already mentioned, and as is clear from the lists of Š1- and Š2-Stems, Š2 verbs are overall much less common in the texts.

6.5. T-Stems

Mehri possesses two derived verbal stems that are characterized by an infixed *t*. Both T-Stems occur fairly frequently. The one which we will call T1 has the basic pattern *CátCəC* in the perfect. The other stem, which we will call T2, has the basic pattern *əCtəCūC* in the perfect. The T2-Stem, like the D/L- and Š2-Stems, is characterized by a suffixed *-ən* on all imperfect forms. Johnstone refers to both of the T-Stems as reflexives, but this designation covers just a minority of T-Stem verbs. Besides reflexives, we find reciprocals, passives, and a number of verbs without a clear derivational meaning.

6.5.1. T1-Stem Form

The T1-Stem is characterized by an infixed *t*, which is inserted between the first and second root letters. The base pattern of the strong verb in the perfect is *CátCəC*. Following is the full paradigm of a strong verb in the T1-Stem (*nátfəz* 'cut one's foot'):

	Perfect	Imperfect	Subjunctive	Conditional
1cs	*nátfəzək*	*əntəfūz*	*l-əntīfəz*	*l-əntə́fzən*
2ms	*nátfəzək*	*təntəfūz*	*təntīfəz*	*təntə́fzən*
2fs	*nátfəzəš*	*təntəfáyzi*	*təntīfəz*	*təntə́fzən*
3ms	*nátfəz*	*yəntəfūz*	*yəntīfəz*	*yəntə́fzən*
3fs	*nətfəzūt*	*təntəfūz*	*təntīfəz*	*təntə́fzən*

	Perfect	Imperfect	Subjunctive	Conditional
1cd	*nátfəzki*	*əntəfzō*	*l-əntəfzē*	*l-əntəfzáyən*
2cd	*nátfəzki*	*təntəfzō*	*təntəfzē*	*təntəfzáyən*
3md	*nətfəzō*	*yəntəfzō*	*yəntəfzē*	*yəntəfzáyən*
3fd	*nətfəztō*	*təntəfzō*	*təntəfzē*	*təntəfzáyən*
1cp	*nátfəzən*	*nəntəfūz*	*nəntīfəz*	*nəntəfzən*
2mp	*nátfəzkəm*	*təntəfīz*	*təntə́fzəm*	*təntə́fzən*
2fp	*nátfəzkən*	*təntəfūzən*	*təntə́fzən*	*təntə́fzən*
3mp	*nátfəzəm*	*yəntəfīz*	*yəntə́fzəm*	*yəntə́fzən*
3fp	*nátfəz*	*təntəfūzən*	*təntə́fzən*	*təntə́fzən*

Imperative: ms *nətīfəz*, fs *nətīfəz*,[11] mp *nətə́fzəm*, fp *nətə́fzən*

Participle:[12] ms *məntīfəz*, fs *məntəfzēta*, md *məntə́fəzi*,[13] fd *məntəfzēti*, cp *məntəfzūtən*

When the second root consonant is *s*, *ṣ*, *ś*, *ṭ*, *d*, *ð*, *ḏ̣*, *z*, or *ź*, then the *t* of the stem assimilates to this consonant in the perfect, for example *naṭṭəb* < **naṭtəb*, *faźźəḥ* < **fatźəḥ*. When the second root consonant is *d*, the assimilation of the cluster *td* seems to result in *tt*, though this is alternately transcribed as *dd* or *tt* (see n. 14, below).

6.5.2. T1-Stem Meaning

A number of T1 verbs are reciprocals, and as such they are conjugated only for the dual and plural. Such are:

> *battəd* (or *baddəd*)[14] 'part from one another'
> *gatləs* 'quarrel with one another'
> *ġatbər* 'meet one another' (cf. G *ġəbūr* 'meet s.o.')
> *ġatrəb* 'know one another' (cf. G *ġərūb* 'know')

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[11] The fs imperative (like the 2fs subjunctive) is distinguished from the ms in verbs whose third root letter is *y*, e.g., *ġətayr* 'speak', fs. *ġətayri* (cf. 94:9, 10).

[12] Only about ten T1-Stem participles are attested in the texts.

[13] The paradigmatic md form in Johnstone's *ML* (p. lxx) is the incorrect *məntə́tzīṭa*, a form clearly mangled by a typesetter. Luckily, there is one md form attested in the texts, namely, *məġtəbəri* 'we will meet', which is mistranslated as 'meet me' (94:43).

[14] Forms with double *tt* are found in 12:9, 12:13, 94:47, and in the paradigms in the *ML* (p. xlviii). Forms with double *dd* are found in 82:5 and in the *ML* entry for √*bdd* (p. 42). This probably represents an inconsistency in transcription, not in language; the audio for 82:5 confirms the pronunciation *tt*.

ḥatrəb 'be at war with one another' (= T2 *əḥtərūb*; cf. D/L *ḥōrəb* 'be
at war with s.o.'; Arabic tD *ḥarraba* and Gt *iḥtaraba* 'be at war
with one another')

katləṯ 'talk to one another' (cf. G *kəlūṯ* 'tell')

latbəd 'fight with one another'[15] (cf. G *ləbūd* 'hit, shoot')

latḥəḳ 'catch up on one another' (cf. G *ləḥāḳ* 'catch up to, overtake';
Arabic tL *talāḥaqa* 'overtake one another')

lattəġ 'kill one another'[16] (cf. G *lūtəġ* 'kill')

naṭṭəb 'fall off, drop (intrans.)' (cf. H *hənṭawb* 'drop (trans.), let
fall')

ṭətān 'stab one another' (cf. G *ṭān* 'stab')

Others can be loosely classified as passives, intransitives, or reflexives,
most often with a corresponding G-Stem:

fattək 'be released, set free' (cf. G *fək* 'release')

fatḳəḥ 'break in half (intrans.); be half gone' (cf. D/L *fōḳəḥ* 'break in
half (trans.)')

faźźəḥ 'be embarrassed' (cf. G *fəźāḥ* 'be embarrassed (d.o. = by
s.o.)', D/L *fōźəḥ* 'embarrass s.o.')

ġatfən 'keep one's face covered (of woman)' (cf. G *ġəfūn* 'be in seclu-
sion the week before marriage (of woman)', T2 *əġtəfūn* 'hide
oneself')

gatḥi 'gather together (intrans.)' (always plural)

gatma 'gather (intrans.)' (always plural; cf. G *gūma* 'gather (trans.)';
Arabic tD *tajammaʿa* and Gt *ijtamaʿa* 'gather, come together')

ġatyəḏ̣ 'get angry' (cf. D/L *aġyēḏ̣* 'anger')

hattəm 'be sad, be anxious' (cf. Arabic Gt *ihtamma* 'be grieved')

ḥatrək 'move (intrans.)' (= T2 *əḥtərūk*; cf. D/L *ḥōrək* 'move (trans.)';
Arabic tD *taḥarraka* 'move (intrans.)')

ḳaṭṭa 'be cut, be cut off' (cf. G *ḳawṭa* 'cut, cut off'; Arabic tD *taqaṭṭaʿa*
'be cut off')

ḳattəl 'spill (intrans.)' (cf. G *ḳəl* 'spill (trans.)')

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[15] In the *ML*, this verb is translated as a passive 'be hit', but in a passage like 12:12,
it is clearly reciprocal in meaning.

[16] In a couple of places forms of this verb are obscured. For example, *lətəġəm* 'they
killed each other' (3:19) looks like a D/L perfect, but is probably a typo for *lattəġəm*,
as supported by the audio. The form *əwtəġō* 'they (two) killed each other' (4:17) looks
like a G perfect, but this is presumably < *əwttəġō* < the expected *lattəġō*.

ḳatləb 'change form, change into (intrans.)' (cf. G ḳəlūb 'turn; turn
    into (another shape)')

ḳatməḥ 'despair, be disappointed' (cf. D/L aḳōməḥ 'disappoint')

matḥən 'be angry, be disturbed; be in trouble' (cf. G məḥān 'give s.o.
    bad news; disturb s.o.')

matxəḳ 'come out, be pulled out (said of a dagger)' (cf. G məxāḳ
    'draw, pull out (a dagger)')

naṭṭəb 'drop (intrans.)' (cf. H hənṭawb 'drop (trans.)')

satḥəb 'crawl on one's belly' (cf. G səḥāb 'drag')

watḳəð̣ 'wake up (intrans.), awaken'[17] (cf. D/L awōḳəð̣ 'wake up
    (trans.)')

watxəf 'remain; arrive (in the evening)'

xatləf 'change (intrans.); be different' (cf. G xayləf 'succeed, come
    after; replace'; Arabic Gt ixtalafa 'be different, differ (intrans.)')

Still others, including some transitive verbs, are probably best consid-
ered lexical:

ġatri 'speak' (can be reciprocal when used in the dual and plural)

ḥatrəf 'move (trans. or intrans.), go away' (cf. G ḥərūf 'move,
    remove')

ḥātūg (ḥatwəg) 'need' (cf. ḥōgət 'thing; need'; Arabic Gt iḥtāja
    'need')

ḳatnəm 'collect fodder' (= D/L aḳawnəm and T2 əḳtənūm)

matrəḳ 'draw (a dagger)' (takes d.o.)

matwi 'have leisure time'

ratḳi 'read'

śatūḳ 'miss, long for' (cf. H śawḳ 'light, burn (trans.)'; Arabic tD
    tašawwaqa and Gt ištāqa 'long for')

Two T1 verbs require special attention. First is the verb təḳ 'drink',
historically a T-Stem of the root √hḳy (cf. H hḳū 'give drink; irrigate'),
which has become totally irregular and anomalous.[18] Second is the
verb śītəm 'buy', which is historically a T-Stem of the root śʾm (cf. G
śōm 'sell'), but has come to behave completely as a Gb-Stem verb, as if
from the root śtm.

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[17] The T-Stem is also found used transitively, e.g., təḳð̣əm tay 'wake me up!' (99:5)
and hō məttūḳað̣ tīs 'I will wake her up'. Cf. the intransitive watḳəð̣əš lā 'you did not
wake up' (99:12).

[18] The full conjugation is given in the *ML*, p. liii-liv. See also §7.2.13.

Finally, note that T1-Stems can correspond to an Arabic tD-Stem (Form V, *tafaʿʿala*), tL-Stem (Form VI, *tafāʿala*), or Gt-Stem (Form VIII, *iftaʿala*). On the Arabic counterparts to the T2-Stem, see below, §6.5.4.

6.5.3. T2-Stem Form

Like the T1-Stem, the T2-Stem is characterized by an infixed *t* following the first radical consonant. However, whereas the infix is adjacent to the second radical in the T1-Stem, where it is subject to regressive assimilation, it is adjacent to the first radical in the T2-Stem, and not subject to assimilation. For example, while the infixed *t* assimilates to the following *s* in the T1 form *kassi* (< *katsi*), it does not assimilate to the preceding *s* in the T2 form *əstəyūr*. There is, however, irregular assimilation found in some verbs, such as *əttūma* 'listen' (< *əhtūma*), *ḥəḏḏūr* (for expected *əhtəḏūr*), and *wəddawd* (for expected *əwtədūd* or *əwtədawd*). Forms like *əḏtəmūm* (listed in Johnstone's *ML*) show that dentals and interdentals do not regularly assimilate in this verbal stem. Following is the full paradigm of a strong verb in the T2-Stem (*əftəkūr* 'think, wonder'):

	Perfect	Imperfect	Subjunctive	Conditional
1cs	*əftəkórk*	*əftəkīrən*	*l-əftəkūr*	*l-əftəkīrən*
2ms	*əftəkórk*	*təftəkīrən*	*təftəkūr*	*təftəkīrən*
2fs	*əftəkórš*	*təftəkīrən*	*təftəkáyri*	*təftəkīrən*
3ms	*əftəkūr*	*yəftəkīrən*	*yəftəkūr*	*yəftəkīrən*
3fs	*əftəkərūt*	*təftəkīrən*	*təftəkūr*	*təftəkīrən*
1cd	*əftəkárki*	*əftəkəráyən*	*l-əftəkərē*	*l-əftəkráyən*
2cd	*əftəkárki*	*təftəkəráyən*	*təftəkərē*	*təftəkráyən*
3md	*əftəkərō*	*yəftəkəráyən*	*yəftəkərē*	*yəftəkráyən*
3fd	*əftəkərtō*	*təftəkəráyən*	*təftəkərē*	*təftəkráyən*
1cp	*əftəkūrən*	*nəftəkīrən*	*nəftəkūr*	*nəftəkīrən*
2mp	*əftəkárkəm*	*təftəkīrən*	*təftəkīr*	*təftəkīrən*
2fp	*əftəkárkən*	*təftəkīrən*	*təftəkūrən*	*təftəkīrən*
3mp	*əftəkīr*	*yəftəkīrən*	*yəftəkīr*	*yəftəkīrən*
3fp	*əftəkūr*	*təftəkīrən*	*təftəkūrən*	*təftəkīrən*

Imperative: ms *əftəkūr*, fs *əftəkáyri*, mp *əftəkīr*, fp *əftəkūrən*

Participle: ms *məftəkīr*, fs *məftəkərēta*, md *məftəkīri*, fd *məftəkərēti*,
   cp *məftəkərūtən*

It should be noted that some forms of the T2-Stem are rather rare. For
example, there are just two T2 participles attested in the texts, and
only five different imperative forms.

6.5.4. T2-Stem Meaning

Roots found in the T2-Stem are most often also attested in the D/L-
Stem, though the derivational relationship between the two is not
always obvious. If there is a clear relationship, the T2 is usually a pas-
sive of the D/L, less often a reflexive. Many T2-Stems are borrowings
from the Arabic tD-Stem (Form V, *tafaʿʿala)* or tL-Stem (Form VI,
tafāʿala), which have a similar relationship with the Arabic D- and
L-Stems. Examples of T2 verbs that are passives or reflexives of the
D/L are:

> *ʾātəlūm* 'learn' (cf. D/L *ʾōləm* 'teach'; Arabic tD *taʿallama* 'learn')
> *ʾātəwūr* 'be hurt' (cf. D/L *ʾāwēr* 'hurt (trans.)')
> *wətxawr* 'stay behind, come late' (cf. D/L *awōxər* 'postpone')
> *ʾātōśi* 'have dinner, eat' (cf. D/L *ʾāśi* 'give dinner')[19]
> *əbtərūk* 'be blessed' (cf. D/L *abōrək* 'bless'; Arabic tD *tabarraka* and
>   tL *tabāraka* 'be blessed')
> *həððūr* 'be careful, be wary' (cf. D/L *ḥōðər* 'warn'; Arabic D *ḥaððara*
>   'warn' and tD *taḥaððara* 'be wary')
> *əktəlūb* 'be upset, be worried' (cf. D/L *əkōləb* 'upset')
> *əmtəhūl* 'become easier' (cf. D/L *amōhəl* 'ease, lighten')
> *əstəhūl* 'go safely, go with good fortune' (cf. D/L *sōhəl* 'bid farewell
>   to')
> *əwtəlūm* 'be prepared, be ready (of person or thing)' (cf. D/L *awōləm*
>   'prepare')

A number of T2-Stems are reciprocals, again often with a correspond-
ing D/L verb:

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[19] The D/L-Stem *ʾāśi* is given in the ML (p. 32), but does not occur in Johnstone's
texts. We might expect the D/L form to be *ʾōśi*, and in fact, this is the form found in
Jahn (1902: 166). However, the Ḥarsusi cognate *ʾāś*, and the same Mehri form *ʾāśi*
printed in Johnstone's *HL* (p. 11), prove that this is not a typographical error in the
ML.

əhtōdi 'divide amongst one another' (cf. D/L hōdi 'divide, share out')

əḥtəlūf 'make a pact/alliance with one another' (cf. Š2 šəḥāləf 'make an alliance with s.o.')

əḥtərūb 'be at war with one another' (= T1 ḥatrəb; cf. D/L ḥōrəb 'be at war with s.o.'; Arabic tL taḥāraba 'be at war with one another')[20]

əltəḥawm 'touch one another' (= T1 latḥəm and Š2 šəlēḥəm; cf. G ləḥām 'touch')

əntōwəḥ 'fight with one another'

ərtōʾ 'draw lots for portions' (cf. D/L arōwa 'divide s.t. into portions', rawa 'lot, portion')

ərtəwūg 'plot against, make a plan (as a group)' (cf. D/L arwīg 'consult', T1 ratwəg 'consult one another')

wəddawd 'divide tasks among one another' (cf. D/L awdīd 'assign tasks')

əxtəlūf 'differ from one another'

Other T2-Stems must be considered lexical. Such are:

ʾātəḳawd 'believe' (cf. Arabic Gt iʿtaqada 'believe firmly')

ʾātəyūn 'betray'

əbtōźaʾ 'make purchases' (cf. Arabic tD tabaḍḍaʿa 'shop, purchase')

əftəkūr 'think, wonder' (cf. D/L fōkər 'think'; Arabic tD tafakkara)

əftərūg 'watch, look at' (cf. Arabic tD tafarraja 'watch')

əftūrəḥ 'be delighted only to be disappointed later' (cf. G fírəḥ 'be happy', D/L fōrəḥ 'make happy')[21]

əftərūḳ 'dissipate, disperse (intrans.)' (cf. G fərūḳ 'distribute guests over various houses', T1 fatrəḳ 'become separated'; Arabic tD tafarraqa and Gt iftaraqa 'disperse, become separated')[22]

əġtəfūḳ 'go astray (of women)'

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[20] The *ML* lists only the T1 verb ḥatrəb, but the T2 verb occurs in 104:28. The T1 verb occurs in 104:29.

[21] The imperfect form yəftárḥən 'he was happy' (89:35) is the paradigmatic form for a T2-Stem with a root-final ḥ (*ML*, p. lvii; see also §2.2.2). However, the imperfect form əftərīḥən 'I was happy' (89:21) looks like a paradigmatic T2 imperfect for a strong verb (i.e., as if from *əftərūḥ).

[22] In Johnstone's *ML* (p. 100), it is claimed that this T2 verb is always plural, which is inaccurate; cf. the 3fs perfect in 98:1.

əġtərūb 'be away from home, be abroad; go down (of the sun)' (cf. ġərayb 'strange'; Arabic tD taġarraba 'be away from home, be abroad')

əttūma 'listen to' (cf. G hūma 'hear'; Arabic Gt istamaʿa 'listen to')

əḥtəwūl 'go crazy' (cf. G ḥaywəl 'be crazy')

əktəwūl 'panic, get upset'

ḳəthū 'drink coffee' (cf. ḳəhwēt 'coffee'; Yemeni Arabic tigahwa 'have coffee')

əmtōni 'wish' (= T1 matni; cf. Arabic tD tamannā 'wish, desire')

əmtūrəġ 'roll around in the dust'

əntəḳawl 'choose' (apparently = G nəḳawl and D/L anōḳəl 'choose')

əstōmi 'shout one's tribal war-cry'

əstəwūd 'be blackened'[23]

əstəyūr 'defecate, go to the bathroom' (cf. G səyūr 'go', and the equivalent idiom səyūr kə-ḥənōf- 'go to the bathroom' (lit. 'go with oneself'))

əṣtəyūd 'fish, go fishing' (cf. ṣayd 'fish'; Arabic tD taṣayyada 'hunt, catch')

əśtəlawl 'wander aimlessly' (cf. G śəl and T1 śattəl 'migrate, move')

əwtəkūl 'rely on, trust' (cf. D/L awōkəl 'entrust with'; Arabic D wakkala 'entrust' and Arabic tD tawakkala 'rely on, trust')

əwtōźa 'perform ritual ablutions before prayer' (cf. Arabic tD tawaḍḍaʾa 'perform ritual ablutions before prayer')

əxtəlūf 'disappoint, let s.o. down' (T1 xatləf can also have this meaning)

əxtərūf 'pick, gather fruit' (cf. G xayrəf 'ripen, bloom')

əxtəyūb 'be disappointed' (= T1 xatyəb; cf. Arabic tD taxayyaba 'be disappointed')

əxtəyūn 'have an illusion; give an illusion to s.o.'

As can be seen in the lists of T1- and T2-Stems, a number of roots occur in both stems, with apparently the same meaning. Such are:

T1 ḥatrəb ~ T2 əḥtərūb 'be at war with o.a.' (cf. Arabic tD and Gt)
T1 ḥatrək ~ T2 əḥtərūk 'move (intrans.)' (cf. Arabic tD)
T1 ḳatnəm ~ T2 əktənūm 'collect fodder'

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[23] Johnstone's ML only lists a T1 verb satwəd 'be blackened' (p. 353). We find in the texts the form stəwōd (99:46; better transcribed əstəwūd); though listed in the ML under satwəd, and though it could be an imperfect of satwəd, this form is more likely an imperative or 3ms perfect from a T2 verb əstəwūd.

T1 *laṭḥəm* ~ T2 *əltəḥawm* 'touch o.a.' (cf. Arabic Gt)
T1 *matni* ~ T2 *əmtōni* 'wish' (cf. Arabic tD)
T1 *xatləf* ~ T2 *əxtəlūf* 'disappoint s.o., let s.o. down'
T1 *xatyəb* ~ T2 *əxtəyūb* 'be disappointed' (cf. Arabic tD)

Of course, it is possible that we are misled by the brief definitions in the *ML* or the limited contexts in which these verbs occur, and that on closer inspection the T1 and T2 verbs have different nuances. But assuming that the data are accurate, we can explain the identical meanings of the two stems quite easily. Most of these verbs are probably borrowed from Arabic, where the source verb is either a tD or a Gt. There is no rigid patterning for the borrowing of Arabic T-Stem verbs; we find some Arabic tD-, tL-, and Gt-Stems that correspond to Mehri T1-Stems, and some that correspond to Mehri T2-Stems. In these cases, the verb was borrowed into both stems. In the case of *ḥatrəb ~ əḥtərūb*, we see that already in Arabic this verb appears either in the tD- or Gt-Stems with identical meaning.

6.6. Quadriliterals

Quadriliteral verbs are relatively rare in Mehri, or at least in Johnstone's texts, with the exception of the common verb *abarḳa* 'run'. There are three types of quadriliterals: a basic quadriliteral type (Q-Stem), an N-Stem quadriliteral type, and a pseudo-quadriliteral type. These will be discussed in turn below.

6.6.1. Basic Quadriliterals (Q-Stems)

Most quadriliteral verbs belong to the category that I call Q-Stems. There are two characteristic patterns for the perfect stem of the strong verb: $(a)C_1aC_2C_3\partial C_4$ (true quadriliterals) and $(a)C_1aC_2C_1\partial C_2$ (reduplicated verbs). The prefixed *a-* of both patterns is the same prefix that is found in the D/L-Stem, and is present in the same environments, namely when the initial root letter is voiced or glottalic. The Q verbs found in Johnstone's texts are:

abarḳa 'run'
adamdəm 'grope'
aġsərō 'chat at night, chat all night' (cf. *ġasrawwən* '(in) the early evening')
karbəl 'crawl on one's knees'

aḵāləd (< *akaʿləd) 'roll (trans.)'
amarḥəb 'welcome' (cf. Arabic Q *marḥaba* 'welcome', denominative from *marḥaba* 'welcome!')
amarkəḥ 'tidy up; drink coffee'[24]
tarðəm 'mumble'

These basic quadriliterals can also be found in the Š-Stem (ŠQ verbs). Attested in the texts is:

šədarbəš 'call a camel by flapping one's lips' (cf. Q *adarbəš* 'flap one's lips to make a camel come')

6.6.2. N-Stem Quadriliterals

A less common type of quadriliteral verb is characterized by an *n-* that precedes the root in all tenses. As in some Ethiopian Semitic languages (e.g., Geʿez), the N-Stem is not productive as a derivational stem, but is found only with quadriliteral roots. N-Stem quadriliteral verbs can be of two types: *ənC₁əC₂C₃ūC₄* (true quadriliteral) and *ənC₁əC₂C₁ūC₂* (reduplicated). The N-Stem quadriliterals attested in Johnstone's texts are:

ənfədfūd 'have scabies, swellings' (cf. *fədfīd* 'scabies, ringworm')
ənḥəṭəmūl 'be smashed'
ənḥēbūb 'shriek (of camels)'[25]
ənkəwawl 'have swollen testicles'[26]
ənšərxawf 'slip away, sneak away (intrans.)' (cf. Q *šərxawf* 'sneak s.t. to s.o.')
ənṭayrūr 'flow (of blood)'

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[24] Johnstone's text 59 deals with a misunderstanding based on the two very different meanings of this verb in Northern Mehri ('tidy up') and Southern Mehri ('drink coffee').

[25] This verb appears in the *ML* under the root √*nḥbb* (p. 291), but the form of the perfect suggests that it belongs in this class, perhaps from a root √*ḥybb*.

[26] The verb appears in the *ML* under the root √*kʿl* (p. 200), but the root must be √*kwʿl*, and the underlying form *ənkəwʿūl; the first *w* of *ənkəwawl* is the radical, while the second is the result of the shift *ū* > *aw*, as a result of the underlying guttural (see §2.2.2). And, in fact, the *JL* gives the root as √*kʿl* / *kwʿl* (p. 124).

There is one non-quadriliteral N-Stem attested, namely the participle *mənkayṭa* (root √*kṭ*ʿ, 99:28). This is undoubtedly a direct borrowing of the Arabic N-Stem (Form VII, *inqaṭaʿa*).[27]

6.6.3. Pseudo-Quadriliterals

A third type of quadriliteral is characterized by the perfect pattern $C_1 \partial C_2 \bar{\imath} C_3 \bar{u} C_3$. Only three of these are attested in Johnstone's texts:

> ʾāfīrūr 'be(come) red' (cf. ʾōfər 'red, brown')
> xəmēlūl '(tears) run silently, well up'
> źəġayrūr 'scream, shriek'[28]

Among others in Johnstone's *ML* are:

> əwbīnūn 'become white' (< *ləbīnūn*; cf. *əwbōn* 'white')
> ḥəwīrūr 'turn black' (cf. *ḥōwər* 'black')

The fact that several verbs of this type are derived from color words makes obvious the connection between this pattern and the Arabic stem *ifʿalla* (Form IX). This link, and the fact that most of these verbs are derived from attested triliteral roots (cf. the color terms above), means that these verbs are best seen as triliterals with reduplicated final radicals, and not as true quadriliterals. Therefore, I refer to these verbs as pseudo-quadriliterals.

6.7. Quinqueliterals

Only two quinqueliteral verbs are attested in the texts. One is very common, namely, *śxəwəlūl* 'sit, stay', the complete conjugation of which is as follows:

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[27] Another, pure Arabic verbal form in the texts is *təʿaggəb* 'he was delighted' (22:40) < Arabic *taʿajjaba*. See §14.

[28] Johnstone considers *źəġayrūr* a quinqueliteral or a quadriliteral with an infixed *y* (p. xlvii). I prefer to see the *ī* (reflected in this verb as *ay* because of the preceding guttural) as part of the quadriliteral vowel pattern, and not as an infix or a root letter.

	Perfect	Imperfect	Subjunctive	Conditional
1cs	*śxəwəlēk* (< *-alk*)	*əśxəwəlūl*	*l-əśxáwwəl*[29]	*l-əśxáwwələn*
2ms	*śxəwəlēk*	*təśxəwəlūl*	*təśxáwwəl*	*təśxáwwələn*
2fs	*śxəwəlēš*	*təśxəwəláyli*	*təśxáwwəl*	*təśxáwwələn*
3ms	*śxəwəlūl*	*yəśxəwəlūl*	*yəśxáwwəl*	*yəśxáwwələn*
3fs	*śxəwəllūt*	*təśxəwəlūl*	*təśxáwwəl*	*təśxáwwələn*
1cd	*śxəwəlēki*	*əśxəwəlō*	*l-əśxəwəlē*	*l-əśxəwəláyən*
2cd	*śxəwəlēki*	*təśxəwəlō*	*təśxəwəlē*	*təśxəwəláyən*
3md	*śxəwəllō*	*yəśxəwəlō*	*yəśxəwəlē*	*yəśxəwəláyən*
3fd	*śxəwəllətō*	*təśxəwəlō*	*təśxəwəlē*	*təśxəwəláyən*
1cp	*śxəwəlūlən*	*nəśxəwəlūl*	*nəśxáwwəl*	*nəśxáwwələn*
2mp	*śxəwəlēkəm*	*təśxəwəlīl*	*təśxáwləm*	*təśxáwwələn*
2fp	*śxəwəlēkən*	*təśxəwəlūlən*	*təśxáwlən*	*təśxáwwələn*
3mp	*śxəwəlīl*	*yəśxəwəlīl*	*yəśxáwləm*	*yəśxáwwələn*
3fp	*śxəwəlūl*	*təśxəwəlūlən*	*təśxáwlən*	*təśxáwwələn*

Imperative: ms *śxáwwəl*, fs *śxáwwəli*, mp *śxáwləm*, fp *śxáwlən*

Participle: ms *məśxáwwəl*, fs *məśxəwəlēta*, md *məśxáwwəli*, fd *məśxəwəlēti*, cp *məśxəwəlūtən*

The only other quinqueliteral verb attested in the texts is *zḥəwəlūl* 'slide across (a surface)', attested just once in a poetic text (79:9).

Since the fourth and fifth root consonants of both the attested quinqueliteral verbs seem to reflect reduplication, it is perhaps better to call these verbs pseudo-quinqueliterals, just as I have called the verbs discussed in §6.6.3 pseudo-quadriliterals. On the other hand, since there is no other type of quinqueliteral attested, it is simpler just to use the term quinqueliteral.

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[29] In a few passages (94:3, 4, 9) the *l-* is omitted from the 1cs form. This is undoubtedly a typographical error, as mentioned also in §7.1.3, n. 3.

CHAPTER SEVEN

VERBS: TENSES AND FORMS

7.1. Verbal Tenses and Moods

7.1.1. Perfect

All perfects are formed by attaching the following suffixes to the appropriate verbal base:

	sing.	dual	plural
1c	-(ə)k	-(ə)ki	-ən
2m	-(ə)k	-(ə)ki	-(ə)kəm
2f	-(ə)š	-(ə)ki	-(ə)kən
3m	--	-ō / -ē	-əm / --
3f	-ūt / -ēt	-tō / -tē	--

Notes:
- The 1cs and 2ms perfects are identical for every verb in the language.
- The 3ms and 3fp perfects are identical for every verb in the language.
- The 1cd and 2cd perfects are identical for every verb in the language, just as with the possessive suffixes on nouns (§3.2).
- The 3fs suffix *-ūt* is commonly transcribed *-ōt*.
- When the 3mp form does not have the suffix *-əm*, it is characterized by an internal vowel change instead. As a general rule, this happens whenever the 3ms form has the vowel *ū/ō* in the final syllable.
- The 3fs suffix *-ēt* and the 3d suffixes *-ē* and *-tē* are less common. They are used only with G passives, D-Stems, Š2-Stems, and Q-Stems.

The basic use of the perfect is as a past tense, for example:

> *šənð̣ūr h-arəḥmōn* 'he made a vow to God' (3:3)
> *hamakən* 'did you hear?' (20:8)
> *hēt əl matk əlā* 'you didn't die?' (20:69)
> *bərwōt tēṯ* 'the woman gave birth' (24:4)
> *mōn ʾāmōr hūk* 'who told you?' (36:27)
> *śxəwəlīl wə-šəmrūẓ́* 'they stayed and he became ill' (48:6)
> *kəś bīn ṣ̌ə́təh w-abarḳa* 'he exposed to us his behind and ran away'
>   (91:4)
> *wə-kō əl səyərš lā* 'why didn't you go?' (97:22)

The perfect also appears regularly after a variety of particles, including the conditional particles *hām*, *əðə*, and *lū* (see §13.4), and the temporal particles *mət*, *tē*, and *hīs* (see §13.5.3). The combination of the particle *bər* plus the perfect can sometimes be translated with a pluperfect (see §12.5.6). On the perfect combined with the verbal prefix *ð-*, see §7.1.10.2.

In a small number of passages, the perfect is used in a wish or an oath; some of these seem to be fixed expressions. Examples are:

> *xalyək tēṯi* 'may I divorce my wife' (35:5)
> *abēli šəwədēkəm* 'may God preserve you' (35:15)
> *abaśrək abēli bə-xayr* 'may God give you good news' (45:11)
> *stəwōd awaghək* 'may your face be blackened' (99:46)[1]

7.1.2. Imperfect

All imperfects are formed by attaching a set of prefixes and suffixes to the appropriate verbal base. As discussed in Chapter 6, the D/L-, Š2-, and T2-Stems are categorized by the addition of a suffix *-ən* on all imperfect forms. For this reason, it is convenient to divide the set of imperfect affixes into two types. Note that the prefixes are identical for both sets. Following are the prefixes and suffixes used for all G-, H-, Š1-, and T1-Stems, as well as all quadriliterals, and quinqueliterals:

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[1] As noted in §6.5.4, n. 23, *stəwōd* (better transcribed *əstəwūd*) could also be an imperative.

	sing.	dual	plural
1c	*ə-*	*ə-…-ō*	*nə-*
2m	*tə-(…-i)*	*tə-…-ō*	*tə-…-əm*
2f	*tə-*		*tə-…-ən*
3m	*yə-*	*yə-…-ō*	*yə-…-əm*
3f	*tə-*	*tə-…-ō*	*tə-…-ən*

Following are the prefixes and suffixes used for all D/L-, Š2-, and T2-Stems:

	sing.	dual	plural
1c	*ə-…-ən*	*ə-…-áyən*	*nə-…-ən*
2m	*tə-…-ən*	*tə-…-áyən*	*tə-…-ən*
2f	*tə-…-ən*		*tə-…-ən*
3m	*yə-…-ən*	*yə-…-áyən*	*yə-…-ən*
3f	*tə-…-ən*	*tə-…-áyən*	*tə-…-ən*

Notes to both sets of affixes:
- The 2ms and 3fs imperfects are identical for every verb in the language. In the D/L-, Š2-, and T2-Stems, the 2fs is also identical with these two forms.
- The 2cd and 3fd imperfects are identical for every verb in the language.
- The 2fp and 3fp imperfects are identical for every verb in the language. In the D/L-, Š2-, and T2-Stems, the 2mp is also identical with these two forms.
- In the D/L-, Š2-, and T2-Stems, the 3ms and 3mp imperfects are identical.
- With G-, H-, Š1-, and T1-Stems, in place of the 2fs suffix *-i*, we often find ablaut of the verb stem instead. (See the paradigms in Chapter 6.)
- The prefix *tə-* is sometimes lost in pronunciation and/or transcription before certain consonants (see §2.1.5).
- The final *-ō* of the G dual forms is replaced by *-ē* for G passives.

The imperfect can, in various contexts, indicate almost any tense or aspect. It can be used as a general, habitual, or immediate present; a habitual past; a future; a present or past progressive; or a circumstan-

tial complement. This suggests that the imperfect is basically an imperfective, indicating incomplete action. However, the imperfect can also function as a narrative past tense, with a clear perfective meaning. Following are examples of the imperfect used as a general, habitual, or immediate present:

> *əġōrəb axayr mənk* 'I know better than you' (19:20)
> *śīwōṭ, hām sēh rēḥək, tənūfa* 'fire, if it's far away, is useful' (36:28)
> *mōn yəsūkən bərk abayt ðīməh* 'who lives in this house?' (38:11)
> *kāl ʾāṣər yəwazməm təh ġəggīt u kawt ʾayśē* 'every evening they give him a girl and food for dinner' (42:17)
> *ðōməh əl yəhūrək lā* 'this (man) doesn't steal' (47:14)
> *ʾəl əkawdər l-ʾəttək zōyəd lā* 'I can't drink anymore' (49:10)
> *aġərōyən yəxtəlūf* 'our language differs' (71:1)
> *yəsūbəṭ aġatəh* 'he hits his sister (habitually)' (89:33)
> *hō ʾāgōb bə-tēṭi wə-sē tāgōb bay* 'I love my wife and she loves me' (94:4)
> *əśōni ʾāfōr ṭawla mən arawrəm* 'I see that a cloud has come up from the sea' (96:7)
> *kāl śīən yətmōm wə-yəxlōf* 'everything comes to an end and is replaced' (98:8)

Following are examples of the imperfect used as a past habitual, past continuous, or imperfective:

> *xəṭərāt ṭayt sēkən yəsūkən bə-wōdi* 'once there was a community that lived in a valley' (11:1)
> *sənnawrət təḥbōb aġayg, yəwəzməs śxōf wə-yəlṭōf bīs* 'the cat loved the man; he would give her milk and was kind to her' (15:10)
> *fənōhən … hām ṭāṭ gēləw, yəsyūr hāl əmśənyūtən* 'formerly … if someone had a fever, he would go to soothsayers' (25:17)
> *ḥābū yātəkaydən bīhəm, wəlākən mən sənayn əlyōməh l-ād ʾəḥād yātəkaydən bīhəm lā* 'people used to believe in them, but since those years nobody believes in them anymore' (25:19)
> *kāl sənēt təfayd yəbīti ṭrayt aw śhəlīṭ* 'every year she got back two or three camels' (32:13)
> *aġāh sōbər yəsyūr ð̣ār akōbər ð-aġāh w-yəbayk* 'his brother would always go to his brother's grave and cry' (40:3)
> *ḥəmbərawtən sōbər yəntawḥən* 'the children were always fighting' (50:1)

hō əl əḳawdər l-əġətayr əngəlīzīyət əlā ʾār xawr 'I could speak
 English only a little' (62:7)

kādēt l-ād yəšānōs yəḳfēd arḥəbēt lā 'Kadet didn't yet dare to go
 down to the town' (64:8)

mət ḥəynīṯ fəlōḳ ḥīṭār, əhōrəḳ amaws ðə-ḥaybi w-əsḥōṭ ḥīṭār
 'when(ever) the women let the (goat) kids out, I would steal my
 father's razor and slaughter kids' (89:3)

A future tense is most often indicated by an active participle (see
§7.1.6), but following are examples of the imperfect used as either a
simple or habitual future:

ənḳalāk əlā 'we won't let you (go)' (20:72)

məġōrən əźáṭəš šay w-əhārōs bayš 'then I will take you with me and
 marry you' (24:19)

ʾabdan əl ərdūd lā, tē wə-lū əmūt 'I shall never go back, even if I
 should die' (37:19)

ṣār w-aġāk yəġarbək 'stand (there) and your brother will know you'
 (40:17)

mət səhēk ðōməh, əwəzmək məšēġər 'when you finish this, I will give
 you something else' (55:5)

l-ād ədōbəh zōyəd 'I will never collect honey again' (77:2) (but cf.
 l-ād hō dəbhōna zōyəd lā with the same meaning, 77:3)

yəktəlīṯ bay aḳəbōyəl, hām fəlatk wə-ḳalak tīk 'the tribes will talk
 about me, if I run away and leave you' (83:2)

hēt kənnawn wə-l-ʾəḥād yəśɛ́nyək lā … l-ʾəḥād yənūḳəd lūk lā 'you
 are small and nobody will see you … nobody will blame you'
 (91:15)

In narrative contexts, the imperfect can sometimes be used as a
simple past (perfective) tense.[2] This is not terribly common, but there
are a few dozen examples in the texts. Sometimes a perfect (or multiple
perfects) will begin a narrative sequence, followed by one or more
imperfects. But just as often, an imperfect is used as a narrative past
tense without a preceding perfect. An imperfect used as a narrative
past can also be followed by a perfect in the same sentence. Some
examples are:

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[2] There is some discussion of this use of the imperfect in Wagner (1953: 44-47;
2001: 342-43).

> *yāśūś aġayg ð-tēṯ w-iśəlūl əškay wə-yəlūtəġ ḥāgōr wə-tēṯ* 'the wo-
> man's husband got up, drew (his) sword, and killed the slave and
> the woman' (5:17)
>
> *yənūka īðəbīr, yəḳbəṣəy wə-bakk wə-səyərk təwōli ḥəbyɛ* 'a hornet
> came along, stung me, and I cried and went to my parents' (25:4)
>
> *tā anhōr xəwfīt xətūl aġayg wə-śīni wēl, wə-bdēh wə-yəhəwṣawb
> aṣāwər ðə-fənəwīh wə-tənūṭəś təwōli aġayg wə-tāwōr ʾāynəh ṭayt*
> 'then the next day, the man went stalking and saw an oryx, and
> he missed it and shot the stone in front of him, and it ricocheted
> towards the man and one of his eyes was blinded' (30:8)
>
> *tē nūka aġay, yəġərəbay wə-yabráḳa təwalyɛ* 'then when my brother
> came, he recognized me and ran to me' (34:27)
>
> *tā bə-ḥəllayʾ aġəyōg bər ðə-šəwkīf, təhūrək məndawḳ wə-təlūtəġ aġās*
> 'then at night, when the men had fallen asleep, she stole a rifle
> and killed her brother' (64:30)
>
> *tōli təhayw bə-kabś mən ḏār saṭḥ u bəkūt ḥəyawm w-ʾāṣawr* 'then
> she dropped the lamb from the roof and cried (several) days and
> nights' (75:23)
>
> *tōli həmayh šərayf wə-ġatyəḏ̣ wə-yəḳawfəl əktōb* 'then the *sharif*
> heard him and got angry and shut the book' (88:6)

Interestingly, the imperfect is used for the past tense in all four attested
passages where *mət* is used in the context of a past narrative; see fur-
ther in §13.5.3.1.

In a very few places, outside of a conditional sentence, an imperfect
is best translated with English 'would', as in:

> *ḳərū təwyəh bərk dəḥlīl mən hāl l-ʾəḥād yəśanyəh əlā* 'he hid his
> meat in a hole where no one would see it' (13:7)
>
> *hēśən yəfətḥəs* 'what would open it?' (or: 'what will open it?') (68:9)

Several of the examples cited above show the imperfect used in the
apodosis of a conditional sentences. The imperfect is, in fact, the most
commonly met form in this context; see §13.4 for discussion and addi-
tional examples.

In Mehri, a past or present progressive, as well as a circumstantial,
is usually indicated by the imperfect in combination with the verbal
prefix *ð-*, as discussed separately below (§7.1.10.1). However, because
the verbal prefix *ð-* cannot occur before the prefix *t-* (i.e., the prefix of
all second person and third feminine imperfects), what looks like a

bare imperfect can also serve to indicate a progressive or circumstantial. In reality, however, these are underlyingly imperfects with the prefix *ð-*. See §7.1.10.1 for examples.

7.1.3. Subjunctive

The subjunctive is constructed with nearly the same prefixes and suffixes that are used for the G imperfect. The full set of affixes is:

	sing.	dual	plural
1c	*l-ə-*	*l-ə-…-ē*	*nə-*
2m	*tə-*	*tə-…-ē*	*tə-…-əm*
2f	*tə-(…-i)*		*tə-…-ən*
3m	*yə-*	*yə-…-ē*	*yə-…-əm*
3f	*tə-*	*tə-…-ē*	*tə-…-ən*

Notes:
- 1cs and 1cd forms are preceded by the particle *l-*.
- Where the imperfect has the dual suffix *-ō* or *-áyən*, subjunctives have *-ē*.
- The characteristic *-ən* of the D/L-, Š2-, and T2-Stems is absent in the subjunctive.
- As with imperfects, 2ms and 3fs subjunctives are identical for every verb in the language. With H-, Š1-, and Š2-Stem verbs, many (but not all) T1- and D/L-Stem verbs, and with all quadriliterals and quinqueliterals, the 2fs is also identical with these two forms.
- With many D/L-Stems (including strong verbs), we find ablaut of the verb stem in place of the 2fs suffix *-i*; for some weak verbs (e.g., geminates and II-w/y verbs), the 2fs is identical with the 2ms and 3fs.
- As with imperfects, 2cd and 3fd subjunctives are identical for every verb in the language.
- As with imperfects, 2fp and 3fp subjunctives are identical for every verb in the language.
- The prefix *tə-* is sometimes lost in pronunciation and/or transcription before certain consonants (see §2.1.5).

The verbal base to which these affixes attach is usually different than the base used for the imperfect. Only with Gb-Stems, G passives, and some weak G-Stem verbs (namely, verbs with medial gutturals, includ-

ing II-ʾ, but not II-ʿ; see §7.2.5 and §7.2.6) are the imperfect and sub-junctive forms not distinct. Since all 1cs and 1cd subjunctives are preceded by a particle *l-*, this means that even for verbs that do not distinguish the forms of the imperfect and subjunctive, the 1cs and 1cd forms are always distinct. For example, the form *yāmōl* is the G-Stem 3ms imperfect and subjunctive of the root *ʿml*, and so context must determine whether it is imperfect or subjunctive. But 1cs *āmōl* can only be imperfect, and *l-āmōl* can only be subjunctive.[3]

The subjunctive form can be used either independently or depen-dently, though the latter is far more common. When used indepen-dently in the third persons, it can express a number of things, including: 1. suggestion or obligation, equivalent to English 'should'; 2. a third person imperative, best translated with English 'let'; 3. a wish, like English 'may'; 4. uncertainty, like English 'might'. Examples are:

> *tēṯ tərdēd l-aġaygəs* 'let the woman return to her husband' (19:24)
> *yəkšēf lə-ḥanafəh* 'let him expose himself' (24:38)
> *kāl ð-yəḥōm xədmēt u məskēn, yənkē̄* 'anyone who wants work or a place to live, let him come' (74:7)
> *šūk ʾāmēl gīd … ʾəḥād yəhaḥrəḳ bəh* 'you have a nice farm … some-body should set it on fire!' (91:9)
> *ṭāṭ yāḳā k-həbēr wə-ṭāṭ yāḳā k-ḥārawn wə-ṭāṭ yəḳfēd arḥəbēt* 'one should stay with the camels, one should stay with the goats, and one should go down to town' (102:1)
> *abēli yəbōrək būk* 'may God bless you!' (33:5)
> *yəfarḥək abēli b-xayr* 'may God make you happy with well-being!' (57:13)

Less often, we find a first or second person independent subjunctive, which likewise expresses suggestion, obligation, wishing, or uncer-tainty, as in:

> *hībō l-āmōl hām hāmərk lay* 'what should I do if you command me?' (20:23)
> *hībō əl-ḳəfēd mən ḏ̣ayr ḥayri* 'why should I get down from my don-key?' (46:11)

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[3] In a few places, forms that are clearly 1cs subjunctives are missing the prefix *l-*. Such are *əśnē* (18:10), *əklēk* (20:37), *əśxawwəl* (94:3, 4, 9), and *əsyēr* (94:26). These are undoubtedly mistakes in transcription, and this is confirmed by the audio for the first two of these. I was unable to find audio for text 94 in order to confirm the latter three.

hām ṣərūt wəla rəddūt lay, l-əwbads 'if she stops or comes back at
    me, I should shoot her' (54:18) (but see §13.4.1, n. 8)

mət ḥābū šəwgīś, əl-nəkēś l-ʾāgawz ðə-mətūt 'when the people go
    home, I should dig up the old woman who died' (65:3)

əl-frēḥ bə-ḥəbráy 'let me rejoice in my son!' (90:13)

wadak mayt əl-ttə́ḳḳəh … wadak hēśən l-ʾāmōl həh 'do you know
    when I should drink it? … Do you know what I should do for it?'
    (101:7, 9)

ʾād tāḳāy dənyēt? ðə-ʾəmələk tay l-āḳā dənyēt 'might you be preg-
    nant again? I think I might be pregnant' (101:16-17)

A first person plural cohortative is normally expressed with *nəḥōm*
(lit. 'we want') plus a subjunctive verb (see §7.3.2), but *nəḥōm* can be
omitted if the particle *ġədεwwən* occurs (see §12.5.9).

    A subjunctive verb can also be used dependently, as the comple-
ment of another verb. By far the most commonly occurring verb that
takes a verbal complement is *ḥōm* 'want', which is treated separately
below (§7.3). In translation, a subjunctive verb used as a verbal com-
plement often corresponds to an English infinitive. The subjunctive
can share a subject with the preceding verb, as in:

əl əġōrəb l-əġətayr ʾārəbayyət əlā 'I didn't know how to speak Arabic'
    (34:18)

əl əḳawdər l-əġətayr lā 'I wasn't able to speak' (40:26)

hē šəwēd sɛ́kənəh yənkēhəm bād nəhōri ṯrayt 'he promised his com-
    munity he would come back to them after two days' (32:5)

kādēt l-ād yəšānōs yəḳfēd arḥəbēt lā 'Kadet didn't yet dare to go
    down to the town' (64:8)

ʾāzawm yəhəgēməm līn 'they decided to attack us' (60:11)

sīrōna əl-šəkf 'I'm going to go to sleep' (84:7)

šənðūr h-arəḥmōn yəhaðhəb nēḥər ðōrə wə-nēḥər śəxōf 'he vowed to
    God to fill a valley with blood and a valley with milk' (3:3)

l-ād həbṣark əl-bār lā 'I couldn't see well (enough) anymore to
    travel by night' (80:6)

Alternatively, and very often, the dependent subjunctive can have its
own subject, which is the direct object of the preceding verb, as in:

tōli tədōfa ḥāgərēt təhawḳa səm bərk ʾayśē ð-aġās 'then she paid a
    female servant to put poison in her brother's dinner' (24:46)

 əl yāgōb ʾəḥād lā yāḳā hīs təh lā 'he didn't like anyone to be like him'
  (76:11)

 ṭələbk tīk təklēṯ lay 'I ask you to tell me' (20:38)

 ḥōkəm xəṣawb ḥambərawtən yəhētəməm hāl tēṯ 'the ruler sent the
  boys to stay the night with the woman' (74:13)

 ḳəlʾay l-əbkē 'let me cry!' (22:19)

 ḳəlōna tīk tərfā 'I will let you go up' (53:4)

 ṭərɛḥi l-ənkēš 'let me have intercourse with you!' (99:46)[4]

 *āmōr ḥāgərōn yəhfērəm bayr wə-yəḳəlēm ba nəwās bərkīh
  wə-yəhənḥəm bəh śīwōṭ* 'he told the servants to dig a well, to leave
  Abu Nuwas in it, and to burn him with fire' (20:61)

 kətbōna təwōli aġayg yənkɛ́ w-iźōṭ tɛṭəh 'I will write the man to
  come and get his wife' (22:79)

These last two examples show that a verb can govern more than one
dependent subjunctive.

 Some verbs require a preposition before their verbal complement,
including *ḥə � ̣ur* (*mən*) 'be careful, beware, take care (not to)', *xəzū*
(*mən*) 'refuse', and *fəźāḥ* (*mən*) 'be embarrassed'. Examples are:

 ḥə ̣ ̣ur mən təð ̣lēm ḥābū 'take care not to oppress the people' (74:4)

 abʿayr xəzū mən yətə́ḳ ḥəmōh 'the camel refused to drink the water'
  (49:16)

 fəźaḥk mən əl-gəhōm təwōli bū ðərē ʾ 'I am embarrassed to go to
  strangers' (94:2)

A similar construction is used with *yəṣ* (*mən*) 'be afraid', which is
treated in the section on complement clauses (§13.5.1 and §13.5.1.1).

 A dependent subordinate verb can also occur after a non-verbal
phrase, and in such cases is also equivalent to an English infinitive.
Some non-verbal phrases that can be followed by a subjunctive are
axayr h- (var. *xār h-*) 'it's better for X to',[5] and *ʾāyb l-* 'it's a disgrace for
X to'. Examples are:

 axayr hīkəm tənkēm tīn 'it's better for you to come to us' (28:19)

 xār hūk təhētəm 'it's better for you to spend the night' (31:3)

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 [4] The printed edition has *əl-nakš* for *l-ənkēš*, which is probably an error. See the
Appendix, n. 31.

 [5] When this is negated, it means 'it's better for X not to', as in the sample sentence
from 42:14.

əl xār hūk təgəhōm šīhəm lā 'it's better for you not to go with them' (42:14)

ʾāyb əlīkəm təntawḥəm səbēb ðə-ḥəmoh 'it's a disgrace for you to fight because of water' (10:6)

Compare the similar use of the subjunctive in the predicate of a non-verbal phrase:

anyatəh bə-ḥyatəh yəḥkēm ḥābū bə-ṭəyōb wə-mɛ̄d 'his aim in life was to rule the people well and wisely' (lit. 'with goodness and wisdom') (67:1)

A dependent subjunctive can also indicate purpose. Sometimes these purpose clauses are best translated with English 'so that', while other times they are best translated with an infinitive, making them identical to those cases where the subjunctive functions as a simple verbal complement. Some examples are:

nkɛ əw-boh l-ərṣank 'come here so that I can tie you up' (24:26)
wəzəmīh moh yəttə́ḳ 'he gave him water to drink' (13:9)
kāl ṭayt təntəḳōl ġayg təšafḳəh 'each of you will choose a man to marry' (15:21)
səyūr yəśnē aṣfōri 'he went to see the pots' (36:24)

Sometimes a purpose clause is indicated by a particle *tē* or *l-agərē*, both of which are followed by a subjunctive; see further in §13.5.2.

The subjunctive is also used after a number of particles, including *lēzəm* 'must' (§12.5.10), *ndō* 'let me!' (§12.5.13), *taww-* 'ought to' (§12.5.15), *wōgəb* 'it is proper that; ought to' (§12.5.16), *wətō-* 'should' (§12.5.18), *yəmkən* 'perhaps' (§12.5.19), and with the temporal conjunction *tē* 'until' (§13.5.3.2).

Finally, the subjunctive can also be found in a few idiomatic expressions, such as following the particle *yā rayt* 'if only; would that!'. The subjunctive verb itself is the idiom in *l-əḥməd* 'how nice X must/would be!' and *yək(ə)lēl b-* 'there is no damned…!':

yā rayt l-əśnē ʾəḥād mənhēm 'if only I could see one of them!' (94:32)
l-əḥməd aźɛ́fərə́ts 'how nice her hair must be!' (lit. 'let me praise her hair!') (85:7)

yəkəlēl bəh k̩awt 'there is no damned food' (26:15)[6]

7.1.4. Conditional

The verbal form that Johnstone called the conditional takes the same set of prefixes as the imperfect and subjunctive. It is characterized by the presence of the suffix *-ən* on all forms, as well as the prefix *l-* on all 1cs and 1cd forms. This means that in those forms characterized by a suffixed *-ən* in the imperfect—namely, the D/L-, Š2-, and T2-Stems— the conditional is identical to the imperfect, except in the 1cs and 1cd. In the other verbal stems, the conditional is formed by adding the suffix *-ən* to the subjunctive, with the result that conditional forms are distinct from the subjunctive, except, for most verbs, the 2fp and 3fp forms, whose subjunctive forms already end in *-ən*. In a few verb types, including Gb-Stems and G-Stems with medial gutturals, the conditional is distinguished also by ablaut of the stem; cf. 3fp subjunctive *təghōmən* 'they go' (= imperfect) with conditional *təghīmən*.

In Johnstone's texts, conditional forms are extremely rare. The only certain conditional forms occur in the apodosis of conditional sentences introduced by *lū* (see §13.4.3). All such examples from the texts are:

wə-lū əl hē h̩aywəl lā, əl yəsh̩aytən h̩əybəth lā 'and if he were not crazy, he would not have slaughtered his camel' (55:7)
lū əl bər lūtəġ ərbōt mənīn lā, əl nəwtēġən təh lā 'if he had not killed four of us, we would not have killed him' (83:7)
lū əmnēdəm yəh̩awsəb ləhān nəkōna təh b-amstak̮bələh, l-ʾəh̩ād yāk̮ān yəškūf lā 'if a person were to take account of all that will come to him in the future, nobody would sleep' (98:10)[7]
lū hō k̩ōrək ak̩awt ... wə-nakak báwməh wə-matk, hībō yāmērən h̩ābū? ... wə-l-ʾəh̩ād yāmērən 'l-azīz fəlān' lā 'if I had hidden the food ... and had come here and died, what would the people say? ... Nobody would say: Oh woe for so-and-so!' (98:12)

In addition to these, there are a couple of examples of the form *(l-) əkīrən* 'I wish, would like', which must be a conditional of the (uncommon) verb *kīwər* 'love'. In one case the expected *l-* appears, while in

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[6] On this verb, see the entry *kll* in the *ML* (pp. 206-7).
[7] This passage is repeated nearly verbatim in 98:11.

the other it is absent.[8] We expect the form to be *l-əkwīrən* (see *ML*, p. xxx), but *l-əkīrən* seems to be a variant. The attested passages are:

> *l-əkīrən bəri hāl ḥāmə́y* 'I wish I was with my mother!' (42:23)
> *hō ʾār əkīrən l-ʾāmēr* 'I would like to sing' (52:4)

Because the conditional in many cases does not have a distinct form (that is, it often has the same form as an imperfect or subjunctive), there are many places in which it is possible that an attested verb is conditional. For example, the form *yəḳəbəlayən* in 94:41 could, in theory, be parsed as either a 3md imperfect or a 3md conditional of the D-Stem *aḳōbəl*. However, since an imperfect is expected here, and there is no reason to expect a conditional, this form is surely an imperfect. Similarly, in 96:1, the form *yətəxfən* could be parsed either as a 3ms subjunctive with a 1cp object suffix or as a 3ms conditional.[9] But given the context, the form is unquestionably subjunctive. Following are these two passages in full:

> *sīrō aġayg wə-tét̠əh ð̣ār kərəmōt, mən hāl yəḳəbəlayən sēkən* 'the man and his wife went onto a hill, from where they could watch the community' (94:41)
> *ʾāmēr həh yətəxfən gēhəməh* 'tell him to come to us tonight' (96:1)

7.1.5. Imperative

The imperative is conjugated for person and number. No dual imperatives are attested in Johnstone's texts, and the plural is used where we expect a dual (cf. 74:22), so it is unclear if dual imperatives exist at all. The forms of the imperative are essentially those of the second person subjunctive forms minus the personal prefixes, though the feminine singular sometimes has a suffixed *-i* where it is absent in the 2fs subjunctive. Some examples are:

> *ənkḗ əw-bō* 'come here!' (1:4)
> *əntēr lay* 'untie me!' (20:48)

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[8] The *l-* is barely audible in the audio of 42:23, so it is possible that the speaker produced *l-əkīrən* in 52:4, and it is just not audible. Johnstone also gives the form *əkīrən* (without *l-*) in the *ML* entry for *kwr* (p. 218), but this may be based on 52:4.

[9] That the verb *watxəf* 'come (in the evening)' can take a direct object is proven elsewhere (e.g., 73:5).

> *aḳēfi … w-ʾāmēri hīsən ḥōm l-ərmēs hənīsən* 'go … and tell them I
>   want to speak to them!' (85:2)
> *śxawwəl* 'sit down!' (82:1)
> *kəlēṭi lay* 'tell me!' (74:18)
> *ḳəṣāṣəm ḥəruhs* 'cut off her head!' (97:52)
> *həmē, ā ḥəbrə́y* 'listen, my son!' (22:77)
> *tīyən tī* 'eat me!' (2:4)
> *āzēməm tīn hōba mī* 'give us seven hundred!' (60:5)
> *āzəmən həbēryən* 'give us our camels!' (32:21)
> *məlēhəm moh* 'fill them with water!' (97:7)

As in many other Semitic languages, the imperative form is not used
in a negative phrase. Instead, a negative command is expressed by a
negative subjunctive. As with any negative phrase, the negative parti-
cles are variable. We find *əl … lā*, *l-ād … lā*, or simply *… lā* (see further
in §13.2.1). Some examples are:

> *əl təð̣bēri bay lā* 'don't nag me!' (98:13)
> *təḳtəlōb lā* 'don't worry!' (102:3)
> *əl təḳtəlōb bəh lā* 'don't worry about it!' (71:3)
> *təktəwūl lā* 'don't get upset!' (19:11)
> *əl tāṣōṣ lā* 'don't be afraid!' (34:25) (but simply *tāṣōṣ lā* in 67:2)
> *əl təbkī lā* 'don't cry!' (75:23)
> *əl təkəlēṭi lə-ḥaybi lā* 'don't tell my father!' (89:18)
> *əl təġətayr ġərōy ḳōməḥ lā* 'don't use bad language!' (90:15)
> *təḳlēm təh bawməh lā* 'don't leave him here!' (91:9)
> *l-ād tsələbs ð̣ār ḥəmoh lā* 'don't wait for her at all by the water!'
>   (94:15)
> *l-ʾād təbkē lā* 'don't cry anymore!' (40:7)

There is one example in the texts of what looks like a negated impera-
tive, namely, *šēźəm təh lā* 'don't worry about him' (57:8). This is, in
fact, a subjunctive form, though the prefix is lost in pronunciation:
šēźəm < tšēźəm < təšēźəm (see §2.1.5). It would probably be better to
transcribe the underlying form *təšēźəm* here.

7.1.6. Active Participles (Future)

The verbal form known as the active participle is an integral part of the
Mehri verbal system, functioning mainly—but not exclusively—as a

future tense. Yet despite its frequency, previous treatments of Mehri have often given little attention to this form.[10] It is debatable whether or not this form should be called the "active participle", after its origins, or the "future", after its current usage. I have opted for "active participle", following Johnstone and other scholars.

For the forms of the active participle, there is a major division between those of the G-Stem and the derived stems, as elsewhere in Semitic. In the G-Stem, the active participle has the following basic forms, which can vary slightly for verbs with "weak" root letters:[11]

| ms | *CəCCōna* | md | *CəCCōni* | mp | *CəCyēCa* |
| fs | *CəCCīta* | fd | *CəCCáwti* | fp | *CəCCūtən* |

In Yemeni Mehri, the feminine plural apparently has the variant form *CəCCátna*, but this form is never found in Johnstone's texts.[12]

In all derived stems (D/L-Stem, H-Stem, T-Stems, and Š-Stems) and with quadriliteral and quinqueliteral verbs, the active participle is characterized by a prefixed *m(ə)-*. The base of the derived-stem active participle is identical to the subjunctive base (i.e., the 3ms subjunctive form minus the prefix). The masculine singular active participle is simply the prefix *m(ə)-* plus the base. The other forms are formed from the masculine singular plus the following endings:

fs *-ēta*   md *-i*   fd *-ēti*   cp *-ūtən*

Paradigm forms can be found in Chapter 6. Note that for all derived-stem active participles, there is no gender distinction in the plural. It is perhaps strange that the gender distinction was lost here, but not in the paradigm of the G-Stem active participle. The issue of the loss of gender distinction in the derived-stem active participle may be related to the same phenomenon in the adjectival system. That is to say, some Mehri adjectives also do not exhibit gender distinction in the plural, for no apparent reason (e.g., *gīd* 'good', cp *gīyēd*; see §5.2).

As noted already above, the basic function of the active participle in Mehri is as a future tense. Of the approximately 350 attestations of the

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[10] Much of the material in this section was presented already in Rubin (2007). This article also treated the historical development of the active participle, both in form and function. On the issue of historical development, see also Lonnet (1994b).

[11] I found not a single example of a feminine dual active partciple in Johnstone's texts, so I instead rely on his paradigms in the *ML* (pp. lxix-lxxi) for this form.

[12] Cf. Lonnet (1994b: 234).

active participle in Johnstone's texts (from about 125 different roots), nearly all fall into this category. A few representative examples are:

> *wə-l-ād hō dəbhōna zōyəd lā* 'and I will never collect honey again!'
>   (77:6)
> *agənnay ḥəśrōna arḥəbēt* 'the jinnee will destroy the country' (42:20)
> *ḥābū nəkēya ... wə-səkyēna bawməh* 'people will come ... and dwell
>   here' (74:5)
> *abḳār wərdūtən aw lā yəmō* 'will the cows come down (to the water)
>   today or not?' (27:1)
> *hēt ḳənnawn w-ādk ʾəl hēt məhārəs əlā* 'you are a child and you will
>   not get married yet' (8:8)
> *ṣāḳōna ḥōkəm u mšaxbər təh* 'I will call the ruler and ask him' (20:6)
> *məhawṣəl tīk tétk* 'it will lead you to your wife' (37:15)

Note that when the subject is pronominal, the pronoun can be, and very often is, omitted. Person, therefore, must frequently be gleaned from context.

Although a future tense meaning is the norm, there are several examples where the active participle is best translated with an English present tense, specifically as a present progressive or immediate present. Sometimes, when this is the case, there is an accompanying adverb such as *ṣərōməh* 'now', to make the present tense explicit. Examples are:

> *hō gəzmōna hīkəm məḳā hō hērəḳ* 'I swear to you that I am not a
>   thief' (47:11)
> *hō ʾār ərkəbōna ləh* 'I am really mounting it [the camel]!' (102:12)
> *wə-ṣərōməh ʾāməlōna līn ġərōy* 'and now you are giving us an argu-
>   ment' (lit. 'making for us words') (46:13)
> *məwṣyēta šūk b-anḳāṭ əlyōməh* 'I am advising you on these points'
>   (90:15)

Some examples, translated in the edition of Johnstone's texts with a present tense, are probably best categorized as futures, and thus can-not reliably be placed in this category. One such sentence is:

> *wə-nəḥā məšəwgəśūtən lā* 'and we won't go (this evening)'
>   (Johnstone: 'we are not going tonight!') (35:4)

In two cases (of the same verb), the active participle is used as a progressive tense relative to a past tense verb:

hamam bəh məhaḳbəl līhəm 'they heard he was coming towards
   them' (32:6)
śə́nyō aḳawm məhaḳbəl lóhi 'they saw a raiding party coming
   towards them' (83:1)

The participle *məhaḳbəl* can also function as an adjective meaning
'next', as in *aḳayð̣ amhaḳbəl* 'next summer' (39:16). For other temporal adjectives of this type, see §9.3.

Given the basic future tense meaning of the active participle, it is
not at all surprising to find such forms in the apodosis of real conditional sentences, though more often an imperfect is used in this context (see further in §13.4):

təḥōm xədmēt, ʾāmlōna hūk '(if) you want work, I will make (it) for
   you' (86:2)
hām əl nakak bīhəm lā, ḳəṣṣōna ḥəruhk 'if you don't bring them, I'll
   chop off your head' (86:3)
hām əl nakak bīs lā, sḥəṭōna tīk 'if you don't bring her, I'll slaughter
   you' (86:11)
əð hah ḳaybəl ... bəgdōna tīhəm 'if he accepts ... I will chase them
   away' (22:93)

But we also find examples of the active participle in the apodosis of
unreal conditionals, possibly having spread from its use in real conditionals:

əðə hē səyūr šay, hē śənyōna təh 'if he had been (lit. gone) with me
   (sexually), he would have seen it' (55:10)

One example of the preceding type is not technically part of a conditional, but can be considered an equivalent. It serves as the answer to
a question with a conditional form (*yāmērən*):

*lū hō ḳōrək aḳawt ... wə-nákak báwməh wə-matk, hībō yāmērən
   ḥābū? ʾāmyēra: "ġayg bəxáyl wə-kawb!"* 'if I had hidden the food
   ... and had come here and died, what would the people say? They
   would say: A mean man and a dog!' (98:12)

In five places, we also find the active participle in the protasis of a real conditional sentence. One example is:

> *hām əl sēn wərdūtən əlā, ḥōm əl-hawrəd həbɛ́ryɛ* 'if they (the cows) are not going to come down (to the water), I want to bring down my camels' (27:3)

In this example, the use of the participle may be explained by the appearance of the same form just two lines earlier (27:1). But the use of the participle in a protasis cannot always be explained this way. For other examples, see §13.4.1.

7.1.7. Internal Passives

Internal passives occur in Mehri mainly, perhaps only, in the G-Stem. Johnstone (*AAL*, p. 19) says that the H-Stem also exhibits an internal passive on occasion, but there is only one, uncertain H passive in the texts. Even for the G-Stem, attested cases of the internal passive are rather rare. There are about forty internal passive forms in Johnstone's texts. Internal passives occur in the perfect, imperfect, subjunctive, and conditional, and both the perfect and imperfect forms can be preceded by the verbal particle *ð-* (§7.1.10). See §6.1.2 for the full paradigm of the G-Stem passives. Following are some of the attested forms:

> *yəmkən hərēḳ* 'perhaps it was stolen' (23:4)
> *əðə hē bəh lə-hīs aġəyōg, ʾətēm təsḥayṭ; w-əðə hē əl bəh fēḥəl lā, hē yəsḥōṭ* 'if he has (a penis) like (other) men, you shall be killed; but if he does not have a penis, he shall be killed' (24:39)
> *hō ð-əśəlōl* 'I was (being) carried' (25:15)
> *xəwḳāt bawməh* 'she was born here' (38:12)
> *aġāk bər mōt u bər ḳəbēr* 'your brother is already dead and buried' (40:10)
> *ð-rəṣank h-arēśīt* 'I have been tied up for the snake' (42:17)
> *kəsk ḥābū ð-yərəṣayṣ* 'I found people pressed together' (53:3)
> *kādēt bər əwtēġ* 'Kadet has been killed' (64:29)
> *tāśōś lā, ʾār wə-səbṭāt bə-xəṭrāḳ* 'she won't get up unless she is hit with a stick' (65:11)
> *kəsk tīs bərk dəḥlīl bər ð-ʾāṭəmēt* 'I found it in a cave, already bandaged up' (81:3)
> *ḥāməy wəzəməthəm ḥōṭər bə-ḥāṭərhəm ðə-səḥāṭ* 'my mother gave them a (goat) kid for their kid that was slaughtered' (89:5)

təḥōm təwtōġ 'you want to get killed' (94:25)

əl-ḥarāsīs əwtēġəm mənhēm ṭəmənīt 'the Ḥarasis, eight of them were killed' (104:29)

Note the specialized meaning of passive *xəlēḳ* 'be born' vs. active *xəlūḳ* 'create' (cf. 38:12). Also note that for some verbs the active and passive are identical as a result of phonetic changes (see rule #13 in §2.2.1 and §2.2.2). For example, the form *səḥāṭ* can be either active or passive 3ms perfect, though it is clearly passive in the context of 89:5, given above.

In 97:16, we find the phrase *ksūt agənyət bar ṭəḥnēt ṭəḳayḳ ð-tawḳā*, translated in the printed edition as 'she found the bag of maize ground into flour standing (there)'. The form *ṭəḥnēt* is a 3fs G passive of the verb *ṭəḥān* 'grind'. The form *ð-tawḳā* is not totally clear, but it may be a passive of the H-Stem *həwḳā* 'put, place'. If so, it would be an imperfect combined with the verbal prefix *ð-*, marking a circumstantial (§7.1.10.1).[13]

7.1.8. Passive Participles

Passive participles do not seem to be very productive or common in Mehri, though the category does exist, even if neglected in most recent grammatical treatments. Johnstone mentions in his *ML* (p. xix) that Mehri has both active and passive participles, but fails to mention the passive participle in his sketch in *AAL*. Simeone-Senelle (1997) makes no mention of either participle in her sketch. There is some discussion of passive participles in Bittner (1911: 24-25).

The basic form of the passive participle is of the pattern *məCCīC* (or *məCCayC*, by the changes discussed in §2.2.1 and §2.2.2). This pattern is used not only for G-Stems, but also for H- and T-Stems. This fact was mentioned already by Bittner, and is supported by evidence from Johnstone's texts. According to Bittner, the passive participle is declined as follows: fs *məCCīCōt*, mp *məCCōC*, fp *məCCáCtən*. Bittner's forms are supported by those found in Johnstone's texts.[14] Passive participles are used either as attributive or predicative adjectives. Some examples are:

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[13] In the Yemeni Mehri version of this text recorded by Müller (cf. Müller 1902: 119), Bittner analyzed the corresponding verb (*hūqa*) as an H passive. See Bittner (1915b: 11).

[14] The feminine plural *məśabbōt* in 99:56 (*həbēr məśabbōt* 'satisfied camels') is an Arabized form.

yāmərəm məṣḥayr 'they say (he is) bewitched' (7:9) (cf. G *səḥār* 'bewitch')

məkōn məġrayb b-Landən 'a famous place in London' (53:1) (cf. G *ġərūb* 'know')

nēḥər məxtīb 'an exhausted side-valley' (26:15) (cf. T1 *xatyəb* 'be at a loss')

bəʿayr ōfər məṣḥayr əl-ḥəróhəh … u māšīm ḥəyðēn śayməl 'a brown camel, branded on its head … and its left ear is cut off' (28:8) (cf. G *ṣəḥār* 'brand' and G *ʾāšōm* 'cut off')

ṭāṭ məṣwīb 'one was wounded' (64:6) (cf. H *həwṣawb* 'hit')

anṣəlāt məġəzzōt 'the blade was loosened' (64:19) (cf. G *ġəz* 'loosen')

nəḥōm nədfēn aməlawtəġ 'we should bury those killed' (64:26) (cf. G *lūtəġ* 'kill')[15]

gēd məḥmīṣ mərday 'the discarded skin of a kid' (99:3) (cf. G *rədū* 'throw')[16]

rəwēġəd … məxlaṭṭən 'the pregnant camels … were mixed up' (104:4) (cf. G *xəlūṭ* 'mix')

ġayg šōga bərəh məwṣayf 'a brave man who was already famous' (76:1) (cf. H *həwṣawf* 'describe')

Sometimes it is not so clear whether to classify these forms as passive participles or as lexicalized adjectives. Such is the case with *məwṣayf* 'famous', which is clearly derivable from *həwṣawf* 'describe', but has a slightly different connotation than the literal past participle. More complicated is the word *məśhayr* 'famous' (e.g., 64:1; pl. *məśhōr*). This is clearly a passive participle in terms of its pattern, but the only related verb from this root is the non-active T2-Stem *əśtəhūr* 'be famous'. Moreover, *məśhayr* is almost certainly an adaptation of the Arabic passive participle *mašhūr*. So *məśhayr* cannot be a passive participle in the productive sense.

There may be at least one passive participle of a different pattern, in the following passage:

amarāy ð̣ār asarf ḥayməl təwóy 'the grass on the right side was eaten' (23:18)

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[15] On the form *aməlawtəġ*, see §2.2.2.

[16] The word *gēd* means 'skin', while *məḥmīṣ* means 'skin of a kid'. The word *məḥmīṣ* is given as a noun in the *ML*, but likely has its origins as a past participle; cf. G *ḥəmūṣ* 'skin a kid'.

Here, *təwəy* is likely an adjective with a pattern that corresponds historically to a passive participle (e.g., the Geʿez pattern *CəCūC* or the Aramaic *CəCīC*). We also find the form *kətīb* 'written' (39:5), in what seems to be a set phrase, *hām kətīb* 'if it is written (i.e., God willing)'.[17] It is not clear if this is the same passive participle pattern as *təwəy* or another pattern. It may even be an erroneous transcription for the expected passive participle *məktīb*, since the preceding word ends in the consonant *m*, though the audio does not seem to support this suggestion (and see n. 17).

In the texts, there are also a number of borrowed Arabic passive participles, such as *məḥamməl* 'loaded' (3:11; Ar. *muḥammal*), *məḳaddar* 'decreed' (65:14; Ar. *muqaddar*), *mətarrəx* 'historic, famous' (88:13; Ar. *mutaʾarrix*?), *mēsūl* 'responsible' (91:28; Ar. *masʾūl*), *məḥarrəm* 'forbidden' (94:28; Ar. *muḥarram*).

7.1.9. Compound Tenses

Compound tenses, in which a form of a verb meaning 'to be' is used as an auxiliary, are rather rare. Only a few examples occur in Johnstone's texts, and these are potentially calques of Arabic compound tenses. Some of the compound tenses are formed with a subjunctive form of *wīḳa* 'be(come)' or an imperfect form *yəkūn* 'be' plus a perfect tense (on these two verbs see §13.1.1 and §13.1.2). These are usually future perfects (sometimes better translated with a future conditional in English), but a couple are conditional perfects (or past hypotheticals). Attested examples are:

> *hō šəṣdə́ḳk əlā yāḳā xəlūs* 'I don't believe he would have gotten lost' (23:3)
> *taḳam lətġəkəm ḥāməy* 'have you killed my mother?' (65:13) (or perhaps: 'would you have killed?')
> *həthamk təh yāḳa šəwṣawb aġaṭəw* 'I suspected he must have caught the implication' (82:4)
> *akūn rəddək təwōli ḥə́byɛ* 'I will have gone back to my parents' (94:17)
> *aġayg šəhēwəb tɛṭəh tāḳā bər sīrūt mən ð̣ār ḥəmoh* 'the man thought his wife would have already left the water' (94:20)

> *mət nakan, tāḳāy bər ṭəḥanš ġə́nyət wə-bər mōləš azəyawrət* 'when
> we get back, you should have already ground the sack (of maize)
> and filled the jars' (97:7)

A few times we find either a subjunctive of *wīḳa* or an imperfect of
yəkūn followed by an imperfect, indicating a present progressive:

> *ʾād tāḳā təbayd* 'might you be lying?' (34:16)
> *ðək təkūn təġətōri kə-gənnawnisɛ* 'it's just that she is in converse
> with her jinns' (65:11)
> *tōmər śáṭ̣ayt ṭəwōr w-əśhawd yəkawn ðə-yəhamam* 'she says (this)
> three times, and the witnesses are listening' (100:2)

It is possible that the verbs *təbayd* in 34:16 and *təġətōri* in 65:11, like
the verb *yəhamam* in 100:2, have an underlying prefixed *ð-*, which is
suppressed because of the prefix *t-* (see §7.1.10.1).
And in just one place we find a conditional form of *wīḳa* followed
by an imperfect. This is in the apodosis of a conditional sentence
beginning with *lū* (see §13.4.3):

> *lū əmnēdəm yəḥawsəb ləhān nəkōna təh b-amstaḳbələh, l-ʾəḥād
> yāḳān yəškūf lā* 'if a person were to take account of all that will
> come to him in the future, nobody would sleep' (98:10)

In 98:11, this same passage is repeated, though with the unexpected
addition of the participle *ð-* before the final verb (*ð-yəškūf*).
Once we find the subjunctive of *wīḳa* followed by the verb *ḥōm*
'want'. In this context, the verb 'want' is the complement of the verb
yəṣ 'be afraid', and as such should be in the subjunctive. Presumably,
since the irregular verb *ḥōm* (§7.3) has no subjunctive, the subjunctive
of *wīḳa* is used before it. The passage is:

> *ðə-yəṣṣək tīs mən tāḳā təḥōm tātyōn līn* 'I am afraid she wants to
> betray us' (94:39)

And once we find the combination of an imperfect form of *wīḳa*
plus a perfect tense, indicating a past habitual. Strangely, the com-
pound tense in this passage follows a simple imperfect with the same
past habitual function.

> *ḥaybi wə-ḥaybək mən zəbōn yāfədō mən ḏ̣ār ðīməh wə-yəwḳō ṣərō bərk aməsyōl* 'my father and your father long ago would jump from this (cliff) and would stand [land standing] in the valley bottom' (99:22)

The number of examples of these compound tenses is so small that solid conclusions cannot be made.

7.1.10. The Verbal Prefix ð-

Both perfect and imperfect verbs can be preceded by the particle *ð-*. This is to be distinguished synchronically from the relative pronoun *ð-* (§3.8.1) and the genitive exponent *ð-* (§12.4), though these are all historically the same. The exact meaning of the verbal prefix *ð-* is not always easy to determine, and previous studies have usually been brief.[18] In Stroomer's edition of Johnstone's texts, there are a fair number of instances where the verbal prefix *ð-* is transcribed, but not heard on the audio, or where the prefix is heard on the audio, but not transcribed. When such inconsistencies occur, it is hard to know which witness to trust. This complicates an already complicated set of data. Below we will attempt to sort out the uses of this particle as best as possible, given the evidence in Johnstone's texts.

7.1.10.1. ð- + Imperfect

Let us first examine the use of *ð-* with the imperfect. Johnstone (*AAL*, p. 27) claims that *ð-* is prefixed to the imperfect to give a present progressive meaning, citing *ð-yōmər* 'he is saying' vs. *yōmər* 'he (always) says'. But this is an oversimplification. The combination of *ð-* and the imperfect can indicate a past or present progressive, or a circumstantial clause.

The verbal prefix *ð-* must have its origins in the relative pronoun *ð-*. In fact, there are numerous passages in which it is difficult to determine whether or not *ð-* plus an imperfect verb is functioning as a relative clause or a circumstantial progressive. Consider the following examples:

> *ḳawla aġāh ðə-yəšəwkūf* 'he left his brother who was sleeping' or 'he left his brother sleeping' (17:3)

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[18] Cf. Wagner (1953: 120-21), Simeone-Senelle (2003: 247-50). Pennacchietti (2007) is an important study on the origin of the verbal prefix *ð-*.

nūka ġayg əð-yəsyūr bə-ḥayḳ 'along came a man who was walking
   on the shore' or 'a man came walking on the shore' (20:32)
ʾād fəṭənək hēxər ð-ənkayn ð-yəbayk 'do you still remember the old
   man who came to us who was crying?' or 'do you still remember
   the old man who came to us crying' (22:73)
hūma ṣayḥ ð-yōmər 'he heard a voice that was saying…' or 'he heard
   a voice saying…' (40:5)
śīni bū mēkən ð-yəwəkbəm bayt ðə-tōgər 'he saw a lot of people who
   were entering the house of a rich man' or 'he saw a lot of people
   entering the house of a rich man' (65:6)

From such contexts, relative ð- plus an imperfect must have been rein-
terpreted as simply a circumstantial, referring to either the subject or
object of the main verb. And indeed, we find many cases of this con-
struction used as a circumstantial, where a relative clause does not
work. Thus, indicating circumstantial clauses is one common function
of the verbal prefix ð-. Some examples are:

aġayg rəd təwōli sékənəh ð-iḳətōməḥ wə-ð-ixtyōb 'the man went
   back to his community, despairing and disappointed' (12:14)
səyawr aġiggēn wə-ḥāmēh ð-yəbakyəm 'the boy and his mother
   went away crying' (36:14)
ʾəśənihəm ð-yəġətəryəm 'I saw them speaking' (40:24)
nakam ḥābū ð-yabrə́ḳam 'the people came running' (47:6)
mayt hamak tay ðə-ʾōmər 'when did you hear me singing?' (52:11)
ksétəh ð-yəxawdəm 'she found him working' (59:6)
śxəwəlūl ð-yəftəkērən 'he sat down thinking' (65:2)
hamam təh ḥābū ð-yāyēṭən 'the people heard him crying out' (77:2)

Now consider the following example, in which ð- plus imperfect
can be considered a relative clause, a circumstantial, or simply a main
verb:

xəṭərāt ġayg ð-yəghōm bə-ḥōrəm 'once there was a man who was
   walking on the road' or 'once, there was a man walking on the
   road' or 'once, a man was walking on the road' (46:1)

Most likely from contexts like this one (46:1), the prefix ð- plus imper-
fect came to indicate simply a progressive action, whether past or pres-
ent. There are indeed many examples of this in the texts. Some of
examples of ð- plus the imperfect indicating a present progressive are:

ənḥā ðə-nhəwrōd 'we are bringing (animals) to the water' (10:4)
ð-yəbayk, əl šəh wəlēd lā 'he is crying (because) he has no children' (22:33)
b-xayr hē wə-ð-yəxawdəm 'he is well and is working' (57:8)
ḥābū ð-yəṭawf ləh, wə-ḥəbhɛ ð-yəšəxbīr 'people are visiting him, and his parents are asking' (65:7)
ḥəbūr ð-yəzyūd 'the cold is increasing' (84:4)
ʾādəh ð-yawdəg 'is he still breast-feeding?' (101:14)[19]

More common in the texts are examples of *ð-* plus the imperfect indicating a past progressive, some of which are:

ġəsōmən, wə-hō ð-əśəlōl 'we set off, and I was (being) carried' (25:15)
hō ð-əbayk, wə-ənkʾay ʾāskəray 'I was crying, and a constable came up to me' (34:21)
ḥābū ð-yəźḥayk mənəh 'the people were laughing at him' (42:49)
nəḥā ðə-nəsyūr bə-ḥōrəm 'we were going along the road' (46:15)
hō ð-əghōm bə-ḥarmi 'I was walking along my way' (77:6)
hīs əlyēk ð-yəntawḥən, həwrōd ḥazhɛ 'while those guys were fighting, he had taken his goats down to the water' (61:6)
ḥaybi ð-yəbayd būk 'father was lying to you' (89:23)
hīs ð-yəḥawfər, yəhayw ǯayrəh baṭḥ 'when he was digging, sand was falling on him' (48:17)

The final example above (48:17) illustrates nicely the difference between an imperfect with and without *ð-*. In this sentence, *ð-yəḥawfər* is a past progressive 'was digging' (i.e., 'was in the process of digging'), while *yəhayw* is a past continuous or habitual 'was falling' (i.e., 'was falling continuously or repeatedly').

It is not always clear, however, why the particle *ð-* is or is not used. For example, in about a half dozen passages, we find *ð-* plus an imperfect used in the apodosis of a conditional sentence, for no obvious reason, as in:

hām ʾād həwrədk ḥəmoh ðōməh zōyəd, ðə-nəwtəġk 'if you bring (them) down to this water again, we will kill you' (10:9)
hām ʾəḥād nəkayh, ð-yəwəzməh śəxōf 'if anyone came to him, he would give him milk' (35:23)

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[19] But cf. *ʾādəh yawdəg* 'he is still breast-feeding' in 101:15. No audio was found to compare 101:14 and 101:15.

> *hām ʾəḥād mənkēm ḳərbay, ð-əlūbədəh* 'if any one of you comes
>   near me, I will shoot him' (47:11)

In 10:9 and 47:11, we expect a bare imperfect or a participle, since the
meaning is a future tense. In 35:23, we expect a bare imperfect, since
the meaning is a past habitual.

As mentioned briefly above (§7.1.2), the entire situation is compli-
cated by the fact that the verbal particle *ð-* does not occur before the
prefix *t-*, i.e., before all second person and third feminine forms of the
imperfect.[20] In reality, this means that what looks like a bare imperfect
often indicates a circumstantial, or a present or past progressive. Really
these are cases of *ð-* plus the imperfect, in which the prefix *ð-* is sup-
pressed. Examples are:

> *mən hēśən təźḥōk* 'what are you laughing at?' (5:4)
> *wəlēkən hīs sēn təġətəryən, hənīsən sənnawrət* 'while they were talk-
>   ing, the cat was by them' (15:7)
> *kō ʾətēm təḥafərəm ənxāli abayti* 'why are you digging under my
>   house?' (19:16)
> *kō hēt təġawlək bay wə-təbayk* 'why are you looking at me and cry-
>   ing?' (22:25)
> *sēh təźḥōk* 'she was laughing' (89:9)
> *nəkōt arēśīt tənhōḳ* 'the snake came shouting' (42:26)
> *hamak tīk nəhōr ṭayt tōmər* 'I heard you one day singing' (52:10)
> *sīrūt ḥāgərīt təbayk* 'the slave-girl went off crying' (85:4)
> *kəsūt ḥābū ð-yəftərēgən wa-ḥəynīṯ tənaḥəgən* 'she found the people
>   watching and the women dancing' (97:13)

It should be mentioned that in at least one passage, *ð-* is transcribed
before *t-*, though the *ð-* is not audible on the audio (*ðə-təḳayn*, 63:13).[21]

As noted in §8.20, it seems that when the pronoun following *xā* 'as
if' is *hō*, *ð-* is required before the verb.

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[20] The particle *ð-* is apparently not suppressed before *t-* when it is part of the verbal
root, though evidence for this is not abundant. Cf. *ðə-təlayk* 'I regret' (from *tlū* 'regret',
53:6).
[21] The reader does struggle with this passage, and it is certainly possible that the
ð- prefix was audible when uttered by the original speaker whose words were tran-
scribed. A similar phrase with the same verb (*təḳayn*) is found in 63:4, without *ð-* tran-
scribed or heard on the audio. It should also be mentioned that in 63:13, *ð-* should
probably be parsed as a relative.

7.1.10.2. ð- + Perfect

A single sentence can describe nearly all attested cases of the imperfect with prefixed *ð-*. Unfortunately, no such easy description can be given for the perfect with prefixed *ð-*. In fact, it is not always clear why a perfect has prefixed *ð-*. One use of the perfect with *ð-* is to indicate a circumstantial. While an imperfect with *ð-* can indicate a circumstantial referring to simultaneous action, the perfect with *ð-* indicates a circumstantial referring to an action that has taken place or indicates a circumstantial stative. Sometimes such a circumstantial can be translated with an English perfect participle ('having done *X*…' or 'having become *X*…'), even if this is somewhat awkward. This is illustrated in the following examples:

> *nkōt aġəgənōt ðə-wbsut labs ðə-ġəggēn* 'the girl came wearing (lit. having put on) boys' clothes' (24:6)
> *kūsa ḥaybəh ð-aywər* 'he found his father blind (lit. having gone blind)' (24:50)
> *kūsəm ḥəbrīt ðə-ḥōkəm ðə-rəṣnēt b-gəndēt* 'they found the ruler's daughter tied up (lit. having been tied up) to a tree-trunk' (42:15)
> *watxəfək ðə-gayak* 'I've come home hungry' (63:12)
> *ḳalak tīs sār abyūt əlyēk ð-šəwkfūt* 'I left her behind those houses, sleeping (lit. having fallen asleep)' (65:9)
> *rəddəm ðə-šənṣayr* 'they returned victorious (or: having won)' (69:8)
> *hātīm ðə-ḥəzīn* 'they spent the night being sad' (74:14)
> *kəsk tīs bərk dəḥlīl bər ðə-ʾāṭəmēt* 'I found it in a cave already bandaged up (lit. having been bandaged)' (81:3)
> *sīrūt ǧār ḥəmoh ðə-fərḥōt* 'she went to the water happy (lit. having become happy)' (94:23)

Statives tend to be expressed in Mehri with *ð-* plus a perfect. So for example, phrases like 'I am/was hungry' and 'I am/was cold' are expressed literally as 'I have/had become hungry' and 'I have/had become cold'. We could say then that the *ð-* prefix indicates what in English would be called a present perfect, at least with stative verbs. Examples are:

> *hō ðə-gəlwək u ðə-ḥəbərək* 'I had a fever and a chill' (18:2)
> *ð-əḥtəwēk aw hībō* 'are you crazy or what?' (20:5)
> *hēm ðə-ḥəzīn* 'they were sad' (23:1)

    hō ð-yəṣṣək mənš 'I am afraid of you' (54:19)
    hō ð-əḥtəmk lā 'I am not sure' (57:10)
    ḥəmbərawtən ð-gayam 'the boys were hungry' (84:7)
    hō ð-handək 'I am drowsy' (99:5)
    hō ð-gayak 'I am hungry' (99:10)

Certain other verbs behave in the same way, even though they cannot be called statives. One example is the verb *hānō*, which has the meaning 'intend' when used in the perfect with prefixed *ð-*. For example:

    ð-hānō yəftēk 'he intends to leave' (57:8)
    əl hō ð-hānayk əwṭōməh lā … ʾār ð-hanayš hēśən 'I didn't intend
        it like that … then what did you intend?' (59:10-11)
    ð-hānayk əl-syēr 'I intended to go' (77:5)

The verb *ʾayməl* 'make, do' sometimes has the meaning 'think, believe, be of the opinion' (cf. 28:2; 91:8), but when used in the perfect with prefixed *ð-*, it seems to always have this meaning, as in:

    kəsk śəṭərayr … wə-ð-ʿəmələk təh ð-ənsay 'I found a strip of cloth …
        and I thought it was a human's' (63:9)
    ð-ʾəmələk tīs təhaflət mən ǧayri 'I think she has run away from me'
        (94:22)
    ð-ʾəmələk tay l-āḳā dənyēt 'I think I might be pregnant' (101:17)

    Other uses of *ð-* plus the perfect are more difficult to explain. One of the most commonly occurring verbs in this construction is *ġərūb* 'know', attested in ten or eleven passages in the texts.[22] Three of these are probably circumstantial clauses, but the others are not so clear. Some of these are:

    hēt ʾār ð-ġərəbk ənḥa wōgəb līn nəṣḥōṭ hūk 'you surely know that we
        are obliged to slaughter for you' (31:14)
    hō ð-ġərəbk tīk ǧār aźayga 'I know you are in the pen' (64:29)
    hō ð-ġərəbk ḥəyalla ṭāṭ ð-yənkā bawməh ḥərfōna tīs 'I know that
        whoever comes here will move it' (67:5)
    hō ð-ġərəbk amānēh 'I knew his intention' (71:2)
    hēt ð-ġərəbk təh 'you know it' (82:4)

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    [22] In 89:35 we read *ð-ġərəbk*, but the particle *ð-* is not heard in the audio version. I presume the printed text is correct, but cannot be sure.

Perhaps this verb is treated as a stative (as it is in some other languages). Or perhaps in the perfect with prefixed ð-, there is an aspectual nuance indicated, pointing to knowledge at a particular moment, as opposed to general knowledge; cf. the imperfect used as a general present in the phrase *əġōrəb axayr mənk* 'I know better than you' (19:20). Or perhaps the fact that an independent pronoun is used in all of these examples is a clue. We might suggest then that ð- is used along with the pronoun to provide some sort of emphasis. Other examples in which we find an independent pronoun used in conjunction with ð- + perfect, without a clear function, are:

> *ənḥā ðə-šəźyūmən* 'we have run short of milk' (28:14)
> *hēt ðə-šāsark ḥābū* 'you are keen on the people' (67:5)

Still the exact function of the prefix ð- in these examples is not so clear. And it is worth noting that independent pronouns are commonly used with stative verbs too (see the examples above). Further investigation is needed on the use of this construction.

7.2. Weak Verbs

By the term "weak verb", I mean any verb whose conjugation differs from that of the basic paradigm (see Chapter 6) because of the presence of one or more particular root consonants which cause or have caused phonetic changes. Mehri is particularly rich in weak verb types. A complete survey of all weak verb forms will not be given here for three reasons: 1. The data found in the texts alone are insufficient, since many forms are not attested; 2. Johnstone provides about fifty pages of verbal paradigms in his *ML*, covering almost all weak verb types; 3. a complete survey of all weak verb types (assuming we had the data) warrants a significant amount of space. Instead, in this section, I will provide an overview of the major weak verb types and their characteristic features. For convenience, forms of each weak verb type will be compared to the strong verbal forms.

7.2.1. I-ʾ and I-ʿ Verbs

In the Ga-, H-, T-, and Š-Stems, verbs whose first root letter is ʾ or ʿ are characterized by having a long *ā* in the first syllable. In a few forms, identified below, we find differences depending on whether the root letter was originally ʾ or ʿ. Some representative forms are:

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
Ga strong	*rəkūb*	*yərūkəb*	*yərkēb*
I-ʾ / I-ʿ	*ʾāmūr*	*yāmōr*²³	*yaʾmēr* (/ *yāmēr*)
H strong	*hərkūb*	*yəhərkūb*	*yəhárkəb*
I-ʾ / I-ʿ	*hārūs*	*yəhārūs*	*yəhērəs*
Š1 strong	*šəkbūr*	*yəšəkbūr*	*yəšákbər*
I-ʾ / I-ʿ	*šānūs*	*yəšānūs*	*yəšēnəs*²⁴
Š2 strong	*šənēsəm*	*yəšnásmən*	*yəšnēsəm*
I-ʾ / I-ʿ	*šādəl*	*yəšādələn*	*yəšādəl*
T2 strong	*əftəkūr*	*yəftəkīrən*	*yəftəkūr*
I-ʾ / I-ʿ	*ʾātəlūm*	*yātəlīmən*	*yātəlūm*

Gb verbs whose first root letter is ʾ or ʿ behave normally in the perfect, with the exception that the vowel *ī* of the perfect shifts to *ay*, in accordance with the rules given in §2.2.2. In the imperfect and subjunctive they show the same characteristic *ā* of Ga-Stems.

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
Gb strong	*ṭībər*	*yəṭbōr*	*yəṭbōr*
I-ʾ / I-ʿ	*ʾayməl*	*yāmōl*	*yāmōl*

In the D/L-Stem, there is a distinction between I-ʾ verbs and I-ʿ verbs. Verbs whose first root letter is historically ʾ replace this consonant with *w* in the D/L-Stem, while verbs whose first root letter is ʿ simply exhibit an initial *ʾō-*. However, verbs whose verb root letter is ʿ and whose second root letter is *w* or *y* exhibit initial *ʾā-*, instead (probably also III-w/y verbs; see §6.5.4, n. 19 for an example). Some sample forms are:

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
D/L strong	*arōkəb*	*yarákbən*	*yarōkəb*
I-ʾ	*awōðən*	*yawáðnən*	*yawōðən*
I-ʿ	*ʾōzər*	*yāzərən*	*yōzər*
I-ʿ, II-w/y	*ʾāyēṭ*	*yāyēṭən*²⁵	*yāyēṭ*

²³ Some verbs have a *w* in the imperfect, e.g., *ʾālūm* 'mark', 3ms imperfect *yawləm*, and *ʾādūg* 'suck (at the breast)', 3ms imperfect *yawdəg*.
²⁴ For I-ʿ verbs (vs. I-ʾ) the subjunctive has *-šā-* or *-šē-*.
²⁵ This is the form met in the texts, and given in the *ML* entry (p. 38). However, in the *ML* paradigms (p. xxxvii), we find the form *yāʾīṭən*. Ignoring the ever-present *ī* ~ *ē* variation, it would seem that there is an underlying form *yāʾēṭən*, realized in speech as *yāyēṭən*. Other entries in the *ML* also attest to conflicting data; cf. *yāʿīśən* (p. 38, root ʿyś), but *yāyēbən* (p. 37, root ʿyb).

7.2.2. I-Guttural and I-Glottalic Verbs

Verbs whose initial root letter is a guttural (other than ʾ or ʿ) or a glottalic are not weak, except for the fact that they are subject to the changes of *ī > ay*, *ū > aw*, and *ē > ā*. So, we find Gb-Stem perfects like *ḥayləm* 'dream' and *ḳayrəb* 'approach, be near' (cf. strong *ṯībər* 'break'). These vowel changes are discussed in §2.2.1 and §2.2.2, where a number of other examples are given.

7.2.3. I-w and I-y Verbs

Verbs whose first root letter is *w* are completely regular in the G-, D/L-, H-, and Š-Stems, with the exception of the Ga subjunctive (and hence imperative) forms, which behave as if the verb were of the I-ʿ type. Compare:

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
Ga strong	*rəkūb*	*yərūkəb*	*yərkēb*
I-w	*wəzūm*	*yəwūzəm*	*yāzēm*
Gb strong	*ṯībər*	*yəṯbōr*	*yəṯbōr*
I-w	*wīṣəl*	*yəwṣōl*	*yəwṣōl*

I-w verbs seem also to be regular in the T2-Stem, though data are extremely slim in the texts; one attested form is the active participle *məwtəkīl* '(I'll) trust' (36:5), which patterns with a strong T2-Stem.

In the T1-Stem, I-w verbs behave as strong verbs in the perfect, but the *w* is lost in the imperfect and subjunctive:[26]

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
T1 strong	*nátfəz*	*yəntəfūz*	*yəntīfəz*
I-w	*wátḳəð*	*yətḳūð*	*yətīḳəð*

Verbs whose first root letter is *y* are exceedingly rare. Just one occurs in the texts, *yəṣ* 'be afraid'. In the perfect this behaves like any other geminate verb, but its imperfect and subjunctive forms (e.g., 3ms

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[26] Data are also very slim for T1-Stem I-w verbs, and further study is needed. The active participle *məttūḳāð* (from *watḳəð* 'wake up') in 99:8 is unexpected (assuming its transcription is correct), and suggests other irregularities with I-w verbs.

yāṣōṣ) look as if they are from a Gb-Stem I-ʾ verb. The *ML* (p. 462) lists an H-Stem of this verb, whose forms look irregular. The *ML* also lists one other I-y verb, *hātūm* 'be(come) an orphan' (root *ytm*), which looks identical to the H-Stem of the root ʿ*tm*.

7.2.4. I-l, II-l, and III-l Verbs

Verbs that have *l* as one of their root letters perhaps do not form a separate class of weak verbs, in that they follow the strong verb pattern of conjugation. However, since the consonant *l* is subject to phonetic changes that can obscure the verbal pattern, verbs with *l* can be considered weak. The effects of *l* on verb forms have already been discussed in §2.1.4, where numerous examples can be found.

7.2.5. II-Guttural and II-Glottalic Verbs

Verbs whose second root letter is one of the gutturals *ġ*, *ḥ*, or *x* (on ʾ and ʿ, see §7.2.6) or one of the glottalic consonants are subject to the sound changes *ū > aw*, *ī > ay*, and *ē > ā*, discussed in §2.2.1 and §2.2.2. For example:

	3ms perfect	3mp perfect	3ms imperfect
H strong	*hərkūb*	*hərkīb*	*yəhərkūb*
II-Glott.	*həkṣawm*	*həkṣaym*	*yəhəkṣawm*
II-Gutt.	*həbġawź*	*həbġayź*	*yəhəbġáwź*
Š1 strong	*šəkbūr*	*šəkbīr*	*yəšəkbūr*
II-Glott.	*šəkṣawr*	*šəkṣayr*	*yəšəkṣawr*
II-Gutt.	*šənḥawr*	*šənḥayr*	*yəšənḥawr*

In the H-, Š-, and T-Stems, these sound changes are the only characteristic features of II-Guttural and II-Glottalic verbs. Surprisingly few II-Guttural or II-Glottalic verbs are attested in the D/L-Stem, but those that are (e.g., *aḳōṣər* 'shorten', *fōxər* 'beautify, dress up') behave like strong verbs.

For G-Stems, these sound changes *ū > aw*, *ī > ay*, and *ē > ā* are the only notable features of II-Glottalic verbs. However, II-Guttural verbs are distinctive in the G-Stem. All verbs whose second root letter is *ġ*, *ḥ*, or *x*, have the pattern *CəCāC* in the perfect, and the imperfect/subjunctive pattern *yəCCōC*, like strong Gb-Stems. Verbs whose second

root letter is *h* are also distinctive in the G-Stem. They look very simi-
lar to other II-Guttural verbs, except that their perfect has the pattern
CəCēC, with *ē* rather than *ā*. Examples are:

	3ms perfect	3ms imperf.	3ms subjunct.
Ga strong	*rəkūb*	*yərūkəb*	*yərkēb*
Gb strong	*ṭībər*	*yəṭbōr*	*yəṭbōr*
II-Gutt.	*nəḥāg*	*yənḥōg*	*yənḥōg*
II-h	*gəhēm*	*yəghōm*	*yəghōm*

In the first and second persons of the perfect, *ġ*, *ḥ*, or *x* tend to be fol-
lowed by *a* where strong verbs have *ə*, e.g., *səḥáṭk* 'I danced',
nəḥág(ə)k 'I danced' (cf. strong *rəkə́bk*).

The few II-h verbs that are attested in the D/L-Stem behave as
strong verbs (e.g., *fōhəm* 'make understand', *amōhəl* 'lighten; stop'),
with the exception of *azhīb* 'dress up a woman in finery', which conju-
gates like a II-w/y or geminate verb. II-h verbs are regular in all other
stems.

7.2.6. *II-ʾ and II-ʿ Verbs*

Verbs whose second root letter is ʾ or ʿ form a special class of II-Guttural
verbs, different enough to merit separate treatment. In the G-Stem,
verbs that are II-ʿ behave like other II-Guttural verbs in that their
forms are based on the pattern *CəCāC* for the perfect, and *yəCCōC* for
the imperfect/subjunctive. The difference is that the ʿ is lost com-
pletely, resulting in a monosyllabic base *CāC* for the perfect and *yəCōC*
for the imperfect/subjunctive. Nearly all II-ʿ verbs follow this pattern
in the G-Stem. An exception is the verb *gār* 'fall', which has a 3ms
imperfect *yəgawr* and subjunctive *yəgār*.[27] As for verbs whose middle
root letter is ʾ (of which there are very few), they behave like II-ʿ verbs,
except that they have the characteristic pattern *CōC* in the perfect (on
the sound changes involved, see further in §2.1.2). Some examples are:

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[27] Strangely, it is this verb, which goes against the pattern of all other G-Stem II-ʿ
verbs, that Johnstone chose for his paradigms in the *ML* (pp. xxv-xxvi).

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
Ga strong	*rəkūb*	*yərūkəb*	*yərkēb*
Gb strong	*ṭ́ībər*	*yəṭbōr*	*yəṭbōr*
II-Gutt.	*nəḥāg*	*yənḥōg*	*yənḥōg*
II-ʿ	*tāb*	*yətōb*	*yətōb*
II-ʿ other	*gār*	*yəgawr*	*yəgār*
II-ʾ	*śōm*	*yəśōm*	*yəśōm*

In the H-Stem, II-ʿ verbs also show the loss of ʿ, as well as the shift of *ū* to *aw* found with all II-Gutturals (§2.2.2). So in the perfect, we find *(hə)CawC < *(hə)CʿawC < *(hə)CʿūC*. In the subjunctive, the ʿ is simply lost, but there is no reduction of the following vowel, as there is with strong verbs, for example:

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
H strong	*hərkūb*	*yəhərkūb*	*yəhárkəb*
II-Gutt.	*həbġawź*	*yəhəbġáwź*	*yəhábġəź*
II-ʿ	*həbawr*	*yəhəbáwr*	*yəhábar*

II-ʿ verbs in the Š1-Stem behave as in the H-Stem (according to the *ML*), though no such forms are attested in the texts. Only one II-ʿ verb is attested in the Š2-Stem, namely *šəwēd*. In this case, the sequence *CēʿəC* of the perfect and subjunctive and the sequence *CáʿC* of the imperfect both collapse to *CēC*:

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
Š2 strong	*šənēsəm*	*yəšnásmən*	*yəšnēsəm*
II-ʿ	*šəwēd*	*yəšwēdən*	*yəšwēd*

Only one T-Stem form is attested from a II-ʿ verb, namely, *ṭətānəm* 'they stabbed one another' (4:17). There is also one II-ʿ quadriliteral verb (Q-Stem) used in the texts, namely, *aḳāləd* 'roll' (cf. strong *karbəl*). Here we see the same characteristic *ā* found in the G-Stem. In the imperfect, we find *yaḳəlawd*, with the shift of *ū* to *aw*.

No II-ʿ verbs are attested in the D/L-Stem, and no II-ʾ verbs are attested outside of the G-Stem, with the exception of *śītəm* 'buy'. And

though this verb is historically a T-Stem of the root *š²m*, it conjugates as if it were a Gb-Stem of the root *śtm*.

7.2.7. II-w and II-y Verbs

Verbs whose second root letter is *y* differ only partially from strong verbs in the G-Stem. Compare the forms of the verb *səyūr* 'go', the most common II-y G-Stem:

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
Ga strong	*rəkūb*	*yərūkəb*	*yərkēb*
II-y	*səyūr*	*yəsyūr*	*yəsyēr*

The subjunctive base, which looks like the strong pattern, is often realized *yəsēr* or *yəsīr*, and the imperative (made from the subjunctive) is attested in the texts roughly twenty times with the base *sēr* or *sīr*, but just twice with the base *syēr*. In some forms of the perfect, we regularly find the base *sīr-* in place of *səyər-*, when followed by a vocalic suffix, e.g., 3fs *sīrūt* and 3md *sīrō*, but 1cs *səyərk*.

II-w verbs seem to behave as strong verbs in the Gb-Stem (e.g., *ʾaywər* 'become blind', *kīwər* 'love'), but in the Ga-Stem, they form a separate conjugation type. Like II-ʾ verbs, II-w verbs have a 3ms perfect of the shape *CōC*, but unlike II-ʾ verbs, they have distinct imperfect and subjunctive forms. Compare:

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
Ga strong	*rəkūb*	*yərūkəb*	*yərkēb*
II-ʾ	*śōm*	*yəśōm*	*yəśōm*
II-w	*mōt*[28]	*yəmūt*	*yəmēt*

In the D/L-Stem, II-w and II-y verbs form a single class. Both *w* and *y* remain present in the forms, but the pattern itself is distinctive. Instead of the perfect/subjunctive pattern *(a)CōCCəb*, II-w/y verbs have the pattern *(a)CCīC*, which appears in the imperfect as well. This is the same pattern as found with geminate verbs (§7.2.10). Examples are:

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[28] In the paradigms in the *ML* (p. xxix), the verb *mōt* is mistakenly listed as a II-y verb.

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
D/L strong	*arōkəb*	*yarákbən*	*yarōkəb*
II-w	*aḵwīn*	*yaḵwīnən*	*yaḵwīn*
II-y	*aṣyīḥ*	*yaṣyīḥən*	*yaṣyīḥ*
geminate	*abdīd*	*yabdīdən*	*yabdīd*

At least one II-w/y verb has a different conjugation pattern in the D/L-Stem, namely, the verb *śēwər* 'consult'. This verb does not occur in the texts, but is listed in the *ML* (pp. xxxv-xxxvi, 388). The verb *śēwər* conjugates like a strong D/L-Stem, except with *ē* in place of *ō* in the first syllable of the perfect and subjunctive:

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
D/L strong	*arōkəb*	*yarákbən*	*yarōkəb*
II-w	*aḵwīn*	*yaḵwīnən*	*yaḵwīn*
II-w other	*śēwər*	*yaśáwrən*	*yəśēwər*

The initial voiceless consonant is not a factor, since other II-w verbs with voiceless initial consonants behave as expected, e.g., *twīb* 'repent' and *xwīṣ* 'collect *xawṣ* for basket-weaving'. Perhaps the consonant *ś* is the problem, since it would be quite difficult to pronounce the initial cluster *św-* of the expected form ***śwīr*.

For the most part, II-w verbs follow strong verbs in the H-, Š-, and T-Stems, for example:

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
H strong	*hərkūb*	*yəhərkūb*	*yəhárkəb*
II-w	*həġwūṣ*	*yəhəġwūṣ*	*yəháġwəṣ*
Š1 strong	*šəkbūr*	*yəšəkbūr*	*yəšákbər*
II-w	*šəhwūb*	*yəšəhwūb*	*yəšáhwəb*
Š2 strong	*šənēsəm*	*yəšnásmən*	*yəšnēsəm*
II-w	*šənēwəṣ*	*yəšnáwṣən*	*yəšənēwəṣ*
T2 strong	*əftəkūr*	*yəftəkīrən*	*yəftəkūr*
II-w	*əḥtəwūl*	*yəḥtəwīlən*	*yəḥtəwūl*

However, sequences of the shape *wəC* and *əwC* are usually realized as *ūC*, and so we find forms like 3fs perfect *həġūṣūt* (< *həġəwṣūt*; cf. strong *hərkəbūt*). This change is also seen in the 3ms perfect of the T1-Stem, e.g., *śatūḳ* 'miss' (< *śatwəḳ*):

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
T1 strong	*nátfəz*	*yəntəfūz*	*yəntīfəz*
II-w	*śatūḳ*	*yəśtəwūḳ*	*yəśtīwəḳ*

Though less common, II-y verbs are also more or less regular in the H-, Š-, and T-Stems:

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
H strong	*hərkūb*	*yəhərkūb*	*yəhárkəb*
II-y	*həzyūd*	*yəhəzyūd*	*yəházyəd*
Š1 strong	*šəkbūr*	*yəšəkbūr*	*yəšákbər*
II-y	*šəźyūḳ*	*yəšəźyūḳ*	*yəšáźyək*
T1 strong	*nátfəz*	*yəntəfūz*	*yəntīfəz*
II-y	*ġatyəð*	*yəġtəyūð*	*yəġtīð*

II-y verbs also show a similar realization of *yəC* and *əyC* as *iC*, though not in the 3ms perfect of the T1-Stem (e.g., *ġatyəð*). An example is a form like 2ms perfect *ġatiðək* 'you got angry' (90:15) (< *ġatyəðək*; cf. strong *natfəzək*). Note the T1 subjunctive *yəġtīð* (< *yəġtīyəð*), with the shift of *īyə* > *ī*.

In at least one II-w root, we see a metathesis of the first two root consonants in the H- and Š1-Stem. This is the root *ṣwb*, from which we find H *həwṣawb* 'hit (with a bullet)' and Š1 *šəwṣawb* 'be wounded, be hit (with a bullet)'. These verbs behave as if they were from a root *wṣb*, i.e., they behave as I-w verbs (more accurately, as I-w, II-Glottalic verbs). The original root *ṣwb* can be seen in the noun *ṣawb* 'direction' and in the passive participle *məṣwīb* 'wounded'. Interestingly, Johnstone lists another Š1-Stem in the *ML* (p. 367), *šəṣwūb* 'be wounded deliberately', though this form does not occur in the texts. In the *ML* (p. xliv), there is a footnote to the paradigm of *həwṣawb* that reads "in many hollow [i.e., II-w/y] verbs of this kind the radicals occur in the order wCC". However, both in the texts and in the *ML*, I found no other verbs that undergo metathesis like *həwṣawb* and

šəwṣawb. So either Johnstone's footnote is incorrect, or the data in the texts are not telling the whole story. Based on the data we have, it seems that *həwṣawb* and *šəwṣawb* are anomalous.

7.2.8. III-Guttural Verbs (including III-ʾ and III-ʿ Verbs)

Verbs whose third root consonant is one of the six gutturals ʾ, ʿ, ġ, h, ḥ, and x are subject to a variety of sound changes, all of which have already been discussed (§2.2.2). It is worth noting here that ʾ and h pattern with the other guttural letters in this case, whereas when it comes to the second root letter, they do not (see §7.2.5, §7.2.6). The most characteristic feature of this verb type is the sound change *CəCūG* or *əCCūG* > *CūCəG* (where G = ʾ, ʿ, ġ, h, ḥ, or x), which affects Ga-Stem perfects, T2-Stem perfects and imperfects, H-Stem imperfects, and passive participles, among other forms (see §2.2.2 for examples). The G-Stem imperfects and subjunctives are normal for III-Guttural verbs, except for verbs whose final root letter is ʾ or ʿ. In these verbs, the final root consonant is dropped, resulting in a characteristic final *-a* in the imperfect and *-ē* in the subjunctive.[29] Examples are:

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
Ga strong	*rəkūb*	*yərūkəb*	*yərkēb*
III-ġ/h/ḥ/x	*sūməḥ*	*yəsūməḥ*	*yəsmēḥ*
III-ʾ/ʿ	*nūka*	*yənūka*	*yənkē*

III-Guttural verbs also exhibit various peculiarities in other stems. In the H- and Š1-Stems, some III-Guttural verbs have the vowel *ā* in the final syllable, while others have *ē*. The vowel *ē* seems to be found most often, but not exclusively, with verbs whose third root consonant is *x*, e.g., *həndēx* 'fumigate', *hənfēx* 'blow, breathe', *šəwnēx* 'be rested'. The vowel *ā* (var. *ē̄*) occurs with verbs whose final root consonant is ʿ, e.g., *həwḳā* 'put, put down', *hərbā* 'lift/pull/take up', *həwrē* 'keep away, hold back (trans.)', *həbṭā* 'be late, be delayed', *həḳśē̄* 'dry (trans.)', *šərbā* 'climb (to the top)', *šəḳṭā* 'become despondent, tired (of a situation)', *šəwdē* 'keep safe', *šəwrē* 'back off, stand down'. Other final root consonants vary, e.g., *həfsēḥ* 'stop doing, leave off', but *həṣbāḥ* 'be/happen in the morning; become'.

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29 For the complete conjugation of a III-ʿ verb in the Ga-Stem, see the *ML* (p. xxvi).

7.2.9. III-w and III-y Verbs

Verbs whose final root letter is historically *w* or *y* are characterized by the loss of the final root consonant in nearly all forms of all stems. Sample forms are:

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
G strong	*rəkūb*	*yərūkəb*	*yərkēb*
III-w/y	*bəkū* (or *bəkō*)	*yəbayk*	*yəbkḗ*
D/L strong	*arōkəb*	*yarákbən*	*yarōkəb*
III-w/y	*aḵōfi*	*yaḵafyən*	*yaḵōfi*
H strong	*hərkūb*	*yəhərkūb*	*yəhárkəb*
III-w/y	*həbkū* (or *həbkō*)	*yəhəbayk*	*yəhībək*
Š1 strong	*šəkbūr*	*yəšəkbūr*	*yəšákbər*
III-w/y	*šəbdū* (or *šəbdō*)	*yəšbayd*	*yəšībəd*
T1 strong	*nátfəz*	*yəntəfūz*	*yəntīfəz*
III-w/y	*ġatri*	*yəġ(ə)tūri*	*yəġ(ə)tayr*

There is a second type of III-y verb in the G-Stem, that has the shape *CīCi* in the perfect. Only two are attested in the texts and they have different imperfect patterns:

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
III-y (Gb)	*śīni*	*yəśūni*	*yəśnḗ*
III-y (Gb)	*rayźi*	*yərayź*	*yərźḗ*

III-y verbs like *śīni* and *rayźi* are Gb-Stems, as their perfect forms suggest. The fact that their imperfect and subjunctive forms are distinct is not problematic, since this is the case also for some other Gb-Stems of weak roots. The imperfect and subjunctive forms of *śīni* look similar to those of III-ꜥ verbs, while those of *rayźi* look like most other III-w/y verbs.

In the G- and D/L-Stem active participle, all III-w/y verbs have *y* as their third root consonant, e.g., G *ḳəryōna* 'will hide (ms)' and *śənyōna* 'will see (ms)' (cf. strong *rəkbōna*), and D/L *məwṣəyēta* 'will advise (fs)' (cf. strong *markəbēta*).

7.2.10. Geminate Verbs

Geminate verbs, i.e., verbs whose second and third root consonants are identical, have a unique conjugation in all stems. In the G-Stem, there is only one geminate conjugation, without the distinction between Ga- and Gb-Stems found with strong verbs. It is characterized by a monosyllabic 3ms perfect of the pattern $CəC$. Like II-w and II-y verbs (§7.2.7), the imperfect and subjunctive are distinguished by the vowel alternation $ū \sim ē$.

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
Ga strong	*rəkūb*	*yərūkəb*	*yərkēb*
geminate	*rəd*	*yərdūd*	*yərdēd*
II-w/y	*səyūr*	*yəsyūr*	*yəsyēr*

In the D/L-Stem, geminate verbs have the base *(a)CCīC* (var. *(a)CCēC*), again patterning with II-w and II-y verbs (§7.2.7).

	3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
D/L strong	*arōkəb*	*yarákbən*	*yarōkəb*
geminate	*abdīd*	*yabdīdən*	*yabdīd*
II-y	*aṣyīḥ*	*yaṣyīḥən*	*yaṣyīḥ*

In the H- and Š1-Stems, geminate verbs behave as strong verbs in any form in which the two identical root consonants are separated by a long vowel. So, for example:

	3ms perf.	3mp perf.	3ms imperf.	3mp imperf.
H strong	*hərkūb*	*hərkīb*	*yəhərkūb*	*yəhərkīb*
geminate	*həglūl*	*həglīl*	*yəhəglūl*	*yəhəglīl*
Š1 strong	*šəkbūr*	*šəkbīr*	*yəšəkbūr*	*yəšəkbīr*
geminate	*šərdūd*	*šərdīd*	*yəšərdūd*	*yəšərdīd*

But in the perfect, H- and Š1-Stem geminates are subject to the change $C_2əC_2V > C_2C_2əV$. So from the verb *tmūm*, we have 3fs perfect *təmmūt* < **tməmūt* (cf. strong *ṯbətūt*), but regular 2ms perfect *tməmk*, since this form does not contain the sequence $C_2əC_2V$. In the H- and Š1-Stem imperfect and subjunctive, the sequence $C_1C_2əC_2$ becomes $C_1C_1əC_2$,

turning the initial root letter into the geminated consonant. In practice, this affects all forms of the subjunctive, but only the dual of the imperfect. Compare:

	3md imperf.	3ms subj.	3mp subjunct.
H strong	*yəhərkəbō*	*yəhárkəb*	*yəhárkəbəm*
geminate	*yəhəggəlō*	*yəhággəl*	*yəhággələm*
geminate	*yəhəttəmō*	*yəháttəm*	*yəháttəməm*
Š1 strong	*yəšəkbərō*	*yəšákbər*	*yəšákbərəm*
geminate	*yəšərrədō*	*yəšárrəd*	*yəšárrədəm*

In the T1-Stem, we find the same shift of $C_1C_2əC_2$ to $C_1C_1əC_2$, e.g., 3ms perfect *ḳattəl* 'it spilled' < **ḳatləl* (cf. strong *nátfəz*). The imperfect of T1 geminates seem to behave as strong verbs, e.g., *yəḳtəlūl* (cf. *yəntəfūz*). There is not enough data to make conclusive statements about the subjunctive, but it seems to be unique, e.g., *yəḳtəl* (cf. *yəntífəz*).

There are only a few T2-Stem geminates and the data are inconclusive. It seems that geminates behave as strong verbs in the perfect. With some verbs, the long *ū* between the identical root consonants becomes *aw*, as in *əśtəlawl* 'wander aimlessly' (cf. strong *əftəkūr*), but this may only happen with geminate liquids (see §2.2.3).[30] In the imperfect, it seems all geminate T2-Stems (the few that there are) have *aw* in place of expected *ī*, e.g., *yəśtəlawlən* (cf. strong *yəftəkīrən*), but more data are needed to confirm this. The T2-Stem *wəddawd* is irregular, as noted in §6.5.3. No Š2-Stem geminate verbs are attested.

7.2.11. Weak-f Verbs

There is a set of verbs that have the unusual shapes *CəCC* in the G-Stem perfect and *yəCəCC* in the imperfect. Their subjunctives have the shape *yəCCēC*, like strong verbs. This set includes:

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[30] As noted already in §2.2.3, n. 13, there is some inconsistency in the *ML* on this issue, since from the root *frr*, it lists in one place the form *əftərūr* (p. lv), and in another, *əftərawr* (p. 97).

3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
fəsḥ	*yəfəsḥ*	*yəfsēḥ*
fəsx	*yəfəsx*	*yəfsēx*
fətḥ[31]	*yəfətḥ*[32]	*yəftēḥ*
nəfh	*yənəfh*	*yənfēh*
nəfḥ	*yənəfḥ*	*yənfēḥ*
nəfx	*yənəfx*	*yənfēx*
nətx	*yənətx*	*yəntēx*
nəṯk	*(yənṯōk)*	*(yənṯōk)*
(fətūk)	*yəfətk*	*yəftēk*
(rəfūs)	*yərəfs*	*yərfēs*

The last three verbs in this list are only a partial fit with the previous seven.[33] The verb *nəṯk* 'bite' has an unusual perfect, but its imperfect and subjunctive (*yənṯōk*) look like a normal Gb-Stem. The verbs *fətūk* and *rəfūs* have strong Ga-Stem perfects, but their imperfects belong to this special class.

There are also several D/L-Stem verbs that are of this type, which have unusual forms in the perfect and the subjunctive, but strong imperfects. These include:

3ms perfect	3ms imperfect	3ms subjunct.
fask	*yəfaskən*	*yəfask*
fasx	*yəfasxən*	*yəfasx*
fatš	*yəfatšən*	*yəfatš*
anafḥ	*yanafḥən*	*yanafḥ*
anafx	*yanafxən*	*yanafx*

Occasional forms from other stems also belong here. For example, the 3fs imperfect of the Š1-Stem verb *šəftēḥ* is *təšəfatḥ* (cf. strong *təšəkbūr*), and 3ms subjunctive of the Š1-Stem verb *šəwkūf* 'sleep' (root *wkf*) is *yəšakf* (cf. *yəšawgəś*, root *wgś*).

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[31] G *fūtəḥ* also occurs; see §2.2.2.

[32] The form *yəftətḥ*, given in the *ML* (p. 106) is obviously a typographical error.

[33] Mention should also be made of the form *nəġm* 'be angry' (imperfect *yənġōm*), which appears in the *ML* (p. 288). This is clearly a mistake for *nəġām*. The correct form *nəġām* appears in the English-Mehri index (p. 484), and in Johnstone's texts (89:31).

The common element in almost all of these verbs is the presence of *f* as a root consonant. The two exceptions are *nətx* and *nəṭk* (the latter of which has a strong imperfect). It is unclear why *f* should prove to be a weak root letter. More importantly, the sound changes that have created this small class of verbs are undetermined. To complicate matters, there are many verbs having a root consonant *f* that do not fall into this class, e.g., *fəhēm* 'understand', *fīṭən* 'remember', *fīrəḥ* 'be happy', *fəźāḥ* 'be embarrassed', *nūfəġ* 'throw', and *nəgūf* 'throw away'. This is an area in which more research needs to be done.

7.2.12. Doubly and Triply Weak Verbs

A significant percentage of Mehri verbs have more than one weak root letter. Here, representative forms of only some of the many possible combinations will be presented.

	Stem	3ms perf.	3ms imperf.	3ms subjunct.
gemin., I-ʾ	G	ʾəś	yāśōś	yāśēś
gemin., II-Glott.	G	ṣək	yəṣkawḳ	yəṣkāḳ
II-w, III-y	G	təwū	yətayw	yətē[34]
I-Glott., II-w	G	ṣōr	yəṣawr	yəṣār
I-Glott., III-ʿ	G	ḳawla	yəḳawla	yəḳlē
I-Glott., III-ʿ	Gb	ðayma	yəðōma	yəðmē
I-l, III-Gutt.	G	lūtəġ	yəlūtəġ	yəwtēġ
II-w, III-ʿ	G	gawya	yəgayw	yəgyē
I-w, II-Glott., III-ʿ	G	wīḳa	yəwōḳa	yāḳā
I-ʿ, II-w/y	D/L	ʾāyēṭ	yāyēṭən	yāyēṭ
I-ʾ, III-w/y	H	hānō	yəhayn	yəhēn
I-Glott., II-w	Š1	šəwṣawb	yəšəwṣawb	yəšawṣəb

Most of the time, forms of verbs with multiple weak root letters are predictable, since the rules for the different weak types simply combine. Sometimes, however, combinations of weak letters result in unexpected conjugations. For example, as noted in §7.2.1, verbs whose

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[34] This subjunctive form should probably be considered anomalous, since other II-w, III-y verbs seem to preserve the *w* here, e.g., 3ms subjunctive *yəḥwē*, from *ḥəwū* 'crawl'.

first root letter is ʿ usually exhibit an initial ʾō- in the D/L-Stem (e.g., ʾōzər 'annoy'), but when the second (or possibly also the third) root letter is *w* or *y*, they exhibit instead an initial ʾā- (e.g., ʾāyēṭ 'cry out').

7.2.13. Anomalous Verbs

A number of verbs can only be called anomalous, as they exhibit irregularities that make their conjugation unique and unpredictable. One anomalous verb is *təḳ* 'drink', some of whose forms are:[35]

3ms perf.	3fs perf.	3mp perf.	3ms imperf.	3ms subjnct.
təḳ	təḳyēt	təḳəm	yəttəḳən	yəttəḳ

This verb is historically from the root *hḳy* (cf. G *həḳū* 'irrigate; give a drink' and H *hḳū* 'give water to'). It is hard to place *təḳ* into a verbal stem, though the doubled *t* of the imperfect and subjunctive, and the final *-ən* throughout the imperfect might suggest a T2-Stem. The final *-ēt* of the 3fs perfect, however, is characteristic only of G passives, D-Stems, Š2-Stems, and Q-Stems. This verb is simply anomalous.

   Also anomalous is the pair *fūḳ* 'give in marriage', *šəfūḳ* 'get married' (used with a female subject only), whose root is uncertain. The verb *fūḳ* is an H-Stem, but its conjugation is unusual. If the root were *hfḳ*, the perfect *fūḳ* and its imperfect *yəfūḳ* could be explained as being from **hfūḳ* and **yəhfūḳ* (cf. *flūt*, *yəflūt*), with irregular loss of the initial root consonant *h*. If the root were *fwḳ*, then these forms could be explained as from **fwūḳ* and **yəfwūḳ* (cf. *ḥwūl*, *yəḥwūl*), with reduction of *wū* to *ū*. The subjunctive form *yəhaffəḳ* looks as if it were from a geminate root *fḳḳ*. The verb *šəfūḳ* seems in the perfect as if it is a G-Stem of a root *šfḳ*, but its other forms (e.g., fs active participle *məšfəḳāta*) make it clear that this is an Š1-Stem. It would seem to be derived directly from the H-Stem *fūḳ* by analogy with other stems with an initial voiceless consonants, e.g., *ḥwūb* ~ *šəḥwūb*.

   As noted in §6.5.3, several T2-Stem verbs are anomalous due to the irregular assimilation of consonants, including *əttūma* 'listen' (< **əhtūma*), *ḥəððūr* (for expected **əḥtəðūr*), and *wəddawd* (for expected **əwtədūd*).

   On the anomalous verb *śawḳ*, see §6.3.1, n. 7, and on the seemingly anomalous *həwṣawb* and *šəwṣawb*, see §7.2.7.

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[35] A complete conjugation can be found in the *ML* (pp. liii-liv).

It is unclear whether or not to call certain verbs anomalous. For example, the G-Stem of the root *ẓbṭ* has a 3ms perfect *ẓāṭ* 'he took', and 3ms imperfect subjunctive *yəẓōṭ*, neither of which is predictable. However, in synchronic terms, it seems (based on the limited data in Johnstone's texts) that the verb *ẓāṭ* simply behaves like any II-ʿ verb, and the fact that its root is *ẓbṭ* is just a historical curiosity. Another example is the verb *śītəm* 'buy'. As already noted above (§7.2.6), this verb is historically a T-Stem of the root *śʾm* (cf. G *śōm* 'sell'), but it conjugates as if it were a regular Gb-Stem from the root *śtm* (cf. the ms active participle *śətmōna*). Both of these verbs are anomalous only if we consider their historical root.

Another anomalous verb is *ḥōm*, which will be discussed separately in the following section.

7.3. The Irregular Verb *ḥōm* 'want'

The verb *ḥōm* 'want' is extremely common, appearing approximately 350 times in Johnstone's texts.[36] The verb conjugates like an imperfect (with both past and present meanings), though it can also be used where context requires a perfect, e.g., after a conditional particle (§13.4) or a temporal conjunction (§13.5.3). Its conjugation is irregular; in addition to containing unexpected vowel patterns, it lacks a prefix in the 1cs and 1cd forms. Its forms are as follows:

	sing.	dual	plural
1c	*ḥōm*	*ḥəmō*	*nəḥōm*
2m	*təḥōm*	*(təḥəmō)*	*təḥaym*
2f	*təḥaymi*		*(təḥōmən)*
3m	*yəḥōm*	*(yəḥəmō)*	*yəḥaym*
3f	*təḥōm*	*(təḥəmō)*	*təḥōmən*

On the use of *ḥōm* in a context which requires a subjunctive, see §7.1.9.

There are several uses of this verb, and previous works on Mehri have been deficient, or even misleading, regarding these uses. The basic and most common meaning of the verb is 'want', followed by a

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[36] An abridged version of this section and its sub-sections, with additional comparative linguistic discussion, can be found in Rubin (2009b).

direct object or by a dependent verb. Some examples with a direct object are:

> ḥōm əttēṯi 'I want my wife' (37:23)
> hēśən təḥōm … ḥōm ḳawzərəti ṯrayt 'what do you want? … I want two date-baskets' (98:4)
> ḥōm moh 'I want water' (99:28)
> əl ḥamsən lā 'I don't want them' (89:27)
> hədəllay b-wōrəm ṯayt ð-əl sē ḥōrəm ðə-ḥams lā 'he showed me a way that wasn't the way that I wanted' (62:3)

A following dependent verb appears in the subjunctive, as in:

> ḥōm əl-ḥᵉrəs 'I want to get married' (8:8)
> təḥōm tāzəmən ḥəbrēk 'do you want to give us your son?' (2:3)
> təḥaymi təšəffəḳay 'do you want to marry me?' (24:17)
> əl ḥōm əl-ḥētəm lā 'I don't want to stay the night' (31:4)
> yəḥōm yəṭāf layš 'he wants to visit you' (38:16)
> nəḥōm nəsōfər 'we wanted to take a trip' (91:1)
> ḥōm l-əhaḥrəḳ b-ʾāmēləḳ 'I want to set fire to your farm' (91:11)

In all of the above examples, the subject of *ḥōm* is the same as that of the following verb. But in Mehri, as in English, the verb *ḥōm* can be followed by a nominal or pronominal direct object, which in turn can be the subject of a following verb. Consider the following examples:

> təḥaymhəm yāśēśəm 'do you want them to rise up?' (4:15)
> ḥamk təśnē tēṯi 'I want you to see my wife' (22:41)
> təḥaymən lə-ḥõ nhaxləf 'to where do you want us to move?' (29:8)
> ḥaybhəm yəḥamhəm yāḳām sədəḳā 'their father wanted them to become friends' (50:1)
> nəḥamkəm təfṣālən mənwīn 'we want you to arbitrate between us' (77:9)
> ḥōm aġayti tśəlēli 'I want my sister to carry me' (89:14)
> hēśən təḥami l-ʾāmōl 'what do you want me to do?' (90:14)

If this kind of *ḥōm* construction occurs in the protasis of a conditional sentence, and the dependent verb should be repeated in the apodosis, the verb is used only once, in the subjunctive. Examples of this are:

hām təḥamən, nəślēl 'if you want us to (move), we'll move' (30:3)

hām ʾār təḥamki, l-āmərō 'if you want us to (sing), we'll both sing'
   (52:6)

7.3.1. Independent *ḥōm* 'want, will'

Used independently, without any object or dependent verb, *ḥōm* (in
any form) is the equivalent of 'I want to', 'I will', 'I do', or 'I am willing'.
This use (especially when the form is a first person) often comes in
response to a question or statement containing *ḥōm*. Examples are:

ʾāmawr həh aġəyōg: "təḥōm təśōm līn əskayn ðōməh?" ʾāmōr hīhəm:
   "ḥōm lā" 'the men said to him: Do you want to sell us this knife?
   He said to them: I don't want to' (4:10)

təḥaymi hō əl-ṭāf? wa-ya-ḥōl, nəḥōm 'do you want *me* to scout?
   Indeed, we do' (29:13-14)

hām ʾār fəḳawk, hō ḥōm 'if he lets you marry (me), I am willing'
   (38:19)

hām əl təḥaymi lā, sīrīta təwōli aḳaṣṣāb wə-yəsḥaṭəš 'if you won't, I
   will go to the butcher and he will slaughter you' (49:3)

kə-sōbəḥ tərdaydi hām təḥaymi 'come back in the morning if you
   want' (54:16)

hām təḥaym təsyērəm təwōli aṭəmaʾ … nəḥōm 'if you want to go to
   the treasure … we want to' (88:2-3)

ʾāmōrən h-anōxəðēh: "śōm līn ḳawt" ʾāmōr: "ḥōm lā" 'we said to the
   captain: Sell us some food! He said: I won't' (91:14)

7.3.2. Cohortative *ḥōm*

The first person forms *ḥōm*, *ḥəmō*, and *nəḥōm* can have a cohortative
meaning 'let's' or 'we should', though these are often mistranslated in
Stroomer's edition of Johnstone's texts. A dependent verb, most
always also first person, is subjunctive, as expected. 1cp cohortatives
are by far the most common:

nəḥōm nəhaxləf mən amkōn ðōməh 'we should move away from
   this place' (10:12)

ənḥōm nəkfēl adəkkōn 'we should close up the shop' (22:7)

nəḥōm nərṣān ṭāṭīdayən 'let's tie each other up' (24:25)

nəḥōm nəghōm 'we should go' (94:2)

nəḥōm nədfēn aməlawtəġ 'we should bury those killed' (64:26)

nəḥōm nəktīləṯ 'let's chat' (74:14)

Only a few dual cohortatives are attested:

> *ḥəmō l-əsīrō arḥəbēt əl-fəlāniyyəh* 'let's go to such and such a town' (66:2)
> *ḥəmō l-əsīrō bəl-xəfēʾ* 'we (both) should go in disguise' (66:3)
> *ḥəmō l-əfəwtē tē ḏ̣ār aḳōn ḏēk w-əl-šəḥəgyē ḥəlakməh* 'we should flee to that high spur and stand firm there' (83:2)

A handful of 1cs cohortatives are attested, though all but one of them are mistranslated as 'will' or 'would like' in Stroomer's edition:

> *ḥōm əl-šawgəś* 'I should go' (38:18)
> *ḥōm əl-sōfər* 'I should go' (74:12)
> *ðōməh aġəggēn wəḳōna axayr mənay mət ʾāḳawr, wa-ḥōm l-əwtəġəh* 'this boy will be better than me when he grows up, so I should kill him' (76:12)
> *ḥōm l-əsyēr ḏ̣ār ḥəmōh* 'I ought to go to the water' (94:19)
> *ḥōm, mət ḥābū šəwgīś, əl-nəkēś l-ʾāgawz ðə-mətūt* 'I should, when the people have gone home, dig up the old woman that died' (65:3)

This last example (65:3) is a nice illustration of how *ḥōm* (cohortative or not) is allowed to be separated from the dependent verb by another clause.[37]

In a few cases, the 1cp cohortative is followed by a third person verb. Two examples are:

> *nəḥōm ṭāṭ yāḳā ḥaywəl wa-ṭroh yəmnēm təh* 'we should one (of us) act crazy and two (of us) restrain him' (91:6)
> *nəḥōm aġāk yəhērəs bīs* 'we should have your brother marry her' (97:44)

And in one case, a dependent verb is merely implied:

> *nəḥōm əwṭōməh* 'let's (do) like that' (29:11) (Stroomer: 'we will have it that way')

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[37] A non-cohortative example occurs in 45:11: *təḥami hām kəsk sakənək l-ʾāmēr hībō* 'if I find your settlement, what do you want me to say (to them)?'

7.3.3. Motion Verb ḥōm

The verb ḥōm can also be used as a sort of pseudo-motion verb, best translated as 'be heading to'. In this meaning, it is most often preceded by a verb of motion (usually səyūr 'go', gəhēm 'go', or sōfər 'travel'). Sometimes it is followed by a preposition (h- or təwōli), other times by a direct object, with no difference in meaning. The form of ḥōm is often separated from the motion verb by an adverbial phrase (or phrases). Consider the following examples:

> sáfrək mən dəbayy fənəmšē … ḥōm hə-Landən 'I traveled from Dubai the day before last … heading to London' (18:1)
>
> səyərki hō wə-sədayḳi bərk arayəl ənxāli aḳāʾ nəḥōm təwōli amkōni 'a friend and I went in the Underground, heading to my place' (18:8)
>
> sīrō aġayg wə-ḥabrēh, yəḥaym h-abayt 'the man and his son went off, heading for home' (22:9)
>
> gəhəmk mən śəḥayr ḥōm ṣəlōt 'I came from the mountains, heading for Selot' (38:2)
>
> ð-əġhōm ḥōm təwōli sɛ́kəni 'I was going towards my community' (54:4)
>
> gəhēm yəḥōm arḥabēt 'he went off towards town' (65:4)
>
> safrəm mən aḳāhəm yəḥaym hə-ḳā ṭāṭ 'they travelled from their country, headed for a certain place' (74:1)
>
> kə-sōbəḥ gəhmō, yəḥəmō təwōli ḥaskɛ́nihəm 'in the morning they set out, headed for their communities' (76:13)
>
> fətōk ḥabrē ðə-ḥōkəm yəḥōm aməsgīd 'the ruler's son went out, headed for the mosque' (85:17)

This use of ḥōm is probably an extension of its use in the following type of sentence, where ḥōm is preceded by a verb of motion *and* followed by a dependent verb:

> aġayg gəhēm yəḥōm yəkfēd arḥabēt 'a man set out, intending to go down to the town' (98:1)
>
> sīrūt ṯəbərayn təḥōm təmśɛ́ 'the hyena went off, wanting to go to defecate' (99:12)
>
> aġayg sōfər bərk mərkēb yəḥōm yəbtōźa mən rəḥabēt ṭayt 'a man travelled on a ship, intending to make purchases from a certain town' (103:1)

And the use of *ḥōm* to mean 'be heading to' following a verb of motion has led to its independent use with this meaning (i.e., without a preceding motion verb). In the half dozen or so attested examples of *ḥōm* used independently in this way, it is always followed by a preposition. Examples are:

> *hədəlīli bə-sēkən ðə-ḥōm təwēhɛ* 'they showed me the settlement that I was heading for' (38:7)
> *hē məhray yəḥōm h-aḳā ð-amhərɛ́ˀ* 'he was a Mehri heading for the land of the Mehris' (59:1)
> *əl šay ḥātəm lā yəḥaym lə-ḥõ* 'I am not sure where they were headed' (73:1)
> *ˀāmōr hīs: "təḥaymi əl-ḥõ?" ˀāmərōt: "ḥōm təwōli aġatkɛ"* 'he said to her: where are you headed? She said: I'm headed to (visit) your sisters' (85:3)

7.3.4. Other Uses of *ḥōm*

Another use of *ḥōm* is in conjunction with the particle *bər* (see §12.5.6), together with which it has a proximative meaning 'be about to' or an avertative meaning 'nearly'. This use is found about ten times in Johnstone's texts. Some of these attestations are:

> *bəri ḥōm l-əwbads* 'I nearly shot her' (or: 'I was about to shoot her') (54:13)
> *b-xayr u bərs təḥōm təhahḳəṭ* '(the camel) is well and about to give birth' (63:15)
> *bərhəm yəḥaym yəšakfəm* 'they were about to go to sleep' (75:17)
> *kə-sōbəḥ bərəh yəḥōm yəmīt* 'in the morning, he was nearly dead' (or: 'about to die') (75:18)
> *kəsk aġayg ðə-bərəh yəḥōm yəhwē* 'I found the man about to fall down' (77:6)
> *ḳəlyīta tē bərəh yəḥōm yəsyēr* 'we will leave it until he is about to go' (91:26)

In two places in the texts, *ḥōm … aw* is best translated as 'whether … or'. This is an idiomatic use, deriving from the basic meaning 'want'. These examples are:

> *yəḥōm yəgzēm aw lā, nəḥā səḥēṭa h-axaylən* 'whether he swears or not, we will slaughter (a goat) for our uncle' (31:11)

əl ṭaym mən hənīn śəxōf yəllīləh, təḥaym təšawgəśəm aw lā 'you will
 not taste any milk with us tonight, whether you are leaving or
 not' (35:5)

In one passage *ḥōm*, followed by a direct object, has the meaning
'accept':

nəḥōm śɛrṭ ðōməh 'we accept this condition' (24:39)

PREPOSITIONS

The prepositions of Mehri are:

b- 'in, at; with; for; on'   l- 'to; for'
bād 'after'   mən 'from'
bərk 'in(to), inside; among'   (ʾəm)-mən 'between'
ðār 'on; about'   mən ðār 'after'
fənōhən 'before; in front of; ago'   mən ġayr 'without'
ġayr 'except'   nəxāli 'under'
h- 'to; for'   səbēb 'because of'
hāl 'at, by, beside'   sār 'behind'
hīs 'like, as'   tɛ̄ 'until, up to'
k- 'with'   təwōli 'to, towards'

There are also two particles that cannot strictly be called prepositions, but that either behave as such or are translated as such. Therefore, I include them in this chapter. These are:

ʾār 'except, but'   xā(-hē) 'like, as … as'

Prepositions are of two types. The first type, those consisting of a single consonant, are prefixed to the noun. There are only four of these: b-, h-, k-, and l-. When a noun begins with a consonant, these prepositions are usually (but by no means always) transcribed (and pronounced) with the helping vowel ə.

k-abḳar 'with the cattle' (15:5)   kə-ḥarawn 'with the goats' (14A:5)
b-ḥōrəm 'on the road' (23:17)   bə-ḥōrəm 'on the road' (3:1)
h-arḥəbēt 'to the town' (22:37)   hə-Landən 'to London' (18:1)

The second type, which includes all other prepositions, are treated as separate words. Each of the prepositions listed above will be treated in turn below. Additional (and rare) compound prepositions will be treated together in §8.21, while discussion of the combination of prepositions with pronominal suffixes can be found in §8.22.

8.1. ʾār 'except, but'

The particle *ʾār* appears frequently in the texts and with a variety of meanings (see §12.5.4). Very often it functions as a preposition meaning 'except' or 'but', or at least it is best translated as such in English. Examples are:

> *ʾəl šay hīkəm məsḥəṭawt lā ʾār tēṭi* 'I don't have anything to slaughter for you except my wife' (4:4)
>
> *l-ād ʾəḥād yātəḳaydən bīhəm lā, ʾār hīxār ðə-mən zəbōn ḥāwəlay* 'no one believes in them anymore, except old people from olden times' (25:19)
>
> *ʾādi əl ʾōmər lā ʾār yəmšī* 'I have never sung except yesterday' (52:15)
>
> *wə-l-ʾəḥād yəsūkən bəh lā ʾār aḳēyōy* 'and nobody lived in it but demons' (76:11)
>
> *hām ṭərū ḥəroh, əl yəhəḳōśa ʾār hənīn* 'if he has a wet head, let him not dry it except with us!' (96:5)
>
> *ḥāməy əl səwmēt ʾəḥād əlā ʾār hō wə-ġəgənōt* 'my mother didn't keep any children except me and a girl' (34:1)
>
> *ʾəl šīs wəlēd ʾār hē* 'she had no children but him' (36:3)
>
> *ʾādəh l-ʾəḥād yōmər hayni əhəsawləḥ lā ʾār hēt* 'nobody has ever told me I was good (at it) but you' (52:17)

In the fourth-to-last example above (96:5), *ʾār* is followed by another preposition (*hənīn*), and in the last three examples, it is followed by an independent pronoun, rather than an object pronoun. These cases make it clear that *ʾār* is not functioning grammatically as a true preposition. One of the basic meanings of *ʾār* is 'only', and it is from this meaning that the "prepositional" usage derives (see §12.5.4). In all but two (29:5; 102:19) of the twenty-eight occurrences of *ʾār* with the sense 'except', the context is a negative phrase. On the other hand, *ġayr* 'except' occurs only in positive phrases (see §8.7).

8.2. b- 'in, at; with; for; on'

The preposition *b-* has a variety of functions. It can indicate location 'in' or 'at', or instrument 'with' or 'by'. It can also mean 'with' in its comitative sense (with some verbs of motion); 'for', in the sense of 'in exchange for'; and even 'on', usually with reference to the human body. The basic meaning 'in, at' is illustrated in the following examples:

bə-wōdi kūsa həbēr 'in a valley he found the camels' (12:10)
yəsūkən b-arḥəbēt 'he was living in a country' (20:1)
hē bə-ħɛnd 'he is in India' (40:6)
h-arḥəbēt ðə-bīs tēṯ 'to the country in which the woman was' (22:37)
əwḳōna bər bīsən əśxōf 'maybe they [the camels] have milk' (29:6)

The instrumental meaning of *b-* is illustrated in the following examples:

əwbəds bə-məndawḳ 'shoot it with the rifle' (6:10)
səbūṭ bəh tēṯ ṭawri ṭroh 'he struck (his) wife with it two times' (4:9)
yəlūtəġ mēkən b-əškayəh 'he killed many with his sword' (69:7)
wṭəmēh b-ʾārəfēt 'he struck him with the palm branch' (93:5)

Its comitative meaning 'with':

səyūr b-abḳərēt 'he went with the cows' (1:12)
məḥamməd nūda b-ḥārawn 'Muhammad went out with the goats' (14A:1)
səyūr bīs 'he went off with her' (48:16)
nəḥōm nəsōfər bəh 'we want to travel with him' (91:8)

The meaning 'for, in exchange for':

āmōl xōtəm bə-ʾalf dīnār 'have a ring made for a thousand dinars' (22:47)
wəzmōna tīk jənbəyyət bə-məndawḳək 'I will give you a dagger for your rifle' (34:11)
nḥā ḳaźyə́ya tīk bə-ḥāmēk 'we will compensate you for (the loss of) your mother' (65:14)
bə-kəm śāmōna tīs 'how much will you sell (it) for?' (99:50)

And finally, the meaning 'on' (see further on this use in §13.3.2):

bəh śəf mēkən 'he had a lot of hair' (lit. 'on him (was) a lot of hair') (9:8)
ðōməh əl bəh fēḥəl lā 'this (man) has no penis' (lit. 'on him (there is) no penis') (24:36)
śəllōt gōdēl ðə-bəh śíwōṭ 'she took a burning stick' (lit. 'a stick on which (was) fire') (36:8)

The preposition *b-* is also used in conjunction with a surprisingly large number of verbs, and it is probably this use of *b-* which is encountered most often. Such verbs are:

ʾaygəb b- 'love, be in love with' (vs. *ʾaygəb mən* 'be delighted with')

ʾātəḳawd b- 'believe in'

ʾayləḵ b- 'run short for/of'

ʾayməl b- 'do to s.o.'

hāmōn b- 'trust s.o.'

hāmōr b- 'give an order for s.t.' (vs. *hāmōr l-* 'order s.o.')

hārōs b- 'marry' (vs. *hārōs hāl* 'marry into s.o.'s family')

ʾāṣawb b- 'tie to s.t.' (*b-*: thing tied to; d.o: thing tied)

ʾāṭawf b- 'take away (animals); make panic (animals)'

ʾāwēð b- 'warn s.o.'

ʾāwēg b- 'delay s.o.'

ʾāzōm b- 'invite for' (*b-*: thing invited for; d.o.: s.o.)

ʾōzər b- 'annoy'

bədō b- 'lie to' (vs. *bədō l-* 'tell a lie about s.o.')

bəhēr b- 'ask s.o. for help'

abōrək b- 'bless'

həbśūr b- 'look forward to'

šōda b- 'curse, insult s.o.'

dəl b- 'guide, lead s.o.'

hədlūl b- 'show' (*b-*: thing shown; d.o. or *l-*: to s.o.)

šədarbəš b- 'call (a camel) by a sound'

ðəbūr b- 'nag; apologize to s.o.'

fāl b- 'hurt s.o.'

əftəkūr b- 'think about'

frā b- 'begin s.t.'

frūd b- 'frighten (animals)'

frūḵ b- 'frighten'

fīrəḥ b- 'be happy with'

həfsēḥ b- 'stop doing s.t.'

šəgēməl b- 'take all of s.t.'

ġəlūḵ b- 'look at' (vs. *ġəlōḵ mən* 'look for')

aġwīr b- 'distract, keep s.o. occupied'

hūma b- 'hear about' (vs. *hūma* 'hear s.t.')

həwū b- 'throw down'

həd b- 'pull up, pull at'

ḥrūḵ b- 'burn s.o. or s.t.'

ḥəððūr b- 'look out for [=on behalf of], guard' (vs. *ḥəððūr mən* 'look out for, guard against')

ḥəs b- 'be conscious of' (vs. *ḥəs* 'feel')

ḥyīl b- 'trick'

kəlūṯ b- 'tell s.t.' (*l-*: to s.o.)

katləṭ b- 'talk to one another about, chat about' (reciprocal)

kəś b- 'expose oneself to s.o.'

kawr b- 'roll down (usually stones)' (*l-* 'to')

kəz b- 'shoot s.o. at close range'

əḵtəlūb b- 'be worried about'

aḵāləd b- 'roll s.t.'

aḵōṣər b- 'fall short in generosity with s.o.'

lībəs b- 'put on' (vs. *lībəs* 'wear')

ləġāz (*əwġāz*) *b-* 'to sneak/slip s.t.' (d.o.: to s.o.)

līṭəf b- 'be kind to, look after'

šəmlūk b- 'be given legal possession of a woman in marriage'

amarḥəb b- 'greet, welcome'

amōsi b- 'kiss'

həndəx b- 'fumigate; perfume w/ incense'

šənðūr b- 'vow on'

nūfəġ b- 'throw'

hənfəx b- 'breathe on'

šənḥawr b- 'lodge a complaint against' (*ḥāl*: with)

hənḥū b- 'burn s.o. or s.t.'

nūka b- 'bring; bear (a child)' (vs. *nūka* 'come (to)')

nūka b-kəwṭēt 'tell a story'

rədō b- 'throw s.t.' (vs. *rədō l-* 'throw at')

rəṣawn b- 'tie to/with'

ərtəwūg b- 'plot against'

rayźi b- 'agree with s.t.'

sūməḥ b- 'allow s.t.' (vs. *sūməḥ l-* 'allow s.o., give permission to; forgive')

śūbəh b- 'suspect s.o.' (vs. *śūbəh l-* 'look like')

śūna b- 'be unkind to s.o., humiliate s.o.'

śawk b- 'light s.t. on fire, burn s.t.'

wīda b- 'know about'

wəfūd b- 'ask for the hand of s.o. in marriage' (*ḥāl*: the person asked)

šəwfū b- 'be revenged for s.o., avenge s.o.'

əxtəlūf b- 'let s.o. down'

xayli b- 'be alone with s.o.'

xəṣawb b- 'send s.t.' (*l-*: to s.o.; vs. *xəṣawb* 'send s.o.')

xōṭər b- 'endanger s.o.'

xəyūn b- 'betray s.o.'

The verb *nūka b-* 'bring' warrants further comment. It is clear that it derives from a literal meaning 'come with' (i.e., 'I came with the bread to the house' → 'I brought the bread to the house'). What is in English the direct object must be preceded by *b-* in Mehri. Conversely, the English indirect object usually corresponds to the Mehri direct object (which can be independent or suffixed), though in some examples this object is indicated by a preposition *h-*, *təwōli*, or *ḥāl*, for example:

wbaysi bə-xəlōwəḳ yədōn nakak tīk bīhəm 'put on the new clothes I have bought for you!' (24:6)

nəkēm tay bə-ʾayśē 'bring me supper!' (99:2)

nkayh bə-məṣərawf 'he brought him rations' (8:7)

nkōt həh bə-ḥəmōh 'she brought him water' (48:11)

nakam bīhəm təwɛ́lhɛ 'they brought them to him' (48:13)

nūka bīs ḥāl ḥaybɛh wə-ḥāmɛh 'he brought her to his father and mother' (48:19)

Nūka b- in the meaning of 'bear' can have either a male or female subject; if the other partner with whom the subject has a child is mentioned, the partner is preceded by *mən*. Some examples are:

   nūka məns bə-ġīgēn wə-ġəgənōt 'he got from her a boy and a girl'
     (48:1)
   ənkōt mənəh b-ġīggēn 'she had a boy by him' (75:25)

One occasionally also finds *b-* with other verbs that are not reg-
ularly followed by this preposition, for example, *kəfud* 'go down'
(with *wōdi* 'valley', e.g., 63:2), *śatūk* 'long for' (14:6; elsewhere *l-*),
śəl 'carry s.t.' (e.g., 22:85; usually with d.o.), *tūba* 'follow' (with *śaf/
əśfūtən* 'tracks', e.g., 32:8), and *həwṣawf* 'describe s.t.' (only 96:5; else-
where d.o.). There are a couple of places where *b-* seems to follow
an unexpected verb, but is in fact a typographical error (e.g., 42:37
and 89:22; see Appendix). Also note the verbal idiom *ṭawla aṣəfōt
b-* 'carry report of s.o.' (74:5).

The preposition *b-* is also found in a number of non-verbal idiom-
atic phrases. Such are:

b-abar(r) 'ashore' (lit. 'upon
   land')
b-abarr 'outside'
b-akā 'on the ground'
b-aʾamk 'halfway'
b-aġərbēt 'abroad'
b-arāyək (pl. *b-arāykəm*) 'as
   you wish'
b-gəzayrət 'on an island'
bə-həgdēka 'on your feet'
b-ḥak 'justly'
bə-ḥəllay 'at night'
bə-ḥənafk 'by yourself'
b-hərōhək 'under your
   protection'
bə-ḥōrəm 'on the road'

bə-ḥayk 'on the shore'
bə-nhōr 'per day' (*ṭawri ṭroh
   bə-nhōr* 'twice per day')
bə-raxəṣ 'cheaply'
bə-śawr 'in consultation'
b-X śxōf 'X has milk' (humans
   or animals) (see §13.3.2)
b-xōṭər 'down there,
   downstairs'
bə-xayr 'well'
dawn- b- 'take!' (see §12.5.7)
(wīka) hal-halla b- 'be careful
   with'
ya ḥay b- 'welcome!' (followed
   by a noun or pronominal
   suffix)

Also note the idiomatic expressions *bay ḥassi* 'I am conscious' (40:26)
and *būk ḥēśən* 'what's (the matter) with you?' (48:5) (see §13.3.2). As
with verbs, there are also cases in which *b-* appears unexpectedly, e.g.,
bə-zōyəd 'anymore' (20:12).[1] In 24:8 we find the bizarre phrase *əl hēt*

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   [1] Or perhaps the preposition *bə-* here is connected with the preceding verb,
əkawdər, and the phrase *l-ād əkawdər bə-zōyəd* should be translated 'I cannot handle
more' instead of 'I cannot anymore'. Even if so, *bə-* is nowhere else used with the verb
kədūr 'be able'.

bə-ġəgənōt əlā 'you are not a girl' (24:8), where *b-*, if correct, would possibly mean 'like'. However, this is very likely a typographical error, as supported by the audio, which has *hēt əl hēt ġəgənōt əlā*.

8.3. *bād* 'after'

The preposition *bād*, also found in the compound form *mən bād*, means 'after'. Both *bād* and *mən bād* are quite rare, however, and 'after' is normally expressed by *mən ð̣ār* (see §8.5). Following are all of the examples found in the texts:

hē šəwēd sɛ́kənəh yənkēhəm bād nəhōri ṯrayt 'he promised his community he would come back to them after two days' (32:5)
agarbəm ṭāṭ bād ṭāṭ 'they tried one after the other' (50:3)
u bādīs səddəm 'and after that they made an agreement' (104:31)
wə-hēt ham matk, l-ād ʾəḥād yaʾīśən tay lā mən bādūk 'if you die, no one will keep me alive after you (are gone)' (36:4)
səyūr šəwkūf wə-sē śxəwəllūt bādēh 'he went to sleep, and she stayed after him (after he had left)' (48:26)
w-aḳayźər, mən bādīhəm, gərō ləh bəkōr ḥalakəməh 'and (as for) the leopard, after they (had left), some young camels passed by him' (99:4)
hō səddōna bādīkən ḥārawn 'I will take care of the goats after you (are gone)' (99:37)

Note that in the final four examples above, (*mən*) *bād* has the specific meaning 'after s.o. is gone'. (The preposition *sār* can also be used in this way; see below, §8.17.) *Bād* is found also in the idiom *bād gēhəməh* 'day after tomorrow', for example:

sīr gēhəməh wə-rdēd bād gēhəməh 'go tomorrow and come back the day after tomorrow' (56:2)

8.4. *bərk* 'in(to), inside; among'

The preposition *bərk* is mainly used to indicate location inside or motion into. Examples from the texts are:

ta kūsa fōḳa bərk dəḥlēl, əwkūb bərk adəḥlēl 'when he found a pool of water in a cave, he went into the cave' (3:2)

həwgūś bərk wōdi nōb 'he took (them) into a big valley' (13:6)
aṣōyəġ bərk adəkkōnəh 'the goldsmith (was) in his shop' (22:68)
sē bərk aġərfēt ðayk 'she is in that room' (22:97)
mōn yəsūkən bərk abayt ðīməh 'who lives in this house?' (38:11)
əl hō sīrōna lā bərk aməwsē ðīməh 'I am not going in this rain' (49:5)
əwbūd bərk ḥəmoh 'he shot into the water' (95:4)

By extension of its basic meaning 'inside', *bərk* can also be used to mean 'among', as in:

bərk ḥārawn 'among the goats' (3:7)
bərk həbēr 'among the camels' (28:9)
šḳəryō bərk hərōm 'they hid among the trees' (35:17)
kərbəlē ḥambərawtən bərk abḳār 'the boys crept among the cows'
    (35:18)

We also find in the texts the compound prepositions *tē bərk* and *mən bərk*, though each is attested just once:

səyərk tē bərk rékəb 'I went onto a ledge of a cliff' (38:6)
naṭṭəbəm ʾāźawź wə-gəlē mən bərk šəts 'bones and date-stones dropped from (out of) her backside' (99:12)

The preposition *bərk* is also used in a handful of idioms, including:

bərk amġərāb 'in the evening'   *bərk šārə* 'on/to/along a street'
bərk ḥaydəh 'on his wrist'   *bərk xədmēt* 'at work, employed'
bərk raḥt 'happy' (lit. 'in hap-   *kətūb bərk* 'write on s.t.'
    piness')   (also *kətūb b-*)
bərk səyyārəh (or *mawtər*)   *xəź bərk* 'wade in(to)'
    'in/by a car'

The lone use of *bərk* in an expression of time, *bərk amġərāb* 'in the evening', is attested just once (25:9); the alternative *k-amġərāb*, also attested just once, is found in the same text (25:14).

8.5. ð̣ār 'on; about', mən ð̣ār 'after'

The preposition *ð̣ār* has the basic meaning of 'on, upon'. Before suffixes, it has the base *ð̣ayr-*. Illustrative examples are:

> *hē yəślūl tōmər ð̣ār asarfəh śayməl w-āyś ð̣ār asarfəh ḥayməl* 'it was carrying dates on its left side and rice on its right side' (23:16)
> *hərkūb aġath ð̣ār ṭayt u rēkəb ð̣ār ṭayt* 'he mounted his sister upon one (horse) and he mounted the other' (24:11)
> *śīnək tīsən ð̣ār kərmaym ð̣ayk* 'I saw them on that mountain' (28:2)
> *nəgōf ð̣ayrən ðəbbēt* 'flies came upon us' (29:4)

As in other languages, this preposition can also mean 'about', 'over', in the sense of 'concerning', though examples are very rare. One example is:

> *ġəyōg lattəġəm bawməh, w-ʾəl wadak ð̣ār hēśən lā* 'men have killed each other here, and I do not know over what!' (3:19)

One also finds the combinations *mən ð̣ār* 'from upon, off of' and, more rarely, *tē ð̣ār* (var. *tā ð̣ār*) 'up on to', for example:

> *rədīw bəh mən ð̣ār dahḳ* 'they threw him from a cliff' (20:53)
> *ḳəfūd mən ð̣ār hərōm* 'he got down from the tree' (70:3)
> *tənūgəf mən ð̣ayrəh abaṭḥ* 'she was brushing the sand off of him' (48:17)
> *sīrōni tā ð̣ār adahəḳ ðōməh* 'let us go up on to this ledge' (35:10)

In a few cases, usually in conjunction with a verb of running away (like *flūt* or *fər*), *mən ð̣ār* seems to mean 'from the presence of', for example:

> *fəlatk mən ð̣ār aġayg* 'I ran away from the man' (34:24)
> *yəṣṣək tīs m-ād təfrēr mən ð̣ayrən* 'I fear that she will run away from us' (37:10)

And in a small number of cases, *mən ð̣ār* seems to be equivalent to simple *ð̣ār*, in any of its meanings:

> *śxəwlīl mən ð̣ār aḳəhwēt* 'they sat over the coffee' (48:28)

> *gatəwsəm aġawhɛ mən ð̣ār ɛwɛrṭ* 'his brothers quarreled over the
>   inheritance' (32:11)

Far more often, however, the compound *mən ð̣ār* has the meaning
'after'. Sometimes, in expressions of time, this is better translated as
'in'. Examples are:

> *mən ð̣ār warx, mōt aġayg* 'after a month, the man died' (2:7)
> *ḥazyən tyabtən mən ð̣ār hawrət* 'our goats are weak after the
>   drought' (28:18)
> *mən ð̣ār ṭaybər ð̣ə-ḳaydōr* 'after the breaking of (his) pots' (35:23)
> *mən ð̣ār waḳt, nūka aġayg* 'after a while, the man came' (37:12)
> *tənakan mən ð̣ār warx* 'you will come to us in a month' (38:21)

Interestingly, *mən ð̣ār* is not attested with suffixes when it means
'after'. Instead, *bād* (§8.3) or *sār* (§8.17) must be used.

Simple *ð̣ār* also occurs in a few idioms, several of which involve
either water or corpses:

ð̣ār bayr 'at a well'	*ð̣ār amāray* 'in the pasture'
ð̣ār ḳōbər 'to/at a grave'	*ð̣ār (ḥə)moh* 'at/by/to (the) water'
ð̣ār məkəbrēt 'to/in a graveyard'	*ð̣ār rəḥmēt* 'at/by/to (rain-)water'
ð̣ār məlawtəġ 'to/by (lit. over)	*ð̣ār asarf ð-ḥayməl (/ ð-śayməl)*
dead bodies'	'on the right (/ left) side'

On rare occasion, the compounds *mən ð̣ār* and *tē ð̣ār* can also occur in
these idioms. Two nice examples of the idiomatic usage of *ð̣ār* can be
seen in the following passage:

> *həwrūd həbērhɛ ð̣ār moh u kūsa bū ð̣ār ḥəmoh* 'he took his camels
>   down to water and he found people at the water' (64:1)

Note also the verbal idioms *həftō ð̣ār* 'concentrate on' (e.g., 90:1) and
šəġbōr ð̣ār 'get help from, collect funds from' (e.g., 72:2).

8.6. *fənōhən* 'before; in front of; ago'

The word *fənōhən* is most often met as an adverb meaning 'before,
previously' or 'first' (see §10.3), but it is also found used as a preposi-
tion 'before', with both temporal and spatial meanings. Its spatial use

is often best translated as 'in front of' or 'ahead of'. Before suffixes, it has the base *fənw-*. Examples are:

fənōhən agzέʾ 'before sunset' (60:1)
syēri fənway 'go in front of me!' (54:17)
fənwīkəm məskōt '(just) ahead of you is Muscat' (91:14)
śīni hāləh fənwīh 'he saw his shadow in front of him' (95:5)
ʾəśśōt fənway 'she got up before me' (97:43)

As in many other languages (e.g., Arabic, Hebrew, German), the idea of '*X* ago' is literally expressed in Mehri as 'before *X*'. There are just a couple of examples in the texts:

fənōhən ʾāšrayn sənayn 'twenty years ago' (2:1)
fənōhən hōba snayn 'seven years ago' (14:1)

8.7. ġayr 'except', mən ġayr 'without'

The basic meaning of *ġayr* is 'except' or 'besides'. It occurs with this meaning only a half dozen times in Johnstone's texts, and all of these are within positive phrases. This contrasts with *ʾār* (§8.1), which nearly always occurs in a negative context. Some examples of *ġayr* are:

mōn yəḳawdər yərdads ṣəḥḥayt ġayr arḥəmōn 'who can bring her back alive except God?' (4:8)
ġarḳəm ḥābū ðə-bərkīh, ġayr aġayg w-aðānəh 'the people that were on it [the ship] drowned, except for the man and his family' (74:1)
adamməh bərəh k-ʾəḥād ġayrən 'probably he is with someone else (lit. someone besides us)' (41:4)
ðə-syūr yəxəlōf ġayrəh 'something else (lit. besides it) will take the place of that which has gone' (97:27)

 Much more common, however, is the compound preposition *mən ġayr*, which means 'without'. Examples are:

ʾəś aġəgēn śōx mən ġayr ḥas 'the bigger lad got up without a sound' (17:3)
hēśən nəḳdēr nāmōl mən ġayr abʿayrən 'what can we do without our camel?' (23:2)

ʾāṣəri ṯroh mən ġayr k̠awt 'two nights without food' (73:2)

In four places, *mən ġayr* in transcribed as *mən ġār*. In three of these passages, the audio clearly has the pronunciation *mən ġayr*, while the fourth has a variant on the audio. The four passages are:

> hām k̠alān tīsən mən ġār ʾāyd 'if we leave them without sardines' (27:16)
> ənk̠awdər nəślēl lā mən ġār abʿayrən 'we can't move without our camel' (28:12) (audio has ʾār b-abʿayrən)
> śīlaṯ yūm mən ġār k̠awt 'three days without food' (37:14)
> həwfi mən ġār ġərōy 'pay me without (any) talk' (39:15)

In one case, *mən ġayr* is printed erroneously as *mən xayr*:

> mən ġayr ṣayḫ 'without a sound' (91:18) (Stroomer: *mən xayr ṣayḫ*)

And in one case we find the compound *bə-ġār*, and the audio confirms this pronunciation:

> bə-ġār ʾəḥād 'without anyone' (13:1)

Like simple *ġayr*, the compounds *mən ġayr* (or *mən ġār*) and *bə-ġār* only (or at least usually) occur in positive phrases. The one exception is 28:12, but as noted above, the audio attests *ʾār b-* 'except with' in this negative context. It is possible that the transcription *mən ġār* is correct, and that the reader on the audio substituted *ʾār*, which is more usual in a negative context.

8.8. *h-* 'to; for'

The preposition *h-* has the basic meanings of 'to' and 'for'. It has the same general meanings as the preposition *l-*, yet in the great majority of cases the two are not interchangeable. Comparison of the two prepositions will be taken up below, in §8.12. In Johnstone's texts, the preposition *h-* is most often encountered in the texts marking the indirect object of the verb *ʾāmōr* 'say'. Multiple examples can be found in practically every text. A few are:

ʾāmərūt həh: "kəlēṯ lay" 'she said to him: Tell me!' (5:11)
gēhəməh ʾāmyēra hayni 'tomorrow you will say to me' (33:4)
ʾāmōr hīhəm ġayg 'a man said to them' (35:3)
āmawr h-aġəgənōt 'he said to the girl' (42:40)

The verb *ʾāmōr* is never followed by *l-*. On the other hand, the verb *kəlūṯ* 'tell, (rarely) talk', which is very similar in meaning, is nearly always followed by *l-* (see §8.12 for examples). About fourteen times in Johnstone's texts (five of these in text 22), *kəlūṯ* is followed by *h-*, as in:

əl kəwṯona hūk əlā 'I will not tell you' (12:7; cf. *l-* in 12:8)
kəwṯīta h-aġay b-āgēbək 'I will tell my brother about your love' (38:21; cf. *l-* earlier in the same line)
kəwṯūt h-abāləts 'she talked to her mistress' (85:13)

The phrase *ʾāmōr h-* can also be used impersonally to mean 'be called', though only a few examples are found in the texts. Two of these are:

nəḥā yāmərəm hīn bət bū zīd əlhilāli 'we are called (lit. they call us) Bet Bu Zid al-Hilali' (42:6)
xəṭərāt ġayg yāmərəm həh kādēt 'once there was a man called Kadet' (64:1)

Following are examples of *h-* with the meaning 'for':

śətmək kəswēt h-ʾāśəri 'I bought clothes for my friend' (38:2)
əl šīn kərawš əlā h-anawl 'we didn't have money for the fare' (91:1)
lēzəm l-əsḥōṭ hīkəm 'I must slaughter for you' (4:6)
ḥəfawr həh bayr 'they dug a well for him' (20:73)
axayr hīkəm tənkēm tīn 'it's better for you to come to us' (28:19)

It is a curious feature of Mehri that some of the most common verbs of motion often do not govern a preposition. When they do, the preposition is only rarely *h-* (and even more rarely *l-*). We find *h-* used about two dozen times in the texts following a verb of motion (including, in a few cases, the pseudo-motion verb *ḥōm*; see §7.3.3). In these cases, the object of *h-* is nearly always a place; only once is the object a person (77:5). Some examples of this are:

səyūr h-abə́təh 'he went to his house' (20:64)

rəddəm h-ak̄āhəm 'they went back to their country' (40:20)

gəhmō h-arḥəbēt ð̣ə-bīs aḡəgənōt 'they went to the town where the girl was' (75:4)

safərən bərk bədən, nəḥōm hə-ṣawr 'we travelled in a beden-boat, headed for Ṣur' (84:1)

ð̣ə-hānayk əl-syēr h-ʾəḥād 'I was intending to go to someone' (77:5)

Also not very common is the use of *h-* to mark an indirect object (other than with the verbs *ʾāmōr* and *kəlūṯ*, as discussed above). In fact, the use of *h-* to mark an indirect object seems to be mainly lexical. The following verbs govern an object with the preposition *h-*:

dūfa h- 'pay s.o.'

həftō h- 'give an idea to' (vs. *həftō ð̣ār* 'concentrate on')

gəzūm h- 'swear to'

ḡəź h- 'wink at'

šənð̣ūr h- 'vow to s.o.'

nəṭawk̄ h- 'kiss s.o. in greeting'

rəgūz h- 'sing to/for'

ṣəbūr h- 'have patience with s.o.' (vs. *ṣəbūr mən* 'do with-out' and *ṣəbūr l-* 'give respite to')

śnū h- 'diagnose by a soothsayer'

əxtəyūn h- 'give an illusion to s.o.'

həzbūr h- 'feel pleasure at s.o.'s misfortune' (*h-*: person being ridiculed)

In addition to the above verbs, *h-* is found marking an indirect object only about six times, some probably irregularly: two of these (both in 22:60) are governed by the verb *wəzūm* 'give', which everywhere else takes a double direct object. Another is *həftō h-* 'give an idea to' (90:4). Interestingly, we find *həftō l-* with the same meaning in the very next line (90:5), but this is likely a typographical error; the audio has *h-* in both lines. The fourth (9:3) is with the verb *ḡatəri* 'speak', which is normally followed by *k-* 'with', and the fifth is with the verb *k̄əlūb* 'return', which is usually followed by *l-*. The sixth is with *gəzūm* 'swear' (47:11), which we find in one other passage followed by *l-* (31:5).

The preposition *h-* is also found in a couple of idioms, including *h-aṣayrəb* 'in the autumn' and *hayni (hūk, etc.) sēt* 'I (you, etc.) have been away a long time'. For the rare cases in which *h-* is translated as 'have', see §13.3.2.

In summary, *h-* is met most often after the verb *ʾāmōr* 'say'. It is rare after verbs of motion, even rarer as an indirect object marker 'to'. It is relatively common with the meaning 'for', and, unlike *l-* (see below, §8.12), is used in very few idiomatic phrases. Finally, recall that *h-* is not pronounced, and therefore usually not transcribed, before *h* or *ḥ* (§2.1.3).

8.9. *hāl* 'at, by, beside'

The basic meaning of *hāl* is roughly that of French *chez*. An appropriate English translation can be 'at', 'by', 'beside', 'with', or 'at the place of'. Before pronominal suffixes the base *hən-* is used. Examples from the texts are:

> *sənnawrət shərōt hāl ḥərohəh* 'the cat stayed awake by his head' (15:12)
> *xədūm hāl tōgər* 'he worked with a merchant' (24:33)
> *ʾayśēk hənīn* 'have supper with us!' (lit. 'your supper is with us') (22:56)
> *əkˡɛ hənūk ajənbəyyəti* 'I will leave my dagger with you' (34:15)
> *hənīs xabz u ḳawt* 'beside her was bread and food' (42:15)

Mehri *hāl* can also be used after verbs of motion (most often *nūka*), meaning 'to', 'up to'. The object of *hāl* is nearly always a human, or a noun denoting a human collective, like *sēkən* 'community'. Examples are:

> *nūka bīs hāl ḥaybɛh wə-ḥāmɛh* 'he brought her to his father and mother' (48:19)
> *tē nakam hāl ʾāgawz, haśīśəs* 'when they got to the old woman, they (tried to) rouse her' (65:10)
> *səyūr hāl ḥōkəm* 'he went to the ruler' (36:5)
> *watxəfək hāl sēkən* 'I came to a community' (38:7)

There are also several compound prepositions based on *hāl*. By far the most common of these is *mən hāl* 'from (the presence of)'. Much less often, one finds *lə-hāl* (var. *əl-hāl*) and *tē hāl* substituting for simple *hāl* after a verb of motion. Examples are:

hō nakak mən hāl ḥəbyɛ 'I have come from my parents' (20:70)
hō gəhəmk mən hāl sɛ́kni 'I went from my community' (38:1)
hēt təšhōl mən hənīn gəzēʾ 'you deserve a reward from us' (22:101)
aḵōfi əl-hāl aṣōyəġ 'go down to the goldsmith's place' (22:47)
səyūr tē hāl ʾāgawz 'he went to an old woman' (48:6)

On the use of *mən hāl* as a relative 'where(ever)', see §3.8.4. As for special combinations with verbs, note *wəfūd hāl* 'ask s.o. for s.o.'s hand in marriage' (*b-*: the person whose hand is asked for), for example:

wəfūd bīs hāl ḥəbsɛ 'he asked her parents for her hand in marriage' (14:2)

We also find *šəwkūf hāl* 'sleep with' (e.g., 85:29), *rəmūs hāl* 'chat (at night) with' (e.g., 85:35), *wəḵōt hāl* 'became the wife of' (74:10) (< *wīḵa* 'be(come)'), and *šəmdūd mən hāl* 'take s.t. from s.o.' (73:6).

8.10. *hīs* '*like, as*'

The preposition *hīs* 'like, as' is nearly always found in the compound form *lə-hīs* (var. *əl-hīs*). This preposition cannot take suffixes directly, and instead the direct object marker *t-* must be appended, e.g., *(lə-)hīs tay* 'like me', *(lə-)hīs tīk* 'like you', etc. Note that when pronominal suffixes are used, the element *lə-* is optional. Examples from the texts are:

hō əśɛ́nyəh lə-hīs ḥaybi 'I see him as my father' (18:18)
əl-hīs ḥəbōn ðə-təgēr 'like the sons of merchants' (22:35)
ḵābəm həh faḥləh lə-hīs fənōhən 'they returned to him his penis as before' (24:32)
ḥābū əl-hīs abaṭəḥ mən kəṯēr 'the people are as numerous as sand' (lit. 'the people are like sand because of the large number') (29:17)
hīs amḥəlīb 'like a calf' (41:8)
hah hīs tīkəm 'he is like you' (22:93)
ʾəḥād lə-hīs tay 'is anyone like me?' (42:3)
ʾəl yāgōb ʾəḥād yāḵā hīs təh lā 'he didn't like anyone to be like him' (76:11)

This preposition is normally followed by a noun or adverb, as in the examples above, but in a few cases it is followed by a verbal phrase. All such examples from the texts are:

ʾəmələk lə-hīs ʾāmərk hayni 'I did as you told me' (20:18)
yəktəwīlən lə-hīs hām ṭāṭ xəlūs mən ḥōrəm 'he will get panicky like
  if someone has become lost (lit. lost the road)' (43:1)
yəhyūr wə-yəḥsūs lə-hīs śī ð-yəgərərəh xōṭər 'he would get dizzy and
  feel like something was pulling him downwards' (77:1)

On the temporal conjunction *hīs* 'when', see §13.5.3.3.

8.11. k- 'with'

The basic meaning of the preposition *k-*, which has the base *š-* before
pronominal suffixes, is 'with'.[2] Some examples are:

āḳā kə-ḥārawn 'stay with the goats!' (33:1)
wəkūb k-ʾāgawz 'he went in with the old woman' (75:7)
təsyēr šay 'you will go with me' (55:2)
aġayg šəh śxəwəlūl 'the man (who was) with him stayed' (68:5)
səbīw aġayg šīhəm 'they took the man prisoner with them' (69:2)

It is also usually used with the verb *ġatri* 'speak', just as in English.
Only once (9:3) do we find *ġatri h-*. Examples of *ġatri k-* are:

hō məġətayr kə-ḥāməy 'I will speak with my mother' (9:2)
tōli ġatri šīs 'then he spoke with her' (24:17)

Based on the meaning 'with', *k-* has come to be used in the possessive
construction corresponding to English 'have', as in:

šay nəxlīt 'I have a palm tree' (lit. 'with me is a palm tree') (77:5)
ʾəl šīhəm ḳawt lā 'they had no food' (lit. 'there is not with them
  food') (11:2)

This construction is discussed further in §13.3.1. The preposition *k-*, in
suffixal forms, is also used in a variety of expressions relating to physi-
cal or environmental conditions, for example:

šīn ḥəbūr 'we're cold' (lit. 'cold is with us') (35:4)
šəh ḥarḳ 'he was hot' (lit. 'heat is with him') (32:2)

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  [2] A fuller treatment of this preposition, including comparative and etymological
discussion, can be found in Rubin (2009a).

šay aġəllēt 'it was misty' (lit. 'with me was mist') (47:4)

Many more examples, along with discussion, can be found in §13.3.1.2.

The preposition *k-* is also used idiomatically in a few expressions relating to time of day, namely:

kə-sōbəḥ 'in the morning'   *k-amġərāb* 'in the evening'
k-aḏ̣ahr 'at noon; in the afternoon'   (rare)
k-ʾāṣər 'in the evening' (rare)

As noted above (§8.4), *k-amġərāb* (25:14) is attested just once, as is the alternative *bərk amġərāb* (25:9). The phrase *k-ʾāṣər* is also attested only once (81:1), but the *k-* is absent from the audio. This suggests a possible mistake in the text.

The preposition *k-* seems also to be incorporated into the form *kālayn(i)* 'in the evening'. With *kə-sōbəḥ* 'in the morning', the *k-* is really likewise inseparable, despite the hyphenated transcription. Moreover, *kə-sōbəḥ* is often best translated simply as 'morning'. Compare the following two sentences:

tē kə-sōbəḥ aġayg šəwkūf 'then, in the morning, the man fell asleep.'
    (22:65) (*tē* = 'then')
hātōm tē kə-sōbəḥ 'he stayed until the morning' (9:11) (*tē* = 'until')

As for other idioms, we find:

səyūr k- 'sleep with (sexually)' (lit. 'go with')
səyūr (kə-)ḥənōf- 'go to the bathroom' (lit. 'go (with) oneself')
wīka rəḥaym k- 'be nice to'

8.12. *l-* 'to; for'

The preposition *l-* is usually translated into English as 'to' or 'for', just like the preposition *h-*. However, as already noted above (§8.8), the two are very rarely interchangeable. One very common use of *l-* is to mark the indirect object of the verb *kəlūṯ* 'tell, (rarely) talk'. The verb *kəlūṯ* is nearly always followed by *l-*, though we find *kəlūṯ* followed by *h-* about fourteen times in the texts (five of which are in text 22). However, the semantically similar verb *ʾāmōr* (always followed by *h-*) is never found in combination with *l-*. Examples of *kəlūṯ* with *l-* are:

kəlūṯ əl-ḥābū 'he told the people' (2:5)
kəlaṯk līs b-aġərōy ð-aġās 'I told her her brother's words' (38:21)
kəlawṯ ləh ḥābū bīs 'people told him about her' (40:14)
tē mənays wə-kəlūṯ līs 'then he got hold of her and talked to her' (40:16)
kəlūṯən līhəm b-aḳəssēt kalləs 'we told them the whole story' (91:28)

In general, one cannot say that *l-* is regularly used to mark an indirect object. A number of verbs that we would expect to take an indirect object instead take a direct object in Mehri. The most notable example is the verb *wəzūm* 'give', which takes a double direct object, as in:[3]

wəzmōna tīš xəmsīn ḳarš 'I will give you fifty dollars' (48:6)
wə-ṣərōməh əl wəzəmk tīn tīhəm lā 'now you (still) have not given them to us' (91:30)

Even more surprising is the fact that verbs of motion in Mehri are often followed by a direct object. And when they are followed by a preposition, it is very rarely *l-*. In fact, *l-* (except in the combinations *əl-ḥõ* 'to where?' and *əw-bō* 'to here'; see §10.1) is never found after the common motion verbs *səyūr* 'go', *nūka* 'come', *wīṣəl* 'arrive', or *gəhēm* 'go'.[4] Just six times *l-* follows *rəd* 'return' (after which *təwōli* is more common; see below, §8.19), four times *ḳəfud* 'go down' (after which a direct object is most common), and a handful of less common verbs only once. It is found regularly only with certain motion verbs, such as *həḳbūl* 'come near', *ḳərūb* 'approach', and *ləḥāf* 'come close to' (see the list below). It is also significant that the only two motion verbs that are found used with both *h-* and *l-* are *rəd* 'return' and *ḳəfud* 'go down'.

With the benefactive meaning of 'for', *l-* is found about twenty times, less than a third as often as *h-* in this function. And even though there is overlap in meaning, *h-* and *l-* seem to occur in different contexts (i.e., after different verbs and nouns). Some of the examples in which *l-* means 'for' are:

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[3] As discussed in §8.8, *h-* is found before the indirect objects of *wəzūm* in a single passage (22:60).

[4] The phrase *nūka bawməh* 'come here' is found four times in the texts, compared to *nūka əw-bō*, which is found eight times.

u nəḥārəm ləh yəbīti ṭrayt 'they slaughtered two camels for him'
   (32:9)

yəkūn lūk śak 'it will be a crime for you' (33:3)

ḥāmēk həwḳawt lūk śīwōṭ 'your mother lit a fire for you' (36:11)

həḳəfūd ləh ḳayd 'they let down a rope for him' (48:3)

Although l- is relatively rare as a general preposition meaning 'to' or
'for', it is extremely common as an object marker following certain
verbs. Some of these might be considered indirect objects, but the
majority must be considered idiomatic. Attested in the texts are:

ḥāmōr l- 'order s.o.' (vs. ḥāmōr b- 'give an order for s.t.')

ʾāyōb l- 'cheat s.o., break an oath to'

ʾātyōn l- 'betray'

bədō l- 'tell a lie about s.o.' (vs. bədō b- 'lie to')

šədhūḳ l- 'look down at'

dək l- 'spring on, pounce upon'

həðrō l- 'let the blood of a goat run over s.o.'

fḳō l- 'cover' (b-: with)

fəyūz l- 'overcome, defeat s.o.'

gərō l- 'pass by s.o.; happen to'

gəzūm l- 'swear to'

həġbūr l- 'give help to s.o.'

ġatyəǯ l- 'be(come) angry at'

šəwgawr l- 'raid'

həgūm l- 'attack'

əttūma l- 'listen to'

ḥəg l- 'refuse s.o. permission to marry'

ḥəźawr l- 'persuade s.o.'

kbūr l- 'stay with s.o. to drink milk'

aḳōbəl l- 'watch, keep an eye on'

həḳbūl l- 'approach, come towards'

aḳōdəm l- 'offer s.o. (food)'

ḳawdər l- 'manage against, get the better of'

ḳəlūb l- (b-)səlōm 'send greetings to s.o.; greet s.o.' (also ḳəlūb səlōm l-)

ḳərūb l- 'get near, approach'

ləḥāf l- 'come close to, next to'

ləḥāḳ l- 'help'

ləś l- 'press up against'

məthūl l- 'become easier for'

nəkūś l- 'exhume'

nəḳawd l- 'blame, criticize'

rədō l- 'throw at' (vs. rədō b- 'throw s.t.')

rūfa l- 'climb (a rope); board (a ship)'

ratḳi l- 'read the Quran over s.o.'

hərxū l- 'release, untie'

sūməḥ l- 'allow s.o., give permission to; forgive' (vs. sūməḥ b- 'allow s.t.')

ṣəbūr l- 'give respite to' (vs. ṣəbūr mən 'do w/out' and ṣəbūr h- 'have patience with s.o.')

šəwṣawb l- 'be wounded in'

śōm l- 'sell to s.o.'

śōbəh l- 'look like' (vs. śōbəh b- 'suspect s.o.')

śəd l- 'saddle'

śəhēd l- 'bear witness to/ against'

śərawg l- 'sew up'

śatūk̠ l- 'miss, long for'

ṭāf l- 'visit'

həṭlawk̠ śīwōṭ l- 'open fire on' (lit. 'release fire')

həwḥū l- 'come to help s.o.'

wəkūb l- 'go in (to see) s.o.; go into (sexually)' (vs. wəkūb 'enter')

xəlūṭ l- 'stay with s.o.' (vs. xəlūṭ 'mix s.t.')

xəṣawb l- 'send for; send to s.o.'

źəḥāk l- 'make fun of' (vs. źəḥāk mən 'laugh at')

zəl l- 'attack' (mistakenly confused with śəl in 26:9)

As with b-, one finds l- sometimes used with verbs where it is not expected, for example kəšūf 'expose' (e.g., 24:38; elsewhere with d.o.), k̠əfud (e.g., 64:18; usually d.o.), rəkūb 'mount' (e.g., 102:11; usually with ð̣ār or d.o.), səlūb 'wait for' (48:8; elsewhere with d.o.), xətūl 'stalk, creep up on' (10:14; elsewhere with d.o.), and xəzū 'refuse' (94:4; elsewhere with mən).

The verb šəxbūr 'ask' is twice found with l-, meaning 'ask about s.o.' (20:46; 94:14). It is not clear whether this is really distinct from šəxbūr mən 'ask about s.t.', since in one place šəxbūr mən also means 'ask about s.o.' (32:6). A number of other verbs with l- are attested just once, and it is unclear if they are exceptional or not. Such are həftō l- 'give an idea to' (90:4, probably a typographical error; the audio has h- and we find həftō h- in the previous line), ḥəkūm l- 'force s.o.' (75:1), ḥātūg l- 'need s.o.' (94:13), ləb l- 'be fond of' (76:15),[5] lət l- 'bandage up' (75:18), ləwū l- 'wrap around' (49:11), and rəṣawn l- 'tie to' (89:9; once also rəṣawn b-, 42:15, with the same meaning). As noted already in §8.8, we find gəzūm l- once (31:5) and gəzūm h- once (47:11), both meaning 'swear to'. The phrase ʾāmōl l-X ġərōy 'give s.o. an argument' (46:13) also seems to be an idiom; elsewhere (including earlier in 46:13) ʾāmōl h- means 'make for'. Another idiom is gəzōt lay ḥəyawm 'the sun went down on me' (80:6).

The preposition l- also occurs in a number of non-verbal idioms. Such are:

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5 The verb ləb is not in Johnstone's *ML*, and it is tempting to think that the form təlbūb in 76:15 is a typographical error for təḥbūb (though ḥəb normally takes a d.o.; cf. 15:10, 67:1). However, the audio clearly has təlbūb. Moreover, the *JL* (p. 158) gives the verbs lɔ́ttub 'to be likeable' and šɛlbɔ́b 'become friends'.

> *ḥāšē l-* 'far be it from (s.o.)!'
> *ḳərayb l-* 'near, close to'[6]
> *l-ādēd ð-* 'each, every' (see §5.5.3)
> *l-arawrəm* 'along the seashore'
> *l-arayḳ* 'before/without breakfast'
> *l-ʾāṣər* 'at night' (rare)
> *l-āyūmən* 'last year'
> *lə-ḥōlət ðīməh* 'in this condition/way'
> *əl-ḥōrəm* 'on the road' (more often *b-ḥōrəm*)
> *l-aḳəssēt ðīməh* 'in this way'
> *(səyūr) lə-mrawḳəṣ* '(walk) on crutches'
> *əl-xā ð-abayt* 'at the door of the house'
> *wōgəb l-* 'be proper for; be obliged to' (see §12.5.16)

Also attested twice is *rēḥək l-* 'far from' (99:22; 104:3), though more common is *rēḥək mən*. There are also a number of other idioms having to do with parts of the body. Attested are:

> *l-ḥərōh* 'on the head' (28:8)
> *l-fēm* 'in the foot, on the leg' (72:4)
> *l-ḥayd* 'on the hand' (75:16)
> *l-ʾarḳ ð-ansēm* 'on the artery' (75:18)
> *l-xaffəh* 'on foot' (78:1)

On the compounds *l-adəfēt ð-*, 'by the side of, beside', *l-aḳāṭər* 'in the direction of', and *əl-sayb ð-* 'in the direction of', see §8.21. And for the rare cases in which *l-* is translated as 'have (time left)', see §13.3.2.

In short, the use of the preposition *l-* is highly idiomatic. We also find that *l-* and *h-* have very little overlap in function. The verb *kəlūṯ*, normally followed by *l-*, is very occasionally found with *h-*. Both prepositions are found a handful of times after the motion verbs *rəd* and *ḳəfūd*. Very few other verbs are attested with both prepositions with no difference in meaning; among these are *gəzūm* 'swear' (31:5; 47:11), *ġərūf* 'fetch water' (both in 68:3), and *həftō* 'give an idea' (90:4, 5), though, as noted above and in the Appendix, the use of *l-* with *həftō* in 90:5 is probably a typographical error. And finally, both prepositions can mean 'for', though *h-* is far more common in this meaning.

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[6] In one case (77:1), *ḳərayb* is lacking a following preposition, but this is probably a typographical error, since a following *l-* is heard on the audio.

8.13. mən 'from'

The preposition *mən* has the basic meaning 'from', in reference to both location and cause. By extension, it is used in partitive constructions ('of'), and in comparative constructions ('than'), and it also has a few less common uses. The following examples illustrate its basic meaning 'from':

> *fətawk ḥābū mən amsgēd* 'the people came from (out of) the mosque' (4:13)
> *nūka mən ḥəwōdi* 'he came from the valley' (10:1)
> *həwū mən daḥḳ ḳənnawn* 'he fell from a small ledge' (17:4)
> *ḥōm mənk aṣədḳ* 'I want from you the truth' (22:89)
> *ḳərūt mən ḥābū* 'she hid (her) from the people' (24:4)
> *šəmrūź mən faṭx* 'he was ill from the head wound' (48:12)
> *ġəyəbūt mən ayəṣayt* 'she fainted from fear' (54:11)

Its partitive use:

> *ṭərō mən atəgēr* 'two of the merchants' (4:1)
> *ðōməh mən ātəḳādhəm ðə-sēḥər* 'this is some of their belief about witchcraft' (7:8)
> *səḥṭōna ṭād mən ḥəbənšɛ* 'I will kill one of your sons' (48:23)
> *kāl mənīn ðə-bdō* 'whoever of us lied' (24:37)

And its comparative use:

> *yəmō əl hē axass əlā mən əmšē* 'today is no worse than yesterday' (26:4)
> *ʾətēm axayr mənay aw hō axayr mənkēm* '(whether) you are better than me or I am better than you' (42:12)
> *ḥaybi axayr mənay yōmər* 'my father sings better than me' (52:2)

For further discussion of comparatives, see §5.4. In about a dozen passages, *mən* has the meaning 'because of', for example:

> *əl təwīw śī-lā yəmō mən aðəbbēt* 'they have eaten nothing today because of the flies' (26:13)
> *ḥābū əl-hīs abaṭəḥ mən kəṭēr* 'the people are as numerous as sand' (lit. 'the people are like sand because of the large number') (29:17)

ʾāgawz l-ād ənkats šənēt əlā mən ḥəbrīs 'the old woman could not sleep (lit. sleep did not come to her) because of her son' (36:8)

śīnək mərkēb hərsō b-agzayrət ðəkəməh mən aððərbēt 'I saw a ship anchored by that island because of the storm' (103:7)

The preposition *mən* is also used idiomatically with a number of verbs, including:

ʾaygəb mən 'be delighted with' (vs. *ʾaygəb b-* 'love')

bəkō mən 'weep for/from'

ðawla mən 'be crippled in (a body part)'

gəhēr mən 'be dazzled by'

gəzūm mən 'swear against' (vs. *gəzūm l-* 'swear to')

ġəf mən 'lift s.o. up by'

ġəlūḳ mən 'look for' (vs. *ġəlūḳ b-* 'look at')

ġayźən mən 'feel sorry for s.o.'

hattəm mən 'be sad about'

ḥəððūr mən 'look out for, guard against' (vs. *ḥəððūr b-* 'look out for [=on behalf of], guard')

ḥəyūr mən 'get confused about'

šəktūb mən 'have s.o. write a charm against'

ḳawṭa mən 'be tired of'

šəḳṭā mən 'be tired out or depressed from'

nūṣəḥ mən 'advise against'

səd mən 'be able (or enable) to do without'

ṣəbūr mən 'do without' (vs. *ṣəbūr l-* 'give respite to' and *ṣəbūr h-* 'have patience with s.o.')

tāb mən 'be tired of; have trouble with'

ṭəyūb mən 'enjoy s.t.'

šəxbūr mən 'ask about s.t./s.o.'

xəlūs mən 'stray from, get lost; be unable to find'

xəzū mən 'refuse s.o. or s.t.'

yəṣ mən 'fear, be afraid of'

źəḥāk mən 'laugh at' (vs. *źəḥāk l-* 'make fun of')

šəźyūḳ mən 'be fed up with, tired of'

The preposition *mən* is also found in a number of other idiomatic expressions. Such are:

gəmēt mən gəmēt 'every Friday'

kalləh mənk 'it's all your fault' (lit. 'it's all from you')

mən ðəkīr 'famous'

mən ṭawr 'sometimes'

mən ṯōdi 'at the breast' (said of a baby)

mən xawr 'after a little while'

mən zəbōn ḥāwəlay 'long ago'

məśhayr mən 'famous for'

məxwīf mən 'afraid of'

rēḥək mən 'far from' (also, less often, *rēḥək l-*)

tōgər mən 'rich in'

xəlēʾ mən 'empty of'

In two passages, *mən* means 'according to', though this use is clearly an extension of the meaning 'from'. These are:

> *w-ʾād l-ʾəḥād yəśanyəh lā … mən aḳawl ð-aġəyōg* 'nobody had seen it … according to the report of the men' (41:10)
> *mən ḥābū ð-yəškəlīṭəh, ʾādəh ṣəḥ* 'according to the people who had heard the tale from him, he was still alive' (92:6)

In two passages (both from text 22), *mən* means 'approximately, about':

> *ʾāzēm xəddōmət mən ʾāśərēt dīnār* 'give the workers about ten dinars' (22:48)
> *mən myīt u mən mītayn dīnār* 'about a hundred or two hundred dinars' (22:50)

In one passage, *mən* is best translated by 'ago':

> *abʿayri ðə-həġṣōbən təh mən ʾayśər yūm* 'my camel that we lost ten days ago' (28:6)

Finally, we also find *mən* used in a handful of cases with a temporal meaning 'since' or 'for' (in the sense of 'since … ago'). In the latter meaning, *mən* is usually used in a negative phrase in conjunction with the particle *l-ʾād* (§13.2.2). All of the attested examples are:

> *ʾādi əl śīnək tīhəm lā mən warx* 'I have not seen them for a month' (20:41)
> *mən sənayn əlyōməh l-ād ʾəḥād yātəḳaydən bīhəm lā* 'since those years nobody believes in them' (25:19)
> *mən warxi ṭroh l-ʾād xəṣawb b-śī-lā* 'for two months he has not sent anything' (57:7)
> *mən mayt? mən wəḳōna ʾayśər yūm* 'since when? since about ten days (ago)' (101:12-13)

On the temporal conjunction *mən hīs* 'since', see §13.5.3.3.

8.14. (*ʾəm*)-*mən* 'between'

The preposition (*ʾəm*)-*mən* occurs most often in the simple form *mən*, making it homophonous with the preposition *mən* 'from'. That it is a different preposition is clear from the fact that its suffixed forms are

made from the base *mənw-* (cf. the two *ʾet* prepositions of Biblical Hebrew). The form *ʾəm-mən* derives from *ʾəm-bən*, as shown by the Yemeni Mehri form *beyn* or *bīn*, Ḥarsusi *bēn*, and Soqoṭri *əm-bīn*.[7] The shift of *b > m* is due not to the preceding *m*, but rather to the following *n*. On the sound change *bVn > mVn*, see §2.1.7. Examples from the texts are:

> *hē šəwkūf ʾəm-mən ṭrō* 'he was sleeping between two (men)' (69:3)
> *təšəwkūf mənwə́h u mən tέṯəh* 'she would sleep between him and his wife' (46:7)
> *ləhān fəṣawl mənwīn hō ḳəbələk* 'whatever they decide between us, I will accept' (77:4)
> *hadyəm adabh mənwayhi* 'they divided the honey between the two of them' (77:10)
> *mənway u mənwūk šέrṭ* '(there was) between me and you (one) condition' (99:53)

In one passage *(ʾəm)-mən* means 'among', and is preceded by *mən* 'from':

> *gār amǝlawtǝġ mǝn mǝnwīhǝm* 'men were killed from among them' (lit. 'dead men fell from among them') (104:29)

It is worth mentioning that Johnstone's text 77 contains four distinct suffixed forms of *(ʾəm-)mən*, which is overall rather rare in the texts.

8.15. *nəxāli* 'under'

The preposition *nəxāli* 'under' usually appears in the texts as either *ənxāli* or, especially when preceded by a word ending in a vowel, as *nxāli*. Examples from the texts are:

> *wəṣələm nəxāli abayt ðə-śέrəʾ* 'they arrived below the judge's house' (19:14)
> *ḳəfūdən b-abar ənxāli dέhəḳ śōx* 'we came ashore under a big cliff' (60:10)
> *aġayg šəḳrō nxāli həddūt* 'the man hid under the cradle' (63:8)

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[7] Yemeni Mehri *beyn* is found in Jahn (1905: 125) and Bittner (1914a: 12), while *bīn* is found in Sima (2009). The Ḥarsusi and Soqoṭri forms are given in *HL* (p. 22), and the latter is also found in Leslau (1938: 85).

kūsa nxāli ḥəruhs śāṯayt ḥərawf 'he found under her head three
(gold) coins' (97:41)

w-əlhān kəsk nxāsɛ hē ð-hō 'and whatever I find under it is mine'
(67:8)

One also finds the compound preposition *mən nxāli*, which can mean
'from under' or simply 'under'. All of the attested examples of this
compound are:

gōrək mən nxāli ḥāṣən 'I passed under a castle' (22:28)
ḳawla mən nxāsɛ gērtən 'he put slave-girls under her' (24:45)
ṣāḵ mən nxāli ḥāṣən 'he called out from under the castle (wall)'
(48:3)

Twice we find the combination *tē nxāli* 'down to, to under':

həwū śɛ́rəʾ ta nxāli ḥāṣən 'the judge fell down to beneath the castle
(walls)' (48:5)
səyūr bīhəm tē nxāli ḥāṣən ðə-ḥōkəm 'he took them to below the
ruler's castle' (48:13)

Note also the idiom *mən nxāli śəhawd* 'before witnesses' (39:5).

8.16. *səbēb* 'because of'

The preposition *səbēb* 'because of' only occurs four times in Johnstone's
texts, and in three of these cases it is part of a compound. Strangely,
the make-up of the compound is different in all three cases; we find
səbēb ðə-, *səbēb mən*, and *əw-səbēb* (< *əl-səbēb* < *l-səbēb*). More often
this meaning is conveyed by the preposition *mən* (see above, §8.13),
and perhaps *səbēb* should be seen as an Arabism. Following are all
attested cases of *səbēb* as a preposition:

ʾāyb əlīkəm təntawḥəm səbēb ðə-ḥəmoh 'it's a disgrace for you to
quarrel because of water' (10:6)
wa-yəkūn səbēb mənk 'and it will be because of you' (22:94)
l-ʾəḥād yəḥōm yəxlēṭ līn lā əw-səbēbəh 'no one wants to stay with us
because of him' (89:32)
wa-šəwkīf wa-aśśəm əsbēb aṣawt ðə-bərhoh 'they kept falling asleep
and waking up because of the voice of Berhoh' (104:23)

Səbēb also occurs as a noun meaning 'reason, cause' (43:3; 48:17; 86:6).

8.17. *sār* 'behind'

The preposition *sār* has the basic meaning of 'behind'. When suffixes are added, the base is usually the compound form *mən sər-*; the simple base *sər-* is used in contexts in which the prepositional phrase is used in a relative clause (which need not be preceded by *ðə-*) and after certain verbs (e.g., *bəḳawź* 'run'). Some examples are:

> *tabam sār əśfūtən ðə-həbɛ̄r* 'they followed after the tracks of the camels' (12:11)
> *tabatəh sənnawrət mən sərīh* 'the cat followed after him' (15:9)
> *šəwkəfō sār hərōm* 'they went to sleep behind a tree' (17:2)
> *ḥəwōdi sərīn* 'the valley behind us' (30:2) (but *ḥəwōdi ðə-sərīn* in 80:4)
> *nəkēs mən sərīs u mənɛ́ ṭidaysē* 'come at her from behind and take hold of her breasts' (40:15)
> *ʾāmərk hīs "syēri fənway!", u hō səyərk mən sərīs* 'I said to her: "Go in front of me!", and I went behind her' (54:17)

As illustrated in the first two examples above, the verb *tūba* 'follow' can be followed by *sār*. However, it is far more often followed by a direct object (e.g., 22:11; 94:18). This verb can also be, and usually is, followed by *b-* if the object is *śaf* (pl. *əśfūtən*) 'track(s)'. Additional verbal idioms are *bəkō sār* 'cry over' and *bəḳawź sār* 'run after', as in:

> *bəkō aġayg sār tɛ́ṭəh* 'the man cried over his wife' (19:5)
> *hēt təbēki sār kabś* 'you are crying over a lamb' (75:23)
> *bəḳawź sərīs ḥəbrē ðə-ḥōkəm* 'the Sultan's son ran after her' (97:15)

In just two cases, *sār* has the temporal meaning 'after', though the second of these could legitimately be translated as 'behind':

> *ḥəbray yəmēt sərīs* 'my son will die after she is gone (lit. after her)' (37:10)
> *ʾād yənkɛ mawsəm mən sərīh* 'will another monsoon boat be coming after it?' (45:16)

8.18. *tē* 'until, up to'

The particle *tē* (variants *tā, ta*) is most commonly used as a temporal conjunction meaning either 'until' or 'when' (see §13.5.3.2). However, in conjunction with nouns or adverbs, it functions as a simple preposition with either a temporal meaning 'until' or a spatial meaning 'up to'. Examples are:

> *səlōb tē bə-ḥəllay* 'wait until night-time' (22:36)
> *nəḥōm nəślēl tā ḥəwōdi sərīn* 'we ought to move into the valley behind us' (30:2)
> *wəzmōna tīhəm anawlhəm mən źāfōr tē bawməh* 'I will give them their fare from Dhofar to here' (91:32)
> *safərən bərk mawtər mən məskōt tē dəbay* 'we travelled by car from Muscat to Dubai' (91:33)
> *səyawr tē ḥərōź amšəġərēt* 'they went on until the next acacia tree' (99:15)

As discussed in several sections above, *tē* also occurs in combination with a number of other prepositions. One finds *tē b-* 'up on to', *tē bərk* 'up on to', *tē ḏ̣̌ār* 'up on to', *tē hāl* 'to (s.o.)', and *tē nxāli* 'down to', though all of these are quite rare. The most common of these is *tē ḏ̣̌ār*, which is found about nine times in the texts, while *tē b-* and *tē bərk* each occur just once.

8.19. *təwōli* 'to, towards'

The preposition *təwōli* 'to, towards' is very common, more common than *h-* to indicate motion towards. The majority of its occurrences are following a form of the verb *səyūr* 'go', though it is also found with a number of other verbs of motion. Only rarely does it follow a non-motion verb (e.g., *kətūb* 'write', *ʾāyēṭ* 'cry out'). Most notable is that the object of *təwōli* is nearly always a person or group of people (or animals); when it is not, it is usually a noun denoting a human collective, like *sēkən* 'community'. Examples are:

> *səyawr təwōli śarʾ* 'they went to a judge' (24:38)
> *hō sīrōna təwōli ḥaybi* 'I am going to my father' (24:49)
> *səyūr təwōli sékənəh* 'he went to his community' (31:15)
> *nūka ḥəynīt təwōli kəlōn* 'the women came to the bride' (9:7)
> *śalləm təh təwōli sēkən* 'they carried him to the community' (17:9)

hah rəd təwōli abətəh 'he went back to his house' (18:9)
rəd təwōli sēkən 'he went back to the community' (30:8)
ʾāyēṭ təwōli ḥābū 'he cried out to the folk' (17:6)
gəhōm təwōli séknək 'go to your community!' (38:21)
kətūb təwōli aṣōyəġ xaṭ 'he wrote a letter to the goldsmith' (22:83)
xəṣawb bīs təwōli ḥōkəm 'he sent it to the ruler' (48:14)

It is a curious feature of Mehri that if the object following most verbs of motion is a place, there is usually no preposition involved. The distinction between human and non-human objects is illustrated very nicely by the following example in which the verb *səyūr* has two objects:

wə-səyərk wə-əsyūr arḥəbēt təwōli ʾāśər ðə-ḥaybi 'I set off and went to town to a friend of my father' (34:15)

In one case, before a verb, *təwōli* is translated as 'until' (in place of expected *tɛ̄*) in the printed edition:

śəllīs təwōli ḳayṭa 'he carried her until he was tired' (46:3)

However, the audio has *tōli* 'then', and so we should correct this and translate this passage instead as 'he carried her, then he got tired'. (The opposite mistake, the transcription of *tōli* in place of *təwōli*, is found in 85:5.)

    It should also be mentioned that there is a noun *təwōli* which means 'end part of the night' (e.g., 42:25; 103:2).

8.20. *xā(-hē)* 'like, as … as'

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, it is not certain that *xā* should be classified as a preposition, but it is included for convenience because of its English translational value. In context, *xā* is often best translated into English as 'like' or 'as … as'. Literally, it means something more like 'as if'. It is always followed by an independent personal pronoun, most often *hē*, though this is sometimes obscured by an alternative transcription *xā-hɛ*. Observe the following examples:

aġīgēn rəḥaym, xā-hē rīt 'the boy was as beautiful as a moon' (22:1)
xawr ḳāṣəm xā-hē falg 'the lagoon was as cold as ice' (36:1)

əwbōn xā-hē śχōf wə-χəfayf xā-hē bōrəḳ 'as white as milk and as fast
   as lightning' (41:8) (Stroomer: *xā-hɛ* for both)
aġīggēn, ʾāmawr, xā-hē ṣār 'the boy, they say, was like a gazelle'
   (83:3) (Stroomer: *xā-hɛ*)

Literally, these examples translate as 'beautiful as if he were a moon',
'cold as if it were ice', etc., but it is unclear whether or not *xā-hē* has
been grammaticalized and is considered (natively) as a true preposi-
tion. In all other occurrences of *xā* in the texts, however, *xā* cannot be
considered a preposition. In these cases, the meaning of *xā* is more
transparent as 'as if'. Following are all additional attestations of *xā*:

məḳā xā-sēh nkath arḥəmēt ðīməh '(it is) as if this (last) rainfall
   never came there' (26:15)
əl xā-hō ð-əgūzəm lūk əlā 'let's say I took no oath for you' (lit. 'as if
   I did not take an oath for you') (31:6)
məḳā xā-hō ð-ənūfa śē hənēkəm '(it is) as if I were of no use to you
   in anything!' (33:2)
əśōni ḥābū xā-hēm bərk ḥəmōh 'I saw people as if they were in
   water' (40:23)
wə-lā məḳā xā-hēm xəlēḳəm '(it is) as if they had never been born'
   (90:8)

It seems that when the pronoun is *hō*, *ð-* is required before the verb.

8.21. Additional Prepositions

There are a handful of phrases which might be considered compound
prepositions, all of which occur just once or twice in the texts. With
one possible exception (*l-sayb ð-*), these can be analyzed as simple
prepositions plus nouns. These are:

l-adəfēt ð- 'by the side of, beside' (cf. *dəfēt* 'body, side')
b-aðōbəl ð- 'beside' (cf. *ðōbəl* 'side, edge')[8]
l-aḳāṭər ð- 'in the direction of' (cf. *ḳāṭər* 'direction')
ḳəyōs ð- 'like' (cf. *ḳəyōs* 'proportion; good fit, proper measure')
l-sayb ð- 'in the direction of' (*sayb* 'direction?' is not attested)
b-aṭərēf ð- 'beside' (cf. *ṭərēf* 'side')
mən aṭərēf ð- 'from among'

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[8] For a literal example of *b-aðōbəl ð-* 'at the side of', see 37:20.

The attested contexts are:

> *wġāz bəh aġayg ð-l-adəfə́təh* 'he slipped it to the man by his side'
>   (73:6)
> *tē b-aðabəli həwḳayh w-aḳōfi* 'then when (it was) beside me, he put
>   it down and went away' (92:2)
> *gəhōm l-aḳā́ṭr ð-ḥəyawm* 'go in the direction of (towards) the sun'
>   (37:16)
> *sīrūt l-aḳā́ṭərəs* 'she went on her way (lit. in her direction)' (48:27)
> *nkōt bə-kəwṯēt ð-ḳəyōs ð-kəwṯēt ðīməh* 'she told a story that was like
>   this story' (48:31)
> *səyərk əl-sayb ð-śīwōṭ* 'I went in the direction of the fire' (47:3)
> *u hīs bərsən b-aṭərēf ð-aźayga* 'and when they [the goats] were
>   beside the pen' (31:12)
> *yəhwafyəm faḳḥ ð-ðəmmēt ðīməh mən aṭərēf ð-amōl ð-hənīn
>   bə-śḥayr* 'they pay half of this debt from the herd that we have in
>   the mountains' (58:8)

The phrase *mən aṭərēf ð-* also occurs in text 75 (three times) in con-
junction with the particle *ʾamma*, and seems to have little meaning;
see further in §12.5.3.

One other compound preposition, *l-agərē (ð-)* 'for the sake of, on
behalf of', is attested twice. It does not fit in with the above com-
pounds, since it is not a recognizable combination of a preposition
and a noun. More often, *l-agərē* is used as a subordinating conjunction
indicating purpose (see §13.5.2). Its prepositional attestations are:

> *šxəbərətəh … l-agərē ð-aġayg yəhəmē* 'she questioned him … on
>   behalf of the man who was listening' (63:13)
> *təḥōm təśōm aʾāmərk l-agərē təmbōku* 'do you want to sell your life
>   for the sake of tobacco?' (94:36)

Mention should also be made of the preposition *bəla* 'without', which
occurs just one time in the texts, in the phrase *bəla šak* 'without a
doubt' (7:5). This is simply an Arabism, as is the related word *bəlāš* 'for
nothing, gratis' (22:48). The preposition *ʾāwēź* 'instead of, in place of'
also occurs just one time (17:15). Its status in Mehri is unclear, though
it is certainly related to the Arabic preposition *ʿiwaḍa*, which has the
same meaning.

8.22. The Suffixed Forms of Prepositions

The prepositions can be divided into groups on the basis of the suffixed forms. The monoconsonantal prepositions *b-*, *h-*, *k-*, and *l-* (as well as the direct object marker *t-*; see §3.3) form one group. These four are declined as follows (here and in the rest of this section, unattested forms are given in parentheses):

	k-	*b-*	*h-*	*l-*
1cs	*šay*	*bay*	*háyni*	*lay*
2ms	*šūk*	*būk*	*hūk*	*lūk*
2fs	*šayš*	*bayš*	*hayš*	*layš*
3ms	*šəh*	*bəh*	*həh*	*ləh*
3fs	*šīs*	*bīs*	*hīs*	*līs*
1cd 2cd	*(šə́ki)*	*(bə́ki)*	*(hə́ki)*	*(lə́ki)*
3cd	*šə́hi*	*(bə́hi)*	*(hə́hi)*	*lə́hi*
1cp	*šīn*	*bīn*	*hīn*	*līn*
2mp	*šīkəm*	*bīkəm*	*hīkəm*	*līkəm*
2fp	*šīkən*	*bīkən*	*hīkən*	*(līkən)*
3mp	*šīhəm*	*bīhəm*	*hīhəm*	*līhəm*
3fp	*šīsən*	*bīsən*	*hīsən*	*līsən*

The one exceptional form among these four prepositions is the 1cs form *háyni*. In addition, we can point out the following:

• The 1cs forms *bay* and *lay* have the variant transcriptions *bəy* and *ləy*.

• One time (17:8) the 3ms form *bəh* is transcribed *bīh*, which should be corrected for the sake of consistency.

Another group consists of *bād*, *bərk*, *hāl*, *fənōhən*, *(ʾəm-)mən* (between), and *sār*. These forms are:

	bād	*bərk*	*fənōhən*	*hāl*	*(ʾəm-)mən*	*sār*
1cs	*(bādáy)*	*(bərkáy)*	*fənwáy*	*hənáy*	*mənway*	*sərə́y*
2ms	*bādūk*	*(bərkūk)*	*(fənwūk)*	*hənūk*	*mən(w)ūk*	*(sərūk)*
2fs	*(bādáyš)*	*(bərkáyš)*	*(fənwáyš)*	*hənáyš*	*(mənwáyš)*	*(səráyš)*
3ms	*bādēh*	*bərkīh*	*fən(ə)wīh*	*hənēh*	*mənwə́h*	*sərīh*
3fs	*bādīs*	*bərkīs*	*(fənwīs)*	*hənīs*	*(mənwīs)*	*sərīs*

1cd	(bādə́ki)?	(bərə́ki)?	(fənwə́ki)?	(hənə́ki)?	(mənwáyki)	(sərə́ki)?
2cd						
3cd	(bādə́hi)?	(bərkə́hi)?	(fənwə́hi)?	(hənə́hi)?	mənwáyhi	(sərə́hi)?
1cp	(bādīn)	(bərkīn)	(fənwīn)	hənīn	mənwīn	sərīn
2mp	(bādīkəm)	(bərkīkəm)	fənwīkəm	hənīkəm	mənwīkəm	(sərīkəm)
2fp	bādīkən	(bərkīkən)	(fənwīkən)	hənīkən	(mənwīkən)	(sərīkən)
3mp	bādīhəm	bərkīhəm	fənwīhəm	hənīhəm	mənwīhəm	sərīhəm
3fp	(bādīsən)	bərkīsən	(fənwīsən)	hənīsən	(mənwīsən)	sərīsən

Notes:

- Only *mənwīkən* (77:8) is attested for the 2mp of *(əm-)mən*, but this is a typographical error. The audio clearly has *mənwīkəm*. We also find erroneous 2mp *fənwīkən* (91:14) and 3mp *hənīhən* (38:10); in both cases the audio has final *-m*.
- The only attested dual form in this group is the 3cd *mənwáyhi*. In his *ML* (p. xviii), Johnstone gives the forms *fənwə́ki*, *fənwə́hi* as representative of this group. If this is correct, then it is very unclear whether the others pattern with *fənwə́hi* or the attested *mənwáyhi*. Therefore, I mark the unattested dual forms given above with a question mark.

Another set includes *ð̣ār* and *ġayr*:

	ð̣ār	*ġayr*
1cs	*ð̣ayri*	(*ġayri*)
2ms	*ð̣ayrək*	(*ġayrək*)
2fs	(*ð̣ayrəš*)	(*ġayrəš*)
3ms	*ð̣ayrəh*	*ġayrəh*
3fs	*ð̣ayrəs*	(*ġayrəs*)
1cd	(*ð̣ayrki*)	(*ġayrki*)
2cd		
3cd	(*ð̣ayrki*)	(*ġayrki*)
1cp	*ð̣ayrən*	*ġayrən*
2mp	(*ð̣ayrkəm*)	(*ġayrkəm*)
2fp	(*ð̣ayrkən*)	(*ġayrkən*)
3mp	*ð̣ayrhəm*	(*ġayrhəm*)
3fp	*ð̣ayrsən*	(*ġayrsən*)

The prepositions *təwōli* and *nəxāli* are unusual, in that they take the suffixes of the plural noun. This is due to the final *-i* of their bases, which was reinterpreted as part of the suffix in the plural forms. For example, the 3mp form *nəxālihəm* is etymologically made up of the base *nəxāli* plus the 3mp suffix *-həm*, i.e., *nəxāli-həm*. This was reinterpreted as a base *nəxāl* plus the suffix *-ihəm* that is found attached to plural nouns, i.e., *nəxāl-ihəm*, and subsequently the entire paradigm shifted to this pattern. The forms are:

	təwōli	*nəxāli*
1cs	*təwēlyɛ*	(*nəxālyɛ*)
2ms	*təwēkɛ*	(*nəxākɛ*)
2fs	(*təwēšɛ*)	(*nəxāšɛ*)
3ms	*təwēhɛ*	*nəxāhɛ*
3fs	*təwēsɛ*	*nəxāsɛ*
1cd	(*təwáliki*)	(*nəxāliki*)
2cd		
3md	(*təwálihi*)	(*nəxālihi*)
1cp	(*təwáliyən*)	(*nəxāliyən*)
2mp	*təwálikəm*	(*nəxālikəm*)
2fp	(*təwálikən*)	(*nəxālikən*)
3mp	*təwálihəm*	*nəxālihəm*
3fp	(*təwálisən*)	(*nəxālisən*)

Notes:
- 1cs *təwēlyɛ* and 2ms *təwēkɛ* are attested in the texts only as *təwə́lya* and *təwēka*, which are just variant transcriptions.
- The *l* of the reinterpreted bases *nəxāl-* and *təwōl-* is lost before suffixes beginning with a consonant other than *y*, i.e., all 2s and 3s forms. On the loss of *l* in general, see §2.1.4.
- In the paradigm found in Johnstone's *ML* (p. xviii), the 1cs and all dual and plural forms of *nəxāli* all have *á* in place of *ā*. This is just a variant transcription, attested in the texts only with the 3ms form.

Finally, the preposition *mən* is unique. Its suffixed forms are:

	singular	dual	plural
1c	*mənáy*		*mənīn*
2m	*mənk*	*mənkáy*	*mənkēm*
2f	*mənš*		*(mənkēn)*
3m	*mən(ə)h*	*(mənháy)*	*mənhēm*
3f	*məns*		*mənsēn*

Notes:
- The 1cs forms *mənáy* is found transcribed rarely as *mənə́y* (or *əmnə́y*) and once as *məni* (34:10).
- The 1cp form *mənīn* is also found transcribed as *mənayn* and *mənēn*.

The words *ʾār*, *tā*, and *xā(-hē)* cannot take suffixes. *Səbēb* takes suffixes as any ordinary noun, though only 3ms *səbēbəh* is attested in the texts (89:32).

9.1. Cardinals

9.1.1. Numerals 1-10

Following are the numerals 1-10 that are attested in Johnstone's texts, including variant forms:

	Masculine	Feminine
1	ṭād / ṭāṭ	ṭayt
2	ṯroh / ṯ(ə)rō	ṯrayt
3	śāṯayt	śhəlīṯ
4	(ə)rbōt / rəbōt	árba
5	xəmmōh	xáyməh
6	yətēt	hət
7	yəbayt	hōba
8	ṯəmənyēt / ṯəm(ə)nēt / ṯəmənīt	ṯəmōni
9	saʾáyt (?)	(not attested)
10	ʾāśərēt / ʾāśərīt	ʾōśər

The numeral *ṭād / ṭayt* (which often can have the sense of 'a certain') normally follows the noun, but in a couple of examples precedes it. The numeral *ṯroh / ṯrayt* usually follows a dual form of the noun (see §4.2), but can also precede, in which case the accompanying noun appears in the plural. Unlike 'one' and 'two', the numerals from three to ten normally precede the noun, though in a few examples they follow instead. The numeral 'nine' is attested only once in Johnstone's texts, in the form *saʾáyt* (104:29). This is quite different from the forms *sāt* (m.) and *sē* (f.) given in *ML* (p. 338) and *AAL* (p. 23); it seems to be a Ḥarsusi form, which is not surprising given that text 104 is about the Ḥarasis, and is the Mehri version of a Ḥarsusi original.[1]

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[1] A Ḥarsusi version of text 104 was recorded by Johnstone, and appears as text 3 in the published edition of Ḥarsusi texts (Stroomer 2004). In the Ḥarsusi version (3:29), the number 'nine' appears as *səʾayt*.

The noun accompanying any numeral appears in its indefinite form, even when a definite meaning is intended (cf. 97:16, '7f' below). Following are some examples of numerals in context:

1m   *ġiggēn ṭād* 'one boy' (35:8), *kā ṭāṭ* 'a certain place' (25:1), *ṭāṭ dəllōl* 'one guide' (60:8)

1f   *nəhōr ṭayt* 'one day' (24:5), *fāməs ṭayt* 'one of its legs' (6:14), *wōdi ṭayt* 'a certain valley' (44:12)

2m   *warxi ṯroh* 'two months' (17:11), *ġīgēni ṯərō* 'two boys' (35:1), *ṯroh ġayw* 'two brothers' (40:1), *ṯawri ṯroh* 'two times, twice' (37:11), *ṯroh ðə-nḥā* 'two of ours' (89:4), *ṯroh śəhawd* 'two witnesses' (9:4), *ṯroh mən təgēr* 'two of the merchants' (4:1) (see also §4.2)

2f   *tēti ṯrayt* 'two women' (2:1), *gərayti ṯrayt* 'two slave girls' (97:31), *fərhayni ṯrayt* 'two horses' (24:11) (see also §4.2)

3m   *śāṭayt ġəyōg* 'three men' (60:4; but *ġəyōg śāṭayt*, 64:33), *śāṭáyt məhrḗ* 'three Mehris' (88:1), *śāṭayt əmbərawtən* 'three boys' (91:1; but possibly *śāṭayt ḥəmbərawtən* in 84:1. See discussion in §4.4), *nəḥā śāṭayt* 'we are three' (42:24)

3f   *śhəlīṯ sənayn* 'three years' (14:3), *śhəlīṯ saʾāt* 'three hours' (18:10), *śhəlīṯ ġəggōtən* 'three girls' (37:3), *śhəlīṯ aġathɛ* 'his three sisters' (37:6)

4m   *ərbōt ġəyōg* 'four men' (88:7), *ərbōt ʾāṣawr* 'four nights' (92:1), *ərbōt mənīn* 'four of us' (83:7)

4f   *arba rīġād* 'four pregnant camels' (12:10)

5m   *xəmmōh ṭəwōr* 'five times' (20:42), *xəmmōh wōrəx* 'five months' (10:10)

5f   *xayməh sənayn* 'five years' (14:5), *xayməh rīkōb* 'five camel (-loads)' (65:15)

6m   *yətēt bū* 'six people' (71A:1), *yətēt wəźāḥ* 'six times per day' (93:3)

6f   *ḥat yūm* 'six days' (27:22) (see §9.2)

7m   *ḥəbanhɛ yəbayt* '(his) seven sons' (50:1), *yəbayt zəyawrət* 'seven buckets' (97:7), *hēm yəbayt* 'they were seven' (70:3)

7f   *hōba yənīṯ* 'the seven women' (97:16), *hōba snayn* 'seven years' (14:1)

8m   *ṭəmənyēt ðərḗʾ* 'eight lengths' (98:11)

8f   *ṭəmōni snayn* 'eight years' (8:1)

9m   *saʾayt mən adərawʾ* 'nine of the Duru' (104:29)

10m *ʾāśərēt ġəyōg* 'ten men' (104:6), *ʾāśərēt dīnār* 'ten dinars'
     (22:40)
10f *ʾōśər rawn* 'ten goats' (70:5), *ʾōśər mən ḥazyɛ́* 'ten of my goats'
     (81:4)

Interestingly, the numeral *ṭād / ṭayt* comes between a noun and its
attributive adjective. In these cases (of which only a handful are
attested) *ṭād / ṭayt* is usually best translated with an indefinite article:

   ġəgənōt ṭayt ərḥaymət 'a beautiful girl' (97:19)
   rəzḳ ṭāṭ yədīn 'a new fortune' (98:9)
   śawr ṭāṭ yədīn 'a new opinion' (98:9)

Numerals do not seem to occur with pronominal suffixes, or at least
no such forms are attested. Instead, we find a construction with the
partitive, as in *ərbōt mənīn* 'four of us' (83:7). We do, however, find a
suffix (dual, of course) on the noun *kəlayt* 'both': *kəláthi* 'both of them'
(20:25).[2]

9.1.2. Numerals 11-19

It seems that the numerals 11 to 19 were originally made simply by
saying 'ten and one', 'ten and two', etc., with both elements agreeing in
gender with the noun. However, in the texts, we find more often that
these forms are replaced by numerals borrowed from Arabic. The fol-
lowing are all of the forms of the teens attested in the texts:

   Native forms:
   11   *ʾāśərēt wə-ṭāṭ ġəyōg* 'eleven men' (104:10)
   15   *ʾōśər wə-xayməh* 'fifteen (dollars)' (39:3)[3]

   Arabic forms:
   11   *ḥəḍʿášar ġəyōg* 'eleven men' (104:25)
   14   *arbātāšər zayr* 'fourteen buckets' (97:21)
   15   *xamstāšər yūm* 'fifteen days' (97:31)
   16   *anhōr ðə-səttāšər* 'the sixteenth day' (97:32) (see below, §9.3)

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   [2] *Kəlayt* is the feminine form of 'both'. The masculine counterpart is *kəlō*.
   [3] In the context of 39:3, *ʾōśər wə-xayməh* could also be translated 'ten and five'.

The noun following a number 11 to 19 can either be singular (as *zayr* above) or plural (as *yūm* above), though the plural seems to be more common.

9.1.3. Tens

The forms of the tens in Mehri have been borrowed from Arabic. Those attested in the texts are *ʾāšrayn* '20', *śəlāṯayn* '30', *ʾərbəʿayn* (var. *arbəʿīn*) '40', and *xəmsayn* (var. *xəmsīn*) '50'. The pattern of *śəlāṯayn* '30' is Arabic, but the initial *ś* is Mehri; the form is thus a hybrid. For numbers such as 21, 22, 23, etc., the digit follows the ten and is usually preceded by *wə-*, e.g., *ʾəśrayn wə-ṭāṭ* '21'. As with the teens, nouns following numerals twenty and above can be either singular or plural. Examples from the texts are:

20	*ʾāšrayn sənayn* '20 years' (2:1), *ʾāšrayn ḳərawš* '20 dollars' (25:8), *ʾāšrayn bēr* '20 camels' (32:10), *ʾāšrayn rawn* '20 goats' (39:2)
21	*ʾəśrayn wə-ṭāṭ* '21 (men)' (104:21)
23	*ʾəśrayn śāṯayt manāṣīr* '23 Manasir (tribesmen)' (104:24)
25	*xams wə-ʾāšrayn ġayg* '25 men' (104:10), *xams wə-ʾāšrayn nəfār* '25 persons' (104:8)
30	*śəlāṯayn ʾalf* '30,000' (65:15)
40	*ərbəʿayn ġayg* '40 men' (104:27), *ərbəʿayn yawm* '40 days' (8:6), *arbəʿīn ḳərawš* '40 dollars' (77:3)
50	*xəmsayn rawn* '50 goats' (20:32; but *xəmsīn rawn* in 20:60), *xəmsayn ḳarš* '50 dollars' (72:3; but *xəmsīn ḳarš* in 48:6)

9.1.4. Hundreds

The numeral '100' is *myīt* (var. *əmyīt*). The numeral '200' is the dual *myīti ṯrayt* (vars. *mīti* / *əmyēti ṯrayt*). For all other multiples of '100', however, 'hundred' is *mī*, preceded by a feminine digit. Accompanying nouns are usually in the singular. In a few cases, the genitive exponent *ð-* is placed between the numeral and the noun.

100	*əmyīt ḳarš* '100 dollars' (85:3), *myət bū* '100 people' (22:32), *myīt dīnār* '100 dinars' (22:50), *əmyīt kīlo ð-ʾāyś* '100 kilos of rice' (66:4), *myīt əð-ḳarš* '100 dollars' (85:5), *myīt gənēh* '100 sovereigns' (85:12)

200 əmyēti ṯrayt ðə-ḳarš '200 dollars' (64:11), myīti ṯrayt '200' (85:8), mīti ṯrayt '200' (104:27)

300 śhəlīṯ mī (69:5)

500 xayməh mī (9:3)

700 hōba mī (60:5)

Note also the unusual mī'ət ðə-ḳarš '100 dollars' (75:6), and the Arabic dual form in mītayn dīnār '200 dinars' (22:50).

9.1.5. Thousands and Above

The numeral '1000' is 'alf (var. ēf). Multiples up to '10,000' are made with a masculine numeral plus the plural yəlēf 'thousands'. Higher multiples use the singular form 'alf. Accompanying nouns are usually singular. All of the attestations from the texts are:

1000 'alf dīnār '1000 dinars' (22:47), ēf ḳərawš '1000 dollars' (20:32)

4000 ərbōt yəlēf '4000' (22:48)

10,000 'āśərēt yəlēf '10,000' (22:49)

20,000 'āšrayn 'alf ḳarš '20,000 dollars' (4:1), a'āšrayn 'alf 'the 20,000' (4:10)

30,000 śəlāṯayn 'alf '30,000'(65:15)

40,000 'ərbə'ayn 'alf '40,000' (22:53)

'Million' is məlyōn (pl. m(ə)lēyīn). This is a borrowing from Arabic, as evidenced by the shared broken plural pattern.

1,000,000 məlyōn ḳarš '1,000,000 dollars' (36:2), bū mlēyīn 'millions of people' (74:4)

9.2. Special Forms Used With 'Days'

A peculiar feature of the numeral system of Mehri (though not unknown from some other Semitic languages) is the existence of a special set of numerals used for counting three or more days. These are as follows (numbers in parentheses are not attested in Johnstone's published texts, but are taken from *AAL*, p. 23):

nəhōr ṭayt 'one day'	*(šīdəṯ yūm)* 'six days'
nəhōri ṯrayt 'two days'	*(šība yūm)* 'seven days'
śēləṯ / śīləṯ yūm 'three days'	*(ṯīmən yūm)* 'eight days'
rība yūm 'four days'	*(tīsa yūm)* 'nine days'
xəmhēt yūm 'five days'	*ʾayśər yūm* 'ten days'

There seems to be some inconsistency in their usage, as there are sev-
eral examples from the texts of a feminine cardinal number being used
instead of one of these special forms, e.g., *xayməh yūm* 'five days'
(84:1) and *hət yūm* 'six days' (27:22). It is also worth pointing out that
in order for one of the special forms to be used, the word *yūm* need not
follow if it has been previously mentioned; cf. *nəhōri ṯrayt aw śēləṯ*
'two or three days' (99:52).

9.3. Ordinals

Following are the forms of the ordinals 1-10, with unattested forms in
parentheses (taken from *ML* and *AAL*):

	masculine	feminine
1st	*ḥāwəlay*	*ḥāwəlīt*
2nd	*məšḗġər*	*məšə́ġ(ə)rīt*
3rd	*śṓləṯ*	*śəwṯīt*
4th	*arōbəʾ / arōbaʾ*	*r(ə)báyt*
5th	*(xōməs)*	*xəmhīt*
6th	*(sōdəs)*	*šədṯīt*
7th	*(sōbaʾ)*	*(səbayt)*
8th	*(ṯōmən)*	*(ṯəmnīt)*
9th	*(tōsaʾ)*	*(təsayt)*
10th	*(ʾayśər)*	*(ʾāśərīt)*

As evident from the above list, the ordinals for 3 through 9 are all built
on the same pattern: *CōCəC* for masculine and *CəCCīt* for feminine.
Although the feminine forms are in a few cases transcribed in the texts
with the suffix *-ēt* (and always so in *ML* and *AAL*), I assume that *-īt* is
the underlying suffix, since we find *-ayt* in forms where the suffix was
historically preceded by a guttural consonant. This shift of *ī* to *ay* is in
accordance with the rule given in §2.2.2.

For 'second', there are two other words besides *məšḗġər* attested in
the texts. The first is *ṯōni* (48:23, 24), a form based on the expected

ordinal pattern *CōCəC*. This is the Yemeni Mehri form.[4] The second is *mətalli* (64:19; fp *mətalyōt* in 30:13). This is based on the same root as the word *tōli* 'then', and the basic meaning must be something like 'another, a following', meanings given in the *ML* (p. 401). The adjective *məšēġər* can also mean 'other', and the adjective *ḥāwəlay* can also mean 'former' or 'previous', as will be seen below. Some examples of the ordinals in context are:

1m   *aġayg ḥāwəlay* 'the first man' (73:9), *əwbōd ḥāwəlay* 'he shot the first one' (64:19), *aġaygəs ḥāwəlay* 'her first husband' (22:77), *zəbōn ḥāwəlay* 'former times' (25:19)[5]

1f   *tếṯəh ḥāwəlīt* 'his first wife' (22:102)

2m   *ṭawr amšēġər* 'the second time' (65:12), *kāl ṭāṭ yəḥōm yəxbēr məšēġər* 'each one wanted to test the other' (73:10)

2f   *aġatəh amšəġrēt* 'his second sister' (37:19), *ḥəwōdi amšəġərēt* 'the second valley' (92:4), *fēməs aməšəġərēt* 'its other leg' (81:4)

3m   *śōləṯ ð-ʾāṣáwr* 'the third (one) of the nights' (22:68), *ʾāṣər śōləṯ* 'the third night' (37:20), *līlət ðə-śōləṯ* 'the third night' (48:24)

3f   *anhōr śəwṯīt* 'the third day' (22:49), *nəhōr ðə-śəwṯīt* 'the third day' (88:5), *nəhōr śəwṯīt* 'the third day' (91:27), *aġatəh śəwṯīt* 'his third sister' (37:20)

4m   *arōbaʾ ð-ʾāṣáwr* 'the fourth night' (37:16), *arōbəʾ* 'the fourth (man)' (73:8)

4f   *anhōr ðə-rəbayt* 'the fourth day' (24:20), *nəhōr ðə-rbayt* 'the fourth day' (48:25)

5f   *xəmhēt* 'the fifth (day)' (32:5)

6f   *ʾāṣər ðə-šədṯēt* 'the evening of the sixth (day)' (92:3)

16   *anhōr ðə-səttāšər* 'the sixteenth day' (97:32)

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[4] Text 48 is an Omani Mehri "translation" of a Yemeni Mehri text published in Jahn (1902: 7-14). It is not surprising, therefore, that Johnstone's text contains this form, as well as several other Yemeni Mehri words (e.g., *ḥərmēt* 'wife', *dawlət* 'ruler', and *məkahōyət* 'coffee shop'). Although, in the passage in Jahn (p. 12) corresponding to Johnstone's 48:23, we find *līlət ṯaniyət*, with the feminine ordinal! On the adverb *ṯanyən* 'secondly', see §10.5.

[5] We also find the word *ḥāwīl* in 42:25. This is glossed in the *ML* (p. 194) as 'first', but based on the context would seem to be a noun meaning 'first part'. It is in the phrase *ḥāwīl ðə-ʾāṣər* 'the first part of the night', in parallel with *faḵḥ ðə-ʾāṣər* 'the middle part of the night', and *təwōli ðə-ʾāṣər* 'the last part of the night', in the same sentence.

As seen in the above examples, there are many cases in which the ordinal immediately follows the noun (e.g., *aġayg ḥāwəlay* 'the first man', 73:9; *nəhōr śəwṯīt* 'the third day', 91:27), but we also find some examples in which the genitive exponent *ð-* comes between the noun and the ordinal (e.g., *nəhōr ðə-śəwṯīt* 'the third day', 88:5). There are also examples of the ordinal preceding a plural noun, with the genitive exponent *ð-* between them, but in these cases the ordinal is acting as a substantive (e.g., *śōləṯ ð-ʾāṣáwr* 'the third night', lit. 'the third (one) of the nights', 22:68). The construction of the type *nəhōr ðə-śəwṯīt* is met only when referring to days or times of the day, and so this is probably idiomatic. That each of these are not true ordinal adjectives is evidenced by the one occurrence of *ʾāṣər ðə-šədṯēt* (92:3). If *šədṯēt* here were simply an attributive ordinal, we would expect the masculine form, since *ʾāṣər* is masculine. So *šədṯēt* must be a substantivized form, feminine because it refers to an implied feminine noun *nəhōr* 'day', and the phrase should be translated 'the night of the sixth day', rather than 'the sixth night'. The phrase *nəhōr ðə-śəwṯīt* would then be literally 'the daytime of the third day', though a simple translation as 'the third day' is preferable.

In the context of a past tense narrative, the idea of 'next' (i.e., 'the following') is expressed with *xayləf* (f. *xəwfīt*), as in *ʾāṣər xayləf* 'the next night' (69:3) and *anhōr* (or *nəhōr*) *xəwfīt* 'the next day' (30:8, 69:5).[6] Alternatively, *məšēġər* can mean 'next' (i.e., 'the second'), as in *nəhōr amšəġərēt* 'the next day' (89:31). In a future context, 'next' (i.e., 'the coming') is expressed with *məhakbəl*, as in *aḳayð amhakbəl* 'next summer' (39:16). The idea of 'last' is expressed by the verb *gərō* in a relative clause, as in *nəhōr ðə-gəmēt ðə-gərōt* 'last Friday' (lit. 'Friday that passed') (53:1).

The ordinals for three and above can also be used as adverbs, while *fənōhən* seems to be used for 'first(ly)' and *məġōrən* for 'second(ly)'. Evidence is slim, but we find a nice sequence of *fənōhən* 'first(ly)', *məġōrən* 'second(ly)', and *śōləṯ* 'third(ly)' in 90:15.

9.4. Fractions

The following fractions are attested in the texts:

1/2   *faḳḥ* (dual/plural *faḳḥi*), as in *faḳḥ ð̣ə-sēt* 'half an hour' (53:6),
       faḳḥ ð̣ə-ḥōz 'half of the goat' (25:15), *faḳḥ ð̣ə-warx* 'half a
       month' (72:6), *faḳḥ ð̣ə-həbēr* 'half of the camels' (69:8)

1/3   *śəlēṯ*, as in *śəlēṯ ð̣-ʾāṣ̣ər* 'a third of the night' (42:33)

3/4   *śhəlīṯ rəbōyɛ* 'three-quarters' (66:9)

All three occurrences of the fraction *śəlēṯ* are in text 42. Two of these
are incorrectly transcribed as *śhəlīṯ* (42:24 and 42:30), but the audio
confirms that *śəlēṯ* is correct in both places.

9.5. Days of the Week

The Mehri words for days of the week that are attested in Johnstone's
texts are *l-əṯnayn* 'Monday' and *gəmēt* 'Friday', both of which are
clearly borrowed from Arabic. In the texts, these are always used in
combination with either *nəhōr* 'day' or *ʾāṣ̣ər* 'evening', with one excep-
tion. All attested examples with *gəmēt* 'Friday' are:

nəhōr ð̣ə-gəmēt 'Friday' (48:3; 85:7) (vars. *anhōr ð̣-agəmēt*, 4:13;
   anhōr ð̣-gəmēt, 85:4)
nəhōr ð̣ə-gəmēt ð̣ə-gərōt 'last Friday' (53:1)
ʾāṣ̣ər ð̣-agəmēt 'Friday night' (7:7) (but see below)
gəmēt mən gəmēt 'Friday after Friday (i.e., every Friday)' (48:2)

The word *gəmēt* can also mean week, as in *wəkōna gəmēt* 'about a
week' (91:13) and *śxəwəlūl gəmēt* 'he stayed a week' (93:7).

    There is some complication with the word *l-əṯnayn* 'Monday'. It is
attested only once in the texts, in the phrase *ʾāṣ̣ər ð̣ə-l-əṯnayn* (37:2). In
Stroomer's edition, as in the *ML* (p. 418), this is translated as 'Sunday
night'. This would mean that to a Mehri speaker, each day starts at
sundown of the previous day. If this is correct, then *ʾāṣ̣ər ð̣-agəmēt*
(7:7) should be translated as 'Thursday night', rather than 'Friday
night'.

    Once in the texts we find 'Thursday', and once we find 'Wednesday',
but each of these reflects an erroneous translation. The passages (with
their translations in Stroomer's edition) are:

nəhōr ð̣ə-rbayt 'Thursday' (22:53) (correct to: 'the fourth day')
ʾāṣ̣ər ð̣ə-rbayt 'Wednesday (evening)' (69:5) (correct to: 'the fourth
   night')

These can both be proven incorrect on several levels. First, *rbayt* is the feminine ordinal 'fourth', and the fourth day of the Mehri (and Arab) week is Wednesday. So *nəhōr ðə-rbayt* (22:53) would have to be 'Wednesday', not 'Thursday'. In fact, *nəhōr ðə-rbayt* is listed in the *ML* as 'Wednesday' (p. 312). The other passage *ʾāṣər ðə-rbayt* could be 'Wednesday night', but if *ʾāṣər ðə-l-əṯnayn* (37:2) is 'Sunday night', and not 'Monday night', as discussed above, then *ʾāṣər ðə-rbayt* should really be 'Tuesday night'! However, this is irrelevent, since there is no reason to think that either passage (22:53 and 69:5) is referring to a weekday at all. Instead, *rbayt* should be translated as a simple ordinal, i.e., 'the fourth (day)'. In text 22, we find *nəhōr xəwfīt* 'the next day' (22:48), *anhōr śəwṯīt* 'the third day' (22:49), and so *nəhōr ðə-rbayt* (22:53) is clearly 'the fourth day', in the context of the narrative. In text 69, there is nothing to suggest that a day of the week is being referred to, and a translation as 'the fourth night' actually makes better sense in the context. The real word for 'Wednesday' is probably *rəbūʾ*, as given in the *ML* (p. 313) and elsewhere (e.g., Nakano 1986: 144).

ADVERBS

As in many other Semitic languages, there is no productive means for creating adverbs in Mehri. In some places where we find an adverb in English, Mehri uses a prepositional phrase, for example:

> *ərṣani bə-ḥays* 'tie me up tightly' (lit. 'with force') (24:28)
> *ð-yəśōm bə-raxəṣ* 'it was selling (them) cheaply' (lit. 'with cheapness') (45:15)
> *anyatəh bə-ḥyatəh yəḥkēm ḥābū bə-ṭəyōb wə-mēd* 'his aim in life was to rule the people well and wisely' (lit. 'with goodness and wisdom') (67:1)
> *təḥawkəm bə-ḥaḳ* 'you rule justly' (lit. 'with right') (74:20)
> *ḳawṭa bə-ḥays* 'he cut (too) forcefully' (lit. 'with force') (75:17)
> *ṭād hərgūf b-abēdi* 'one falsely shivered with fever' (lit. 'with a lie') (84:4)

Such examples are relatively uncommon. Even less common is the use of a modified cognate accusative as an adverbial expression, as in:

> *ġəlōḳ b-aġəggēn ġayləḳ ḳəway* 'he looked at the boy intensely' (lit. 'looked a strong look') (22:8)
> *ḳaṭays mən ḳəṭāt ḳənnət* 'he cut her lightly' (lit. 'he cut her a little cut') (75:18)[1]

However, there are a significant number of lexical adverbs, organized below according to type.

10.1. Demonstrative Adverbs

The words for 'here' and 'there' pattern with the demonstratives, in that there are forms with and without the element *-məh* (see §3.4). The longer forms (i.e., those with the element *-məh*) are far more common overall, though in combination with *l-* 'to', only the shorter form of

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[1] The translation found in Stroomer's edition, 'he gave her a little cut', is an equally good, if not better, translation.

'here' is found. Following are the forms, along with some sentences illustrating their use:

Here:	*bō* (rare)	There:	*ḥəlawk* (rare)
	báwməh		*ḥəlák(ə)məh*
To here:	*əw-bō* (< *əl-bō*)	To there:	(not attested)
From here:	*əm-bō, əm-báwməh,*	From there:	*mən ḥəlák(ə)məh*
	mən báwməh		

kō hēt bawməh 'why are you here?' (3:10)
səkyēna bawməh 'they will live here' (74:5)
aʾəśēš bō 'your dinner is here' (42:27)
ənkɛ̄ əw-bō 'come here!' (1:4)
əl yənakam bawməh lā 'they don't come here' (94:33)[2]
nakak əm-bō 'I've come from here' (80:2)
səyərk … əm-bawməh 'I went … from here' (53:1)
fətōk mən bawməh 'he got out from here' (3:3)
l-ʾəḥād yəšānūs yənkɛ̄ ḥəlakməh lā 'nobody dared to go there' (95:1)
ḥəkṣawm ḥəlakəməh 'he spent the day there' (99:39)
ḥəlawk tōmər 'there are dates there' (5:8)
səyawr mən ḥəlakməh 'they went from there' (68:2)

10.2. Adverbs of Place

abar(r) 'ashore' (directional)
  b-abar(r) 'ashore' (locational)
abarr 'outside' (directional)
  b-abarr 'outside' (locational)
aġawf 'up, upwards, upstairs, uphill' (directional)[3]
b-aġərbēt 'abroad' (locational)
bə-kāl əmkōn 'everywhere'

əl-ḥəḳ 'inside' (locational)
  mən ḥəḳ 'from inside'
əw-mṣāʾ 'downstream'
xōṭər 'down, downward, downstairs' (directional)
  b-xōṭər 'down there, downstairs' (locational)

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[2] Note that the verb *nūka* 'come', which usually takes a direct object, can be followed either by directional *əw-bō* or by locational *bawməh*.

[3] In addition to six attestations of directional *aġawf*, we find in one passage (88:9) *h-aġawf*. But it is possible that this is mistaken; the *h-* is not audible on the audio. We also find three cases of locational *aġawf*, all in the phrase *mən aġawf* 'from above'.

The adverb *əw-mṣāʾ* 'downstream' (< *lə-mṣāʾ*), which occurs four times in the texts, is transcribed variously as *əwmṣāʾ* (29:9), *əmṣā* (38:3), *w-əmṣā* (54:6), and *əmṣaʾ* (63:13). These should all be transcribed *əw-mṣāʾ*; the *w* missing from two of these and the *ʾ* missing from two of these are present on the audio for all four.

In 42:28, we find the phrase *mən śadḳəs əwxayw hə-śadḳəs ʾālēw*, translated as 'across its jaw from top to bottom'. The word *śadḳ* is translated in the *ML* (p. 373) as 'inside of the cheek' (likewise in the *HL*, p. 118, and *JL*, p. 246) and *ʾālēw* is translated in the *ML* (p. 23) as 'at the top'. I did not find the word *əwxayw* in any of Johnstone's lexicons, but presumably it must mean something like 'at the bottom'. It is unclear if *ʾālēw* is locational or directional. The entry in the *ML* suggests that it is locational, and it fits as such in the context of 42:28, which could be literally translated as 'from the inside of its cheek at the bottom (?) to inside of its cheek at the top'.

10.3. Adverbs of Time

bād gēhəməh 'day after tomorrow'	*məġōrən* 'later; second(ly)'
bə-ḥəllay 'at night'	*mən ṭawr* 'sometimes'
fōnəh (less common var. of *fənōhən*)	*nəhōrən* '(at) midday'
fənōhən 'first(ly); previously, formerly'	*sētən* 'a while ago'
mən fənōhən 'before(hand)'[4]	*sōbər* 'always'
fənəmšē 'day before yesterday'	*səwānōt* '(for/in) a little
gēhəməh 'tomorrow; the next day	while' (see §4.5)
(in narrative); tonight (rarely)'	*ṣərōməh* 'now'
ġasráwwən '(in) the early evening'	*tē* (+ adverb) 'then' (see
ḥāwəlay 'previously, before' (see §9.3)	§13.5.3.2)
həyūm w-ʾāṣawr 'day and night'	*tōli* 'then'
k-ʾāṣər 'in the evening' (rare)[5]	*xəṭərāt* 'once' (lit. 'time')
k-aḏ̣ahr 'at noon; in the afternoon'	*yəllō* 'last night'
kālayn(i) 'in the evening'	*yəllīləh* 'tonight'
kə-sōbəḥ 'in the morning'	*yəmō* 'today'
k-amġərāb 'in the evening' (rare)	*yəmšē* (vars. *yəmši*, *əmšē*)
l-āyūmən 'last year' (rare)	'yesterday'

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[4] The adverb *fənōhən* can also mean 'before(hand)' if preceded by a preposition other than *mən*. Cf. *lə-his fənōhən* 'as before' (24:32).

[5] As noted in §8.11, *k-ʾāṣər* is attested just once (81:1), and the *k-* is absent from the audio version.

10.4. Adverbs of Manner

fīsā(ʾ) 'quickly'
fáxrəh 'together'
hɛ̄ 'so, thus' (rare; see §11.9)
ḳəráyb 'nearly' (see below)
taw 'well' (see below)
əl-xārxawr 'slowly, gently'
(l-)əwṭakəməh 'thus, like that, in that way' (see below)
wəṭōməh 'thus, like this, in this way' (see below)

The word *ḳərayb* is an adjective meaning 'near', but in one place is found used adverbially:

> *mət ḳərayb təxərūfən* 'when they [the date-palms] were nearly ripe…' (37:1)

The word *taw* is found only once in the texts as an adverb, but the same word serves as the base of the particle *taww-* 'must, ought to' (§12.5.15) and as part of the exclamatory phrase *həs-taw* 'very good! ok!' (§12.2). The adverbial example is:

> *ʾəḥād ð-yəḥwɛ̄k taw əlā* 'no one will understand you very well' (80:19)

The forms *wəṭōməh* 'thus, like this, in this way' and *(l-)əwṭakəməh* 'thus, like that, in that way' clearly have the same suffixes as the near and far demonstratives, e.g., *bawməh* 'here', *həlakməh* 'there' (§10.1), *ðōməh* 'this', and *ðákəməh* 'that' (§3.4). The phrases *lə-ḥōlət ðīməh* 'in this manner' (24:15, 25) and *l-aḳəssēt ðəkəməh* 'in that way' (84:10) are uncommon, but have a meaning similar to *wəṭōməh* and *(l-)əwṭakəməh*.

10.5. Other Adverbs

adamməh 'probably' (see §12.5.2)
ṭanyən 'secondly' (see below)
wəḳōna (var. *əwḳōna*) 'perhaps; about, approximately' (see below)
wīyən 'very (much); well' (see below)
xāṣ, xāṣtən 'especially'

The adverb *ṯanyən* 'secondly' occurs only once in Johnstone's texts (58:9). It is from the same base as the Yemeni Mehri ordinal *ṯōni*, discussed in §9.3.

The form *wəḳōna* 'perhaps; about, approximately' is obviously the participle of the verb *wīḳa* 'to be, become', but its two adverbial uses are relatively common. In the meaning 'about, approximately', *wəḳōna* is, as expected, most often followed by a number or time word like 'year' or 'month'. When it means 'perhaps', it can be used either with a nominal or verbal phrase, or it can be used independently, as in 26:7. The following examples illustrate these adverbial uses of *wəḳōna*:

> ʾədəmōt *əwḳōna myət bū* 'she executed about a hundred people' (22:32)
> *śxəwəlīl wəḳōna faḵḥ ðə-warx* 'they stayed about half a month' (72:6)
> *śxəwəlūl wəḳōna ʾayśər yūm* 'he stayed about ten days' (74:3)
> *əwḳōna bər bīsən əśxōf* 'perhaps they [the camels] have milk in them' (29:6)
> *hēt wəḳōna mɛśk wəlā ðəḥāk* 'perhaps you defecated or urinated' (99:53)

The adverb *wīyən* is quite rare in the texts, occurring just six times in Johnstone's texts. It occurs once modifying an adjective (23:2), and five times modifying a verb. Its basic meaning seems to be 'very much', as in:

> *fōnəh gīd wīyən* 'before (it was) very good' (23:2)
> *ġatyəðəm lūk wīyən* 'they are very angry at you' (37:18)
> *ḥābū tābəm wīyən* 'the people became very weary' (61:1)
> *hē yəḥəbōb ḥābū wīyən* 'he loved the people very much' (67:1)

In two places, *wīyən* is better translated as 'well' or 'very well', though the original meaning 'very much' can be seen:

> *hō əl əġōrəb ḥōrəm wīyən lā* 'I didn't know the road well' (47:2)
> *wəlākən arībēy əl yəhəbṣawr wīyən lā* 'but my companion did not see very well' (82:2) (*həbṣawr* = 'to see well')

CHAPTER ELEVEN

INTERROGATIVES

The Mehri interrogatives are as follows:[1]

Mehri	Primary Meaning	Secondary Meanings
mōn	who?	
hɛ́śən	what?	why? what for?
hɛ́śən mən	which? what kind of?	
hõ	where?	
kō	why?	how? (how about?)
hībō	how?	what? why? (what kind of?) (how about?)
mayt	when?	
kəm	how many? how much?	

Each of these interrogatives will be treated in turn below. Note also that Arabic *kɛf* 'how?' occurs three times in Johnstone's text 23.[2] On the interrogative particle *wəlɛ̄*, see §12.5.17.

11.1. mōn 'who?'

The interrogative *mōn* 'who?' is fairly straightforward. The following sample passages from Johnstone's texts illustrate its use in Mehri:

   mōn 'who?' (97:34)
   hɛ̄t mōn 'who are you?' (20:68)
   mōn mənkɛm ṭəfōna 'who among you will scout?' (29:12)
   mōn ʾāmōr hūk 'who told you?' (36:27)
   hɛ̄t bər mōn 'whose son are you?' (lit. 'you are the son of whom?') (20:44)

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   [1] Much of the information in this chapter appeared in Rubin (2008b), which also included comparative and historical discussion of the interrogatives.
   [2] These are in lines 10, 15, and 16. The verb *ʿɛmək* following *kɛf* in 23:15 is probably also an Arabic form, since the *ML* does not list a G-Stem of this verb, and since we would not expect initial ʿ in a Mehri verb. This text (23) has additional Arabisms, including *ma* (23:3) and *bəððabṭ* (23:15). See further in Chapter 14.

    ətēm bət mōn 'what is your (tribal) affiliation?' (lit. 'you are of the
       house of whom?') (42:5)
    mōn yəsūkən bərk abayt ðīməh 'who lives in that house?' (38:11)
    mōn mənkēm yəḥōm… 'who among you wants…?' (95:2)
    mōn ð-yəlūtəġ arēśīt 'who is the one who killed the serpent?' (42:40)
    mōn ð-yəḥōm yəwtaġəh 'who is the one who wants to kill him?'
       (83:4)
    mōn mənkēm ð-yəḳawdər yəṭbēr… 'who among you can break…?'
       (lit. 'who is among you that can break') (50:2)

In the final three examples, in all of which *mōn* is used as the subject of
a verb, *mōn* appears in conjunction with the relative pronoun *ð-* (see
§3.8.1). In the final example, *mōn* is part of a complex subject, but in
the first two of these (42:40 and 83:4) *mōn* alone is the subject. It is
evident that the use of the relative *ð-* is not obligatory, since there are
many parallel sentences in which *mōn* is used alone (e.g., the examples
from 38:11 and 95:2 above).

11.2. *hēśən* 'what?'

In Johnstone's texts, *hēśən* nearly always means 'what?'. It is strange,
then, that Johnstone glosses this word as 'why?' in his grammatical
sketch (*AAL*, p. 27), since only very rarely is it best translated as such.
In his *ML* (p. 150), he translates *hēśən* as 'what?; why?'. What compli-
cates the picture in Mehri, and what also makes it interesting, is that
while *hēśən* does indeed nearly always mean 'what?', it is not the only
Mehri interrogative used in this way; often *hībō* can correspond to
English 'what?'. Because of this overlap in meaning, we will examine
carefully the different functions of *hēśən*. The word *hēśən* can be used
as the subject of a verbal or non-verbal sentence:

    hēśən gərō 'what has happened?' (65:13)
    būk hēśən 'what is (the matter) with you?' (48:5)
    hēśən šīkəm 'what is (the matter) with you?' (104:17)
    šayš hēśən 'what do you have?' (lit. 'what is with you?') (94:45)
    hēśən mərtayḳ 'what is (this word) *mərtayḳ*' (71:4)
    hēśən nakak 'what is (this word) *nakak*?' (20:20)
    hēśən ḥəlatəh 'what is its description?' (28:7)

It can also be used as a direct or indirect object:

> *hēśən təḥōm* 'what do you want?' (10:5)
> *təḥōm hēśən* 'what do you want?' (70:6)
> *hēśən śīnək* 'what did you see?' (95:6)
> *hēśən tōmər* 'what is she saying?' (99:44)
> *hēśən l-ʾāmōl* 'what should I do?' (101:11)
> *hēśən əḵawdər l-āmōl* 'what can I do?' (67:2)
> *hēśən təḥami l-ʾāmōl* 'what do you want me to do?' (90:14)
> *hēśən ʾəmələš bə-dənyē* 'what have you done on earth?' (68:6)
> *hēśən ġatərīkəm* 'what did you talk about?' (74:21)
> *bə-hēśən katəwṭki* 'what did you (two) talk about?' (74:22)
> *mən hēśən təźḥōk* 'what are you laughing at?' (5:4)
> *mən hēśən faṭx* 'what is the cut from?' (48:12)

It can be used as an independent interrogative:

> *hēśən* 'what?' (82:4; 89:16)

It can be used in indirect questions, functioning as either subject or object:

> *kəlēṯ lay hēśən ʾəmələk* 'tell me what you did!' (20:17)
> *śənēya gēhəməh hēśən yāḵā* 'we'll see tomorrow what happens' (75:11)
> *wadak hēśən l-ʾāmōl* 'do you know what I should do?' (101:9)
> *hamaš ayəġrayb hēśən ð-yōmər* 'did you hear what the crow was saying?' (5:4)
> *əl-wadak ðār hēśən lā* 'I do not know over what [they killed each other]' (3:19)

As noted above, in some contexts it seems to mean 'why?' or 'what for?':

> *hēśən* 'why?' (27:2; 42:7)
> *təšəxbūr mənsēn hēśən* 'why were you asking about them?' (28:5)

 hḗśən l-āzəməh 'why should I give him (it)?' (89:32)[3]
 təḥaməh hḗśən 'what do you want it for?' (97:38)
 hḗśən nakak 'for what are you going?' (99:36)

In one case *hḗśən* seems to have this meaning in combination with the preposition *k-* (no audio was available to check this):

 hēt k-hḗśən bawməh 'why are you here?' (99:49)

Interrogative *hḗśən* can also be used as an indefinite pronoun 'whatever', though examples are rare:

 hḗśən təḥaymi … hō wəzmōna tīš 'whatever you want … I'll give it to
  you' (99:31)

11.3. *hḗśən mən* 'which? what kind of?'

The interrogative *hḗśən* is combined with the preposition *mən* 'from' to express 'which?' or 'what kind of?', a meaning also often carried by English 'what?'. The position of *mən* is not fixed, and so a pronoun (personal or demonstrative) can intervene between *hḗśən* and *mən*. Examples are:

 hḗśən mən ḥaylət 'what kind of scheme?' (75:11)
 hḗśən mən źəyaft ðīməh 'what wedding feast is this?' (75:5)
 hḗśən mən ġīgēn ðōməh 'what kind of lad is this?' (91:7)
 hḗśən mən śawr 'what kind of plan?' (35:9)
 hḗśən mən bēdi 'what kind of trick?' (72:1)
 hēt hḗśən mən ġayg 'what man are you?' (i.e., 'who are you?') (42:50;
  74:7)
 hḗśən hēt mən ġayg 'what man are you?' (i.e., 'who are you?') (63:4)
 hḗśən hēt mən tēṯ 'what kind of woman are you?' (6:11)
 hḗśən hēt mən mənēdəm 'what kind of person are you?' (20:34)
 hḗśən ðōməh mən ġərōy šūk 'what are you talking about?' (lit. 'what
  kind of words are with you?') (20:13)

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 [3] The translation in Stroomer's edition reads 'why should I give it (to him)?'. The verb *wəzūm* 'give' takes a double direct object (see §8.12), and so an object suffix on the verb can in theory refer to either the patient (English d.o.) or recipient (English i.o.). However, in this passage the suffix must refer to 'him', since the object being given is a female camel (*yəbīt*). The verb 'I should give it (f.)' would be *l-āzəməs*.

An example in an indirect question is:

> *əl wīda hēśən mən məḥnēt yāmōl lā* 'he didn't know what kind of work he might do' (65:2)

11.4. *ḥõ* 'where?'

The interrogative *ḥõ* means 'where?' in both direct and indirect questions:

> *wə-tōmər w-aʾəśēyɛ ḥõ* 'and where are the dates and my supper?' (42:26)
> *ḥõ aʾəśēyɛ* 'where is my supper?' (42:34)
> *aʾayśē ḥõ* 'where is the supper?' (91:17)
> *tēṯi ḥõ* 'where is my wife?' (37:12)
> *ḥəbrətš ḥõ* 'where is your daughter?' (48:8)
> *ḥõ sē* 'where is she?' (65:9)
> *hātəmk ḥõ yəllō* 'where did you spend last night?' (80:2)
> *wadak tīsən ḥõ* 'do you know where they are?' (lit. 'do you know them where (they are)?') (28:4)

The interrogative can be combined with *l-* 'to' (realized as *əl-ḥõ* or *lə-ḥõ*) and *mən* 'from' when used with verbs of motion (or where motion is implied):

> *lə-ḥõ təsyawr* 'where are you going?' (72:2)
> *lə-ḥõ təghēm* 'where are you going?' (72:5)
> *əl-ḥõ sīrōna yəmō* 'where are you going today?' (44:1)
> *mən ḥõ nakak* 'where have you come from?' (80:1)
> *hēt mən ḥõ nakak* 'where do you come from?' (80:20)
> *təḥaymi əl-ḥõ* 'where are you headed?' (85:3)

It is interesting to note that *ḥõ* often appears in phrase-final position, a trait not found with the other interrogatives. This is a tendency, but certainly not a rule, as evident from the examples above.

11.5. *kō* 'why?'

The basic meaning of Mehri *kō* is 'why?', and this is the meaning which it nearly always carries. Examples are:

 wə-kō 'why?' (36:26; 57:9; 97:3)
 ḥaybi wə-kō əl hārəsk lā 'Father, why haven't you gotten married?'
  (97:2)
 kō hēt bawməh 'why are you here?' (3:10)
 kō ətēm bawməh 'why are you (pl.) here?' (82:4) (Stroomer: 'what
  are you here for?')
 wə-kō əl səyərš lā 'why didn't you go?' (97:22)
 kō hēt təbayk 'why are you (m.) crying?' (5:10)
 kō hēt təbēki 'why are you (f.) crying?' (85:4)
 kō tēm təbakyəm 'why are you (pl.) crying?' (36:15)
 kō ətēm k̦əfədkəm 'why have you come?' (74:19)
 kō hēt tabak tīn 'why did you follow us?' (22:11)

Very rarely *kō* seems to mean 'how?', as in:

 wə-kō ʾəḥād yək̦awdər yəġbēr ḥəbhɛ ðə-bər mōtəm 'how can anyone
  meet his parents who have already died?' (20:36)
 wə-kō ġərəbk tay ʾōmər 'how do you know I (can) sing?' (52:7)

In at least one example, *kō* is found used with the relative *ð-* (§3.8.1),
as we saw with *mōn* above (§11.1):

 kō ðə-ġərəbk 'how do you know?' (or: 'how is it that you know?')
  (27:4)

In the last two examples, both of which contain a form of the verb
ġərōb 'know', it is not so clear that *kō* really means 'how?'. It might be
perfectly acceptable to translate as 'why do you know?', with 'why'
meaning not 'what is the purpose of your knowing?' but rather 'by
what reason have you come to know?'. Only in the example preceding
these two (from 20:36) is *kō* more clearly used to mean 'how?'.
 One final example, in which *kō* means 'how about?, what about?', is
unique and possibly erroneous:

 wə-kō həbērkəm 'and how about your camels?' (27:21)

It should be pointed out that Bittner (1914a: 30), following Jahn before
him (1902: 235), gives the word for 'why?' as *wukô* (= *wə-kō*). Wagner
(1953: 60) follows suit. Johnstone (*ML*, p. 200) also notes that *kō*
appears more often as *wə-kō*. As can be seen from the above examples,

kō is indeed often preceded by *wə-*. In many cases, it is not quite appropriate to translate *wə-* as a conjunction, as with the first couple of examples above (36:26; 97:2). For this reason, the *wə-* can indeed be interpreted as simply a part of the interrogative.

11.6. *hībō* 'how? what?'

One cannot provide a simple English translation for Mehri *hībō*, as it has a variety of translations in different contexts. It has already been noted above that there is an overlap in the use of *hībō* and *hēśən*. Many times it corresponds to English 'how?', which is most likely its basic meaning:

> *hībō təṭwahi* 'how will she come?' (75:6)
> *hībō tɛṯk* 'how is your wife?' (97:50) (Stroomer: 'what is your wife like?')
> *hībō ʾəmələš wəṭōməh* 'how have you done this?' (97:51)
> *hībō əl ḳalam tayš (tə)šakfi* 'how did they not let you sleep?' (74:17)
> *hībō* 'how so?' (80:13) (Stroomer: 'what (do you mean)?')
> *hībō ḥayr ḥayrək* 'how is the donkey your donkey?' (46:12)
> *hībō təkūsa ḥənafk* 'how do you find yourself?' (i.e., 'how do you feel?') (84:8)

In other cases it translates as 'what?':

> *hībō śawr* 'what is the plan?' (6:6)
> *hībō ʾāmərk* 'what did you say?' (80:9)
> *tōmər hībō* 'what do you say?' (93:3)
> *ʾətēm tāmərəm hībō* 'what do you say?' (80:16)
> *hībō ʾāmlōna* 'what'll we do?' (98:9)
> *wəlākən hībō* 'but what [do they say]?' (42:3)
> *hībō l-āmōl* 'what should I do?' (37:15)
> *hībō ʾəmələm* 'what did they do?' (74:20)
> *hībō ð-yōmər* 'what was it saying?' (5:4)
> *hībō yāmərən ḥābū* 'what would the people say?' (98:12)
> *hībō śīnəš* 'what do you see?' (98:13)
> *ð-əḥtəwēk aw hībō* 'are you crazy or what?' (20:5)

As can been seen from the above examples, most of the cases in which *hībō* means 'what?' involve a form of the verbs *ʾāmōr* 'say', *ʾaymǝl* 'do',

or, in one case, *śíni* 'see'. This may suggest that we are dealing with an idiomatic use of 'how?' in Mehri. That is to say, in some cases where in English one would use 'what?', Mehri speakers prefer to use 'how?'. So, 'what should I do?' can be literally rendered in Mehri as 'how should I do?'. However, such an idiomatic use is not fixed, since *hḗśən* can also be used with the verbs *ʾāmōr*, *ʾaymǝl*, and *śíni*, as can be seen from the examples given above (§11.2). This means that *hībō* and *hḗśən* are simply synonymous in some environments. We even find both used identically in the same text, in the mouth of the same speaker. For example, we find *hībō ʾǝmǝlǝm* 'what did they do?' (74:20), followed shortly thereafter by *hḗśən ʾǝmǝlǝkǝm* 'what did you do?' (74:21).

In indirect questions, we also find *hībō* meaning either 'how' or 'what, as in:

> *l-ʾād wīda hībō yāmōl lā* 'he did not know at all what to do' (76:3)
> *wādākǝm ḥābū hībō sǝnēt ðīmǝh* 'do you know how the people are this year?' (45:1)

In at least one case, *hībō* is best translated by English 'what kind of?':

> *hībō aġǝrōy ðōmǝh* 'what kind of talk is this?' (20:5)

In a couple of cases, *hībō* means 'why?' or 'how come?':

> *hībō* 'how come?' (27:15)
> *hībō ǝl-ḳǝfēd mǝn ḏ̣ayr ḥayri* 'why should I get off my donkey?' (46:11)

Finally, there is at least one more use of *hībō*, which does not fit with any of the above examples:

> *hībō ḥām* 'how about the dream?' (19:21)

11.7. *mayt* 'when?'

Mehri *mayt* presents no problems in terms of meaning. It is used to mean 'when?' in both direct and indirect questions:

> *mayt hamak tay ðǝ-ʾōmǝr* 'when did you hear me singing?' (52:11)
> *mayt tǝrdēd lǝy* 'when will you come back to me?' (56:5)

wadan lā mayt yənkɛ̄ 'we don't know when it is coming' (45:17)
wadak mayt əl-ttəḳḳəh 'do you know when I should drink it?'
   (101:7)
mən mayt 'since when?' (101:12)

On the temporal particle *mət*, which is derived from *mayt*, see §13.5.3.1.

11.8. *kəm* 'how many? how much?'

Mehri *kəm* is used for the question 'how many?' or 'how much?'. The question '(for) how much?', when used with regards to money, is *bə-kəm*. Among the few examples in Johnstone's texts are:

kəm yūm tṣābərən mən ḥəmoh 'how many days can they go without
   water?' (27:21)
ḥəmawlət bə-kəm 'how much is a camel-load?' (27:11)
bə-kəm tḥōm təśōm lay aməndawḳək 'for how much do you want to
   sell me your rifle?' (39:1)
bə-kəm śamōna tīs 'how much will you sell it for?' (99:50)

On the use of the preposition *b-* as 'for, in exhange for', see §8.2.

11.9. *əl hɛ̃ lā* 'isn't that so?'

In one passage, we find the interrogative phrase *əl hɛ̄ lā*, which acts as a tag question, equivalent to English 'isn't that so?' or 'no?' (French *n'est-ce pas*). The passage is:

hɛ̄t sīrōna gēhəməh, əl hɛ̄ lā 'you'll go tomorrow, no?' (56:1)

It is unclear if this *hɛ̄* is to be connected with the third person pronoun *hɛ̄*.[4] The transcription of this passage in 56:1 should more accurately be *əl hɛ̃ lā* since in the *ML* (p. 150), we find the transcription *əl hã lā*, with a nasalized vowel; the audio recording of this passage suggests a nasalized vowel; in one handwritten version of this text, Johnstone transcribed a nasalized vowel;[5] and in Jibbali we find *ʔɔl hɛ̃ lɔ*.[6]

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[4] In 72:3, it seems that we also have an attestation of *hɛ̄* in its simple meaning 'so, thus'. However, the audio has instead the pronoun *hɛ* 'it', which fits the context better.
[5] I thank A. Lonnet for kindly allowing me to see this handwritten copy of text 56.
[6] Cf. *JL*, p. 93.

CHAPTER TWELVE

PARTICLES

12.1. Coordinating Conjunctions

Following is a list of the basic Mehri coordinating conjunctions:

> *w(ə)-* (var. *u*) 'and'
> *wəlākən* 'but'
> *aw* 'or'
> *wəlā* 'or; or else'

Each of these will be discussed in turn below. For subordinating conjunctions, see §13.4 and §13.5, and on the use of *ʾār (wə-)* as a subordinating conjunction, see below, §12.5.4.

12.1.1 *w(ə)-* 'and'

The most common conjunction in Mehri is the coordinating particle *w(ə)-*, which has the free variant *u-* (< *ʾəw). This particle is used to join two elements within a clause, or to join two clauses. Examples of the former are:

> *ʾāgawz wə-ḥəbantsɛ* 'the woman and her daughters' (15:4)
> *səyərki hō wə-hah* 'he and I went' (18:8)
> *tōmər w-āyś* 'dates and rice' (23:15)
> *aməndawḳi gədət wə-rxayṣət* 'my rifle is good and cheap' (39:4)
> *aġīggēn ḳəway wə-xəfayf* 'the boy was strong and quick' (42:2)
> *təšəwkūf mənwəh u mən tēṯəh* 'she would sleep between him and his wife' (lit. 'between him and between his wife') (46:7)
> *sē wə-ḥaybəs w-aġās w-aġaygəs* 'she and her father and her brother and her husband' (48:33)
> *šay məwsē wə-ḥəbūr* 'it was raining and I was cold' (lit. 'with me were rain and cold') (53:6)
> *hō wə-śōx manan təh* 'the old(er one) and I held him back' (91:7)
> *xams wə-ʾāšrayn ġayg* 'twenty-five men' (lit. 'five and twenty') (104:10)

And some examples of *w(ə)-* used to join two clauses are:

> *hēt ḳənnawn w-ādk ʾəl hēt məhārəs lā* 'you are a child and you can-
>   not get married yet' (8:8)
> *ṣōr u ġəlōk b-aġəggēn* 'he stood and looked at the boy' (22:8)
> *ðōməh amfətēḥ wə-sē bərk aġərfēt ðayk* 'this is the key, and she is in
>   that room' (22:97)
> *yəġərəbay wə-yabrə́ḳa təwalyɛ* 'he recognized me and ran to me'
>   (34:27)
> *ʾagbək bīs wə-sē ʾagəbōt bay* 'I fell in love with her, and she fell in
>   love with me' (38:19)
> *śxəwəlīl wə-šəmrūź* 'they stayed and he became ill' (48:6)
> *śxəwəllūt bərk alang w-aġayg ḳəfūd wə-wkūb əl-ḥōkəm wə-śītəm
>   ləhān šəh* 'she stayed in the launch, and the man got out and went
>   to the ruler('s house) and bought all that he had' (74:12)

In a very few sentences, *wə-* is used following a subordinate clause,
with no real function, for example:

> *tē ð̣ār bayr, wə-hərbā moh* 'then (when they were) at the well, they
>   drew water' (97:10)

On the sequence *əl … w-əl* 'neither … nor', see §13.2.1.

12.1.2. *wəlākən* 'but'

The particle *wəlākən*, clearly borrowed from Arabic, corresponds to
English 'but'. Examples of its use are:

> *hərōm ðə-bəh ḥfūl, wəlākən ð̣ayrəh īðəbōr mēkən* '(we found) a tree
>   that had ripe figs, but there were many hornets on it' (25:3)
> *ḥābū yātəḳaydən bīhəm, wəlākən mən sənayn əlyōməh l-ād ʾəḥād
>   yātəḳaydən bīhəm lā* 'people used to believe in them, but since
>   those years nobody believes in them anymore' (25:19)
> *hō ʾār ḳənnawn, wəlākən hamak* 'I am just a young person, but I've
>   heard' (48:30)
> *šxəbīri, wəlākən hō əl əḳawdər l-əġətayr əngəlīzīyət ʾār xawr* 'they
>   questioned me, but I could speak English only a little' (62:7)
> *bəgawdəh, wəlākən l-ād ləḥāḳəm təh lā* 'they pursued him, but they
>   didn't catch up to him at all' (69:5)

wəlākən hīs śīni ġəyōg həḳbīl ləh, ḳərū aḳatəh 'but when he saw the men coming towards him, he hid his food' (73:3)

In one passage (52:16), we find the form *lākən*, but this is most likely just an error in transcription. The audio has *wəlākən*.

12.1.3 aw 'or'

As a simple coordinating conjunction, *aw* means 'or'. It seems to be restricted to simple 'X or Y' contexts. Examples are:

mən ð̣ār sənēt aw zōyəd 'after a year or more' (16:1)
ð-əḥtəwēk aw hībō 'have you gone mad or what?' (20:5)
ʾətēm axayr mənay aw hō axayr mənkēm 'you are better than me or I am better than you' (42:12)
ərbōt aw yətēt bū 'four or six people' (71A:1)
hāl ʾəḥād aw wəḥśūk 'with someone or by yourself?' (80:5)
wəḳēya b-amkōnkəm aw śəlyēla 'will you stay at your place or will you move?' (96:4)
hamak tay aw lā 'did you hear me or not?' (96:7)
ṣadḳ aw bēdi 'the truth or a lie' (99:1)

In some passages, *aw* functions as a subordinating conjunction 'unless', as in:

əl hō kəwt̠ōna hūk ʾəlā aw bɛr ġərəbk tīk 'I won't tell you unless I know you' (12:7)
ḥəggūt ləh tét̠əh m-ād yəhērəs aw yəḥōm yəxōli 'his wife stopped him from marrying (again) unless he would get divorced' (32:28)
ftəkōna lā aw təśtōm hayni jənbəyyət 'I won't go unless you buy me a dagger' (34:33)

One wonders if *aw* in such contexts derives from *ʾār u* (see §12.5.4).

12.1.4. wəlā 'or; or else'

The conjunction *wəlā* (vars. *wəlē, wəla, wəlá, wə-lā, wə-la, wəlla*) is occasionally used, like *aw*, to indicate simple 'X or Y', as in:

> ḥāmēh wəla aġatəh wəla aġāh 'his mother or his sister or his broth-
>   er' (54:3)
> hām ṣərūt lay wəla rəddūt lay 'if she stops or comes back at me'
>   (54:18)
> ələṭməs b-ʾārəfēt wəlā bə-rəyēʾ 'I strike it with a palm branch or with
>   a lung' (93:2)
> nəḥā wəḵēya b-amkōnən tɛ̄ gēhəməh wəlā bād gēhəməh 'we will be
>   at our place until tomorrow or the day after tomorrow' (96:5)

But more often, wəlā has the meaning 'or else', in which case it nor-
mally follows an imperative and precedes a future tense (imperfect or
active participle):

> kəlēṭi lay b-aṣədḵ wə-lā wtġōna ḥənōfi 'tell me the truth, or I'll kill
>   myself!' (37:13)
> ʾāzēmi ḥənafš, wəlá səḥṭōna ṭād mən ḥəbənšɛ 'give yourself to me,
>   or else I will kill one of your sons!' (48:23)
> ʾōbəl, wəlā yəxlīfək ġəyōg ð-axayr mənk 'try, or else men better than
>   you will replace you!' (76:5)
> āzɛ́mən xəṭawrḵiyən, wəlá məšənḥərūtən bīkəm 'give us our sticks,
>   or else we will lodge a complaint against you!' (91:24)
> ʾāmayli hayni ḥaylət wəlā mətōna ṣərōməh 'make a solution for me,
>   or else I will die now!' (99:29)

On the interrogative particle wəlɛ̄, which can also have the meaning
'perhaps', see §12.5.17. This particle is certainly related to the conjunc-
tion wəlā historically, but the fact that the former is normally tran-
scribed with ɛ̄, and the latter with ā, makes it difficult to determine if
they should be considered the same in synchronic terms.

12.2. Exclamations

There are numerous exclamatory particles in Mehri. Examples of these
are:

ʾabdan 'never! no!'

ahā (var. ɛhɛ̄) 'yes! uh-huh!'
    (see also §2.2)

ʾōhi 'oh!' (rare)

barr 'never! not at all!' (rare)

bas(s) 'enough! that's all'

bas(s) mən X 'enough of X!'

bə-haw 'not at all!'

ðɛ̄ 'well now…' (rare)

ġədɛwwən 'let's go!'

həs-taw 'very good! ok!'

ḥāk 'here you are!' (rare)

ḥāšē l- 'far be it from (s.o.)!'

ḥāyyə būk 'greetings to you!'

lā 'no!'

lawb 'indeed!'

l-azīz X 'oh woe for X' (rare)

mayxāləf 'nevermind!'

əstəhōl 'good fortune!'

wə-hīh 'indeed! oh!' (rare)

wə-lū 'even so!' (§13.4.4)

xaybən 'all right! well…'

yā ḥay b- 'welcome!' (followed
    by suffix or noun)

yā-ḥōl (var. yā-ḥawl) 'yes! in-
    deed!'

yā-rayt (+ subj.) 'would that!
    I wish!' (rare) (see §7.1.3)

yɛ́-yɛ́ 'ok! yes!'

yəx 'ugh!'

12.3. Vocatives

The vocative particle in Mehri is ā (var. a), for example:

ḥəððōr, ā ḥəbray 'look out, my son!' (22:44)

a ḥaybi, hō kəsk śī 'Father, I have found something' (37:22)

həmēm a ḥəbənyɛ 'listen, my sons!' (50:4)

a ǵiggēn, wəlɛ̄ təḳayr 'O young man, can you read?' (71:2)

ā kəlōb 'O you dogs!' (91:20)

In several texts, we find the vocative particle yā (var. ya), which is pre-
sumably an Arabism:

ya bā nəwās, ḳəlɛ mənk amzɛ̄ḥ 'O Abu Nuwas, leave off joking'
    (36:31)

ya ḥāməy 'O my mother!' (65:13)

yā āzīz 'O Aziz!' (75:23)

ya ḥaybi 'O my father!' (97:42)

There are also a number of cases where no vocative particle is used at
all, for example:

ḥaybi, aġayg əl fəśō lā 'Father, the man has not had lunch' (22:14)
aġayti, fāš bay 'Sister, you have hurt me' (24:27)
aġay, amarḳəḥ 'Brother, drink up' (59:8)

The vocative word in each of these last three examples is a familial term with a 1cs possessive suffix ('my father', 'my sister', 'my brother'). The option to omit a vocative particle is presumably restricted to such cases, though more data are needed to confirm this.

12.4. Genitive Exponent *ð-* ('of')

The genitive exponent in Mehri is *ð-*, corresponding to English 'of'.[1] This particle, like the prepositions *b-*, *h-*, *k-*, and *l-* (see §8.1), is pre-fixed to the noun and often has the helping vowel *ə*. With the exception of the possessive pronominal suffixes (see §3.2.1), the particle *ð-* is, for nearly all nouns, the only way to express a genitive relationship. Examples are:

ḥəbrīt ðə-ḥōkəm 'the daughter of the ruler' or 'the ruler's daughter' (48:6)
brīt ðə-tōgər 'a daughter of a merchant' or 'a merchant's daughter' (75:1)
ḥəbrē ð-aġah 'the son of his brother'(76:1)
xā ð-abayt 'the door of the house' (75:8)
bə-rḥəbēt ðə-ḥaybəs 'in her father's country' (48:33)
að̣āy ð-ənsay 'the smell of a human' (63:8)
aġayg ð-aġəgənōt 'the girl's husband' (75:10)
tēṯ ðə-ḥəbrē ðə-ḥōkəm 'the wife of the ruler's son' (85:28)
aðōrə ð-ašōbəʾ ð-aġatəh 'the blood of his sister's finger' (48:18)

As evident from the first two examples above, the noun preceding the genitive exponent can be definite or indefinite. And as evident from the last two examples, a string of multiple genitives is possible.

Like English 'of' and similar particles in other languages, Mehri *ð-* can also be used to indicate the materials from which something is made, to describe the contents of something, or to specify the particular type of something. Examples are:

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[1] Watson (2009) is an important study of the genitive exponent *ð-* and other genitive constructions in Yemeni Mehri.

xətōwəm ð-əðəhēb 'gold rings' (88:5)
ḥərawf ð-ðəhēb 'gold coins' (97:43)
fīgōn ð-moh 'a cup of water' (37:24)
gənyət ð-ʾāyś 'a sack of rice' (98:4)
tōgər ð-ʾāyś 'the rice merchant' (66:2)
məstōn ð-nēxəl ð-tōmər 'a row of date-palms' (37:1)
abayr ð-ḥəmoh 'the well of water' (48:2)
ḥəlēb ð-ḥārawn 'the milking of the goats' (47:2)

As discussed in §5.1, an adjective modifying the first member of a genitive phrase will follow the entire phrase. Whether an adjective in such a position modifies the first or second member of the phrase, if not clear from gender/number agreement, must be gleaned from context. Examples are:

ḥəbrīt ð-aṣəyyōd ḥənōb 'the old(er) daughter of the fisherman' (97:33)
ḥəbrē ðə-ḥōkəm akənnawn 'the small (younger) son of the ruler' (97:46)
ḥayb ð-aġīggēn amərayź 'the father of the sick boy' (65:8)

In the first example above, the adjective *ḥənōb* is feminine and so must modify *ḥəbrīt*. But in the other two examples, the adjective agrees in gender and number with either noun. If context allowed it, these last two sentences could be translated instead as 'the son of the young ruler' and 'the sick father of the boy'.

As already noted (§4.6), the genitive exponent is sometimes absent in partitive constructions. On the use of the genitive exponent *ð-* following certain numbers, see §9.1.4 and §9.3.

12.5. Miscellaneous Particles

12.5.1. *ʾād*

The temporal particle *ʾād* has a variety of meanings, including 'still', 'while', 'yet', 'again', and 'before', though 'still' is the most common of these. When *ʾād* means 'still', it is most often followed by a pronominal suffix. Some examples with the meaning 'still' are:

ʾād fəṭənək hēxər ð-ənkayn 'do you still remember the old man who
     came to us?' (22:73)

ənwōḳa ʾādən b-amkōnən 'we'll still be in our place' (29:10)

ādəh līsən faḳḥ ðə-warx 'they still had half a month (left)' (30:9)

bɛr hē xəmhēt, ʾādəh əl śīni sɛ́kənəh lā 'it was already the fifth (day),
     and he still had not seen his community' (32:5)

hēt ʾādək ḳənnawn 'you are still a child' (34:8)

ʾādsən šīn wəḳōna ʾašrayn rawn 'we still have about twenty goats'
     (39:14)

ādi ðə-təlayk tīs 'I still regret it' (53:6)

ʾādi bay ayəṣayt 'I still had the fear in me' (54:15)

bər dəxaləm, hīs ʾādhəm faxrəh, l-ʾəḥād mənhēm yəbayd 'they had
     vowed, when they were still together, that neither of them would
     lie' (74:2)

In about seventeen passages in the texts, ʾād (always followed by a suf-
fix) is used in a dependent clause, where it has the meaning 'while' or
'while still'. In a dozen of these cases, we simply find the set phrase ʾād-
(+ suffix) lə-wṭakəməh, meaning something like 'while like this' or
'while doing this' (lə-wṭakəməh 'thus, in that way'). Examples are:

w-ādəh śxəwəlūl, nūka aməwsē 'while he was sitting down, the rain
     came' (3:2)

ʾādhəm lə-wṭākəməh, nakam aġəyōg 'while they were like this, along
     came the men' (24:36)

aḳōfi bə-ḥnafk, ʾādək ḥəśaym 'go away, while you are still respec-
     table!' (37:23)

ʾādəh l-əwṭākəməh, śīni śīwōṭ ð-aḳēyōy 'while he was at this, he saw
     the fire of (some) demons' (76:9)

ḥōm əl-gəhōm ʾādəh šay aḳāṣəm 'I want to go while it's still cool out'
     (94:35)

ʾādəs təġətōri šəh, ṣāḳawt līs ḥəbrəts 'while she was talking to him,
     her daughter called to her' (99:45)

In just one passage (35:13), ʾād, without a suffix, is best translated as
'yet'. In a second passage (31:2), ʾād probably has this meaning, though
it is not completely clear from context:

ʾād wəzyēma tīn śxōf śī 'are you going to give us any milk yet?'
     (35:13)

ʾād ʾəḥād śīni ḥazyən 'has anyone seen our goats?' (31:2)

In just two passages, ʾād has the meaning 'again', a meaning that ʾād very often has in a negative sentence (see §13.2.2). In one of these two examples, ʾād is used in combination with zōyəd, as it often is in a negative sentence (§13.2.5):

hām ʾād həwrədk ḥəmoh ðōməh zōyəd, ðə-nəwtəġk 'if you bring (them) down to this water again, we will kill you' (10:9)
ʾād tāḵāy dənyēt 'might you be pregnant again?' (101:16)

In a related use, ʾād can mean 'another', in the sense of 'additional' or 'one more', though examples are few:

xəṭarkəm ʾād yənkɛ́ mawsəm mən sərīh 'do you think another monsoon boat will be coming after it?' (45:16)
ʾāmawr ʾād lang ṭāṭ məhaḵbəl 'they said another launch was coming' (45:17)

In one passage (82:2), ʾād clearly means 'before':

nəḥōm nəwbadəh, ʾādəh əsḥarīn 'we should shoot him, before he bewitches us' (82:2)

This meaning is also found in a couple of negative sentences, where the sense 'before' derives from the literal meaning 'when not yet' (see §13.2.2). There are also about three or four passages in which ʾād has no clear function. On negative l-ʾād, see further in §13.2.2.

12.5.2. adamməh

The particle adamməh is attested only once in Johnstone's texts, meaning 'probably'. The context is:

adamməh bərəh k-ʾəḥād ġayrən 'he is probably with somebody else' (41:4)

12.5.3. ʾamma

The particle *ʾámma* has the meaning 'as for' or 'but', used to stress a contrasting subject. It occurs in more than two dozen places in Johnstone's texts. Examples are:

> *ʾamma bāl ḥārawn hīs əlyēk ð-yəntawḥən, həwrōd ḥazhɛ* 'as for the goat herder, while those guys were fighting, he took his goats down to the water' (61:6)
> *w-ʾamma ġəyōg śāṯayt … fəlēt* 'as for the three men … they fled' (64:33)
> *ʾamma tēṯ śxəwəllūt bərk alang, w-aġayg ḳəfūd* 'as for the woman, she stayed in the launch, and the man disembarked' (74:12)

In about half of the attested passages, *ʾamma* appears twice (*ʾamma … w-ʾamma*), contrasting two explicit subjects, as in:

> *ʾamma ṭayt, ṣərūt, w-amma ṭayt, wəkəbūt bərk amkōn* 'one stood (outside), while the other went into the place' (2:3)
> *ʾamma aṣōyəġ šəwkūf … w-amma aġayg aźayf śxəwəlūl* 'the goldsmith fell asleep … but the guest stayed (as he was)' (22:62)
> *ʾamma ḥārawn wə-həbēr təkūnən bīsən śəxōf lā … w-ʾamma əbḳār təkūnən bīsən śəxōf* 'the goats and camels, they have no milk … but the cows do have milk' (58:2)[2]
> *ʾamma ṭroh rəkəbō bərk hawri, w-ʾamma ṭāṯ rēkəb bərk alang* 'two got into the canoe, and one got into the launch' (60:6)

In three texts (1, 4, 71A), *ʾamma* serves to indicate more generally the beginning of a story, in which cases a decent translation is 'now', for example:

> *w-amma kəwṯēt ðə-bā nəwās* 'and now a story of Abu Nuwas' (1:1)
> *ʾamma anəḥāg ðə-bdūn* 'and now (about) the game *bedun*' (71A:1)

In text 75, *ʾamma* occurs three times in conjunction with the phrase *mən aṭərēf ð-*. The phrase *mən aṭərēf ð-* (cf. *ṭərēf* 'side') is attested once

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[2] The verb 3fp imperfect *təkūnən* agrees with *ḥārawn wə-həbēr* 'the goats and camels' in the first instance, and *əbḳār* 'cows' in the second. This is unexpected, since the grammatical subject of both clauses is *śəxōf* 'milk'. Moreover, a verb is not normally used in this type of 'have' construction; see §13.3.2.

meaning 'from among' (see §8.21), but all together, *w-ʾamma mən aṭərēf ð-* just means 'and now about':

> *w-ʾamma mən aṭərēf ð-aġayg* 'and now about the man' (75:10, 12, 14)

12.5.4. *ʾār*

The particle *ʾār* is extremely common, but its exact meaning is hard to pin down. It appears twice in the *ML*, under the root √ʿr (p. 26), where it is glossed as 'but; just, only; except; indeed', and under the root √ġyr (p. 147), where it is glossed as 'except, only, just; certainly'. It seems to have all of these meanings, as well as the meanings 'unless' and 'in fact'. There are also cases in which *ʾār* seems to have little or no meaning at all. The basic, or at least the most common, meaning of *ʾār* is 'only, just', for example:

> *šay ʾār hah* 'I have only him' (2:4)
> *hō ʾār ṭāṭ* 'I am only one (person)' (20:12)
> *nūka ʾār bə-ḥīṭār* 'they gave birth only to female kids' (30:11)
> *kūsa ʾār kabś* 'he found only a lamb' (37:13)
> *məhawf tay ʾār mən ḏ̣ār ʾas* 'you will pay me only after difficulty' (39:13)
> *hō ʾār ḳənnawn* 'I am only a child' (48:30)
> *ḏayrhəm ʾār ṣəbōyəġ* 'they wore only indigo-dyed robes' (104:32)

On the combination *ðək ʾār*, see §12.5.8. Often, *ʾār* meaning 'only' is used in conjunction with the negative element *əl* or *əl … lā* (cf. French *ne … que*). The meaning is no different from when *ʾār* is used in a positive phrase. Examples are:

> *ʾəl šīhəm ʾār hēt* 'they have only you' (18:18)
> *hō əl šay ʾār ðōməh* 'I have only this' (73:5)
> *hō əl əḳawdər l-əġətayr əngəlīzīyət əlā ʾār xawr* 'I could speak English only a little' (62:7)
> *hō ʾəl šay ʾār ḥōṭəri ṭroh* 'I have only two female kids' (89:8)
> *həftōk adəšdāštəh bərhoh w-əl həbḳō ʾār awzārəh* 'Berhoh took off his dishdashah and left on only his waistcloth' (104:18)

From this use of ʾār meaning 'only' in a negative phrase, ʾār has developed into a pseudo-preposition meaning 'except' or 'but' in a negative sentence. For example, the above sentence from 18:18 translates as 'they have only you', but this is semantically the same as 'they do not have (anyone) except you'. We find that ʾār really does mean 'except' or 'but' in many cases; for example, a sentence like ʾəl šīs wəlēd ʾār hē (36:3) really means 'she had no children but him', not the more literal 'she had no children, only him'. However, that ʾār is grammatically not a preposition is proven by the fact that it can be followed by an independent pronoun or by another preposition. For further examples on the use of ʾār as a pseudo-preposition 'except', see §8.1.

The particle ʾār can also function as a subordinator meaning 'unless', in which case it is usually followed by the conjunction wə- (var. u). There are about a dozen examples in the texts. It is unclear if the conjunction is required, since there is some uncertainty about the transcription. In two cases, the transcription does not include the conjunction, but it is audible in the audio version (32:15, 65:11). In a third case (102:7), the conjunction is missing, but no audio version was available for comparison. In one case (75:24), we have the conjunction in the transcription, but not on the audio! Therefore, it remains uncertain whether or not ʾār is required to be the combination ʾār wə- in order to mean 'unless', though the available evidence suggests this to be the case. Some of the attested examples are:

> məšfəḳāta lā ʾār kāl ð̣-iḥōm yāzémi śaḥzi 'I will not marry unless whoever wants to, will give me my frankincense trees' (32:15) (audio: ʾār u kāl)
>
> ð̣-əlūbədəh, ʾār u təḥaym tarabam tay 'I will shoot him, unless you give me safe-conduct' (47:11)
>
> əl təhəwrūd lā ʾār wə-təḥōm bə-ḳəwwēt 'don't bring (them) down to the water, unless you want (to do it) by force' (64:3)
>
> tāśōś lā, ʾār səbṭāt bə-xəṭrāḵ ṭawr əṭroh 'she won't get up, unless she is hit twice with a stick' (65:11) (audio: ʾār wə-səbṭāt)
>
> ʾabdan, ʾār wə-təḵalbəm āzīz ṣəḥ 'not at all, unless you return Aziz to life' (75:24) (but ʾār wə- missing in audio!)
>
> śāmīta təh layš lā, ʾār wə-təḥaymi təšəkfi hāl aġaygi 'I won't sell it to you unless you sleep with my husband' (85:29)
>
> əl ḳədərk l-əsyēr lā ʾār u məzzək 'I can't go on unless I smoke' (94:26)

There are a couple of cases where Johnstone (or Stroomer) translated ʾār as 'unless', and even though this works, ʾār is really being used as a pseudo-preposition 'except'. For example:

> śīwōṭ əl tənūfa lā ʾār hām sē nxali ḥəmōh 'fire is of no use, except if it is under the water' (Johnstone: 'fire is of no use unless it is under the water') (36:29)
>
> āḳā hayni lə-hīs ḥaybi ʾār bə-rźəwēʾ 'be like my father to me [forbidden to me as a husband] except with a peace-offering' (Johnstone: 'unless there is a peace-offering') (102:19)

As already mentioned above, the particle ʾār can also mean 'certainly', 'really', or 'indeed'. There are about twenty such examples in the texts, some of which are:

> nəḥā ʾār ənḥōm 'we really want to' (28:14)
>
> hēt əl tənūfa lā. lawb hō ʾār ənūfa '(Mother:) you are of no use. (Son:) yes, I am of use!' (33:1-2)
>
> hō ʾār məhawf tīk 'I will indeed pay you' (39:12)
>
> təšhōl ʾār gəzēʾ 'you deserve retribution indeed' (73:11)
>
> ðōməh ʾār ðə-hō 'this is really mine' (77:3)
>
> səlōmət yəmō ʾār ġalyət lūk 'safety today will be expensive for you indeed' (83:6)
>
> hēt ʾār məzzək yəmō. wəlā məzzōna təmbōku wəlā b-ərṣōṣ 'you will certainly smoke today. You will smoke either tobacco or bullets' (94:26)

In five passages, ʾār follows the particle hām 'if' and is best translated as 'in fact' or 'really':

> hām ʾār fəḳawk, hō ḥōm 'if in fact he lets you marry me, I am willing' (38:19)
>
> hām ʾār matḥənək məhawf tīk 'if in fact you are upset, I will pay you' (39:14)
>
> hām ʾār ḳalam tay xəlyɛ … ənkōna tīkəm 'if in fact my uncles let me … I will come to you ' (44:6)
>
> hām ʾār təḥamki, l-āmərō 'if you want us to (sing), we'll both sing' (52:6)
>
> hām ʾār aṣadḳək, xṭark, tāfēd 'if in fact you are telling the truth, go on and jump!' (99:18)

There are about ten cases in which *ʾār* is found at the beginning of an interrogative phrase and is translatable as 'well (then)' or 'but'. Some examples are:

> *ʾār kō hēt təġawlək bay* 'well then, why are you looking at me?' (22:25)
> *ʾār tēṭi ḥõ* 'well, where is my wife?' (37:12)
> *ʾār ðə-hanayš hēśən* 'well, what did you intend?' (59:11)
> *ʾār hēśən mən bəhlīt baxaṣ ðə-rōh* 'but what kind of word is *baxaṣ* of the head?' (80:15)

Finally, as with *ʾād* (§12.5.1), there are about three or four cases in which *ʾār* just has no clear function.

12.5.5. *əbōb(ən)*

The particle *əbōb(ən)* occurs just three times in Johnstone's texts, in three different forms: *əbōb*, *əbōbən*, and *əbōbnə*. It means something like 'I beg you!', in an exclamatory sense, and can be followed by a subject pronoun for emphasis.

> *əbōbən ətēm həgnəm aźayga* 'I beg you, warm the pen' (26:9)
> *əbōb ḥəbrəy šāməni* 'I beg you, my son, fall in with my wishes!' (90:11)[3]
> *əbōbnə ətēm, təḳlēm təh bawməh lā* 'I beg you, do not leave him here!' (91:9)

12.5.6. *bər*

The particle *bər* (vars. *bɛr, bar*) is extremely common, appearing roughly one hundred and sixty times in Johnstone's texts. It occurs on its own, as well as with pronominal suffixes. It does not have a single, well-defined meaning, but instead has several uses. In conjunction with a verb (nearly always a perfect), or in a non-verbal sentence, *bər* can mean 'already'. If the sentence is non-verbal, *bər* is used with a

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[3] Johnstone's text has a 2ms imperfect or subjunctive form *təšāməni* (with 1cs object suffix), which, if correct, warrants a translation "I beg you, my son, that you'll fall in with my wishes". I suggest instead the imperative *šāməni*, which is confirmed by the audio. It is true that the form *təšāməni* could be pronounced *šāməni*, without the initial *t-* (see §2.1.5), but the initial *t-* is audible in 90:8, where the form *təšāməni* is certainly a 2ms imperfect or subjunctive.

pronominal suffix, while if the sentence is verbal, there is usually no suffix. Examples with the meaning 'already' are:

bɛr ṭəyəbk mənsēn 'I've already had my fill of them' (20:16)
hō bər ʾāmərk hūk mən fənōhən 'I already told you before' (24:53)
aġāk bər mōt u bər ḳəbēr 'your brother has already died and been buried' (40:10)
aġəgənōt bərs bə-bayt 'the girl is already in the house' (48:9)
bər amarḵḥək 'have you drunk (the coffee) already?' (59:9)
hō bər śabak 'I've already had enough' (73:6)
mət awōðən fēgər, tāḳāy bərš əl-xā ð-abayt 'when he calls the dawn prayer, you should already be at the door of the house' (75:8)
hēt bərk śəb ṣərōməh 'you're a big boy already now' (89:15)

Sometimes the word 'already' is superfluous in English, and the Mehri phrase containing *bər* is best translated with a simple perfect or pluperfect, as in:

ḥāgōr bər ḳərū moh 'the slave had hidden water' (5:2)
hənkūr ðə-sē fəwtōt u bɛr źāṭōt amōləh kalləh 'he realized she had run away and had taken all his wealth' (22:70)
wə-bar ḳəwbēh kabś 'and they have turned him into a lamb' (40:7)
bɛr hayni sēt mənhēm 'I have been (away) a long time from them' (44:2)

A second very common use of *bər*, and one that seems to be an extension of the previous meaning, is its use in temporal clauses (following *hīs*, *mət*, *tɛ̄*, or *tɛ̄ hīs*; on temporal clauses, see §13.5.3 and its subsections). If a temporal clause is non-verbal and has a pronominal subject, then *bər* (with a suffix) is required as a placeholder for the subject. But we find *bər* used in verbal temporal clauses as well, usually indicating a perfect or pluperfect. Some examples are:

hīs bəri bərk amərkēb, dəfɛ́ti tɛ̄t ġəlayðət 'when I was in the boat, a fat woman slapped me' (40:25)
wə-əbḳār bār hīs bɛr ḥəlawbəsən 'and the cows went away when they had milked them' (35:7)
mət bərsən bərk ḥəmōh, śəlēl xəlawḳīsən 'when they are in the water, take their clothes' (37:3)
mət bər təwū, ṣāḳəh 'when he has eaten, call him' (22:88)

tē bərhəm śíyəx, hamam b-ḥōkəm ð-agzayrət 'when they were grown, they heard about the ruler of the island' (74:8)

tē ʾāṣər bɛr ḥābū šəwkīf, təwū ġayg yəšəwkūf 'when, one night, the people had gone to sleep (or: were asleep), they [witches] ate a man who was sleeping' (2:2)

sīrō tē bərhi bə-ḳā ṭāṭ 'they went off until they were in a certain place' (72:3)

tē hīs bərhəm bə-ḥōrəm, kūsəm ġayg ʾāwēr 'when they were on the way, they found a blind man' (46:9)

Further examples of *bər* in temporal clauses, along with additional discussion, can be found in §13.5.3 and its subsections.

In a very few cases, *bər* serves as a placeholder after other particles or expressions:

adamməh bərəh k-ʾəḥād ġayrən 'he is probably with somebody else' (41:4)

l-əkīrən bəri hāl ḥāmɛ́y 'I wish I were with my mother' (42:23)

wə-śafi bəri bərk ʾāmḳ ð-abḳār 'and there I was in the middle of the cows' (47:5)

A third use of *bər* is in conjunction with the verb *ḥōm* (see §7.3.4), together with which it means 'be about to' or 'nearly'. *Bər* is found used this way only about eight times in Johnstone's texts. Some of these attestations are:

bəri ḥōm l-əwbads 'I nearly shot her' (or: 'I was about to shoot her') (54:13)

b-xayr u bərs təḥōm təhahḳəṭ '(the camel) is well and about to give birth' (63:15)

tē kə-sōbəḥ bərəh yəḥōm yəmīt 'then in the morning he was nearly dead' (or: 'about to die') (75:18)

kəsk aġayg ðə-bərəh yəḥōm yəhwē 'I found the man about to fall down' (77:6)

ḳəlyīta tē bərəh yəḥōm yəsyēr 'we will leave it until he is about to go' (91:26)

Finally, in a few passages, *bər* seems to mark something like a perfect progressive:

hō bəri śātōḳək əl-ḥəbyɛ 'I have been missing my parents' (20:63)
hah bɛr kərmūk əwṭōməh 'he has been acting so generously to you'
    (22:52)
bəri ð-əmtanyən tīkəm 'I have been hoping for you (to come)' (42:6)

There are perhaps a dozen occurrences of *bər* that do not fit in with
one of the above uses, and in which *bər* does not seem to have a dis-
cernible function.

12.5.7. *dawn-*

The particle *dawn-* is used only with a second person suffixed pro-
noun, and is translated either as an imperative 'take!' or as a slightly
more polite 'you may have'. The preposition *b-* is required before the
object. Following are all of the examples in the texts:

dawnək bīhəm 'take them!' (20:50)
dawnək hēt b-əḥkawmət 'you take (over) the government' (20:78)
dawnək bə-ḥəkəmti 'you may have my government' (42:51)

The example from 20:50 comes in response to someone who used the
command *ndō* 'give!' (see below, §12.5.13).

12.5.8. *ðək*

The particle *ðək*, which is a reduced form of the far demonstrative *ðēk*
(§3.4), can be used as an introductory particle, equivalent to English
'it's (just) that…' or 'it's because…'. It occurs seven times in the texts
with this meaning, all but once in combination with the particle *ʾār*
'only' (see §12.5.4). Examples are:

ðək ʾār ʾəḥād mənkēm ġəb ənxāhɛ 'it's because one of you excreted
    under it' (3:16)
ðək ʾār nəḥagkən 'it's just that you've been amusing yourselves'
    (26:16)
ðək ʾār hēt təhəǧnayni 'you are just imagining (things)' (lit. 'it's just
    that you are imagining') (64:17)
ðək təkūn təġətōri kə-gənnawnisɛ 'it's just that she is in converse
    with her jinns' (65:11)
ðək ʾār yəṣṣək 'it's just that you're afraid' (91:19)

There is an eighth occurrence of *ðək*, which seems to mean something like 'as'. It is not clear if it should be interpreted as the same particle *ðək* discussed above:

> *lawb, tōmər hēt ðək ḥaybək yōmər* 'indeed, you sing as your father does' (52:1)

12.5.9. *ġədɛwwən*

The particle *ġədɛ́wwən* has the meaning 'let's go!' or 'come on!' and can be followed by a prepositional phrase. It does not decline in any way. Some examples of its use are:

> *ʾāmōr hīhəm: ġədɛwwən* 'he said to them: let's go!' (19:13)
> *ʾāmawr: ġədɛwwən təwōli śɛ́rəʾ. ʾāmōr: ġədɛwwən* 'they said: let's go to the judge! He said: let's go!' (23:11)
> *ġədɛwwən hāl ḥəkawmət* 'let's go to the authorities!' (46:14)
> *ġədɛwwən məhēśən tīk* 'come on, I'll show you!' (65:8)
> *ġədɛwwən təwōli ḥābū* 'let's go to the people!' (77:4)
> *ġədɛwwən təwēhɛ* 'let's go to him!' (94:47)

In a couple of places, *ġədɛwwən* is followed by a 1cp subjunctive verb, in which case it can be translated as above, or sometimes better 'let's go and...!':

> *ġədɛwwən nəśnē hərōm* 'let's go and see the tree' (3:16)
> *ġədɛwwən nətbēs* 'come on, let's follow her!' (94:22)

It should be mentioned that Johnstone lists a shorter form *ġədɛw* 'go!' in his *ML* (p. 132), but this does not occur in the texts.

12.5.10. *lēzəm*

The indeclinable particle *lēzəm* (var. *lāzəm*), undoubtedly borrowed from Arabic *lāzim*, has the meaning of 'must', 'have to', or 'it is necessary that'. It is followed by a subjunctive or, to indicate an explicit future tense, a participle. It can also be used without a following verb, in which case the verb 'be' is implied. Some examples from the texts are:

lēzəm l-əsḥōṭ hīkəm 'I must slaughter for you' (4:6)
lēzəm ərdɛ́h bəh rawrəm 'I must throw him into the sea' (20:27)
lāzəm ʾayśēk hənīn 'you must have supper with us' (lit. 'your supper must (be) with us') (22:57)
lāzəm nəftēk 'we have to leave' (34:31)
lāzəm əftəkōna 'you will have to leave' (34:32)
lēzəm əfśēkəm hənay 'you must have lunch with me' (lit. 'your lunch must (be) with me') (36:19)
lēzəm ðəkyērɛ ḥaybətk 'they will have to mention your camel' (63:6)
lāzəm yəkawn təmōm 'they must be an even number' (71A:1)
lēzəm tərtayḵ hayni awərḵāt ðīməh 'you must read this note for me' (85:18)

12.5.11. *mākənnay*

The particle *mākənnáy* occurs just four times in Johnstone's texts. Johnstone glosses this particle as 'as for' in his *ML* (p. 264; cf. the much more common particle *ʾamma*, §12.5.3), but it really only has this meaning in one passage:

w-*ətēm əntəḵayl. mākənnay hō wḵōna k-həbēr* 'you choose. As for me, I will stay with the camels' (102:1)

It has a similar contrastive meaning in one other passage:

wə-*mākənnay hām ʾəḥād hārōs bə-ġəggēt…* 'but if someone marries a (previously unmarried) girl…' (100:7)

Twice, *mākənnay* occurs in conjunction with *xəṭərāt (ṭayt)* 'once', and only seems to serve to mark the beginning of a story. The phrase can be translated as 'now once…'. These passages are:

u *mākənnay xəṭərāt kəlūṯ līn ġayg…* 'now once, a man told us (the following)…' (81:3)
mākənnay xəṭərāt ṭayt ð-əwxafn b-aźayga ðəkəməh 'now once we were staying in that cave…' (89:1)

However, *xəṭərāt* 'once' is much more often used alone at the beginning of a story, with no difference in meaning (e.g., 49:1; 74:1).

12.5.12. *mō*

The very rare particle *mō* is glossed in Johnstone's *ML* (p. 260) as 'well; indeed'. Its exact meaning is unclear from the two attestations in the texts. These are, with Johnstone's exact translations:

> *fəṭōn mō* 'do please remember!' (57:13)
> *mō nḥā śxəwlūlən* 'we stayed indeed' (60:13)

In the first example, *mō* follows an imperative. Based on the context of the story it seems to add urgency to the imperative, or possibly means 'please' (as Johnstone translated). In the second example, *mō* is translated in the texts as 'indeed', but the same passage is translated in the *ML* (p. 260) as 'well, we stayed'.[4] Based on the context, the latter makes more sense. Overall, it seems that *mō* has little semantic value. On a very likely third attestation of *mō* in 52:3, see §3.2.3, n. 2. In this third case, *mō* also seems to add urgency to an imperative.

12.5.13. *ndō*

The particle *ndō* (variously transcribed *əndō*, *əndoh*, *ndōh*, and *ndoh*) seems to be a frozen imperative form. When followed by a noun or pronominal suffix, it has the meaning 'give here!' or 'give me!', but when followed by a subjunctive verb, it has the meaning 'let me!'. Unlike a regular imperative, however, it does not decline for gender or number. The attestations of this particle are the following:

> *ndōh mənš aṣayġət* 'hand over your jewelry!' (lit. 'give from you the jewelry') (3:5)
> *əndō aməndawḳ* 'give me your rifle!' (20:49)
> *əndōhəm* 'give them to me!' (24:7)
> *əndoh fʿəmka* 'give me your feet!' (24:28)
> *ndoh əl-ḳṭaʿaš* 'let me cut you!' (75:18)
> *ndoh əl-śnē xaṭ* 'let me see the letter!' (75:21)

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[4] The audio has *wə-nḥā* rather than *mō nḥā*, but given that this passage appears in the *ML* (p. 260) with *mō*, I will assume that the text is correct and the reader on the audio was mistaken.

12.5.14. śaf

The particle *śaf*, which occurs roughly twenty times in Johnstone's texts, has the meaning 'it happened/turned out that' or 'as it happened/turned out'. The bare form *śaf* is used when it is followed by a nominal subject, but it takes a pronominal suffix when the subject precedes or is otherwise unexpressed. Following are some examples from the texts:

> *wə-ḥəynīṯ śafsən səwēḥər* 'and the women, as it turned out, were witches' (15:4)
> *ðōməh ba nəwās, śafəh ṣəḥ* 'that is Abu Nuwas, it turns out that he is alive' (20:56)
> *śafhəm gənnawni* 'it turned out they were jinns' (37:7)
> *śaf źāṭəh səwēḥər* 'it turned out that witches got hold of him' (40:2)
> *śaf tēṯ ðə-hātəmūt aḵōbər ð-aġās* 'as it happened, a woman was spending the night by the grave of her brother' (54:9)
> *śaf tēṯ hīs śənyati ġəyəbūt mən ayəṣayt* 'it turned out that the woman, when she saw me, had fainted from fear' (54:11)

In one example it has the meaning 'probably':

> *śafk təġōrəb hō əṣṭawṭ agawfi* 'you probably know that I have a pain in my chest' (101:9)

This particle *śaf* is to be distinguished from the noun *śaf* (pl. *əśfūtən*) 'track, footprint' (e.g., 64:12).

12.5.15. taww-

The particle *táww-* (var. *tə́ww-*) occurs only with pronominal suffixes, and is followed by a verb in the subjunctive. It has the meaning of 'must', 'ought to', 'have to', or 'it's necessary that'.

> *tə́wwəkəm təsmēḥəm tay* 'you must (ought to) excuse me' (24:41)
> *tawwək tṣəbēr lay* 'you'll have to be patient with me' (39:12)
> *tawwək tāmōl hayni mārawf* 'you must do me a favor' (46:2)
> *tawwəš təḵfēdi mən ḏ̣ayri* 'you have to get down off me!' (46:5)
> *tawwək təsēmi* 'you ought to spare me!' (83:5)

In one case *táww-* is used independently, with the verb implied:

> ʾāmərūt téṯəh: *"ðə-yəṣṣək…"* ʾāmōr aġayg: *"tawwəš lā"* 'his wife said: I am afraid… The man said: You shouldn't be' (94:39-40)

The particle *taww-* is to be connected with the adverb *taw* 'well' (§10.4).

12.5.16. *wōgəb*

The particle *wōgəb* (< Arabic *wājib*) is followed by a subjunctive verb and has the meaning 'it is proper that', 'ought to', or 'should'. Person is indicated either with a suffixed pronoun attached directly to *wōgəb* (which has the base *awag(ə)b-* before suffixes) or with the preposition *l-* plus a suffixed pronoun. In the examples from the texts, the former is used exclusively in negative statements and the latter exclusively in positive statements. Examples are:

> hēt ʾār ð-ġərəbk ənḥa wōgəb līn nəsḥōṭ hūk 'you surely know that we are obliged to slaughter for you' (31:14)
> əl awagəbkəm lā təwtēġəm məḳənayw mən ṯōdi 'you ought not kill a child at the breast' (64:25)
> əl awagəbkəm təsīrəm wə-tḳəlām aməlawtəġ wəṭōməh lā 'you ought not go and leave the dead like this' (64:26)
> wōgəb līn nəḳbēr aməlawtəġ 'we ought to bury the dead' (64:28)
> əl awagəbkəm lā tāṭāfəm lay bə-ḥazyən 'you ought not frighten our goats' (70:2)
> awagbək təslɛ́bi lā wə-təfasli bərk ḥābū 'you ought not disarm me and embarrass me in front of the people' (76:17)

It will be noticed in the above examples that a clause with *wōgəb* can be negated in more than one way. In 76:17, *əl* is omitted. In 64:25 and 70:2, *lā* immediately follows the suffixed form of *wōgəb*. In 64:26 and 76:17, *lā* comes at the end of the negative clause.

12.5.17. *wəlɛ̄*

The particle *wəlɛ̄* (var. *wəla*) has no simple translation in English. It comes at the beginning of a sentence and can be used as an interrogative particle, similar in use to Biblical Hebrew *hă-* or Arabic *ʾa-*. It is rather rare, however. Among the dozen or so examples in Johnstone's texts are:

> *wǝlḗ kǝskǝm mǝtwē-śī* 'did you find any grazing?' (26:14; 29:3)
> *wǝlḗ śī ʾāyd* 'are there any sardines?' (27:9)
> *wǝlḗ ʾǝḥād ǝnkaykǝm* 'has anyone come to you?' (45:5)
> *wǝlḗ nūka mawsǝm yǝllō* 'has the monsoon boat come last night?' (45:14)
> *a ǧīggēn, wǝlḗ tǝḳayr ... wǝlḗ tǝrtōḳi xaṭ* 'O young man, can you read/ hide? … Can you read a letter?' (71:2)[5]

Far more often, however, a declarative is made into an interrogative simply by intonation of voice, with no special particle necessary, as in:

> *hēt ǝḥtǝwēk* 'have you gone mad?' (40:10)
> *wīḳa lūk śī* 'has something happened to you?' (42:7)
> *bass* 'is that all?' (42:53)
> *tǝḥaymi tāzēmi* 'do you intend to give (yourself) to me?' (48:24)
> *hamak ʾǝḥād ʾāmōr ftǝkōna* 'did you hear someone say he is leaving?' (57:9)
> *kǝskǝn ḥābū* 'did you find the people?' (99:41)

In a few passages *wǝlḗ* seems to mean 'perhaps'. The three clearest examples are:

> *wǝlḗ ʾǝlḥōḳ amawsǝm* 'maybe I will meet the monsoon boat' (45:12)
> *wǝlḗ arabbǝk yǝsēmǝn tay u nǝʾāyōś* 'perhaps your Lord will preserve me and we will survive' (36:3)
> *wǝlḗ ǝkūsa ʾǝḥād yǝmzūz* 'perhaps I will find someone who smokes' (94:25)

In one example, *wǝlḗ* is translated as 'perhaps' within a question:

> *wǝlḗ śīnǝk ḥǝbrǝy* 'did you perhaps see my son?' (57:5)

The use of *wǝlḗ* as 'perhaps' is undoubtedly to be connected with (and is probably the source of) the interrogative particle *wǝlḗ*. One can see, for example, how the question in 57:5, above, could be interpreted as simply 'have you seen my son?'.

That *wǝlḗ* 'perhaps' and interrogative *wǝlḗ* are both normally transcribed with final *ḗ*, while the conjunction *wǝlā* (§12.1.4) is more often

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5 The verb *tǝḳayr* is translated as 'read/hide' because the point of the story from which this line comes is that the verb *tǝḳayr* (3ms perfect *ḳǝrū*) is ambiguous.

transcribed with *ā* or *a* makes one wonder if we are dealing with one or two particles in synchronic terms. Presumably they are historically the same.

12.5.18. *wətō-*

The particle *wətō-* is attested only once in Johnstone's texts. It is used in conjunction with a pronominal suffix and a following subjunctive verb. It means 'must' or 'should', and thus would seem to overlap in meaning with *lēzəm* (§12.5.10) and *wōgəb* (§12.5.16). The attested passage is:

> *wətōkəm ʾār tsəmīḥəm lay* 'you really should allow me!' (64:2)

12.5.19. *yəmkən*

The particle *yə́mkən* (< Arabic *yumkin*) means 'perhaps' or 'maybe', and is followed by a subjunctive or, when indicating a simple past, a perfect. Examples are:

> *yəmkən hərēḵ* 'perhaps it was stolen' (23:4)
> *yəmkən təġrēb aġərōyəh* 'maybe you know his language' (34:26)
> *yəmkən yənkē* 'perhaps he will come' (41:4)
> *yəmkən xəlaws mənīn* 'maybe they missed us' (64:15)
> *yəmkən l-ənkē həh b-ʾəḥād yədbɛ́həh* 'perhaps I would have brought someone to it to collect the honey' (77:4)
> *yəmkən yəsyēr wə-yənkē həh b-ʾəḥād yədbɛ́həh həh* 'perhaps he would have gone and brought somebody to it to collect the honey for him' (77:8)

SOME SYNTACTIC FEATURES

13.1. Copular (Non-Verbal) Sentences

Mehri, like many other Semitic languages, does not make use of a verb 'be' in the present tense. Instead, subject and predicate are simply juxtaposed. Examples are:

> *hō ġayg fəḳayr* 'I am a poor man' (91:3)
> *hēt ḥaywəl* 'you are crazy' (94:36)
> *ðōməh amfətēḥ wə-sē bərk aġərfēt ðayk* 'this is the key, and she is in that room' (22:97)
> *ðīməh tēṯi* 'this is my wife' (46:16)
> *ʾəlyōməh ḥabənyɛ* 'these are my sons' (74:23)
> *bawməh kāl-śīən ġōli* 'here everything is expensive' (18:15)
> *aġīggēn ḳəway wə-xəfayf* 'the boy was strong and quick' (42:2)
> *tēṯ ðə-kəláṯk lūk bīs ḥabrīt ðə-ḥōkəm, w-aġaygəs ṣōyəġ tōgər* 'the woman that I told you about is the daughter of the ruler, and her husband is a rich jeweler' (22:31)
> *ḥəbkɛ bərk agənnēt* 'your parents are in Paradise' (20:70)
> *l-ʾād ʿāðər lā* '(there) is no excuse at all' (44:5)
> *kō hēt bawməh* 'why are you here?' (3:10)
> *hībō śawr* 'what is the plan?' (6:6)
> *hēśən ḥəlatəh* 'what is its description?' (28:7)
> *ḥõ aʾəśēyɛ* 'where is my supper?' (42:34)

In copular sentences, an interrogative can come in either the subject position, as in the last four examples above, or in the predicate, as in the following four examples:

> *hēt mōn* 'who are you?' (20:68)
> *tēṯi ḥõ* 'where is my wife?' (37:12)
> *tōmər hībō* 'what do you say?' (93:3)
> *šayš hēśən* 'what do you have?' (94:45)

Occasionally, in place of a copula, we find a personal pronoun placed between the subject and predicate. This happens when the subject is an independent relative clause, when the predicate is modified by a relative clause, when an adverb separates the subject and predicate, or when the whole clause is negated, as in:

> w-əlhān kəsk nxāsɛ hē ð-hō 'and whatever I find under it is mine' (67:8)
> ðōməh hah aṣōyəġ ðə-wkūb 'this is the goldsmith who has entered' (22:87)
> ðōməh hē aġīgēn ð-źāṭ ətɛ́ṭk 'this is my son who took your wife' (22:89)
> ḥazikəm yəllō sēn bə-ḥəwōdi ðī 'your goats were in this valley last night' (31:3)
> ðōməh əl hah šaġli lā 'this is not my thing' (22:22)
> aġəlēt əl hē mənay la 'the fault is not mine (lit. from me)' (36:30)

The copula is normally missing from past tense contexts as well, for example:

> ḥāgōr bōyər 'the slave was cunning' (5:12)
> aġīgēn rəḥaym 'the boy was handsome' (22:1)
> ḥaybi fəḳayr 'my father was poor' (34:4)
> aġay śōx bə-ḳəṭar 'my big (older) brother was in Qatar' (34:20)
> arḥəbēt bīs xawr, wə-xawr ḳāṣəm xā-hē falg 'the town, in it was a lagoon, and the lagoon was as cold as ice' (36:1)
> aġayg məhray 'the man was a Mehri' (69:2)
> ḥələts əl sē gədət lā 'its condition was not good' (83:1)

For examples of the lack of a present or past copula in 'have' sentences, see below, §13.3.1.

13.1.1. The Verb wīḳa

The verb wīḳa can mean 'be', however it is rarely used as a copula. Much more often, it means 'stay', 'become', or 'happen, take place', for example:

wīḳa kə-ḥārawn 'he stayed with the goats' (14A:5)

ətēm wəḳēya b-amkōnkəm aw śəlyēla? nəḥā wəḳēya b-amkōnən tē gēhəməh 'will you stay at your place or will you move? We will stay at our place until tomorrow' (96:4-5)

wīḳa rəḥaym k-ḥābū mən ðār ṭaybər ðə-ḳaydōr 'he became nice to people after the breaking of his pots' (35:23)

waḳak bə-xayr 'I became well' (25:16)

waḳam ʾayśōr 'they became friends' (61:9)

wīḳa lūk śī 'has something happened to you?' (42:7)

ktēbəm hayni kāl-śīən ðə-wīḳa 'write (down) for me everything that happens' (66:1)

hīs wəḳōt həgmēt 'when the attack took place' (69:8)

In a past existential phrase ('there was/were'), the presence or absence of the verb *wīḳa* is semantically predictable. For a true existential, when the phrase 'there was/were' can be replaced with 'there existed', no verb is needed:

xəṭərāt ġayg 'once there was a man' (15:1)

xəṭərāt ḥōkəm b-ərḥəbēt 'once there was a ruler in a town' (36:1)

When an existential 'there was/were' can be replaced with 'there happened/took place', then *wīḳa* is used:

tā ʾāṣər ṭāṭ wīḳa šarḥ b-arḥəbēt 'then one night there was a party in the town' (37:9)

sənēt ṭayt wəḳōt hawrət 'one year there was a draught' (61:1)

əl wīḳa ḥarb śī-lā 'there has been no war' (104:28)

The verb *wīḳa* is really only used as a copula in two environments. The first is when a subjunctive is required because of meaning (i.e., 'should be' or 'might be', as in the first three examples below) or syntax (i.e., functioning as a dependent verb, as in the last three examples below):

ṣərōməh hēt tāḳā ð-əwbədk ṭāṭ 'now you should (pretend to) be one who has shot someone' (72:4)

mət awōðən fēgər, tāḳāy bərš əl-xā ð-abayt 'when they call the dawn prayer, you should already be at the door of the house' (75:8)

ʾād tāḳāy dənyēt 'might you be pregnant again?' (101:16)

> *əl yāgōb ʾəḥād lā yāḳā hīs təh lā* 'he didn't like anyone to be like him' (76:11)
> *nəḥōm ṭāṭ yāḳā ḥaywəl wə-ṭroh təmnēm təh* 'we should one (of us) act crazy and two (of us) restrain him' (91:6)
> *həthəmk təh yāḳā mən xəṣəmyən* 'I suspect he is one of our enemies' (94:42)

The second environment in which *wīḳa* is used as a copula is in the protasis or apodosis of a conditional sentence, for example:

> *hām abēli yəḥōm, əwḳōna šəh rəḥaym* 'if God wills it, I will be good to him' (18:17)
> *hām aġərōyəs wīḳa ṣadḳ, aḳēʿyōt aməšəġərēt wəḳōna aġərōyəs ṣadḳ* 'if her words are true, (then) the second spirit-woman, her words will be true (too)' (68:13)

However, we can also find examples of a missing copula in a conditional sentence, such as:

> *wə-lū əl hē ḥaywəl lā, əl yəsḥayṭən ḥəybəth lā* 'and if he were not crazy, he would not have slaughtered his camel' (55:7)

The verb *wīḳa* is also attested with a few other idiomatic meanings. In one place, followed by a dependent (subjunctive) verb, it means 'begin':

> *wīḳa hē yənšarxəf* 'he began to slip away' (69:4)

In one place we find the idiom *wīḳa hāl* 'to become a wife to':

> *wəḳōt hāl ġayg* 'she became the wife of a (certain) man' (74:10)

And in about five passages (three of them within text 99), *wīḳa* means something like 'reach', 'happen/come upon', or 'wind up (in/at/on)'. A few of these passages are:

> *ð-admēmən bə-ḥaydi, tē waḳak ðār āgərəzəh* 'I was groping around with my hands until I happened upon his testicles' (91:16)
> *fər aḳayźər wə-wīḳa ðār aṣāwər* 'the leopard jumped and reached the (other) rock' (99:20; cf. also 99:19)

> *w-ʾāfōd aḳayźər … u wīḳa bərk aməsyōl* 'the leopard jumped and
>   wound up in the valley bottom' (99:24)
> *wīḳa līhəm həzayz* 'a strong wind came upon them' (103:1)

On the use of *wīḳa* in compound verb tenses, see §7.1.9.

13.1.2. The Verb yəkūn

The verb *yəkūn*, like *ḥōm* (see §7.3), only occurs in the imperfect. It is
used as a copula meaning 'be' in places where a habitual aspect or gen-
eral present meaning is intended. It is also found in the apodosis of
conditional sentences. It seems almost to function as a suppletive to
wīḳa in its use as a copula. That is, we find *wīḳa* used as a copula in
places where we need a subjunctive or partciple, and *yəkūn* in places
where we need an imperfect. It is not problematic that both *yəkūn* and
wīḳa are found in the apodosis of conditional sentences, since in this
position we regularly find either imperfects or participles, used inter-
changeably (see §13.4.1).

In the *ML* (p. 218), *yəkūn* is glossed as 'to be constantly, be all the
time; be acceptable', but this is somewhat imprecise. It is not that the
verb means 'be constantly, be all the time', but rather that the verb is
often used in contexts where the imperfect is used to indicate a habit-
ual. Since the habitual aspect is indicated by the verbal form (the
imperfect), it need not be part of the semantics of the verbal root itself.
Some examples of *yəkūn* are:

> *yəkūn lūk śak hām ġatəryək k-ḥədaydək* 'it would be a crime if you
>   talk to your uncle (like that)' (33:3)
> *nkūn k-ḥāməy bərk ḥārawn wə-həbɛ̄r* 'we used to be with my mother
>   among the goats and camels' (34:6)[1]
> *yāmərəm śɛ̄rək yəkūn k-səwēhər* 'they say that the *śɛ̄rək* is (habit-
>   ually) with sorcerers' (41:1)
> *əðə hē səḥāṭ ḥəybəth, hē yəkūn ḥaywəl. w-əðə hē əl səḥaṭ ḥəybəth lā,
>   hō əkūn ḳəḥbɛ̄t* 'if he slaughtered his camel, then he is crazy; if he
>   didn't kill his camel, then I am a whore' (55:9)

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[1] The audio for the passage is actually: *təkūn ḥāməy…* 'my mother used to be…',
but whether or not this reflects the original story more accurately is irrelevent here.
Both this and the printed version show the same habitual use of the verb *yəkūn*.

In one place *yəkūn* is translated simply as 'will be', in an independent clause, for no clear reason:

ḥəbrē ðədsūs *yəkūn* dəsūs 'the son of a snake will be a snake' (64:26)

Either the verb *yəkūn* has the meaning 'become' here (as *wīka* can), or the translation should reflect a habitual or general present, i.e., 'the son of a snake is (always) a snake'.

And in one passage we find *yəkūn* following *lēzəm* (var. *lāzəm*):

lāzəm yəkawn təmōm 'they must be an even number' (71A:1)

The particle *lēzəm* is normally followed by a subjunctive or, less often, an active participle (see §12.5.10). Assuming *yəkūn* behaves like other verbs whose middle root letter is *w* (e.g., *yəmūt*), then *yəkawn* can only be a 3mp imperfect (cf. *yəmawt*); the expected 3mp subjunctive would be *yəkēnəm* (cf. *yəmētəm*). The imperfect *yəkawn* is apparently substituting for the subjunctive here, since, as noted above, this verb only has imperfect forms.

Finally, Johnstone's gloss of 'be acceptable' is appropriate only in one passage, for the phrase ðōməh *yəkūn* lā 'this is not acceptable' (94:5), an idiom also found in Sima's texts (cf. Sima 2009: 424, text 73:13).

13.2. Negation

This section will cover a variety of negative particles in Mehri. The negative indefinite pronouns *l-ʾəḥād* 'no one' and *śī-lā* 'nothing' have been treated elsewhere (§3.5.1 and §3.5.2, respectively).

13.2.1. ǝl and lā

Verbal and non-verbal sentences are negated by the elements *əl ... lā*. Note that *əl* can sometimes be transcribed in the texts with a preceding glottal stop (*ʾəl*), and *lā* can sometimes be transcribed with a preceding epenthetic vowel (*əlā*). Before *ʾəḥād* and *ʾād*, *əl* is transcribed *l-*. Most often, both elements are used in tandem (cf. French *ne ... pas*), though there is some variation with the exact placement of these elements within the sentence.

In non-verbal sentences with a pronominal subject (including *ʾəḥād* and *śī*, but not demonstratives), the element *əl* precedes the entire phrase to be negated (including the subject), while the element *lā* fol-

lows the entire phrase. With pronouns (especially 2sg), there also is a tendency to add a fronted pronoun. When the subject is a noun or a demonstrative pronoun, *əl* follows the subject, but is then followed by a resumptive pronoun. The result is that the nominal subject is essentially fronted. Examples of negated non-verbal sentences are:

> *əl hō hērək lā* 'I am not a thief' (47:8)
> *ʾəl hō sənnawrət lā* 'I am not a cat' (6:11) (audio *hō ʾəl hō*; cf. 15:18)
> *hēt, əl hēt ḥōkəm lā* 'you, you are not the ruler' (91:29)
> *əl hēm xəṣawm lā* 'they are not enemies' (64:15)
> *hēt əl hēt axayr mənīn lā* 'you, you are not better than us' (61:4)
> *ʾəl ʾətēm ṭīhōr lā* 'you are not pure' (4:11)
> *əl sē sənnawrət lā* 'she was not a cat' (6:2)
> *əl šīhəm ḳawt əlā* 'they had no food' (30:1)
> *ðōməh əl hah šaġli lā* 'this is not my thing' (22:22)
> *ðōməh əl bəh fēḥəl lā* 'this (man) has no penis' (24:36)
> *ðōməh əl hē śawr gīd lā* 'this is not good advice' (90:6)
> *aġəlēt əl hē mənay lā* 'the fault is not mine (lit. from me)' (36:30)
> *amḥəṣawl əl hē gīd əlā* 'the earning was not good' (57:4)
> *ḳəwwēt əl sē ḳəwwēt ðə-tēṯ lā* '(her) strength is not the strength of a woman' (75:15)
> *tēṯ əl sē mən aḳəbaylət ðə-xəṣə́mhɛ lā* 'the woman was not from the tribe of his enemies' (94:33)

In verbal sentences *əl* usually comes directly before the verb (so, after the subject), and *lā* still follows the entire sentence. There are three qualifications to this rule. First, sentences with an active participle behave like non-verbal sentences, and so *əl* usually precedes an expressed subject. Second, *əl* precedes the subject if it is an indefinite pronoun (like *śī* 'something' or *ʾəhād* 'someone'; see §3.5.1 and §3.5.2 for additional examples). Third, if the verb has the verbal prefix *ð-* (see §7.1.10; but not relative *ð-*), then the element *əl* will also precede an expressed pronoun. Examples of negated verbal sentences are:

> *əl ərdīw būk ḥāgərōn bərk arawrəm lā* 'didn't the slaves throw you into the sea?' (20:59)
> *hēt əl matk əlā* 'you didn't die?' (20:69)
> *ḥaybən əl nūka lā* 'our father hasn't come back' (20:74)
> *hē əl təwīyəh lā* 'he hadn't eaten it' (24:22)
> *əl ḥōm əl-hētəm lā* 'I don't want to spend the night' (31:4)

əl tāṣōṣ lā 'don't be afraid!' (34:25)

hō əl kəsk yənīṯ lā 'I didn't find women' (22:100)

abḳār əl tṣābərən mən ʾāyd əlā 'the cows can't do without sardines' (27:15)

əl təḵawdər lā 'you cannot' (76:1)

əl hō sīrōna lā 'I will not go' (49:5)

əl sēn wərdūtən əlā 'they are not going down (to water)' (27:3)

əl śī yədūm lā 'nothing lasts' (98:15)

l-ʾəḥād ḥərfōna tīs lā 'no one will move it' (67:5)

əl hō ð-əhtəwēk lā 'I have not gone crazy' (20:6)

əl hō ðə-hānayk əwṭōməh lā 'I didn't intend it that way' (59:10)

It is not rare to find the element *lā* used without *əl* (cf. French *pas*), in both verbal and non-verbal sentences. Some examples are:

śīnək təh lā 'I have not seen it' (23:9)

tāṣōṣ lā 'don't be afraid!' (67:2)

šay ḵawt lā 'I have no food' (73:4)

kūsəm təhi lā 'they didn't find them' (35:17)

kəwṭōna hūk əlā 'I won't tell you' (20:37)

ḥōm lā 'I don't want to' (4:10)

ənḵawdər nəślēl lā 'we can't move' (28:12)

ḥārawn bīsən əśxōf mēkən lā 'the goats did not have much milk' (30:13)

In seven passages we find *lā* before a verb, but most of these seem not to be genuine. Four of the seven attestations are negative commands. The six passages are:

l-agərē lā təhɛ̄rəs lā 'so that he will not marry' (6:13) (probably correct to *l-ʾād təhɛ̄rəs*)

lā təḥfēr zōyəd lā 'dig no more' (19:25) (probably correct to *l-ʾād təḥfēr*)

lā šaṯḵələm ḥənfəykəm lā 'don't think yourselves a burden' (28:15)

lā təbkē lā 'don't cry (anymore)!' (40:7) (correct to *l-ʾād təbkē lā*, as on audio)

lā śīnən tīhəm zōyəd lā 'we never saw them again' (60:8) (correct to *l-ʾād śīnən*, as on audio)

əgzēmi lā tədōr mənwēhəm 'swear (that) you will not come between them' (94:6) (probably correct to *l-ʾād tədōr*)

> *lā tənkɛi lā* 'don't come back to me!' (98:4) (probably correct to
> *l-ʾād tənkɛi*)

The first *lā* of 6:13 is likely a typographical error for *l-ʾād* (§13.2.2),
since the passage is identical to an earlier passage that does have
l-ʾād … lā (6:5). Unfortunately, the relevant part of 6:13 is missing
from the audio. It is also likely that the first *lā* of 19:25 should be *l-ʾād*,
which is what we expect with a following *zōyəd* (cf. 60:8, and see
§13.2.5). Unfortunately, and strangely, the audio is missing for this
line as well. The audio for 40:7 and 60:8 was consulted, and both have
l-ʾād in place of the first *lā*, as noted above. I did not find any audio for
94:6 or 98:4 either, but *l-ʾād* fits in both contexts. Only for 28:15 do we
have audio confirmation of *lā … lā*. So, six of the seven examples of *lā*
… (lā) are, or are very likely, mistakes for *l-ʾād … lā*. And in 28:15, we
could probably read the first *lā* as an interjection, and translate 'no,
don't think yourselves a burden!'.

There are also some cases in which *əl* is used without *lā*, though
these are far more infrequent than cases of *lā* used alone; in fact, exam-
ples are quite few. In all but a handful of these cases, the particle *ʾār*
'only' is used (see §12.5.4). There are also plenty of examples where we
also find *əl … lā* used with the particle *ʾār* (e.g., 36:3; 84:1). Examples of
əl used without *lā* are:

> *ʾəl šīhəm ʾār hēt* 'they have only you' (18:18)
> *wə-kō hēt əl təḳawla ḥəbrēk yəsīr šūk hə-sawḳ* 'why don't you let
>   your son go with you to the market' (22:2)
> *hō əl šay ʾār ðōməh* 'I have only this' (73:5)
> *hēm gəzawm əl iźayṭ bəh ḳəźayyət* 'they swore (that) they would not
>   take any compensation for it' (89:5)
> *hō əl šay ʾār ḥōṭəri ṭroh* 'I only have two kids' (89:8)
> *əl həbḳō ʾār awzārəh* 'he left on only his waistcloth' (104:18)

The sequence *əl … w-əl* can also be used as the equivalent of English
'neither … nor', in which case the sentence itself can also be negated
with *əl*, as in:

> *əl tēṯ šəh w-əl ḥəybəth šəh* 'he had neither the woman nor his camel'
>   (55:16)
> *əl (tə)ṭōm əl moh w-əl ḳawt* 'she tasted neither water nor food'
>   (75:22)

əl šīhəm əl śíwōṭ w-əl moh w-əl ḏ̣ērōb 'they had neither fire, nor
   water, nor wood' (76:11)

Finally, *lā* can be used as an interjection 'no!' (e.g., 35:14) and it can be
used independently, substituting for an entire phrase, as in *hamak tay
aw lā* 'did you hear me or not?' (96:7).

13.2.2. *l-ʾād*

The form *l-ʾād* (often transcribed as *l-ād*) is simply a combination of
the negative *əl* plus the particle *ʾād*, which was treated in §12.5.1.
When pronominal suffixes are attached to *l-ʾād*, the negative element
əl follows *ʾād* (*ʾādi əl*, *ʾād(ə)k əl*, etc.). The combination *l-ʾād* has two
basic meanings. Since the most common meaning of *ʾād* is 'still', it is
no surprise that one basic meaning of *l-ʾād … lā* is 'still not' or 'not
yet', as in:

   hēt ḳənnawn w-ādk ʾəl hēt məhārəs lā 'you are a child and you can-
      not get married yet' (8:8)
   tōli həzayz l-ād ḳəlayn əlā nāṭōbəḳ abarr 'then the wind still didn't
      let us go ashore' (60:7)
   kādēt l-ād yəšānōs yəḳfēd arḥəbēt lā 'Kadet didn't yet dare to go
      down to the town' (64:8)
   hō l-ād əḳawfəd lā mən ḏ̣ayrək 'I am not getting down off you yet'
      (46:4)
   tōli l-ād šəwrēm əlā 'then they still didn't back off' (70:3)
   ʾāmōr ðēk ð-ʾādəh əl ātōśi lā 'the one who had not yet had supper
      said' (84:9)

Sometimes this use of *l-ʾād* is best translated as 'never', meaning 'not
yet (still not) up until this point in time'. In these cases, the accompa-
nying verb is always the imperfect, for example:

   mən hīs xələḳək ʾādi əl əhōrək lā 'since I was born, I have never
      stolen' (47:9)
   ʾādi əl ʾōmər lā ʾār yəmšī 'I have never sung except yesterday' (52:15)
   ʾādəh l-ʾəḥād yōmər hayni əhəṣawləḥ lā 'nobody has ever told me I
      was good (at it)' (52:17)
   ʾādəh əl yəsyūr təwalihəm lā 'he had never gone to them before'
      (59:1)

śīnən śī ðə-ʾādən əl ənśɛ́nyəh lā 'we saw something that we have never seen' (82:4)

In a couple of passages, this use of *l-ʾād* behaves like a temporal conjunction, requiring a literal translation 'when still not'. 'Before' is a smoother translation, however. Two attested examples are:

ʾādəh əl təmūm lā ġarbēh ḥaybəh ḥōkəm 'before he finished (his story), his father the ruler recognized him' (lit. 'when he still hadn't finished') (74:23)

ʾāmēr həh yətəxfən gēhəməh, ʾādəs əl gəzōt ḥəyawm 'tell him he should come tonight, before the sun has gone down' (96:1)

The second, and more common, basic use of *l-ʾād … lā* is to mean 'not anymore', 'not any longer', 'not again', or 'never (again)'. In this use, *l-ʾād* is not used with pronominal suffixes. Examples are:

ənkathi aġəllēt wə-l-ād əbṣərō ḥōrəm lā 'a mist came upon them and they couldn't see the road anymore' (17:2)

l-ād rəddōna līn əlā 'you will never come back to us' (20:72)

l-ād təhĒtəməm lā 'don't stay here any longer!' (35:3)

hō ʾāgawz ðə-l-ād wəṣələk əlā l-əsyēr, wə-l-ād həbṣərk lā 'I am an old woman who cannot manage to walk anymore, and I cannot see well anymore' (46:2)

l-ād ʾəḥād ð̣əlūm ʾəḥād lā 'no one was unfair to anyone ever again' (66:10)

hō l-ʾād šay gəmaylət lā 'I don't have the strength (to endure) any longer' (83:4)

l-ʾād səbṭōna tīš lā 'I won't hit you anymore' (89:18)

l-ād ḥamhəm šay lā 'I don't want them with me anymore' (91:32)

l-ʾād śīnək hərbātiyɛ lā 'I never saw my companions again' (103:1)

While *l-ʾād … lā* can mean 'not anymore', 'not again', etc., this negative construction is sometimes strengthened by another word. The most common is *zōyəd* 'more' (see further in §13.2.5), but once we also find *ʾabdan* 'never' (see §13.2.6). These words do not alter the meaning.

We have already seen that *l-ʾād* can mean 'never' both in the sense of 'never up until this point in time' and 'never again in the future'. In

a few passages, it can also have a general meaning 'never'. The clearest examples of this are:

> l-ʾād ḳawla amōl yəttəḳ moh əlā 'they never let (other) animals drink water' (27:5)
> nəġōrəb aḳā l-ād nəšdəlūl 'we know the land, we never need directions' (79:9)

In at least a dozen cases, l-ʾād … lā seems to mean 'not at all', or perhaps is acting as a simple substitute for əl … lā. Some examples of this are:

> l-ād ṣərūt lā 'she didn't stop at all' (54:20)
> l-ād ʾəśśōt lā 'she didn't get up at all' (65:10)
> bəgawdəh, wəlākən l-ād ləḥāḳəm təh lā 'they pursued him, but they didn't catch up to him at all' (69:5)
> mūna ḥādəthɛ wə-l-ʾād ḳədūr yəḥtīrək lā 'he held his hands, and he couldn't move at all' (75:10)
> aġəggēn l-ʾād wīda hībō yāmōl lā 'the boy did not know at all what to do' (76:3)
> aġayg l-ʾād šāmūn tɛṱəh lā 'the man didn't agree with his wife at all' (94:26)

In three passages, l-ʾād (without lā) is followed by the particle ʾār, and while ʾār has a clear meaning ('except' or 'only'), the function of l-ʾād in these passages is not totally clear. It is noteworthy that there are also two places (45:18; 57:11) in which positive ʾād is followed by ʾār, and in both cases ʾād is also of uncertain function. The three passages with l-ʾād ʾār are:

> gōna ḥəyawm l-ʾād ar əśfēḳ 'the sun has gone down, except for the last rays' (21:1)
> bərəh təmūm aġəggōtən ð-arḥəbēt l-ʾād ʾār hō 'he has gone through (all) the girls of the town except for me' (42:19)
> l-ād ʾār hō, tēṱ 'there is only me, a woman' (64:27/29)

Perhaps l-ʾād in these sentences is negating an understood existential 'there is'.

Finally, it should be mentioned that in one place the negative element *l-* occurs not immediately before *ʾād*, but before the element *ʾəḥād* 'someone':

> *ʾād l-ʾəḥād yəśanyəh lā* 'nobody has ever seen it' (41:10)

Compare this to *l-ād ʾəḥād* in 66:10 (cited above). It seems this is just a variant. Or, it is possible the text in 41:10 is a mistake for *ʾādəh l-ʾəḥād* (cf. 52:17), in which case we would expect the negative element to follow the suffixed form of *ʾād*. However, the audio seems to confirm *ʾād l-ʾəḥād*.

13.2.3. *m-ʾād*

The particle *m-ʾād* (most often transcribed as *m-ād*) occurs just a dozen times in Johnstone's texts. Its basic meaning is 'lest' or 'so that not', and it is not used in conjunction with any other negative particle. Some examples are:

> *hafəwtəm bə-ḥənfaykəm, m-ād yənkē agənnay wə-yətɛ́hkəm* 'save yourselves, lest the jinnee come and eat you' (42:19)
> *aġayg dəfōna hīn m-ād nāṭələh* 'the man will pay us so that we don't delay him' (91:26)
> *təḥōm taġwīr b-aġayg m-ʾād yətbē tēṯ* 'she wanted to distract the man so that he didn't follow the woman' (94:18)
> *āzēmi aṣayġat … m-ād yəźayṭəs* 'give me the jewelry … lest they take it' (99:44)
> *ḥəððūr mən tərkōb lə-ʾēlīg yəfūrəd, m-ʾād yəhankəbək* 'look out that you don't get on a (two-year old) camel that panics, lest it throw you off' (102:11)

When following the verb *yəṣ* 'be afraid' (+ d.o.) and preceding a dependent verb, *m-ʾād* is best translated simply as 'that', with the sense of 'that something (bad) will happen'. There are three examples from the texts, two with a subjunctive following *m-ʾād* and one with an imperfect (20:37):

> *yəṣṣək tīk m-ād təlōmi l-əḵlēk bərk šəṭfēti* 'I am afraid that you will expect me to let you into my basket' (20:37)

> *yəṣṣək tīs m-ād təfrēr mən ḏayrən* 'I am afraid that she will run away from us' (37:10)
> *yəṣṣəm aġaygəs m-ād yəḥtəwūl* 'they were afraid her husband might go crazy' (37:12)

On the verb *yəṣ*, see further in §13.5.1 and §13.5.1.1.

13.2.4. *məḳā*

The negative particle *məḳā* occurs just four times in Johnstone's texts, and its exact meaning is difficult to pin down. In the *ML* (p. 427, root √*wḳˤ*), it is defined as 'that not, not (a neg. particle, occurring us. in oaths)'. However, as can be seen from the four examples below, this definition really only covers one of the attested passages (47:11). In the remaining three, *məḳā* means something like '(it is) as if not'. No other negative particle is used in conjunction with *məḳā*. The four attestations are:

> *məḳā xā-sēh nkath arḥəmēt ðīməh* '(it is) as if this (last) rainfall never came there' (26:15)
> *məḳā xā-hō ð-ənūfa śē hənēkəm* 'it's as if I were of no use to you in anything' (33:2)
> *hō gəzmōna hīkəm məḳā hō hērəḳ* 'I swear to you that I am not a thief' (47:11)
> *wəlā məḳā xā-hēm xəlēḳəm* 'it's as if they had never been born' (90:8)[2]

13.2.5. *zōyəd*

The word *zōyəd* (once transcribed *zuyd*) can be a comparative 'more', as in:

> *mən ḏār sənēt aw zōyəd* 'after a year or more' (16:1)
> *warx u zōyəd* 'a month or more' (42:10)
> *əwtawġ mənhēm zōyəd əl-faḳḥ* 'they killed more than half of them' (69:6)

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[2] The function of *wəlā* (cf. §12.1.4) in this example is unclear.

Zōyəd is also attested twice as a noun meaning 'surplus' (66:7; 66:8), and the corresponding verb *zəyūd* 'be(come) more; increase (intrans.)' is also attested twice (66:8; 84:4).

Most frequently—about twenty times in the texts—*zōyəd* is met in conjunction with a negative particle (or particles), together with which it has the meaning 'not anymore, never again'. The negative particle is usually *l-ʾād … (lā)*, but twice *zōyəd* occurs with the simpler *əl … lā*.[3] Examples are:

> *ʾəl əkawdər l-ʾəttə́ḳ zōyəd lā* 'I can't drink anymore' (49:10)
> *l-ād əkawdər bə-zōyəd əlā. hō ʾār ṭāṭ, l-ād əkawdər l-ənkē zōyəd əlā* 'I can't manage anymore. I'm just one (person), I can't "bring" anymore' (20:12)
> *l-ād nəfōna tīkəm zuyd lā* 'I won't be of use to you anymore' (33:6)
> *dəxlōtən l-ād ənnūka náxəlka zōyəd* 'we promise we'll never come to your palm trees again' (37:5)
> *l-ʾād śínən tīhəm zōyəd lā* 'we never saw them again' (60:8)
> *l-ād ədōbəh zōyəd, tē l-əmēt* 'I will never collect honey again, until I die' (77:2)
> *ḥarmək l-ʾād əð̣awbər būk zōyəd tē l-əmēt* 'I swear I won't nag you anymore until I die' (98:15)

Two similar passages from 56:9-10 show that the negatives *əl … zōyəd lā* and *l-ʾād zōyəd lā* mean essentially the same thing:

> *l-ād hō səwbōna tīk zōyəd lā* 'I will not wait for you anymore' (56:9)
> *wə-kō əl səwbōna tay zōyəd lā* 'why won't you wait for me anymore?' (56:10)

In just one passage in the texts, *zōyəd* is used in a positive context, in conjunction with *ʾād*, to mean 'again, anymore':

> *hām ʾād həwrədk ḥəmóh ð̣ōməh zōyəd, ð̣ə-nəwtə́ġk* 'if you bring (them) down to the water again, we will kill you' (10:9)

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[3] In 19:25, we find *lā … zōyəd lā*, but as noted above (§13.2.1) and in the Appendix, this is probably a mistaken transcription for *l-ʾād … zōyəd lā*. Unfortunately, no audio was found to confirm this, but a similar mistake in 60:8 was confirmed by the audio. In 56:14, we find *hō məšēmən tīk zōyəd lā* 'I won't trust you anymore', with only the final *lā* as a negative marker. But, as noted in the Appendix, this should be corrected to *l-ʾād hō məšēmən tīk zōyəd lā*, as heard on the audio.

13.2.6. ʾabdan

The word ʾábdan, clearly a borrowing of Arabic ʾabadan, is most often met in the texts as an exclamation, meaning 'never!' or 'not at all!', e.g., 64:3. However, in a few cases, it is used in conjunction with a verb (as it also is in Arabic).

> ʾabdan əl ərdūd lā 'I shall never go back' (37:19)
> arəzḳ əl yəḳtōṭa lā ʾabdan … wəlākən əššaraf, hām təm, l-ʾād yəxlōf lā ʾabdan '(our) daily bread will never be cut off … but honor, if it comes to an end, will never again be replaced' (98:8)

In the first passage above (37:19), ʾabdan precedes a negated verb, mirroring Arabic usage. In the second passage, ʾabdan twice follows a negated verb, once following əl … lā (giving a generic sense 'never', or perhaps 'never at all') and once following l-ʾād … lā (giving the sense 'never again'). It is worth noting that the passage from 98:8 contains two Arabic loanwords, rəzḳ 'daily bread' (Arabic rizq) and əš-šaraf 'honor' (with the Arabic definite article). So while the word ʾabdan is common as an exclamation, its use in verbal phrases might be considered an Arabism.

13.2.7. əkṯēr

The comparative adjective əkṯēr 'more' (§5.4) is attested only twice in the texts, in both cases in the same negative context, l-ʾād k-X əkṯēr lā, meaning 'have no more (energy)'. It is unclear if əkṯēr is used outside of this idiom to mean either 'more' or 'no more'. The two attested passages are:

> l-ʾād šay əkṯēr lā mən aḏ̣awma 'I have no more (energy) because of thirst' (99:28)
> səbḥək tē təwōli ð-aʾāṣər. l-ʾād šay əkṯēr lā 'I swam until the end of the night. I had no more (energy)' (103:2)

13.3. Expressing 'have'

As in most other Semitic languages, there is no verb 'have' in Mehri. Instead, the concept is expressed with a periphrastic construction. Most often the preposition k- is used, but the prepositions b-, h-, and

l- can also mean 'have' in certain contexts. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

13.3.1. The Preposition *k-*

The basic meaning of the preposition *k-* is 'with', as described in §8.11. With pronominal suffixes (using the base *š-*; see §8.22 for a complete list of forms), it can express the concept 'have'. If the possessor is a noun, a pronominal suffix still must be used with *k-*.

   šay nəxlīt 'I have a palm tree' (77:5)
   šəh ġīgēn u ġəgənōt 'he had a boy and a girl' (22:1)
   šīs wōz 'she had a goat' (49:1)
   xəṭərāt ġayg šəh rīkēb 'once a man had a riding-camel' (12:1)
   ʾəl šīhəm ḳawt lā 'they had no food' (11:2)
   ʾəl šīn ḳərawš lā 'we had no money' (91:2)
   ḥāməy šīs amōl mēkən 'my mother had a lot of property' (34:4)
   sɛkəni ʾəl šīhəm məṣrawf lā 'my community has no provisions' (or: 'my community, they have no provisions' (18:14)
   hō šay śawr 'I have a plan' (35:8)
   hō əl šay ʾār ðōməh 'I have only this' (73:5)

As the last two examples show, an independent pronoun can be added for emphasis. Several of the examples above also show that an explicit past tense marker is normally absent from this construction, and must be gleaned from context. This agrees with what was said about copular sentences above (§13.1). There is just one example in the texts where the verb *wīḳa* 'be, become' makes the past tense explicit:

   abōḳi wīḳa šīsən arḥəmēt 'the rest (of the goats) had fodder' (17:15)

In contexts where a subjunctive is required, the verb *wīḳa* is also used, though there are just two examples in the texts:

   tāḳā šūk maws 'you should have a razor' (75:11)[4]

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   [4] In a previous work (Rubin 2009a: 223), I described *tāḳā* as an imperfect of *wīḳa*, used here to indicate a simple future tense 'you will have', the translation which is found in Stroomer's edition of the texts. More correctly, the form *tāḳā* is a subjunctive (*ML*, p. 426), though the subjunctive forms of this verb are possibly sometimes used in place of the imperfect forms. After noticing *yāḳā* in 98:10, which is undoubtedly

lāzəm əmnēdəm yākā šəh əfkrayyət ðə-ḥənafəh 'a person must have some thought for himself' (98:10)

13.3.1.1. Familial Possession

There is an additional feature of the possessive use of Mehri *k-* that merits closer attention. Within the 'have' construction, a noun indicating a close family member (father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, wife, brother-in-law) will appear with a redundant possessive suffix:

šay ḥəbrayti 'I have a daughter' (lit. 'I have my daughter') (48:7)
šəh ḥayməh 'he had a brother-in-law' (lit. 'he had his brother-in-law') (64:10)
šəh tÉṭəh rəḥaymət 'he has a beautiful wife' (19:1)
šay hāməy ʾāgawz 'I have an old mother' (65:7)
šəh ḥəbanhɛ yəbayt 'he had seven sons' (50:1)
šəh śhəlīt aġathɛ 'he had three sisters' (37:6)
šəh aġāh w-aġāh šəh ḥəbrətəh 'he had a brother and his brother had a daughter' (85:1)

Note also the phrase *nūka bə-ḥabənhɛ* 'he begat sons' (lit. 'he begat his sons') (12:16). The special treatment of familial terms in connection with possession is well known from elsewhere, for example, from Italian, where one typically says, e.g., *la mia faccia* 'my face', *la mia vicina* 'my neighbor', but *mia mamma* 'my mother'. The difference in the case of Mehri is that we are dealing not with a possessive phrase of the type 'my mother', 'your brother', but rather with a pseudo-verbal 'have' construction.

13.3.1.2. Physical and Environmental Conditions

The suffixed forms of the preposition *k-* are also used in a variety of expressions relating to physical or environmental conditions. From the former category, we find:

šīn ḥəbūr 'we're cold' (lit. 'cold is with us') (35:4)
šəh ḥarḳ 'he was hot' (lit. 'heat is with him') (32:2)

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subjunctive (following *lāzəm*; see §12.5.10), I reconsidered the passage in 75:11. If *tākā* here is an independent subjunctive, then the phrase should be translated 'you should have' or simply 'have!' (i.e., a third-person imperative).

Many more examples fall into the category of environmental conditions. This type of expression is rather more unusual cross-linguistically. For example, the expression 'it is raining' will vary depending on context; specifically, its expression depends on who is experiencing the rain. If relating one's own experience, one would say *šay məwsē* 'it's raining (for me)' (e.g., 62:1). But if relating a story in the third person plural, one would say *šīhəm məwsē* 'it's raining (for them)' (e.g., 35:1). Following are several other examples to illustrate this use of *k-*:

> *šay aġəllēt* 'it was misty' (lit. 'with me was mist') (47:4)
> *šay məwsē wə-ḥabūr* 'it was raining and I was cold' (lit. 'with me were rain and cold') (53:6)
> *šīn ḥārīt* 'there was a moon' (81:1)
> *šay əktīw* 'it was dark' (91:16)
> *šəh awakt* 'he was hot (at night)' (91:19)
> *šīsən arīḥ* 'there is a hot wind' (27:22)
> *šay aḳāṣəm* 'it's cool' (94:35)
> *šəh aġəllēt w-aməwsē* 'it was misty and rainy' (98:1)
> *šīn aməwsē* 'it's been rainy' (98:3)
> *šīn ḥabūr u məwsē* 'we're cold and it's raining' (35:4)

It should be mentioned that there are sometimes other ways to express environmental conditions. For example, there is a G-Stem verb from the root *lsw* 'rain', the same root of the word *məwsē* 'rain'. This verb is used twice in the texts, both times impersonally in the feminine singular, *əwsūt* 'it rained' (10:16; 96:7).[5] We also find twice the verb *šərḥawm* 'it rained', both times in the 3mp form (30:14; 44:14). However, in Johnstone's texts, the constructions with *k-* are more common than the verbs.

These expressions of condition, like the 'have' construction discussed above (§13.3.1), lack any explicit reference to tense, which must be gathered from the context. So, just as *šəh ḳawt* can mean 'he has food' or 'he had food', likewise *šəh ḥarḳ* can mean 'he is hot' or 'he was hot'.

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[5] Other verbs denoting environmental phenomena are attested impersonally in the 3fs form, namely *həddūt* 'it thundered' (10:16) and *bərḳawt* 'it was lightning' (10:16).

13.3.2. Other Prepositions

The preposition *b-* can be used to express certain kinds of inalienable possession, in particular those involving parts of the body or bodily conditions (e.g., 'have hair', 'have milk'), states of mind (e.g., 'have patience'), or parts of plants (e.g., 'have leaves'). Literally, *b-* is being used in these cases like English 'on' or 'in' (see §8.2), but in translation the verb 'have' usually works best. Following are some examples:

> *bəh śəf mēkən* 'he had a lot of hair' (lit. 'on him (was) a lot of hair') (9:8)
> *ðōməh əl bəh fēḥəl lā* 'this (man) has no penis' (24:36)
> *kūsən hərōm ðə-bəh ḥfūl* 'we found a tree that had ripe figs' (25:3)
> *ḥārawn bīsən śəxōf* 'the goats have milk' (lit. 'in them (is) milk') (31:10)
> *śəllōt gōdēl ðə-bəh śīwōṭ* 'she took a burning stick' (lit. 'a stick on which (was) fire') (36:8)
> *əl bay ḳəṭfōf lā* 'I don't have wings' (56:8)
> *bəh ḳōni ṭroh* 'it had two horns' (88:7)
> *aġayg ðōməh əl bəh ḥəśmēt lā* 'this man has no respect (for others)' (91:14)

In this same category, we can place the idiom *bay ḥassi* 'I was conscious' (40:26), literally 'in me (was) consciousness', and possibly also the idiom *būk hēśən* 'what's (the matter) with you?' (48:5; 80:7).

The preposition *h-* 'to, for' (§8.8) is translated by 'have' in a few places in the texts. In each case, *h-* really means 'for', but 'have' or 'get' makes for a smoother translation. The relevant passages are:

> *sərōməh əl hūk śī-lā* 'now you have (or: get) nothing' (32:22; 36:11)
> *hām həsbəḥ ṣəḥ, həh məlyōn ḳarš* 'if he is alive in the morning, he shall have (or: get) a million dollars' (lit. 'for him (is) a million dollars') (36:2)

Finally, in conjunction with *ʾād* 'still', *l-* can be used to express 'have', with regards to amount of time remaining. The two attested examples of this are:

> *ādəh līsən faḳḥ ðə-warx* 'they still had half a month (left)' (30:9)
> *ʾādəh lūk məsayr śīləṯ yūm* 'you still have a journey of three days' (37:16)

13.4. Conditionals

There are three conditional particles in Mehri: *hām*, *əðə*, and *lū*. These correspond in use superficially to Arabic *ʾin*, *ʾiða*, and *law*, in that the first two normally indicate real conditionals, while the third normally indicates an unreal conditional. However, the difference in usage between *hām* and *əðə* does not parallel that of Arabic *ʾin* and *ʾiða*. Each of these particles will be discussed in turn.

13.4.1. hām

Hām is the particle normally used to introduce a real conditional. It is by far the most common Mehri word for 'if', occurring over 170 times in Johnstone's texts. If *hām* introduces a verbal clause, the verb or verbs in this clause are nearly always in the perfect; there are about a dozen exceptions, which are discussed below. If the apodosis of a conditional *hām*-clause is a verbal clause (which it is in all but about eight cases), then the verb in the apodosis can be an imperfect (most commonly), a participle, an imperative, or (rarely) a subjunctive. The *hām*-clause can precede or follow the main clause, and in a few cases it is even found embedded within the main clause. Some examples of conditionals with *hām* are:

> *hām rəźawt, əxtyēna tīk* 'if she agrees, we will circumcize you' (8:2)
> *hām səyərk, l-ād rəddōna līn əlā* 'if you go, you'll never come back to us again' (20:72)
> *fənōhən … hām ṭāṭ gēləw, yəsyūr hāl əmśənyūtən* 'formerly … if someone had a fever, he would go to soothsayers' (25:17)
> *hām šīsən arīḥ, tṣābərən rība yūm* 'if there is a hot wind, they can do without (water) for four days' (27:22)
> *hām ḥārawn nūka ʾār bə-ḥīṭār, w-əl nūka b-ʿārōđ̣ əlā, səḥayṭ ḥīṭār* 'if the goats bear only female kids, and they bear no male kids, slaughter a female kid' (30:12)
> *hām əl səḥāṭən həh lā, yənəḳdəm līn ḥābū* 'if we don't slaughter for him, people will criticize us' (31:11)
> *hām həṣbəḥ ṣəḥ, həh məlyōn ḳarš* 'if he is alive in the morning, he shall have (or: get) a million dollars' (lit. 'for him (is) a million dollars') (36:2)
> *śīwōṭ, hām sēh rēḥəḳ, tənūfa* 'fire, if it's far away, is useful' (36:28)
> *yəktəlīṭ bay aḳəbōyəl, hām fəlatk wə-ḳalak tīk* 'the tribes will talk about me, if I run away and leave you' (83:2)

hām əl nakak tīk ṣərōməh lā, əl təšéźi lā 'if I don't come to you right
   away, don't worry about me' (94:17)

hām hādagəš təh wə-hēt dənyēt, yəmūt 'if you suckle him and you
   are pregnant, he will die' (101:18)

There are seven cases in which *hām* is directly followed by an imper-
fect, instead of by a perfect, for no apparent reason.[6] Likewise, there
are five cases in which *hām* is followed by a participle.[7] When the *hām*-
clause has an imperfect, the apodosis can have an imperative, non-
verbal clause, imperfect, or subjunctive. When the *hām*-clause has a
participle, the apodosis usually has a participle or, in one case (37:23),
an imperative. Some of the relevant passages are:

hām ʾətēm wəzyēma tay tēṯi əlā, sḥayṭi 'if you won't give me my
   wife, kill me!' (37:23)

hō śəmōna lūk hām hēt məhawf tay ḥazyé h-aṣayrəb 'I will sell it to
   you if you pay me my goats in autumn' (39:4)

hām əl hēt sīrōna lā, sīrīta təwōli ḥəddōd 'if you won't go, I'll go to
   a blacksmith' (49:5)

hām təhāmay, ḳəfēd līn əw-boh 'if you hear me, come down to us
   here' (64:29)

hām təġətōri kə-gənnawnisɛ tāśōś lā 'if she is speaking with her
   jinns, she won't get up' (65:11)

hām təhaməy, hō arībēk 'if you can hear me, I am your friend'
   (76:12)

As already noted in §7.3, if *ḥōm*, followed by a direct object, occurs in
the protasis of a conditional sentence, and the dependent verb should
be repeated in the apodosis, the verb is used only once, in the subjunc-
tive. Examples of this are:

hām təḥamən, nəślēl 'if you want us to (move), we'll move' (30:3)

hām ʾār təḥamki, l-āmərō 'if you want us to (sing), we'll both sing'
   (52:6)

Besides this special construction with *ḥōm*, and not counting a sub-
junctive that makes up a negative imperative (see the example from

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[6] These are found in 21:12, 64:29, 65:7, 65:11, 75:3, 76:12, and 92:2.
[7] These are found in 34:9, 37:23, 39:4, 49:5, and 56:11.

94:17, above), there are just six other cases in which we find a subjunctive in the apodosis of a conditional sentence. Three of these have a real subjunctive meaning, best translated with English 'should':

> *hībō l-āmōl hām hāmərk lay* 'what should I do if you order me?' (20:23)
>
> *hām ʾəḥād yəġōrəb śī, yədawyəh* 'if anyone knows something, he should cure him' (65:7)
>
> *hām əl kəsk təh lā, hībō l-āmōl* 'if I don't find him, what should I do?' (96:2)

In two others, a subjunctive is used as part of an oath or promise:

> *hām ṣərūt wəla rəddūt lay, l-əwbads* 'if she stops or comes back at me, I should shoot her' (54:18) (but audio clearly has imperfect *ələ́bdəs* 'I will shoot her')[8]
>
> *hām nəkōt ġəllət … əl-haðhəb nəḥər ðōrə* 'if a mist comes … I will fill a wadi with blood' (99:34)

And in the sixth additional case of a subjunctive in the apodosis, the only explanation is that the context is poetry. In fact, this passage also contains the only example in which a subjunctive occurs in the protasis, following *hām*.

> *hām hayš əl-kəlēṯ l-ənkēś awrēḳ* 'if I were to talk to you, I would destroy the papers' (21:11)

Finally, it should be pointed out that there are a few examples where a conditional particle is missing. Each of these are before a form of the verb *ḥōm*, and each of these are in text 86 (lines 1, 2, 6), which lists conditionals out of context. There are nearly thirty examples where we do find the expected *hām* before a form of *ḥōm* (e.g., 4:10; 100:1). These examples from text 86 may in their original contexts be parts of contrasting conditionals, in which case the lack of a conditional particle is expected (see the end of the next section).

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[8] It is impossible to know whether the transcription *l-əwbads* (1cs subjunctive) is an error, or whether the reader on the audio mistakenly read *ələ́bdəs* (1cs imperfect).

13.4.2. əðə

The particle *ə́ðə* (var. *əð*), presumably a borrowing of Arabic *ʾiðā*, occurs eleven times in Johnstone's texts. Like *hām*, *əðə* normally indicates real conditions. However, the evidence suggests that *əðə* is used only to indicate two contrasting conditionals. As with *hām*, if *əðə* precedes a verbal clause, the verb will be in the perfect. Following are all the occurrences of *əðə* in the texts:

> *əð hah šāmūn hō ənkōna tīkəm … w-əð hah xəzū, šaxbərəh mən aḳaṣdəh* 'if he agrees, I will come to you … but if he refuses, ask him about his intentions' (22:17-18)
>
> *əð hah ḳaybəl, hah hīs tīkəm … w-əð hah lūtəġ ətēṯ u ḥāgərīt, hah ġayg férəʾ* 'if he accepts, he is (a dog) like you … but if he kills the woman and the slave, he is a brave man' (22:93-94)
>
> *əðə hē bəh lə-hīs aġəyōg, ʾətēm təsḥayṭ; w-əðə hē əl bəh fēḥəl lā, hē yəsḥōṭ* 'if he is like (other) men, you shall be killed; but if he has no penis, he shall be killed' (24:39)
>
> *əðə hē səḥāṭ ḥəybəth, hē yəkūn ḥaywəl. w-əðə hē əl səḥaṭ ḥəybəth lā, hō əkūn ḳəḥbēt* 'if he slaughtered his camel, then he is crazy; if he didn't kill his camel, then I am a whore' (55:9)
>
> *əðə hē səyūr šay, hē śənyōna təh* 'if he had been (lit. gone) with me (sexually), he would have seen it' (55:10)
>
> *əðə sē kəwṯūt layš, śəlēli kəmkēməš mən ḏ̣ār ḥəruhš … wə-sē gəḥədatš əl təḥayrək kəmkēməš lā* 'if she tells you, lift your headcloth off your head … but (if) she denies you (any knowledge), don't touch your headcloth' (94:42-43)

In this last example, the expected *əðə* is missing from the second conditional. Perhaps this is a mistake or typographical error (no audio was available). Regardless, the first *əðə* still occurs in a context in which there are two contrasting conditionals.

Interestingly, when there are two contrasting conditionals, both of which have the verb *ḥōm* in the protasis, then the conditional particle is omitted. There are four sets of examples of this in the texts. In all of the examples, the apodosis has either a form of the imperative *əntəḳōl* 'choose!' or a form of the exclamation *b-arāyək* 'as you wish! go ahead!'. Two of the examples are:

> ṣərōməh təḥaym thaḥnəṭəm təḥ, b-araykəm; wə-təḥaym təḳəlām
> təḥ, b-araykəm 'now if you want to make him break his oath, go
> ahead; if you want to leave him be, go ahead!' (31:10)
>
> təḥōm təxōli, əntəḳōl. wə-təḥōm tśawwəl, əntəḳōl 'if you want to
> divorce, choose (to do so); if you want to stay, choose (to do so)'
> (32:25)

As mentioned at the end of the last section (§13.4.1), it is possible that
the conditionals in 86:1, 86:2, and 86:6 are contrasting conditionals
taken out of context, since we find ḥōm in the protasis of these phrases,
with no preceding conditional particle.

13.4.3. lū

The particle *lū* introduces an unreal conditional. As with *hām* and *əðə*,
if *lū* is followed by a verbal clause, the verb will normally appear in the
perfect. If the apodosis contains a verb, that verb will be in the condi-
tional tense (§7.1.4). In fact, this is the only environment in which the
conditional tense occurs. The examples found in Johnstone's texts are:

> wə-lū əl hē ḥaywəl lā, əl yəṣḥayṭən ḥəybəth lā 'and if he were not
> crazy, he would not have slaughtered his camel' (55:7)
>
> lū ṣəbūrən, axayr hīn 'if we had had some patience, it would have
> been better for us' (61:7)
>
> lū əl bər lūtəġ ərbōt mənīn lā, əl nəwtēġən təh lā 'if he had not killed
> four of us, we would not have killed him' (83:7)
>
> lū hō ḳōrək aḳawt ... wə-nakak báwməh wə-matk, hībō yāmērən
> ḥābū? ʾāmyēra: 'ġayg bəxayl wə-kawb!' 'if I had hidden the food
> ... and had come here and died, what would the people say? They
> would say: A mean man and a dog!' (98:12)

This last example is interesting, because besides the expected condi-
tional form (*yāmērən*), we find the participle *ʾāmyēra*. Though techni-
cally not part of the apodosis, it could be considered the equivalent.

In just one place in the texts, *lū* introduces an unreal non-past
conditional and is followed by an imperfect. The apodosis still con-
tains a conditional tense, though it is a compound tense made up of
a conditional form of *wīḳa* 'be(come)' plus an imperfect:

> *lū əmnēdəm yəḥawsəb ləhān nəkōna təh b-amstaḵbələh, l-ʾəḥād*
> *yāḵān yəškūf lā* 'if a person were to take account of all that will
> come in the future, nobody would sleep' (98:10)

In 98:11, this same passage is repeated, though with the addition of the
participle *ð-* before the final verb (*ð-yəškūf*). We also find in 98:11 the
phrase *lū wadaš lā* 'don't you know?' It seems likely that *lū* here is a
typographical error for the basic negative element *əl*. The particle *lū*
occurs in both 98:10 and 98:12, so it is easy to see how a typographical
error could have crept in to 98:11. Unfortunately, I found no audio for
this passage.

13.4.4. *tɛ̄ wə-lū*

The phrase *tɛ̄ wə-lū* (vars. *tā wə-lū*, *ta wə-lū*) means 'even if'. It occurs
just ten times in the texts. Of the seven times it is followed by a verbal
clause, six times the verb is in the perfect; in three of these six cases the
perfect is preceded by the verbal particle *ð-* (§7.1.10.2). The one time
that *tɛ̄ wə-lū* is followed by an imperfect (37:19) is in an explicitly
future context. Some examples of *tɛ̄ wə-lū* are:

> *ʾabdan əl ərdūd lā, tɛ̄ wə-lū əmūt* 'I shall never go back, even if I
>   should die' (37:19)
> *tā wə-lū fōnəh farəʾ, ð-yəhəṣawbəḥ nōðəl, ta wə-lū əl hɛ̄ nōðəl lā*
>   'even if he was brave before, he turns into a coward, even if he
>   wasn't a coward (before)' (43:2)
> *əl nḥā ʾāmyēla bəh śī-lā, tā wə-lū ðə-rīkəb ḋār ṭəbərayn* 'we shall not
>   do anything to him, even if he was riding a hyena' (82:3)
> *kāl ʾəḥād yəhātūm hāl xaṣməh, tɛ̄ wə-lū ð-əwtūġ ḥaybəh wə-ḥəbrēh*
>   'everyone spends the night with his enemy, even if he has killed
>   his father and his son' (104:39)

In one case, *wə-lū* (without *tɛ̄*) is used on its own as an exclamation
'even so!' (89:33).

13.5. Subordination

13.5.1. Complement Clauses

The term 'complement clause' is fairly broad and covers a variety of
sentence types. For the present purposes, we will distinguish three

types of complement clauses, illustrated by the following English sentences:

(a1) I want <u>to speak Mehri</u>.
(a2) I want <u>you to speak Mehri</u>.
(b)   I know (that) <u>you speak Mehri</u>.

Types (a1) and (a2), containing an infinitive in English, correspond in Mehri to constructions involving a dependent subjunctive verb, as in the following examples:

> *yəḥōm yəṭāf layš* 'he wants to visit you' (38:16)
> *əl əġōrəb l-əġətayr ʾārəbayyət əlā* 'I didn't know how to speak Arabic' (34:18)
> *ḥamk təśnē tēṭi* 'I want you to see my wife' (22:41)
> *ṭələbk tīk təklēṯ lay* 'I ask you to tell me' (20:38)
> *šəwēdək tīn tāzēmən xəṭawrḳiyən* 'you promised to give us our sticks' (91:30)

These types have been treated already in §7.1.3 and §7.3. Sometimes these subjunctive constructions can be translated with an English type (b) complement clause, instead of with an infinitive. For example, the last two sentences above could be translated 'I ask that you tell me' and 'you promised us (that) you would give us our sticks'. And, in fact, there are a few places where a subjunctive construction is best translated, or can *only* be translated, with an English type (b) complement clause. Such cases nearly always involve verbs of thinking, like *(ð-) ʾayməl* 'think',[9] *həgūs* 'think', *həthūm* 'think, suspect', *šəhēwəb* 'think, imagine', and *šəṣdūḳ* 'believe'. One can sometimes translate with an infinitive, though usually this is awkward. Some examples are:

> *ðə-ʾəmələk tay l-āḳā dənyēt* 'I think I might be pregnant' (or: 'I think myself to be pregnant') (101:17)
> *ʿəmələk tīsən təhaġyəgən* 'I think (that) they will give birth' (28:18)
> *əl nəhágsəh yəsyēr lā* 'we didn't think he would go' (89:35)

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⁹ As noted in §7.1.10.2, the verb *ʾayməl* 'make, do' sometimes has the meaning 'think, believe, be of the opinion' (cf. 28:2; 91:8), but when used in the perfect with prefixed *ð-*, it seems to always have this meaning. Conversely, when it means 'think', it usually has the prefix *ð-*.

> *hō šəṣdɔ́ḳḳ əlā yāḳā xəlūs* 'I don't believe he would have gotten lost' (23:3)
> *aġayg šəhēwəb tɛṭəh tāḳā bər sīrūt mən ḏ̣ār ḥəmoh* 'the man thought his wife would have already left the water' (94:20)
> *həthəmk təh yāḳā mən xəṣɔ́myən* 'I suspect (that) he is one of our enemies' (or: 'I suspect him to be…') (94:42)

However, on occasion these verbs of thinking can also be followed by a perfect, rather than a subjunctive, as will be discussed in §13.5.1.1.

Similarly, the verb *yəṣ* 'be afraid' is normally followed by a subjunctive, though this construction can only be translated with an English type (b) complement clause. However, the verb *yəṣ* uses the preposition *mən* before the subordinate clause (see §7.1.3 for other such verbs). As noted in §8.13, *yəṣ* normally takes *mən* before an object (e.g., 47:5; 54:17). Examples are:

> *yəṣṣək mən ʾəḥād yāyɛ́nəh* 'I am afraid (that) someone will give him the evil eye' (22:3)
> *yəṣṣək tīk mən təḥtəwūl* 'I am afraid (that) you will go crazy' (22:26)
> *ð-yəṣṣək mən yəzlēl līsən kawb yəmō* 'I am afraid (that) a wolf may attack them today' (26:9)
> *ðə-yəṣṣək tīs mən təhaflət mən ḏ̣ayri* 'I am afraid (that) she may run away from me' (94:16)

Note that *yəṣ* is often, but not always, followed by an anticipatory pronominal direct object, as in 22:26 and 94:16, above. It is strange that *yəṣ* in this case takes a direct object, since when not in a complement construction, a pronominal object of *yəṣ* requires *mən* (e.g., 54:17). For more on *yəṣ (mən)*, see also the next section and §13.2.3.

13.5.1.1. Complementizer ð-

Complement clause type (b) involves, in English, an optional complementizer 'that'. In Mehri, the particle ð- serves as an optional complementizer, but it is not clear if there are rigid rules governing its use. The following verbs are attested only with the complementizer ð-: *ʿayləm* 'learn, know',[10] *ḥətūm* 'be sure', *šəḳrūr* 'confess', *śəhēd* 'witness', and *šəṣfū* 'find out'. However, it must be stressed that the evidence is

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[10] This G-Stem verb, found only once in Johnstone's texts, is probably an Arabism, as I have suggested above (§11, n. 2; see also §14).

so slight (essentially just one example per verb in the texts) that it cannot be taken as proof that these verbs must be followed by the complementizer *ð-*. Some of these examples are:

kēf ʿɛ̄mək ðə-hē ǯayrəh tōmər 'how did you learn that it had dates on it?' (23:15)

hō ðə-ḥətəmk ðə-hē ġayg ðə-rīkəb ǯār ṯəbərayn 'I thought that it was a man who was riding on a hyena' (82:2)[11]

əškərərk bə-ḥənōfi ðə-hō ǯələmk 'I confess of myself that I have acted unjustly' (19:24)

təśhīd ðə-hē hārōs bə-fəlāna … təśhīd ðə-hē kəfayləs awkələy… 'do you bear witness that he has married so-and-so? … Do you bear witness that he, her guardian, has entrusted me…?' (100:4-5)

šəṣfū amkwayrəs ðə-sē, amkəwrətəh, šəfḳawt 'he found out that she, his beloved, was engaged' (75:2)

The following verbs are never attested with the complementizer *ð-*: *dəxāl* 'promise', *gəzūm* 'swear', *ḥəlūm* 'dream', *ḥōrəm* 'swear', and *ḥəs* 'feel'. Again, the evidence is so slim (one to three examples per verb in the texts) that more data are needed to prove that these verbs cannot ever be followed by the complementizer *ð-*. Some of these examples are:

ḥɛ̄mək yəllō xəznēt ð-ḥaybi nxāli abə́tk 'I dreamt last night (that) my father's treasure was under your house' (19:17)

dəxlōtən l-ād ənnūka náxəlka zōyəd 'we promise (that) we will never come to your palm trees again' (37:5)[12]

ḥəssək ṯəwyay bə-ḥəllay 'I felt (that) they came to me in the night' (40:22)

hē ḥōrəm əl yədōbəh 'he swore (that) he would not collect honey' (77:8)

hēm gəzawm əl iźayṭ bəh ḳəźayyət 'they swore (that) they would not take any compensation for it' (89:5)

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[11] The printed text has *aġayg* here (with the definite article *a-*), but this does not fit with the following relative clause. Indeed, the audio confirms indefinite *ġayg*.

[12] We might expect *dəxāl* 'promise' to take a following subjunctive, as does *šəwɛ̄d* 'promise' in 32:5 (cited in §7.1.3) and 91:30 (cited in §13.5.1). Perhaps *dəxāl* is followed by the imperfect here (and in 68:16) because of the particles *l-ād … zōyəd*?

If we compare those passages above in which a complementizer is used and those passages in which it is not, we notice that the complementizer *ð-* is always followed by an independent pronoun, in all but one case (19:24) a third person pronoun. In the examples in which *ð-* is absent, there is never an independent pronoun beginning the complement clause. If we are to derive a rule from this, are we to say that *ð-* occurs because of the following third person pronoun, or that the pronoun is used because of the complementizer *ð-*?

A handful of verbs are attested both with and without a following complementizer. Among these verbs are: *ʾāmōr* 'say', *ġərūb* 'know', and *hənkūr* 'realize, think'. For *ġərūb* and *hənkūr*, the data follow a similar pattern to what was already observed: the complementizer is normally used when the complement clause begins with a third person independent pronoun, but it is normally absent if the subject of the complement clause is a first or second person pronoun, or if no pronoun is present. Some examples of *ġərūb* and *hənkūr* with the complementizer are:

> *ġərawb ʾāskēr ðə-hē ʾāwēr baydi* 'the soldiers knew that the blind man was a liar' (46:20)
> *ġərōb ðə-hē zərūḳ ʾār azēməl* 'he knew that he had only stabbed the camel-gear' (76:12)
> *ġərawb ðə-hē, mət ṭāṭ yəṣ, yəśōni kāl-śīən fənwīh* 'they knew that, when someone is afraid, he might see anything in front of him' (95:11)
> *hənkərk ðə-hē ʾəḥād ðə-mōt ənhōr ðəkməh* 'I realized that it was someone who had died that day' (54:13)

Some examples of *ġərūb* and *hənkūr* without the complementizer are:

> *hō əġōrəb ḥambərawtən yəbadyəm lā* 'I know (that) the boys don't lie' (74:20)
> *hē ðə-ġərōb əl šīhəm əl śīwōṭ w-əl moh w-əl ð̣ērōb* 'he knew (that) they had neither fire, nor water, nor wood' (76:11)
> *ðə-ġərəbk təh təftarḥən bə-fəndēl* 'I knew (that) he was happy about sweet potatoes' (89:35)
> *hō ʾār bər hənkərk məhawf tay ʾār mən ð̣ār ʾas* 'I think (that) you will pay me only after difficulty' (39:13)

In the examples from 74:20, 76:11, and 89:35, in which the subordinate clauses all have third person subjects, we might wonder why we do not find ð- plus a third person pronoun. It seems that ð- plus a third person pronoun is used most often when the subordinate clause is non-verbal (as in 46:20 above), when the subordinate clause contains a relative clause (as in 54:13 above), or when the subordinate clause has an embedded subordinate clause (as in 95:11 above). But more examples are needed to prove that any of these conditions is relevant.

Other questions still remain. For example, when the complementizer ð- is used, why is it that sometimes the verb in the main clause has a direct object anticipating the subject of the subordinate clause, but sometimes does not? Compare the following:

> ġərəbk təh ðə-hah sədayḳi 'I knew that he was my friend' (lit. 'I knew him that…') (18:17)
> tēṯ ð̣-aġayg ġarbəts ðə-sē sadḳət 'the man's wife knew that she was a friend' (94:46)
> ġərōb aġayg ðə-hē bərkīh ġəyūr 'the man knew that in it there was poison' (24:48)
> ġərawb ʾāskēr ðə-hē ʾāwēr baydi 'the soldiers knew that the blind man was a liar' (46:20)

It seems that an anticipatory direct object is used when the complementizer ð- immediately follows the verb (as in 18:17 and 94:46), but if the main verb is followed by a nominal subject (as in 24:48 and 46:20), then no direct object is used. More examples are needed to test this rule.

Also when the complementizer is absent, and when the subordinate clause begins with a first or second person pronoun, the preceding verb sometimes has a redundant direct object. Compare the following:

> aġarbək hēt bōyər 'I know that you are a liar' (lit. 'I know you, you are a liar') (99:26)
> śafk təġōrəb hō əṣṭawṭ agawfi 'you probably know that I have a pain in my chest' (101:9)

Why does the verb in 99:26 have a suffix, but not in 101:9? The pronoun immediately follows the verb in both cases. Perhaps an object suffix is simply optional, or perhaps it has to do with first vs. second person pronouns. More data are needed.

The verbs of thinking discussed above (§13.5.1) normally take a subjunctive if the subordinate clause has a present, future, or past conditional meaning. But if the subordinate clause is a simple past tense, then we find either a simple perfect or a non-verbal clause. In these cases, we sometimes find the complementizer ð-, the appearance of which seems roughly to follow the rules for ġərūb 'know', outlined above. That is, we get ð- before a third person pronoun. Following are some examples:

> əmələk təh bər gəhēm 'I think (that) he has already gone' (94:42)
> ḥābū šəṣdīḳ ðə-hē śērək ṣədḳ 'the people believed that it was a real śērək' (41:9)
> yəhōgəs məġfēź ðə-ḳawt 'he thought (that) it was a package of food' (91:20)
> əhagsəš mən aṣədḳəš ḥəźərš əlay 'I thought (that) you were genuinely persuading me' (94:8)

Now whereas we can postulate rules that predict the use of the complementizer ð- with ġərūb and hənkūr, and probably also for the verbs of thinking, the verb ʾāmōr 'say' is more problematic, since no clear rules govern the use of a following complementizer. All we can say is that it is more often absent than present. Compare the following:

> mōn ʾāmōr hūk ð-hō ʾōmər 'who told you that I sing?' (52:9)
> ʾāmawr hē bə-xayr 'they said (that) he is well' (57:6)
> ʾāmawr yəśtōm kāl-śīən 'they said (that) he buys everything' (74:11)
> yāmərəm ðə-səwēḥər tāmōlən ṭəbərēn xətōwəm 'they say that witches put rings on hyenas' (81:2)
> ʾāmawr həgūm əl-sēkən ðə-hē sərīn 'they say (that) it attacked the community that is behind us' (102:4)

In a few rare cases, involving the verbs šənðūr 'vow, promise' and yəṣ (mən) 'be afraid' we find a complementizer ð- used in conjunction with a subjunctive, as in:

> šənðərk ð-əl-ḳəlāk təhaḳṣəm mən hāl təḥōm 'I promise that I will let you spend the day wherever you want' (33:3)
> šənðərk ð-əl-həwfək 'I vow that I will pay you' (39:16)
> yəṣṣək mən akənyawn ð-yəġṣābəm tay təh 'I am afraid that the children will take it away from me' (37:22)

An example of *šənðūr* followed by a subjunctive without the complementizer can be seen in 3:3. Examples of *yəṣ* followed by a subjunctive without the complementizer can be found in §13.5.1; see also §13.2.3, on the use of *yəṣ* with the particle *m-ʾād*.

13.5.1.2. Complementizer ð- vs. Circumstantial or Relative ð-

In §7.1.10.1 and §7.1.10.2 we saw a number of examples of the verbs *hūma* 'hear', *kūsa* 'find', and *śīni* 'see' followed by a circumstantial-marking ð-. A representative example is:

> *ʾəśənihəm ð-yəġətəryəm* 'I saw them speaking' (40:24)

Could this not be a complement clause, literally meaning 'I saw (them) that they were speaking'? Perhaps, but we saw in §13.5.1.1 that the complementizer ð- is normally followed by a third person pronoun (or, with *ʾāmōr*, by a pronoun or noun). Other examples with these verbs show more clearly that ð- in such passages is not a complementizer, for example:

> *kəsk tīs bərk dəḥlīl bər ðə-ʾāṭəmēt* 'I found it in a cave already bandaged up (lit. having been bandaged)' (81:3)

In this passage, if ð- were a complementizer, rather than a marker of a circumstantial verb, we would expect it to occur earlier in the phrase, or at least before *bər*. But it is safe to say that the various uses of the particle ð- (relative, complementizing, and circumstantial) are not always totally distinct.

The verbs *hūma* 'hear' and *śīni* 'see' regularly take a circumstantial phrase (in which a verb may or may not have the marker ð-) in contexts where English has a complement clause. Following are some examples, where a circumstantial phrase in Mehri is best translated with a complement clause in English:

> *məkōn ṭāṭ hamak ḥābū kāl ðə-nūka* 'a certain place I heard (that) everyone came to' (53:1)
> *hamam bəh məhakbəl līhəm* 'they heard (that) he was coming to them' (lit. 'they heard about him coming to them') (32:6)
> *śīnək tīn ðə-gayan* 'you saw (that) we were hungry' (73:11)
> *əśōni ʾāfōr ṭawla mən arawrəm* 'I see (that) a cloud has come up from the sea' (96:7)

Nevertheless, there are rare examples with a complementizer *ð-*, followed by a third person pronoun:

> *hamak əð-hēm təgēr ðə-bīs ð̣əlawm ḥābū* 'I heard that the merchants who are in it treat the people unjustly' (66:2)

The verb *həgūs* 'think' is also sometimes followed by a circumstantial, in place of a subjunctive or complement clause. A circumstantial is not always easily distinguished from a complement clause, however. Two such examples are:

> *yəhūgəs aġəggēn ðə-šəwkūf* 'he thought that the boy was sleeping' (or: 'he thought the boy (to be) asleep') (76:12)
> *əhəgsəh ðə-rīkəb ð̣ār ṭəbərayn* 'I thought that he was riding on a hyena' (or: 'I thought him (to be) riding…') (82:1)

13.5.2. Purpose Clauses

Purpose clauses in Mehri can be either marked or unmarked, though unmarked are more common. An unmarked purpose clause simply includes a subjunctive verb. Some examples are:

> *wəzəmīh moh yəttə́ḳ* 'he gave him water to drink' (13:9)
> *ð-ərtəwōg būk tətēyən tīk* 'they made a plot against you to eat you' (15:17)
> *kāl ṭāyt təntəkōl ġayg təšafḳəh* 'each one must choose a man to marry' (15:21)
> *nkḗ əw-boh l-ərṣank* 'come here so I can tie you up' (24:26)
> *səyūr yəśnɛ́ aṣfōri* 'he went to look at the pots' (36:24)
> *ḥōm l-ərfā aġawf əl-śnē* 'I wanted to climb up to see' (53:3)
> *w-ənkayn bə-fəndēl əntōm fəndēl* 'and he brought us sweet potatoes, so we could taste sweet potatoes' (89:11)
> *āzēmi aṣayġat l-ədəféns mən aḳawm* 'give me the jewelry so I can hide it from the raiding party' (99:44)[13]

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[13] Stroomer translates *l-ədəféns* as 'to pay', as if from the verb *dūfa* 'pay'. Were this correct, there would be no way to explain the *n* in the form, and the following preposition *mən* would be unexpected. The form must be from the verb *dəfūn* 'bury', a verb used again in 99:48. A form of the verb *dūfa* 'pay' does show up in 99:59.

A purpose clause can also be introduced by *tē* (cf. Arabic *ḥattā*), which is followed by a subjunctive verb in a non-past context or a perfect verb in a past tense context. Examples are:

> *əl hah ġəggēt əlá tē tāṣōṣ ləh* 'he is not a girl so that you should be afraid for him' (22:4)
>
> *ʾāmyēla həh wōrəm tē nəmnɛ́h* 'we will make a plan to catch him' (24:19)
>
> *rədyōni aḳaydōr əð-bərkīhəm aśxōf tē yəṯəbīr* 'we will pelt the pots that the milk is in, so that they break' (35:10)
>
> *ṣəbēri lay tē l-haftək abərawḳa əlyōməh* 'give me time to take away these veils' (42:31)
>
> *əl bay ḳəṭfōf lā tē l-əfrēr* 'I don't have wings to fly (with)' (56:8)
>
> *əl hō ḥāgawrək lā, tē l-ədbɛ́h hūk* 'I am not your slave to collect honey for you' (77:4)
>
> *həwrōd ḥazhɛ tē hərwū* 'he took his goats to the water to give them drink' (61:6)

The particle *l-agərē (ð-)*, which before a noun means 'for the sake of, on behalf of' (see §8.21), can also introduce a purpose clause. There is no clear difference between *l-agərē (ð-)* and *tē* in this function. As expected, the verb of the purpose clause will be in the subjunctive. There are just nine such examples with *l-agərē (ð-)* in the texts, including:

> *nəhōm nəṯbēr abḳárhɛ tē nəḳlēh fəḳayr l-agərē l-ʾād yəhɛ̄rəs lā* 'we should break (the bones of) his cows to leave him poor, so that he will never marry' (6:5)
>
> *səḥayṭ ḥīṭār l-agərē ḥābū yəšadərkəm mən ðār agwē* 'slaughter a female kid, so that the people can survive the famine' (30:12)
>
> *ftēḥī xaš l-agərē ðə-l-ākēb* 'open your mouth so that I can go in' (42:27)
>
> *bəʿeli həbēr wə-ḥārawn yəhabyəm lə-bəʿeli əbḳār l-agərē ð-yəśxayf* 'the camel- and goat-herds come to the cowherds to drink milk' (58:4)
>
> *hē əl šəh śī-lā l-agərē ð-yəśtōm məṣrawf* 'he did not have anything (with which) to buy supplies' (65:1)
>
> *nūka ḳēʿəyēti ṯrayt l-agərē tərḥáʒən* 'two female spirits came to wash in the well' (68:6)

> *tē nəhōr amšəġərēt ənkōt ḥāməy l-agərē təźáṭi* 'then the next day, my
>   mother came to take me' (89:31)

Of the nine examples of *l-agərē* in a purpose clause, only two have the
particle *ð-* following *l-agərē* (42:27 and 65:1). However, in three of the
nine cases (68:6, 89:31, and 90:15), the immediately following verb has
the prefix *tə-*, before which the particle *ð-* is usually suppressed (see
§7.1.10.1). Therefore, it is not really clear whether *l-agərē* or *l-agərē ð-*
is more common in a purpose clause.

13.5.3. Temporal Clauses

There are three main markers of temporal subordination in Mehri,
mət, *hīs*, and *tē*. Each of these can be translated by English 'when',
though each has its own special functions. That is, the three are usually
not interchangeable. These three particles will be treated in turn.

13.5.3.1. mət

The particle *mət*, which is a reduced form of the interrogative *mayt*
'when?' (§11.7), has two basic functions as a marker of temporal sub-
ordination.[14] It can refer to an event that has not yet happened (i.e., a
future or relative future), or, rather less commonly, it can refer to a
habitual action. In either usage, *mət* is followed by either a verb in the
perfect tense (remembering that the imperfect of the verb *ḥōm* can
also function as its perfect; see §7.3) or by a non-verbal clause. Some
examples of *mət* referring to an event that has not happened yet are:

> *mət nūka aḳayð̣, həwfi* 'when summer comes, pay me' (39:15)
> *mət gəzōt ḥəyawm, yəšəwgīś ḥābū kāl ʾəḥād lə-sékənəh* 'when the
>   sun goes down, the people all go home' (54:3)
> *ðōməh aġəggēn wəḳōna axayr mənay mət ʾāḳawr* 'this boy will be
>   better than me when he grows up' (76:12)
> *wəzmōna tīkəm fəndēl mət nakakəm* 'I'll give you sweet potatoes
>   when you come back' (89:12)
> *mət səhēk ðōməh, əwəzmak məšēġər* 'when you finish this, I will give
>   you something else' (55:5)

---

[14] For *mət* as the reduced (unstressed) form of *mayt*, we can compare *bət*, the
preserved construct form of *bayt* 'house' (§4.6).

> mət təḥaymi təftēki, səkēbi aġayrōrət ðə-dərēhəm bərk amədōrət
> 'when you want to leave, pour out the bag of money onto the
> floor' (97:24)

In five cases in the texts (out of the fifty or so times *mət* is attested
referring to a future event), a verb in the *mət*-clause is preceded by *bər*
(see §12.5.6), which has its basic meaning 'already'. Two examples of
this are:

> *mət bər ḳəbawr, yəsḥayṭ bēr wəla rawn* 'when they have (already)
> buried him, they slaughter camels or goats' (54:2)
> *mət bər śəhēdəm śəhawd, yəhəmlūk śɛ́rəʾ aġayg* 'when the witnesses
> have (already) testified, the judge gives the man conjugal posses-
> sion' (100:6)

As also discussed in §12.5.6, if the temporal clause is non-verbal and
has a pronominal subject, then the particle *bər*, which carries no mean-
ing, is required to hold the subject. Examples are:

> *mət bərsən bərk ḥəmōh, śəlēl xəlawḳīsən* 'when they are in the water,
> take their clothes' (37:3)
> *mət bərk ḳərayb əl-ḥāṣən, ənfēġ bə-śfēt sərūk* 'when you are near the
> castle, throw a hair behind you' (86:9)

Once we find *bər* in the main clause, indicating a time prior to the
temporal *mət*-clause, i.e., a future perfect (on the compound future
perfect tense, see §7.1.9):

> *mət nakan, tāḳāy bər ṭəḥanš gənyət wə-bər mōləš azəyawrət* 'when
> we get back, you should have already ground the sack (of maize)
> and filled the jars' (97:7)

As already mentioned, the second basic use of *mət* is to refer to a
habitual action, whether past or present. In these cases, *mət* can be
translated as 'when' or 'whenever'. There are less than a dozen such
passages in the texts, some of which are:

> *mət ḥābū śīnəm tīs yāṣawṣ* 'when(ever) people see it, they get afraid'
> (16:2)

mət gawya, yətayw mən amāray 'when(ever) he was hungry, he
would eat of the pasturage' (74:3)

mət ḥəynīṯ fəlōḵ ḥīṭār, əhōrəḵ amaws ðə-ḥaybi w-əsḥōṭ ḥīṭār
'when(ever) the women let the (goat) kids out, I would steal my
father's razor and slaughter kids' (89:3)

mət ṭāṭ yəṣ, yəśōni kāl-śīən fənwīh wa-yəfrōḵ bəh 'when someone is
afraid, he sees anything in front of him and it frightens him'
(95:11)

In addition to these two basic uses of *mət*, there are four cases in
which we find *mət* used in the context of a past narrative. Two of these
cases contain the phrase *mət səwānōt* 'after a little while', which seems
to be idiomatic. The four examples are:

mət ḳayrəb təxərūfən, təhəṣabḥən ðə-xərēṭ 'when they (the date-
palms) were close to being ripe, one morning they were stripped
of their fruit' (37:1)

mət səwānōt yəhəftūk ṭāṭ 'after a little while, he took one (veil) off'
(42:32)

mət bərəh rəwāḥāḵ yəšlabdən 'when he was a little ways away, he
fired (his gun)' (83:3)

mət səwānōt yəwōḳa ðār ṭāṭ mən əl-manāṣīr 'after a little while, he
came upon one of the Manasir' (104:19)

In three passages we find *mət* + *ð-*. In one of these (40:17), the particle
ð- comes between *mət* and a nominal subject. This is most likely a mis-
take, and the *ð-* is not heard on the audio. In the other two cases (37:25;
46:7), the particle *ð-* comes between *mət* and a verb. Here, the particle
ð- (confirmed by the audio) should be parsed as the verbal prefix *ð-*
(§7.1.10), indicating a continuous or habitual aspect. The passages are:

*ṭaṭ yākēb bərk aġayg mət ð-šərbā kərmaym u ṭaṭ yākēb bərkīh
mət təwō abāyōr* 'one (jinn) would go inside the man when he
climbed the mountain and one would go inside him when he ate
the camels' (37:25)[15]

---

[15] Presumably, the verb *təwō* would also be preceded here by *ð-*, were it not for the
fact that the verbal prefix *ð-* is normally suppressed before verbs beginning with *t-* (see
§7.1.10.1).

mət ð-yəḥōm yəšakf hāl tḗṯəh, təšəwkūf mənwəh u mən tḗṯəh 'when(ever) he wanted to sleep with his wife, she would sleep between him and his wife' (46:7)

In text 15:8, we find the form məth, which would appear to be mət plus a 3ms pronominal suffix. However, this form is undoubtedly just a typographical error for mət. We also find a typographical error in 99:13, where mət ḥəlākəməh should be read mən ḥəlākəməh 'from there' (as it is translated by Johnstone); otherwise we would expect mət bərən ḥəlākəməh 'when we are there'.

On the combination tḗ mət 'until', which is found once (97:12), see the next section.

13.5.3.2. tḗ

The very common particle tḗ (vars. tā, ta) has a variety of functions and meanings. It can be used as a preposition 'until' (see §8.18) and a purpose-marking subordinating conjunction 'so that' (§13.5.2), but it is most frequently encountered as a marker of temporal subordination. It is used as such in narration of past events, and carries a nuance of sequential action. That is, it has the meaning of 'then when', though a translation 'when' is normally sufficient and sometimes even preferable. Because it has this nuance of 'then', a temporal 'when'-clause with tḗ always precedes the main clause. The temporal conjunction tḗ can be followed by a verb in the perfect or by a non-verbal phrase. Examples from the texts are abundant. Some are:

tḗ wəṣələm kūsəm ḥəmoh 'then when they arrived, they found the water' (5:5)

tḗ gəzōt ḥəyawm ḳərū təwyəh bərk dəḥlīl 'then when the sun went down, he hid his meat in a hole' (13:7)

nūka hēxər … tḗ wīṣəl hāl aġayg wə-ḥəbrēh ṣōr u ġəlōk b-aġəggēn 'an old man came along … then when he got to the man and his son, he stood and looked at the boy' (22:8)

tḗ kālayni nūka abayt, ksīs xəlayyət 'then when he came home in the evening, he found it empty' (22:69)

tḗ šəwkūf, śəllūt xəlawḳəhɛ 'then when he was asleep, she took off his clothes' (48:26)

tōli ḳəfdō təwōli ḥōkəm. tḗ nkō, ʾāmōr ḥōkəm, "kō ʾətēm ḳəfədkəm?" 'then they went down to the ruler. When they came (to him), the ruler said: Why have you come down?' (74:19)

tē nakak, kəsk aġayg ðə-bərəh yəḥōm yəhwē 'then when I came, I
found the man about to fall down' (77:6)

*tōli źəḥkūt tēṯ … tōli gəhmō … tē ḳərəbō lə-sēkən ðə-xəṣəmhɛ, ʾāmōr
h-tɛ́ṯəh…* 'then the wife laughed … then they went off … then
when they got to a community of his enemies, he said to his
wife…' (94:24)

tē kə-sōbəḥ ḳəlōb ḥas, šxəbīrəh ḥābū 'then in the morning when
(his) consciousness returned, the people questioned him' (95:6)

If the subordinate clause is unusually long, then the main clause may
be preceded by *tōli* 'then', as in:

*tē ḳəfūdən b-abar ənxāli dɛ́həḳ śōx u həḳəfūdən əlhān bərk alang
mən ḥāməl, tōli ʾāmōr ḥaywəl…* 'then when we came ashore
under a big cliff and brought down all the luggage that was in the
launch, (then) the crazy one said…' (60:10)

A pronominal subject is rarely expressed after *tē*. Both *mət*
(§13.5.3.1) and *hīs* (§13.5.3.3) can express a following pronominal
subject with the help of the particle *bər*, but *tē* must be followed by *hīs
bər*. There are just a few examples of this, including:

tē hīs bərhəm bə-ḥōrəm, kūsəm ġayg ʾāwēr 'when they were on the
road, they found a blind man' (46:9)

tē hīs bəri bə-ʾāmḳ ðə-ḥōrəm, nəkōt məwsē 'when I was half-way
along, the rain came' (47:2)

That *tē* cannot be followed directly by *bər* is shown by two other exam-
ples, one where *bər* is being used with the verb *ḥōm* to mean 'be about
to' (see §7.3.4), and one where *bər* is being used with the subordinator
to give the clear sense of 'after' (see §13.5.3.3):

tē hīs bərhəm yəḥaym yəšakfəm, aġayg kəlōn həftōk amaws 'then
when they were about to go to sleep, the bridegroom took the
razor' (75:17)

tē hīs bər aṣalyəm, śīnəm ḥābū awrḳāt 'then after they had prayed,
the people saw the note' (85:17)

In rare cases, *tē* is combined with *hīs* for no apparent reason, as in:

tē hīs wəṣələn bawməh, ʾāmōr… 'when we arrived here, he said…' (46:16)[16]

In addition to having the meaning '(then) when', the conjunction *tē* is also often found with the meaning 'until', a meaning it also has as a preposition (see §8.18). In this case, the subordinate clause follows the main clause, and the verb following *tē* is a perfect if the reference is to the past, but subjunctive if the reference is to the future. Examples are:

ḥābū ġəlawḳ mənhēm tē ḳaṭam 'the people looked for them until they got tired' (35:17)
tē gəzōt ḥəyawm, səyūr aġiggēn tē wīṣəl xawr 'then when the sun went down, the boy went until he got to the lagoon' (36:6)
wə-səyərk tē wə́ṣlək abayt 'and I went on until I got to the house' (62:4)
dawnək hēt b-əḥkawmət tē nənkēk 'you take (over) the government until we come (back) to you' (20:78)
ḥarmək l-ʾād əð̣awbər būk zōyəd tē l-əmēt 'I swear I won't nag you anymore until I die' (98:15)
ʾā ḥāməy, mənɛ́i ayṯayl tē l-ənkēš 'Mother, hold the fox until I come to you!' (99:43)

In rare cases, it can be unclear whether *tē* is functioning as 'until' or 'then when'. For example, in 62:4 (preceding the passage cited above), we find the sentence *tōli səyərk tē wəṣlək ḥōrəm ṭayt, kəsk ġayg ṭāṭ wə-šxəbárk təh*. Depending on punctuation (in writing) or sentence stress (in speech), this could be translated either 'then I went on until I got to a certain road, (and) I found a certain man and asked him' or 'then I went on, (and) then when I got to a certain road, I found a man and asked him'. The single punctuation mark in Stroomer's edition (the comma after *ṭayt*) does not remove the ambiguity.

In one place (97:12) we find the unique combination *tē mət* 'until when', in the phrase *nḥāgi tē mət ḳanaš wə-təḥaymi təftēki, səkēbi…* 'dance until when you get tired and want to leave, pour out…'. That this is not a mistake seems to be confirmed by the fact that we find an expected perfect following *mət*. The same line is repeated near verba-tim in 97:24, though with the *tē mət* separated into two clauses: *nḥāgi*

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[16] Cf. 46:15, where we find simply *tē wəṣələm…* 'when they arrived…'.

tē təḳənēi wə-mət təḥaymi təftēki, səkēbi 'dance until you are tired, and when you want to leave, pour out…'.

In many passages, *tē* functions not as a conjunction, but as a simple adverb 'then', in which case it is always followed by another adverb or adverbial phrase. Such adverbs or adverbial phrases are nearly always temporal in nature, like *kə-sōbəḥ* 'in the morning', *bə-ḥəllay* 'at night', *kālayni* 'in the evening', *nəhōr ṭayt* 'one day', etc. Some examples are:

> *tē mən ḏ̣ār sənēt, səyūr təwōli ḥaybəs* 'then after a year, he went to her father' (9:1)
>
> *tē bə-ḥəllay, həbawr aġayg abḳarhɛ* 'then at night, the man took out his cattle' (15:9) (Stroomer: 'when the man took his cattle out at night…')
>
> *tē nəhōr ṭayt nakam təh śāṭayt śəbōb u wfawd hənīh* 'then one day three young men came to him and asked him for their hands (in marriage)' (37:7)
>
> *tē nəhōr ṭayt kālayni, ḳəṭōt abōkər u ḳəlays u šəwgūś. tā bərk amġərāb śīni ḥārawn* 'then one day in the evening, the camel got tired, and he left it and went on. Then in the evening, he saw goats' (37:17)
>
> *tē məġōrən, hīs yəḥōm yəbār, məġāṭ u wīḳa hē yənšarxəf* 'then later, when he wanted to make off, he stretched himself and began to slip away' (69:4)
>
> *tē kə-sōbəḥ, hīs bēṣər absār, ḳəfdō ḥəmbərawtən* 'then in the morning, when the dawn had come, the boys disembarked' (74:17)
>
> *tē kə-sōbəḥ, wətḳəḏ̣awt ṭəbərayn* 'then in the morning, the hyena woke up' (99:9)
>
> *tē bə-gərdīś, həwḳawt śīwōṭ* 'then (when she was) in the desert plain, she lit a fire' (36:9)
>
> *gəhēməm, tē b-ʾāmḳ ð-ḥōrəm, kūsəm ġayg ð-yəsyūr* 'they set off, and then half-way along, they found a man who was traveling' (70:7)
>
> *tē ḏ̣ār bayr, wə-hərbā moh* 'then (when they were) at the well, they drew water' (97:10)

The last three examples show that the adverbial phrase need not be temporal, though such examples are uncommon.

In a few passages in which *tɛ̄* is followed by a verb, it is translated with a simple 'then' in Stroomer's edition. In fact, these are best parsed as subordinators, as in:[17]

tɛ̄ nūka aġay, yəġərəbay wə-yabrə́ḳa təwalyɛ 'then when my brother came, he recognized me and ran to me' (34:27) (Stroomer: 'Then my brother came. He recognized me and ran towards me')
tɛ̄ nūka b-arḥəbēt ð-amhərɛ́ʾ wə-wəkūb bərk bayt, kūsa tɛ̄t̠ 'then when he got to the country of the Mehri and entered a house, he found a woman' (59:2) (Stroomer: 'then he got to the country of the Mehra and went into a house. (There) he found a woman')

The adverbial *tɛ̄* differs from its near synonym *tōli*, in that *tōli* cannot be directly followed by another adverb. Instead, the conjunction *hīs* must intervene, as in:

tōli hīs bə-ḥəllay həwḳā śēf šəh bərk śīwōt̠ 'then, when (it was) at night, he put the hairs he had in the fire' (37:25)

Interestingly, in one place it appears that the adverb *tōli* 'then' is functioning as a temporal subordinator:

tōli aġayg šəwēhəb tɛt̠əh tāḳā bər sīrūt mən ðār ḥəmoh, ʾāmōr… 'then when the man thought his wife would have already left the water, he said…' (94:20)

This is either just a mistake on the part of the speaker, or *tōli* is taking on this function here on analogy with *tɛ̄*, which can function as both an adverb and a subordinating conjunction.

13.5.3.3. *hīs*

The particle *hīs* can function as a preposition meaning 'like', in which case it is usually found in the compound *lə-hīs* (see §8.10). It is encountered most often, however, as a marker of temporal subordination 'when'. Of the three such markers—*mət*, *tɛ̄*, and *hīs*—*hīs* is the one that appears most frequently in Johnstone's texts. Unlike *mət*, but like *tɛ̄*,

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[17] The opposite mistake is also found. In the example from 15:9, cited above, Stroomer translates 'when the man took his cattle out at night…', without a main clause.

hīs is used in the context of a past narrative, and a following verb appears in the perfect. But while the *tē*-clause (when it means 'when') must precede the main clause, the *hīs*-clause can precede, follow, or be embedded within the main clause. And while *tē* carries a sequential nuance 'then when', *hīs* is simply 'when'. This is not to say that *hīs* cannot be used in a context where 'then when' is appropriate; it can, and in such cases it is optionally preceded by the adverb *tōli* 'then'. *Hīs* also has other meanings not found with *tē*, as will be outlined below. Following are some examples of *hīs* meaning 'when':

> ʾəś aġayg hīs hōma aṣawt ðə-ḥəybīt 'the man arose when he heard the sound of the camel' (13:3)
>
> ṣərōməh hīs hēm kāl ṭāṭ wəḥśīh waḳam sīhōl 'now, when they are each by themselves, they have become easy (to break)' (50:4)
>
> aġayg, hīs šəwkūf, ʾādōl abīrakha 'the man, when he had lain down, had raised his knees' (69:4)
>
> tōli aġāh, hīs hūma aġərōyəh, ġərbēh 'then his brother, when he heard his story, recognized who he was' (74:16)
>
> tōli hīs nūka, həftōk xəlōwəḳ əð-ḏayrəh 'then when he arrived, he took off the clothes that were on him' (75:7)
>
> hīs hamak tīs ġətəryōt əwṭākəməh, rōdək b-abərayḳ 'when I heard her talking this way, I threw down the jug' (89:24)
>
> hīs śinīn ḥāgōr, yəṣ 'when the slave saw us, he became afraid' (91:3)
>
> hīs əlḥāḳən təh, bəkō. hīs bəkō, ġáźnək mənəh 'when we caught up with him, he started crying. When he started crying, I felt compassion for him' (91:5)

As with the other temporal conjunctions, a pronoun subject in a non-verbal *hīs*-clause is nearly always expressed as a suffix on the particle *bər*, as in:

> hīs bɛrhəm ðār ḥəmoh, nūka aḳawm 'when they were at the water, the raiding-party came' (10:8)
>
> hīs bɛrəh bə-ḥəwōdi, həgūm ləh kawb 'when he was in the valley, a wolf attacked him' (14A:2)
>
> hīs bɛri bər ʾōśər sənayn, ʾāmərk ḥaybi… 'when I was ten years old, I said to my father…' (34:7)
>
> hīs bɛrən b-āmḳ, ġəbōrən gōr 'when we were half-way, we met a slave' (91:2)
>
> hīs bɛrəh rēḥəḳ, kəś bīn šətəh 'when he was already far away, he exposed his behind to us' (91:4)

However, there are a few examples of *hīs* followed by an independent pronoun, as in:

> *hīs hēm faxrəh, əl ḳədarkəm līhəm lā* 'when they were together, you could not overpower them' (50:4)
> *ʾādi əl ʾōmər lā ʾār yəmšī hīs hō wəḥśəy* 'I have never sung except yesterday when I was alone' (52:15)

In many, if not most, passages in which *hīs* means 'when', it can also be translated as 'after'. But to make the sense of 'after' more explicit, the particle *bər* precedes the verb of the *hīs*-clause. Only very rarely does *bər* take a pronominal suffix in this usage. Some examples are:

> *hīs bɛr fəśū, šəwkūf* 'after he (had) had lunch, he slept' (12:4)
> *hīs bɛr təwīw, amma aġayg aðərayʾ gəhēm* 'after they ate (or: had eaten), the stranger went off' (13:11)
> *əbḳār bār hīs bɛr ḥəlawbəsən* 'the cows went home after they had milked them' (35:7)
> *hīs bərhəm śxəwəlīl, ṣāḳōt tēṯ aġās* 'after they had sat down, the woman called her brother' (64:29)
> *hīs bər təmūm u bər ḳəfūd xōṭər, ʾāmōr aġayg ðə-ksēh fənōhən…* 'after he had finished (collecting honey) and come down, the man who had found it first said…' (77:3)
> *w-aġayg mōt hīs bər təmūm kəwṭatəh* 'the man died after he finished his story' (92:6)

The combination *mən hīs* has the meaning 'since', in the sense of 'from the time when'. Examples are:

> *mən hīs ḥə́byɛ mōtəm, bər śīnək tīhəm xəmmoh ṭəwōr* 'since my parents died, I have seen them five times' (20:42)
> *ādi əl śīnək ḥə́byɛ lā mən hīs mōtəm* 'I have not seen my parents since they died' (20:43)
> *mən hīs xələḳək, ʾādi əl kəsk ʾəḥād lə-hīs tīhəm lā* 'since I was born, I have never met (lit. found) anyone like them' (62:13)

In a few places, *hīs* has the meaning 'since' (causal) or 'because':

> *kalləh mənk, hīs ḳalak təh yəsīr mən hənay* 'it's all your fault (lit. from you), because you let him go away from me' (17:7)

hīs hēt ḥəbrē ð̣ə-fəlān, ḳalōna tīk təsīr 'because you are the son of
   so-and-so, I will let you go' (20:47)
hīs bər bəhərš bay, məšēmən tīš 'since you have asked me for help, I
   will comply' (90:12)
ṣərōməh hīs əl wīḳa ḥarb śī-lā… 'now since there has been no war…'
   (104:28)[18]

In one passage, we twice find *hīs* followed by an imperfect, indicating
a past progressive. *Hīs* can be translated here as 'when' or 'while' (on
the use of *ʾād* + suffix to express 'while', see §12.5.1):

hīs sēn təġətəryən hənīsən sənnawrət, wə-hamatsən hīs təġətəryən
   'when (or: while) they were talking the cat was with them, and it
   heard them when (or: while) they were talking' (15:7)

And in a few places, nearly all in text 99, *hīs* functions as a relative
'when', 'at the time when':

*kəwṯēt mən azbōn ḥāwəlay, hīs səfrəm ayṯayl wə-kawb, wə-ḳayźər
   wə-ṯəbərayn, wə-yəġrayb w-arxəmūt* 'a story from long ago, when
   the fox, the wolf, the leopard, the hyena, the crow, and the vul-
   ture traveled' (99:1)
kəwṯōna b-abṣōrət ð-ayṯayl … hīs ʾādəs adənyē təġətōri 'I will tell
   about the cleverness of the fox … (at the time) when the (whole)
   world still spoke' (99:2)
*kəwṯōna bə-kəwṯēt ð-əl-ḥarāsīs mən zəbōn ḥāwəlay, fənōhən
   šarəkah, hīs ʾādəs əl ənkōt əlā* 'I will tell the story of the Ḥarasis
   (from) long ago, before the Company, when it still had not arri-
   ved' (104:1)
mən hīs šəxtīn, yāfədəm mən ð̣ār aṣāwər ðayk 'at the time when they
   were circumcised (i.e., long ago), they jumped from that rock'
   (99:17)

In this final example, *mən* is functioning the same way as in the idiom
mən zəbōn ḥāwəlay 'long ago' in 104:1.

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[18] This sentence is not complete, so the 'since' here could, in theory, be either
temporal or causal. However, the surrounding context suggests a causal 'since'.

The compound *lə-hīs*, usually met as a preposition meaning 'like, as' (see §8.10) also functions as a subordinator in a few places, for example:

> *ʾəmələk lə-hīs ʾāmərk hayni* 'I did as you told me' (20:18)
>
> *əl-hīs bər āməlōt b-aġaygəs ḥāwəlay, āməlīta būk əwṭākəməh* 'as she dealt with her previous husband, thus will she deal with you' (22:77)
>
> *yəḥsūs lə-hīs śī ð-yəgərárəh xōṭər* 'he felt like something was pulling him down' (77:1)

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

ON ARABIC FORMS

Mehri-speaking territory has long been surrounded by speakers of Arabic, and Arabic has only become more pervasive with the growth of infrastructure in Oman and Yemen over the last forty years. Nearly all speakers of Mehri are bilingual speakers of Arabic. It is not surprising then that Arabic has had tremendous influence on Mehri, especially in terms of vocabulary. Interestingly, Arabic has not affected Mehri as much in the realm of phonology. For example, Mehri has retained the Semitic lateral and glottalic consonants whose pronunciations were altered in Arabic many centuries ago. Mehri has, for the most part, lost the voiced pharyngeal fricative ʿ, though this is very much in use in Arabic. In one place we find an interesting case of possible Arabic interference in pronunciation, namely *gǝnōbi* in place of *jǝnōbi* 'daggers' (104:36), assuming the transcription is correct here.[1]

Even a cursory glance at Johnstone's *ML* makes it apparent that Mehri is beholden to Arabic for a large number of vocabulary items. Many borrowings are fairly obvious, such as the form of the 'tens' (§9.1.3), days of the week (§9.5), nouns of the pattern *CǝCCōC* or *CǝCCāC* indicating occupations (§2.1.6), and particles like *ʾámma* (§12.5.3), *lēzǝm* (§12.5.10), and *yā* (§12.3). Many Arabic loans are well adapted into the morphological system of Mehri, in particular, borrowings of verbal roots.

Here is not the place for a study of the Arabic influence on Mehri. This is an area for fruitful research, and it is hoped that someone else will make a study of this subject.[2] In this chapter I only want to briefly discuss the actual Arabic forms and other Arabisms that occur in Johnstone's texts.

In a few places in Johnstone's texts, we find complete phrases or sentences in Arabic. Examples can be found in 19:19, 19:22, and 22:84, where the Arabic phrases are set in italics. Scattered throughout the texts are numerous Arabic nouns, verbs, adverbs, particles, etc. It is

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[1] The phoneme *j* is pronounced [g] in some Omani Arabic dialects, especially in the north.

[2] Some discussion can be found in Lonnet (2009).

important to at least recognize that these are not Mehri. Some of these are:

> *bəla šak* 'without a doubt' (7:5)
> *bəððabṭ* 'exactly' (22:29; 23:15)
> *təʿaggəb* 'he was delighted with' (22:40) (the root ʿgb exists in Mehri, but this is an Arabic tD [Form V, *tafaʿʿala*] 3ms perfect)
> *bəlāš* 'for nothing, gratis' (22:48)
> *mītayn* '200' (22:50) (the Arabic numeral; see §9.1.4 for the Mehri equivalent)
> *ṭayyəb* 'fine!' (22:75)
> *kēf* 'how?' (23:10, 15, 16)
> *ʿɛ̄mək* 'you learned' (23:15) (see §11, n. 2)
> *dār ma dār* 'around' (48:13)
> *wə-lḥamdu lillāh* (60:9, 13)
> *b-əl-xəfēʾ* 'secretly, in disguise' (66:3)
> *ḥōgət* 'something' (70:6; 94:8) (see §3.5.5)
> *algənūbi* '(the) southern' (71:1)
> *ʾāzzēt ənnafs* 'honor, nobility' (73:2) (on audio: ʿāzzət ənnafs)
> *kaðālik* 'also, likewise' (74:2)
> *ḥad əl-fəlāni* 'such and such a place' (74:4; 75:7)
> *ɛmēnyayn* 'honest' (74:13) (with the Arabic dual suffix; Mehri adjectives have no dual forms; see §5.1)
> *b-əl-ḥagīga* 'in the right, correct' (82:3)
> *yā ʿazzətayn* 'how sorry I am!' (85:24) (with the Arabic dual suffix)
> *yɛ̄-yəlḥakəh yɛ̄-llɛ́* 'either you'll catch him or not' (96:3) (the verb here is Mehri, but the particles *yɛ̄ … yɛ̄-llɛ́* are Arabic)
> *əššaraf* '(the) honor' (98:8) (better transcribed *əš-šaraf*)
> *məśabbōt* 'satisfied' (99:56) (with the Arabic fp suffix)
> *əl-ʿəša* 'supper' (104:11/22)

Compare also the many occurrences of the Arabic definite article with tribal names, especially in text 104, e.g., *əl-ʿəfār w-əl-ḥarāsīs* 'the Ifar and the Ḥarasis' (104:16).

Most nouns and adjectives are more difficult to categorize as Arabisms (as opposed to borrowings), without features like the Arabic definite article (like *əš-šaraf*, above) or an Arabic inflectional morpheme (like *ɛmēnyayn*, above). So, for example, it is unclear whether adjectives like *dayyən* 'religious' (74:2) and *məxləṣ* 'loyal,

sincere' (18:17) are Arabisms or borrowings that have been integrated into the language. The same can be said about Arabic participial forms like *məḥarrəm* 'forbidden' (94:28), which clearly reflect original Arabic morphological patterns, but which may be integrated into the language (other examples can be found in §7.1.8). We might call nouns like *sāʾəh* '(wrist)watch' (91:2; suffixed *sāʾətəh* 'his watch', 91:3) and *səyyārəh* 'car' (62:12) Arabisms, since they have Arabic feminine suffixes.

Some Arabisms include syntactic particles, as in:

yāṣōṣ mən əswēḥər lanhən (tə)tawyən akənyayn 'they are afraid of witches, that they will eat the children' (7:3) (*lanhən* < Arabic *li-ʾanna-hunna*, dialectal *li-ʾanhin*)

ma amhōrət ð-abʿayr 'how clever the camel was!' (23:3) (*ma* < Arabic *mā*)

hō ġaźnək mən xəlawti, l-ənha tṣawbər mənk lā 'I feel sorry for my stepmother, because she can't do without you' (34:31) (*l-ənha* < Arabic *li-ʾanna-hā*, dialectal *li-ʾanha*)

al takam lətġəkəm ḥāməy 'have you killed my mother?' (65:13) (*al* < Arabic *hal*)

la-bə́d ḥaybəs məlēk 'her father must be an angel' (97:44) (*la-bə́d* < *lā budda*, dialectal *lā budd*)

It is possible that certain peculiarities of syntax should also be considered Arabisms. For example, in Mehri an attributive demonstrative normally follows its head noun, as in *aġayg ðōməh* 'this man' (65:9). But in a few places in the texts, as briefly described in §3.4, an attributive demonstrative precedes the noun, e.g., *ðōməh aġəggēn* 'this boy' (76:12), *ðīməh agawhərət* 'this jewel' (22:54), and *ðəkməh awakṭ* 'that time' (104:35). It seems likely that this is due to the influence of Arabic; cf. Omani Arabic *ða l-bēt* 'this house'.

The influence of Arabic on Mehri can only increase, as the growth of infrastructure and increase in education (through the medium of Arabic) expand in the Omani Dhofar (and in Al-Mahra in Yemen). We can only hope that Mehri can stave off its total replacement by Arabic, as it is not only a captivating and rich language, but is also at present the most vibrant representative of an ancient branch of the Semitic language family.

wə-təmmūt

CORRECTIONS TO STROOMER'S EDITION OF
JOHNSTONE'S TEXTS

The following corrections are collected mainly from my own observations, but some were first pointed out in the reviews of Stroomer's edition of Johnstone's texts by Wagner (2001), Sima (2003), and Lonnet (2003-5). Consult these excellent reviews for additional suggestions on variant readings, and discussion of the text edition in general. The review of Smith (2002) is also very worthwhile.

As discussed in the Introduction (§1.7), the quality of the audio recordings of Johnstone's texts is inferior. The reading is extremely unnatural, and the reader sometimes reads things differently than they appear in transcription. Therefore, if a word in Johnstone's texts is suspect or problematic, it is only possible, not certain, that a more acceptable reading on the audio reflects the original transcription. In the list below, I only make reference to the audio in cases where the correction is not simply a matter of transcription, or is not an obvious typographical error.

I do not include here typographical errors in the English translation of Johnstone's texts, nor do I attempt to correct the many mistranslations. (My own translations can be found throughout the present volume.) I also do not include (for the most part) the countless inconsistencies in transcription. The only issue of transcription that I routinely correct is the use of hyphen, with the result that: 1. clitics, like the conjunction *w(ə)-* (§12.1.1), the prepositions *b-*, *h-*, *k-*, and *l-* (§8), the particle *ð-* (§3.8.1; §7.1.10; §12.4), the first person subjunctive prefix *l-* (§7.1.3), the particle *xā-* (§8.20), and the Arabic definite article *əl-* (in Arabic words and names), are always followed by a hyphen; 2. the negative particle *əl* (§13.2.1) is *not* connected to the following word with a hyphen, but is written as a separate word, except in the compounds *l-ʾəḥād* 'no one' (§3.5.1) and *l-ʾād* (§13.2.2).

The purpose of this Appendix is not to criticize the work of Johnstone or Stroomer, but to arrive at a better understanding of the Mehri texts on which they worked. The corrections below include not only typographical errors in the edition of Stroomer, but, as far as I

can tell, also errors in Johnstone's transcription. There are undoubt-
edly cases where it is my correction that is mistaken, and there are
likely additional mistakes that I have missed.

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
1, n. 5	kś	ksʾ	
2:5	əl ḥābū	əl-ḥābū	
2:7	təsyūr	səyūr	Wagner (p. 343) suggests ðə-səyūr, but the audio has səyūr.
3:16	wəśələm	wəṣələm	
3:19	látəġəm	láttəġəm	Probably. See §6.5.2, n. 16.
5:14	ənká-w-bō	ənká əw-bō	
5:15	ləhīs	lə-hīs	
5:16	ləhīs	lə-hīs	
6:1	báyli	bəʾēli	Audio supports this.
6:1	ḳəniw	ḳənīw	
6:2	wə-sēh	əl sē	Audio supports this.
6:13	lā təhĒrəs	l-ʾād təhĒrəs	Probably. Cf. 6:5. See §13.2.1.
10:1	ḳəṭāṭ	ḳəṭāt	Possibly.[1]
10:3	gəhēmən	gəhēməm	
10:4	wə-əl-nḥōm	w-əl nəḥōm	
10:6	ʾəlīkəm	əlīkəm	
12:1	ð-əl ḥarāsīs	ð-əl-ḥarāsīs	
12:15	əl-zəgdək	əl zəgdək	
13:7	ḥāl	hāl	
13:7	ʾəḥād	l-ʾəḥād	Probably. Audio unclear.
14A:2	ṣəl	śəl	Probably. Audio unclear.
15:8	mə́th	mə́t	See §13.5.3.1, end.
15:18	ʾəl-hō	ʾəl hō	
15:21	kāl-śī	kāl-śīən	Audio supports this. See §3.5.4.
17:8	bīh	bəh	See §8.22.
17:10	lə sēkən	lə-sēkən	

[1] The *ML* lists ḳəṭāṭ 'covered ledge' (p. 243) and ḳəṭāt 'piece' (p. 244), and presum-
ably it is the latter being used here in the sense of 'some'.

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
17:15	ð-yəmōt	ðə-mōt	Discussed in Wagner, p. 344.[2] Audio supports this.
18:8	wə-sədáyḵ	wə-sədáyḵi	Audio supports this.
18:10	əśnē	l-əśnē	Audio supports this. See §7.1.3, n. 3.
18:10	śəwārəʾ	šəwārəʾ	Audio supports this.[3]
18:13	aṣədáyḵi	sədáyḵi	Audio supports this. Cf. 18:8.[4]
18:15	ʾəl-hō	ʾəl hō	
18:17	ðə háh	ðə-háh	Better ðə-hē.
18:17	aṣədáyḵi	sədáyḵi	Audio supports this. See 18:13.
18:18	ləhīs	lə-hīs	Two times in this line.
19:22	il-ḥilm miš ʿilm	(italicize in text)	Quote is in Arabic. Cf. 19:19.
19:25	lā təḥfēr	l-ʾād təḥfēr	Probably. See §13.2.1.
20:4	hīkəm … šīkəm	hīkən … šīkən	Audio supports this. Cf. 20:18, 25.
20:14	l-āmərk	əl ʾāmərk	
20:37	əḵlēk	l-əḵlēk	Audio supports this. See §7.1.3, n. 3.
20:40	tāxōfi	təxōfi	If this is a D/L subj. of √xlf.
20:41	ʾādi śīnək	ʾādi əl śīnək	Audio supports this.
20:43	ḥəbyɛ	ḥəbyɛ lā	Audio supports this.
20:48	ʾəláy	láy	Audio supports this.
20:55	b-āməndáwḵ	b-aməndáwḵ	
20:59	l-ərdīw	əl ərdīw	
22:2	šīk	šūk	Audio supports this.

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[2] I have seen a typescript version of this text—used as a B.A. examination for Johnstone's students!—that has ðə-mōt, proof that Wagner's suggested reading is correct. My thanks to A. Lonnet, who is in possession of this version and kindly shared it with me.

[3] The ML (p. 382) does list śārəʾ 'street', but the plural form clearly has an initial š in the audio version, and the singular šārəʾ is used later in the same sentence. The word is an obvious Arabic loan.

[4] The roots ṣdḵ and sdḵ alternate, as noted in §5.4, n. 12, but here the s is confirmed by the lack of the definite article in the audio. We would expect the article a- before the glottalic ṣ.

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
22:2	ḥəbōn ətēgər	ḥəbōn ð-ətēgər	Possibly, cf. 22:35. Audio unclear.
22:6	yəftərēgəm	ð-yəftərēgən	Audio supports this.[5]
22:8	ġayg	aġayg	Audio supports this.
22:11	tábák	tábak	
22:15	aḵāfi	aḵōfi	Audio supports this.
22:24	hah	əl hah	Audio supports this. Better əl hē.
22:24	ð-ġáwləḵ	ð-yəġáwləḵ	Audio supports this.[6]
22:45	əl-śnēs?	əl-śnēs.	This phrase is not a question.
22:47	yətə́mməh	tə́mməh	Audio supports this.
22:48	yətə́mməh	tə́mməh	Audio supports this.
22:70	sē	ðə-sē	Audio supports this.
22:77	l-ənōṭək	əl ənōṭək	
22:78	l-ilḥōm	əl yəlḥōm	
22:80	l-əḵálás	əl əḵálas	
22:85	ð-śəlūl	ð-yəśəlūl	Audio supports this.
22:97	ġərfēt	aġərfēt	Audio supports this.
23:3	šəṣdēḵk	šəṣdə́ḵk	Audio supports this.
23:5	ləwṭākəməh	l-əwṭākəməh	
23:6	ətġāḵkəm	təġāḵəm	Audio supports this. Discussed in Wagner, p. 344.
23:19	amźárhəh	amźárḥəh	
23:20	ḥəbyēs	ḥəbyēsa	Audio supports this.
24:6	ġəggənōt	aġəgənōt	Audio supports this. Cf. 24:7.
24:8	əl hēt bə-ġəgənōt	hēt əl hēt ġəgənōt	Audio supports this. See §8.2, end.
24:15	hē	hēm	Audio supports this. Cf. 24:25.

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5 If this form is a 3mp imperfect, functioning as a circumstantial, the ð- (heard on the audio) is needed. The translation in context should be '(the people came) looking'. If the translation '(the people came) to look' is correct (as in Stroomer's edition), we would need a 3mp subjunctive yəftərēg. In neither scenario could the final -m be correct.

6 The form ġáwləḵ does not exist.

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
24:22	*əl-təwīyəh*	*əl təwīyəh*	
24:32	*ləhīs*	*lə-hīs*	
24:39	*ləhīs*	*lə-hīs*	
24:39	*wə-ə́ðə*	*w-ə́ðə*	
24:54	*aġīgən*	*aġīgēn*	
25:4	*wə- bákk*	*wə-bákk*	
25:8	*kəráwš*	*ḳəráwš*	
25:9	*amḥēśən*	*amḥēśən*	
25, n. 6	Not in ML…	ML *trḳź* (p. 403).	
25:15	*ḳəbērən*	*ḳəbērəm*	Audio supports this.
26:4	*əl-hē*	*əl hē*	
26:4	*axaṣṣ*	*axass*	See §5.4.
26:9	*yəślēl*	*yəzlēl*	Audio supports this.
26:13	*əl-śīnən*	*əl śīnən*	
28:2	*tərḥōkən*	*tərḥōkən*	
28:6	*kəsk mən*	*kəsk mənəh*	Audio supports this.
28:8	*əl ḥəróhəh*	*əl-ḥəróhəh*	
28:9	*riġād*	*rīġād*	
28:12	*əl-ḳálak*	*əl ḳálak*	
28:18	*thəġyīgən*	*təháġyəgən*	Audio supports this.[7]
28:21	*ð-isəbēṭ*	*ðə-səbēṭ*	Discussed in Wagner, pp. 344-45.
29:5	*ða-mōn*	*ðḗ mōn*	
29:6	*ənkām*	*yənkām*	Audio supports this.
29:9	*əwmṣāʾ*	*əw-mṣāʾ*	See §10.2.
29:10	*əl-kūsa*	*əl kūsa*	
30:2	*təġīgən*	*təháġīgən*	Audio supports this. Cf. also 30:9; *ML*, p. xlv; and Wagner, p. 345.
30:7	*ʾāyni lā.”*	*ʾāyni” lā.*	
30:8	*aṣāwr*	*aṣāwər*	
30:9	*təhəġīgən*	*təháġīgən*	Audio supports this.
31:3	*ði*	*ðī*	
31:4	*əl-ḥōm*	*əl ḥōm*	

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[7] We expect a 3fp subjunctive here after *ʾayməl* (see §13.5.1), and *təháġyəgən* is the 3fp subjunctive given in Johnstone's paradigm (*ML*, p. xlv). The audio actually has *təháġīgən* (cf. 30:9), but this is due to the pronunciation of the sequence *yə* as *ī* (see §2.2).

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
31:6	*xā hō*	*xā-hō*	
31:6	*ʾəḥād*	*l-ʾəḥād*	Audio supports this.
31:10	*śəxof*	*śəxōf*	
31:12	*bə-ṭərēf*	*b-aṭərēf*	Audio supports this.
31:12	*aźáyga*	*ð-aźáyga*	Audio supports this.
31:13	*ðə hō*	*ðɛ̄ hō*	Probably. Audio supports this.
32:5	*nəhōr ṭrayt*	*nəhōri ṭrayt*	Audio supports this.
32:5	*ʾādəh śīni*	*ʾādəh əl śīni*	Audio supports this.
32:6	*šaźáywə*	*šaźáywəh*	
32:8	*tábám*	*tábam*	
32:12	*l-əšfōḳ*	*əl əšfōḳ*	
32:15	*ʾār kāl*	*ʾār u kāl*	Audio supports this. See §12.5.4.
32:15	*ð bɛr*	*ð-bɛr*	
32:20	*ðɛ́kəmə*	*ðɛ́kəməh*	
32:26	*əl-ḥōm*	*əl ḥōm*	
32:27	*sənēt ṭráyt*	*sənēti ṭráyt*	Audio supports this.
32:27	*əl-xōli*	*əl xōli*	
33:1	ʿ*ham…yəsbáṭk.*'	*ham…yəsbáṭk.*	This is an indirect quote.
33:1	*əl-waḳak*	*əl waḳak*	
33:3	*ð-əl ḳəlāk*	*ðə-l-əḳlāk*	
33:4	*ʾāmēra*	*ʾāmyēra*	Audio supports this.
33:6	*ḳalākəm*	*əl ḳalākəm*	Audio supports this.
33:6	*haḳṣəm*	*əl-haḳṣəm*	Audio supports this.
33:6	*tīkən*	*tīkəm*	Audio supports this.
34:13	*ʾāmərūt:* "*yāməy, šándəm*	*ʾāmərūt ḥāməy:* "*šándəm*	Audio supports this.
34:20	*wə-kəsk*	*w-əl kəsk*	Audio supports this.
34:20	*aśōx*	*śōx*	Audio supports this.
34:25	*təṣōṣ*	*tāṣōṣ*	Audio supports this.
34:27	*aġáy.*	*aġáy,*	See §13.5.3.2.
34:33	*wəl*	*aw*	Audio supports this.
35:1	*əl bəʾēli*	*əl-bəʾēli*	
35:4	*l-ənġōrəb*	*əl nəġōrəb*	
35, n. 5	**tətwēyən?*	*tətēyən.*	Discussed in Lonnet, p. 160.
36:28	*səh*	*sēh*	

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
36:35	ð bɛr	ð-bɛr	
37:1	təḥəṣábḥən	təḥəṣábḥən	
37:3	rəḥawźtən	rəḥźawtən	Audio supports this.
37, n. 5	ML *srr*	ML *str*	
37:9	l-ənōḥəg	əl ənōḥəg	
37:11	ḥīləm	ḥyīləm	Audio supports this.
37:18	yətēm	yətēyəm	Audio supports this.
37:19	l-ərdūd	əl ərdūd	
37:20	bə-ðōbəl	b-aðōbəl	Audio supports this.
37:22	wəlú	wə-lū	
38:3	əmṣā	əw-mṣāʾ	Audio supports this. See §10.2.
38:5	wə-kəsk	kəsk	Audio supports this.
38:9	l-əġárbəs	əl əġárbəs	Audio supports this.
38:10	hənīhən	hənīhəm	Audio supports this.
38:21	tənākən	tənákan	Probably.[8]
39:3	šəġəláyḳk	šəġəláyḳ	Probably from *šəġlū*.[9]
39:4	wa-rxáyṣət	wə-rxáyṣət	Audio supports this.
40:4	amītáyn	amaytáyn	Audio supports this. Cf. also *ML*, p. 275.
40:7	lā	l-ʾād	Audio supports this. See §13.2.1.
40:17	mət ð-ḥārawn	mət ḥārawn	Audio supports this. See §13.5.3.1.
40:23	xā hēm	xā-hēm	
40:24	lʾəhāmahəm	əl əhāmahəm	
40:26	ḥəssi	ḥassi	Audio supports this.
40:26	l-əḳawdər	əl əḳawdər	
41:2	ð-səyawr	ð-yəsyawr	Audio supports this.

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[8] The form *tənākən*, which is a 2ms imperfect + 1cp object suffix, is better transcribed *tənákan* (cf. *ənákak*, 37:19). However, this form is not heard in the audio version, which instead has a simple ms imperative *nkɛ̄*. Both forms fit the context well enough, and it is not clear which is original to the story.

[9] Johnstone lists in the *ML* (p. 136) a verb *šəġāləḳ* 'buy s.t. expensive', the 1cs perfect of which would be *šəġāḳək* (< *šəġálḳək*). The form *šəġəláyḳk* in the text looks much more like an error for *šəġəláyḳ*, which is the expected 1cs perfect of *šəġlū* 'buy at a high price' (*ML*, p. 137). It is likely that the verb *šəġāləḳ*, though listed in Johnstone's *ML*, does not really exist, as the meaning 'buy s.t. expensive' is unexpected for the root √ġlḳ. In contrast, *šəġlū* 'buy s.t. at a high price' has a meaning which fits well with other forms of the root √ġly, e.g., *ġōli* 'expensive'.

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
41:5	wə-ðə-hámam	wə-ðə-yəhámam	Audio supports this.
41:8	l-ənḳawdər	əl ənḳawdər	
41:8	xā-hɛ	xā-hē	Twice in this line. See §8.20.
41:10	w-ʾād əl ʾəḥād	w-ʾād l-ʾəḥād	See also §13.2.2, end.
42:1	wə-l-yəśányəm	w-əl yəśányəm	
42:10	l-ʾəḳawdər	əl əḳawdər	
42:11	kall	kāl	
42:18	əl-wəzēm	əl wəzēm	
42:19	lʾād	l-ʾād	
42:19	mād	m-ād	
42:20	l-aġəggənōt	l-aġəgənōt	
42:24	yəźə́ṭ	yəźáwṭ	Audio supports this.
42:24	śhəlīṯ	śəlēṯ	Audio supports this. See §9.4.
42:27	aʾəśḗš	aʾəśēš	
42:30	śhəlīṯ	śəlēṯ	Audio supports this. See §9.4.
42:35	aʾəśḗš	aʾəśēš	
42:36	aġəggənōt	aġəgənōt	
42:36	w-aġəggənōt	w-aġəgənōt	
42:37	h-aġəggənōt	h-aġəgənōt	
42:37	həwḳā bīs	həwkəbīs	Audio supports this.
42:39	w-aġəggənōt	w-aġəgənōt	
42:40	h-aġəggənōt	h-aġəgənōt	
42:42	śīən	śī	Audio supports this. See §3.5.2.
42:52	l-əśōm	əl əśōm	
42:52	yəḥáwṣələh	yəḥáwṣələh	
43:2	fárə	fárəʾ	
43:3	ðə ḳáṣdi	ðə-ḳáṣdi	
44:9	əl-(t)səyūr	əl (tə)syūr	
44:10	məmtənḥōtən	məmtəḥnōtən	Audio supports this.
44, n. 1	not in the ML	ML mḥn	
45:5	ḥād	ʾəḥād	See §3.5.1.
46:2	əl səyərk	l-əsyēr	Audio supports this, as does the ML (p. 431, s.v. √wṣl).

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
46:3	*təwōli*	*tōli*	Audio supports this. See §8.19.
46:18	*wə-ttámam*	*wə-támam*	Possibly.[10]
47:2	*l-əġōrəb*	*əl əġōrəb*	
47:4	*ð-əwṭmə́k*	*ð-əwṭəmūk*	Audio supports this.
47:7	*wə- ʾāyēṭəm*	*wə-ʾāyēṭəm*	
47:9	*əl-ḥōrəḳ*	*əl əḥōrəḳ*	
48:2	*hīs*	*hīsən*	Audio supports this.
48:3	*həḵfīd*	*həḵfūd*	Audio supports this.
48:4	*ləḥəkōt*	*ləḥəḵōt*	
48:7	*əl-tənákay*	*əl tənákay*	
48:11	*hə-bə́ts*	*h-abə́ts*	Audio supports this. Cf. 20:64.
48:13	*əl ḥāṣən*	*əl-ḥāṣən*	
48:18	*ðə-šōbəʾ*	*ð-ašōbəʾ*	
48:25	*aśōləṯ*	*śōləṯ*	Audio supports this.
48:26	*ðə-yəšakfəm*	*yəšakfəm*	Audio supports this.[11]
48:26	*ḥasəlábhɛ*	*hasəlábhɛ*	Possibly. See §4.4.
48:27	*hə́nəh*	*hənēh*	Audio supports this. Cf. 9:1.
48:28	*nūka ġaygəs*	*nūka aġaygəs*	Audio supports this.
48:29	*hayyə*	*ḥayyə*	Audio supports this, as does *ML*, p. 196.
48:29	*nkē*	*yənkē*	Audio supports this.
48:30	*kənáwn*	*kənnáwn*	Audio supports this.
48:31	*ðə-ḳiyōs*	*ðə-ḳəyōs*	
48:31	*ḳəssēt*	*aḳəssēt*	Audio supports this.
48:32	*ḳəṣṣ*	*ḳəš*	
49:7	*ð-yəḳṣām*	*yəḳṣām*	Audio supports this.
49:10	*ʾəttəḵ*	*l-ʾəttəḵ*	Audio supports this.
51:5	*šəḵwu*	*šəḵwū*	
52:3	*məháġfələn*	*mō háġfələn*	Audio supports this. See §3.2.3, n. 2.

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[10] According to the ML (p. lvi), the 3mp perfect of the anomalous verb *əttūma* has the form *támam*, while *ttámam* is the mp imperative (cf. 46:17). However, perhaps the 3mp perfect *támam* has the form *ttámam* when preceded by a particle like *wə-*. On the audio, the imperative in 46:17 and the perfect in 46:18 do sound identical.

[11] The form needs to be a subjunctive here after *tɛ* 'until' (§13.5.3.2), which should not be preceded by the verbal prefix *ð-*.

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
52:6	təḥamk,	təḥamki,	Audio supports this.
52:15	l-ʾōmər	əl ʾōmər	
52:16	lākən	wəlākən	Audio supports this. See §12.1.2.
53, n.1	ML tlv	root tlv (ML tlt)	The ML (p. 401) has a typo.
54:1	wə-ḥəynīṯ	wə-yənīṯ	Audio supports this.
54:6	w-əmṣā	əw-mṣāʾ	Audio supports this. See §10.2.
54:13	əḥōm	ḥōm	Audio supports this.
54:15	ləhīs	lə-hīs	
54:16	yəhātum	yəhātūm	
54:18	l-əwbads	ələ́bdəs	Possibly. Audio supports this. See §13.4.1, n. 8.
55:6	ḥābū	əl-ḥābū	Audio supports this.
55:7	l-yəsḥayṭən	əl yəsḥayṭən	
56:1	hɛ̄	hɛ̃	See §11.9.
56:4	əl-əḵawdər	əl əḵawdər	
56:12	l-əġōrəb	əl əġōrəb	
56:14	hō məšēmən	l-ʾād hō məšēmən	Audio supports this.
57:6	ʾār	ʾād əl	Audio supports this.
57:6	ʾəlyīkəm	əlīkəm	Audio supports this.
57:7	ʾād	l-ʾād	Audio supports this.
57:7	šāźayn	ð-šāźayn	Probably. Audio supports this.
57:8	šɛ̄źəm	təšɛ̄źəm	Preferable transcription. See §7.1.5.
57:14	ð-əl	ðək əl	Audio supports this.
58:3	yəgáməm	wə-yəgáməm	Audio supports this.
58:7	wə-hēm	hēm	Audio supports this.
58:8	mən ṭərēf	mən aṭərēf	Audio supports this.
58:8	ðə-mōl	ð-amōl	Audio supports this.
59:1	l-yəsyūr	əl səyūr	
59:5	kəláys	ḵəláys	
59:6	ðɛ̄-kō	ðɛ̄ kō	
60:5	təḥaym	təḥaymən	Audio supports this.
60:6	ʾamma ṭāṭ	w-ʾamma ṭāṭ	Audio supports this.
60:8	lā šīnən	l-ād šīnən	Audio supports this. See §13.2.1.

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
60:10	*əl-təśxáwwələm*	*əl təśxáwwələm*	
60:10	*məkārūtən*	*u məkārūtən*	Audio supports this.
60:11	*yəhə́gēmən*	*yəhəgēmém*	Audio supports this.
61:1	*tábam*	*tābəm*	Audio (and the context) support this.
62:1	*l-əġōrəb*	*əl əġōrəb*	
62:3	*b-ḥōrəm ṭayt*	*b-wōrəm ṭayt*	Possibly. Audio supports this.[12]
62:3	*l-yəġōrəb*	*əl yəġōrəb*	
62:7	*əl-ḳáwdər*	*əl əḳawdər*	
62:13	*lə*	*əl*	
63:6	*ḥābū*	*l-ḥābū*	Audio supports this.
63:8	*šəḳro*	*šəḳrō*	
63:8	*ðay*	*aðay*	Audio supports this.
63:13	*əmṣaʾ*	*əw-mṣaʾ*	Audio supports this. See §10.2.
64:6	*tərwēn*	*ráywi*	Possibly. Audio supports this.[13]
64:7	*l-yəġárbəm*	*əl yəġárbəm*	
64:9	*bārawd*	*bārawt*	Audio supports this. Cf. *ML*, p. 40.
64:12	*yəxáwtəl*	*ð-yəxáwtəl*	Probably. Audio supports this.
64:17	*əlyōməh-əlā*	*əlyōməh lā*	
64:18	*ləwṭākəməh*	*l-əwṭākəməh*	
64:25	*əl-awágəbkəm*	*əl awágəbkəm*	
64:26	*əl-awágəbkəm*	*əl awágəbkəm*	
65:7	*həbrē*	*ḥəbrē*	
65:9	*əlēk*	*əlyēk*	
65:9	*gōr ṯro*	*gōri ṯro*	Audio supports this.

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[12] We do expect the indefinite form *wōrəm* before the numeral *ṭayt* 'one', but definite forms with initial *ḥ*- sometimes replace the indefinite. In 62:4, we again find *ḥōrəm ṭayt*, and in this case the audio agrees with the transcription. See the discussion in §4.4.

[13] If *tərwēn* (3fp subjunctive) is correct, then *tɛ̄* here serves to indicate a purpose clause, 'in order to drink their fill'. But if *raywi* (3fp perfect) is correct, then *tɛ̄* means 'until', and the clause should be translated 'until they had drunk their fill'. Both possibilities fit the context and are grammatically correct. On these uses of *tɛ̄*, see §13.5.2 and §13.5.3.2.

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
65:11	ʾār səbṭāt	ʾār wə-səbṭāt	Audio supports this. See §12.5.4.
66:2	əð hēm	əð-hēm	
66:4	xass mən	mən	Possibly. Audio supports this. See §5.4.
66:5	əð kənnáwn	əð-kənnáwn	
66:5	ləhīs	lə-hīs	
66:10	kəlē	ḳəlē	
66:10	ləhīs	lə-hīs	
66:10	ləwṭākəməh	l-əwṭākəməh	
67:4	ṣōwər	ṣāwər	Audio supports this.
67:5	ðə-ġərábk	ðə-ġərə́bk	
67:5	ḳəlān	ḳəlā	Audio supports this.
67:8	əl-ṭād	əl ṭād	
68:7	śəllīs	śəllīsən	Object agrees with fp ṯ̣ēfər. Audio supports this.
68:10	ġəgēn	ġīgēn	For other options, see §2.1.6.
68:15	amgərēt	amgəmrēt	Audio supports this.
69:5	l-ād əl ləḥākəm	l-ād ləḥākəm	Audio supports this.
69:5	ðə-šēnīs	ðə-šānīs	Audio supports this.
69:5	l-ḳərayb akāhəm	ḳərayb l-akāhəm	Audio supports this.
69:6	əl faḵ	əl-faḵ	
69:7	ð-yəsbīwəh	ðə-səbīwəh	Probably. Audio supports this.
69:7	əl-šəh	əl šəh	
69:8	ðə həbēr	ðə-həbēr	
69:8	zəgēd	ð-zəgēd	Audio supports this.
70:2	əl-wágəbkəm	əl awágəbkəm	Audio supports this.
70:2	ləhīs	lə-hīs	
70:3	kəlēm	ḳəlēm	
70:4	wə-ṭəbərīs	wə-yəṭə́brəs	Possibly. Audio supports this.[14]
70:4	u-wbədə́h	wə-yələ́bdəh	Possibly. Audio supports this.[15]

[14] The perfect ṭəbərīs is grammatically possible here, but the fact that the preceding and following verbs are imperfects (used in a past narrative) suggests that the audio reflects the correct text.

[15] Like ṭəbərīs (see the previous note), wbədə́h is preceded by an imperfect.

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
70:5	*ləwṭakəməh*	*l-əwṭakəməh*	
70:8	*w-waḳam*	*wə-waḳam*	
70:8	*aṣdəḳā*	*asdəḳā*	Audio supports this. Cf. correction to 18:13, but see also §5.4, n. 12.
71:2	*əl-yərtōḳi*	*əl yərtōḳi*	
71:3	*amxəbáy*	*amxəbáyi*	Audio supports this.
71:3	*ðə wə-kō*	*ð$\bar{\varepsilon}$ wə-kō*	Audio supports this.
71A:2	*əl f$\bar{\varepsilon}$məh*	*əl-f$\bar{\varepsilon}$məh*	
72:1	*ṭayṭ*	*ṭāṭ*	Audio supports this.[16]
72:2	*lə ḥõ*	*lə-ḥõ*	
72:3	*əð-wəzūm*	*ðɛ wəzūm*	See §3.4.
72:3	*ð-əwzūm*	*ðɛ wəzūm*	See §3.4.
72:3	*h$\bar{\varepsilon}$*	*hē*	Probably. Audio supports this. See §11.9, n. 4.
72:3	*ləwṭakəməh*	*l-əwṭakəməh*	
72:3	*ḳarš*	*ḳarš*	
72:4	*əl f$\bar{\varepsilon}$m*	*əl-f$\bar{\varepsilon}$m*	
72:5	*ləḥõ*	*lə-ḥõ*	
72:5	*aġīgēn ðə-wbūd*	*aġīgēn ðɛ wəbūd*	Probably. Audio supports this.[17]
72:5	*wə- ðə-nəšəġbōr*	*wə-ðə-nəšəġbōr*	
72:6	*əl f$\bar{\varepsilon}$m*	*əl-f$\bar{\varepsilon}$m*	
73:3	*kərū*	*ḳərū*	
73:5	*əl ṭāṭ*	*əl-ṭāṭ*	
73:8	*ləhīs*	*lə-hīs*	
73:11	*əð hātīm*	*əð-hātīm*	
74:3	*əl-bīs*	*əl bīs*	
74:9	*əl-ġátərbəm*	*əl ġátərbəm*	
74:10	*əð gədḥōt*	*əð-gədḥōt*	
74:13	*l-ənkáthəm*	*əl ənkáthəm*	
74:14	*əl-ġátərbəm*	*əl ġátərbəm*	

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[16] The audio actually has *ṭāṭ mənīn*, while the text has *ṭayṭ mənkáy* (corrected to *ṭāṭ mənkáy*). The form *ṭayṭ* (feminine) is grammatically incorrect here, but *mənkáy* (with a 1cd suffix) is correct. We have to assume that the original speaker could have said *mənkáy* and that the reader could have mistakenly read *mənīn* (with a 1cp suffix). Also note that the verb used (text and audio) is 1cp *nəḥōm* and not dual *ḥəmō*.

[17] The audio actually has *aġayg ðɛ* 'this man', not *aġīgēn ðɛ* 'this young man', but both options are perfectly acceptable here, while *ðə-wbūd* is awkward.

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
74:14	l-ənkátən	əl ənkátən	
74:19	nkōh	nkō	Audio supports this. See §3.2.3, n. 3.
74:21	əl-nəkátki	əl nəkátki	
74:23	ʾād əl hē təmūm	ʾādəh əl təmūm	Audio supports this.
74:24	əð nūka	əð-nūka	
75:2	əmkəwrátəh	amkə́wrətəh	Audio supports this.
75:2	wəḳaytəh	wəḳayta	The form must be a fs participle.
75:2	hāl ġayg	hāl aġayg	Audio supports this.
75:7	amkwáyrəs	ð-amkwáyrəs	Audio supports this.
75:7	w- ʾāmōr	w-ʾāmōr	
75:8	əl xā	əl-xā	
75:10	w-ʾād	wə-l-ʾād	Audio supports this.
75:10	ʾār fáḳək tay ʾār	əl fáḳək tay ʾār	Audio supports this.
75:12	əl xā	əl-xā	
75:14	(yə)śnēm	yəśnēm	Audio supports this.
75:14	əl xā	əl-xā	
75:15	əl-sē	əl sē	
75:16	əl ḥayd	əl-ḥayd	
75:17	ðə-həftōk	həftōk	Possibly. Audio supports this.
75:17	əl ḥayd	əl-ḥayd	
75:18	əl xā	əl-xā	
75:23	gənáy	ġənáy	
75:25	bə-gīggēn	bə-ġīggēn	
76:3	əl-wádak	əl wádak	
76:3	əl-təṣawləḥ	əl təṣawləḥ	
76:6	əl-wádak	əl wádak	
76:6	əl-təṣawləḥ	əl təṣawləḥ	
76:7	əl-təṣawləḥ	əl təṣawləḥ	
76:9	lə-wṭákməh śīni	l-əwṭákməh, śīni	
76:10	əl-kūsa	əl kūsa	
76:11	lə-šəḳrō	wə-šəḳrō	Audio supports this.
76:11	əl šīhəm śīwōṭ	əl šīhəm əl śīwōṭ	Audio supports this.
76:11	əl-təkūsa	əl təkūsa	
76:11	w-əl ʾəḥād	wə-l-ʾəḥād	
77:1	ḳərayb amgərīr	ḳərayb l-amgərīr	Audio supports this. See §8.12, n. 6.

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
77:5	ðēh	ðɛ	Audio supports this. See §3.4.
77:6	wə-hō wəḥayk	wə-həwḥayk	Audio supports this.[18]
77:8	həh bər	hē bər	Audio supports this.
77:8	l-yədōbəh	əl yədōbəh	
77:8	mənwīkən	mənwīkəm	Audio supports this.
78:1	əl xaffəh	əl-xaffəh	
81:1	k-ʾāṣər	ʾāṣər	Possibly. Audio supports this. See §8.11, end.
81:5	əl-yəbáyd	əl yəbáyd	
82:1	ġəlēḵ	ġəlēḵ	
82:2	ðə-yəhəbṣáwr	əl yəhəbṣáwr	Audio supports this.
82:2	aġayg	ġayg	Audio supports this. See §13.5.1.1, n. 11.
82:4	ðə-ʾādən	ðə-ʾādən əl	Audio supports this.
82:4	ð-yāfērērən	ð-ʾāfērūr	Audio supports this.[19]
82:4	həhtámk	həthámk	
83:3	xāhɛ	xā-hē	See §8.20.
83:4	lʾād	l-ʾād	
83:7	əl-bər	əl bər	
84:1	həmbəráwtən	əmbəráwtən	Probably. Audio unclear. See §4.4.
84:7	fərōk	fərōḵ	
84:9	l-ātōśi	əl ātōśi	
85:4	bər-ḥədáydəs	bər-ḥədáydəš	Audio supports this. Cf. 85:9.
85:4	xəwfɛ̄t	xəwfēt	This error is also in *ML*, p. 440.
85:5	xəwfɛ̄t	xəwfēt	
85:5	tōli	təwōli	Audio supports this.
85:6	aġəggənōt	aġəgənōt	
85:7	xəwfɛ̄t	xəwfēt	

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[18] The form here must be a 1cs perfect of the H-Stem verb *həwḥū* 'come to help'. The form *wəḥayk* does not exist.

[19] Even though we could conceivably find an imperfect here, *yāfērērən* is not the correct imperfect form, which is *yāfērūr* (or *yāfīrūr*); see the *ML* (p. lxix and p. 14).

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
85:9	aźéfərə́tš	aźéfərə́ts	Audio supports this.[20]
85:9	xəwfḗt	xəwfḗt	
85:10	xəwfḗt	xəwfḗt	
85:15	kəth¹ō	kəthō ¹	
85:16	aġəggənōt	aġəgənōt	Twice in this line.
85:20	ḥəbrə́tk?	ḥəbrə́tk.	This phrase is not a question.[21]
85:35	yəsdáds	yəsdádš	Audio supports this.
85:35	səbʿáyya	ð̣ə-səbʿáyya	Audio supports this. Cf. 85:16, 19.
85:37	ð̣ə-ḥəbrə́y	ð̣ɛ ḥəbrə́y	See §3.4.
87:1	əl sənáyn	lə-sənáyn	
87:1	w-əl aṣəfēf	wə-l-aṣəfēf	
87:1	ð̣ə-həh	ð̣ə-hē	Possibly. See §3.1, end.
87:5	b əð-ḳəhēb	bə-ð-ḳəhēb	
87:5	əð mən	əð-mən	
88:9	h-aġawf	aġawf	Possibly. See §10.2, n. 3.
88:13	əl-wádak	əl wádak	
88:13	bəh	ð-bəh	Audio supports this.
89:5	l-iźáyṭ	əl iźáyṭ	
89:11	əl-nəġōrəb	əl nəġōrəb	
89:13	l-əwzəmōna	əl əwzəmōna	
89:17	l-əwzəmōna	əl əwzəmōna	
89:21	l-əśənisən	əl əśənisən	
89:22	bə-sēkən	l-sēkən	Audio supports this.
89:26	ənká-w-boh	ənká əw-bō	
89:27	əl-ḥámsən	əl ḥámsən	
89:32	l-yəsyūr	əl yəsyūr	
89:34	sīš	šīs	Audio supports this.
90:2	əl ḫõ	əl-ḫõ	

[20] The 2fs suffix -*š* of the text is not expected here, while the 3fs suffix -*s* heard on the audio is expected. A few words later, we meet another 2fs form, *tīš*, this time supported by the audio. This is ok; it seems that the speaker (in the story) has shifted from talking about the addressee to talking directly to the addressee. To accommodate this, the single close-quotation mark should be moved from the end of the line to after the word *xəwfēt*.

[21] The correct translation of the passage is 'I want you to give me your daughter in marriage'.

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
90:2	əl-hīwəl	l-əhīwəl	Cf. 98:1.[22]
90:5	lūk	hūk	Probably. Audio supports this. Cf. 90:4, and see §8.8, end.
90:8	xā hēm	xā-hēm	
90:11	təšāməni	šāməni	Possibly. See §12.5.5, n. 3.
91:14	fənwīkən	fənwīkəm	Audio supports this.[23]
91:15	wə-ʾəḥād	l-ʾəḥād	Audio supports this.
91:18	mən xayr	mən ġayr	See §8.7.
91:22	kəláṯk h-aġáyg	kəláṯk l-aġáyg	Probably. Audio supports this.[24]
91:23	xəṭáwrḳiən	xəṭáwrḳiyən	
91:24	xəṭáwrḳiən	xəṭáwrḳiyən	Twice in this line.
91:25	xəṭáwrḳiən	xəṭáwrḳiyən	
91:26	l-əmšənḥərūtən	əl əmšənḥərūtən	
91:28	əl-tśōm	əl tśōm	
91:29	l-əsūməḥ	əl əsūməḥ	
91:30	wə-kō lə	wə-kō əl	
91:30	xəṭáwrḳiən	xəṭáwrḳiyən	
91:30	l-əwzə́mk	əl wəzə́mk	
92:1	ʾāsáwr	ʾāṣáwr	
92:3	wa-yəṯáyl	w-ayəṯáyl	Cf. 99:1.
92:4	həgūm təh	həgūm ləh	Probably. Audio supports this.[25]
92:4	d-yəšnáwṣən	ð-yəšnáwṣən	
93:5	yəttáman	ð-yəttáman	Probably. Audio supports this.
94:3	əśxáwwəl	l-əśxáwwəl	Probably. See §7.1.3, n. 3.
94:4	əśxáwwəl	l-əśxáwwəl	Probably. See §7.1.3, n. 3.

[22] Stroomer's footnote to the form in 90:2 can be replaced with: ML *wly*.

[23] Hence the translation should read 'ahead of you', not 'ahead of us'. If it were the latter, the Mehri would be *fənwīn*.

[24] However, this may simply be a mistake on the part of the reader on the audio, since the verb *kəlūṯ* is nearly always followed by *l-*, rather than *h-*. See §8.8 and §8.12.

[25] Everywhere else in the texts (about ten times), the verb *həgūm* takes *l-* before an object (*təh* would be a d.o.), so it seems likely that the reader on the audio is not in error here.

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
94:5	*tabdēdi*	*tabdēd*	Probably. No audio found.[26]
94:6	*lā tədōr*	*l-ʾād tədōr*	Probably. See §13.2.1.[27]
94:6	*l-ədōr*	*əl ədōr*	
94:6	*l-əḵawdər*	*əl əḵawdər*	
94:9	*əśxáwwəl*	*l-əśxáwwəl*	Probably. See §7.1.3, n. 3.
94:11	*šay*	*šəh*	*šay* does not fit the context.
94:15	*təšwēdən*	*təšwēd*	Probably. No audio found.[28]
94:20	*l-āmə́rk*	*əl āmə́rk*	
94:24	*lə sēkən*	*lə-sēkən*	
94:25	*l-axáyr*	*əl axáyr*	
94:26	*əsyēr*	*l-əsyēr*	Probably. See §7.1.3, n. 3.
94:28	*l-yəśəlawl*	*əl yəśəlawl*	
94:28	*aġərōyhəm*	*aġərōyhən*	Probably. No audio found.
94:31	*əl-bōdək*	*əl bōdək*	
94:38	*l-yəsyáwr*	*əl yəsyáwr*	
94:39	*l-yəsyáwr*	*əl yəsyáw*	
94:42	*xāhə́h*	*xā-hē*	
94:42	*ðə*	*əðə*	
95, n. 1	Cf…	ML *gww* (p. 126)	
95:1	*lə ḥəmóh*	*lə-ḥəmóh*	
95:5	*əl ḥābū*	*əl-ḥābū*	
96:3	*ḳəlē*	*ḳəlē*	
96:5	*yəhəḳāśa*	*yəhəḳōśa*	Probably. No audio found.[29]
97:15	*wə-l*	*w-əl*	
97:15	*wə-rədd*	*wə-rəd*	
97:22	*l-səyə́rš*	*əl səyə́rš*	
97:28	*háfsəḥən*	*háfsəḥəm*	Possibly. No audio found.[30]

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[26] Assuming that this is a 2fs subjunctive, this form should not have a final *-i*; see the *ML* (p. xxxiv). This is discussed by Wagner (2001: 345).

[27] On the unexpected and probably erroneous 2fs imperfect form *tədōr*, see the discussion in Wagner (2001: 345). The expected form is *tədayri*.

[28] After *təḥaymi*, we expect the subjunctive form *təšwēd* (§7.3), but *təšwēdən* is an imperfect (*ML*, p. lxiv).

[29] The *ML*, p. 241 (s.v. √*ḳśˀ*), gives the imperfect of this H-Stem verb as *yəhəḳōśa*, obviously a typographical error for *yəhəḳóśa*. This is the expected form based on the paradigm given for *hərbā* in the *ML*, p. xli.

[30] Given that this command is addressed to *bəʾēli šarḥ* 'the party-goers', we expect here the mp imperative *hafsəḥəm*, rather than the fp *hafsəḥən*. However, in a parallel passage earlier in the story (99:15), the speaker specifically addresses 'the women (of the party)', so perhaps the fp imperative is really intended here. In the Yemeni Mehri

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
97:31	*kəlḗṭəm*	*kəlḗṭən*	Expect fp form. No audio found.
97:37	*amṣarrək!*	*amṣarrək*	The following subjunctive is part of the same sentence.
97:41	*wə-ʾəśś*	*wə-ʾəś*	
97:42	*əl ḥaybəh*	*əl-ḥaybəh*	
97:45	*ðə-həh*	*ðə-hē*	
97:51	*əl hāl*	*əl-hāl*	
98:4	*lā tənkɛi*	*l-ʾād tənkɛi*	Probably. See §13.2.1.
98:11	*lū wádaš*	*əl wádaš*	Probably. See §13.4.3, end.
98:12	*wə-l ʾəḥād*	*wə-l-ʾəḥād*	
99:4	*aṭayṭ*	*ð-ṭayṭ*	Probably. No audio found.
99:11	*əl-mɛśəš*	*əl mɛśəš*	
99:13	*mət*	*mən*	See §13.5.3.1, end.
99:21	*lə kawb*	*lə-kawb*	
99:35	*ṭall*	*ṭal*	
99:37	*wə-ðə xətáwn*	*wə-ðə-xətáwn*	
99:46	*əl-nakš*	*l-ənkēš*	Probably. No audio found.[31]
99:48	*lə xaṭṭ*	*lə-xaṭ*	
100:5	*əl hámələk*	*l-əhámələk*	
100:7	*ðə-ḥārōs*	*ðə-ḥārōs*	
101:14	*arəźəš*	*ʾārəźəš*	
102:7	*ʾār ənkōna*	*ʾār w-ənkōna*	Possibly. See §12.5.4.
103:3	*əl-śēś*	*l-āśēś*	
103:4	*əl-ḳáwdər*	*əl əḳáwdər*	
104:5	*əl ḥarāsīs*	*əl-ḥarāsīs*	
104, n. 1	not in the ML	ML *śḳṣ* (p. 378)[32]	

version of this story, on which the Omani version is based (Müller 1902: 121 = 1907: 40; Bittner 1914b: 14), we find, instead of an imperative, a 1cp perfect, *fsâḥən*. In Omani Mehri, the 1cp perfect would be *həfsēḥən*. In the Ḥarsusi version of this text (Stroomer 2004: 46, text 8:28), we also find a 1cp perfect, *afsaḥən*. The difference in tenses is probably due to the different meanings of this verb in the dialects. In Yemeni Mehri, the H-Stem of √*fsḥ* means 'stop' or 'dismiss', while in Omani Mehri (and Jibbali), it means 'leave off, stop doing' (cf. *ML*, p. 103). Johnstone (*HL*, p. 35) defines the Ḥarsusi cognate as 'waste time'.

[31] The verb here has to be a 1cs subjunctive of *nūka*, plus a 2fs object suffix. We expect this to have the form *l-ənkēš*, as found in 99:43 (cf. also *nənkēk*, 20:78; *tənkēs*, 40:15).

[32] The word to which this footnote refers is *məśḳayṣ* (104:5), which is given in the *ML* as *məśkayṣ* (with non-glottalic *k*). It is unclear which form is correct. The transla-

Text #	Printed	Correct Reading	Note
104:6	*ləhīs*	*lə-hīs*	
104:22	*həyðántihəm*	*ḥəyðántihəm*	
104:23	*həyðántihəm*	*ḥəyðántihəm*	
104:28	*əl-yənáfam*	*əl yənáfam*	
104:28	*əl-wīḳa*	*əl wīḳa*	

One final comment: In the audio of text 17, all the duals of the first few lines are read as plurals by the reader on the audio tape. Presumably, the duals were used by the original speaker, but the reader replaced them with the plural forms that came more naturally to him.

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tion given in the text is 'eastwards' and in the *ML*, 'sunrise, east'. Interestingly, the corresponding passage in the Ḥarsusi version of this text (Stroomer 2004: 18, text 3:5) has *məġarrəbīn* 'westwards' (though this word is not in the *HL*). A. Lonnet suggests (p.c.) that *məśkayṣ* refers to a geographical area, which is in the east from a Mehri perspective and in the west from a the perspective of Ḥarsusi speakers, who live in the northeastern area of Dhofar or in the Wusta region to the east of Dhofar.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography includes all works cited in this text, as well as many other works relating to the study of Mehri. The list is not exhaustive. For the few bibliographical abbreviations used in this book, see the list of abbreviations on p. xvii.

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INDEX OF PASSAGES

All of the text numbers below refer to the Mehri texts published in Stroomer (2009). All of references below are to paragraph numbers in this volume. Not included in this index are the approximately five hundred items cited in the Appendix.

INDEX OF SELECT MEHRI WORDS

Most things can be found using the Table of Contents, but for those grammatical particles that are treated in more than one section, it is convenient to have a separate index. Most of the words treated in only one place (such as many of the items in Chapters 8 and 12) are not listed below.

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