4. Notes on the Language of the Poems

4.1. Consonants

There are only two consonants the pronunciation of which in the poems deviates from the local dialect (S) of the reciter, viz. the reflexes of qāf and kāf.

The only reflex of qāf in S is /g/, but in the poems affricated combinatorial front variants characteristic of the Bedouin dialects of the periphery of the Syrian Desert also occur. In the Balqa and its immediate neighbourhood the most common affricated variant is /g/ [ʣ], phonetically identical with the local (both S and B) reflex of ġīm. Although the occurrence of the reflexes in the poems is rather irregular, no hypercorrect affricated variants can be found, but all front variants follow the phonemic structure of 8:


On the other hand, the pattern is inconsistent, as non-affricated reflexes often occur in positions in which B regularly has phonetically-conditioned affrication: /bāgī I 8b, VI 7b, /gīfān/ IV 17b, /sādīgin/ IV 21d, /gil/ IV 22b, /gīfār/ V 10b, 15b, /cārāgil/ V 12a, /rāgil/ VIII 5b, /sārij/ IX 7b, /māqamīlīg/ X 21b, /nāgil/ X 22b, /yīgilīlī/ X 37b, /mīt collider/ X 24b, /rīgil/ XI 10b, /mānagīya/ XI 16b, /itfārij/ XII 19b, /dāgget/ XII 20a, /māzālīlīg/ XIII 16d, /mīg/dīn/ XIII 16c, /gīdāmm/ XIII 15d, /nīg/ XIV 45a.

The reflex of kāf in S is /k/, in proximity to front vowels /tʃ/ [ʈʃ]. However, the distribution is not completely complementary: minimal pairs such as /'abūk/ 'your (sing. masc.) father' vs. /'abūč/ 'your (sing. fem.) father' and /kān/ 'he/it was' vs. /čān/ 'if' demonstrate the phonemic status of the affricated variant. At the present, /k/ can in normal conversation be regarded as a recessive variant, used freely by women of the older generation but seldom by adult male speakers whose speech is more levelled.2 In the poems several deviations from older genuine S are found: /kāyīd/ I 16a, /kasīr/ III 50b, /kasīrīm/ III 51a, /kāsīb/ IV 18c (cf. /cāsīn/ VI 12b), /kīsah/ IV 22a, /kāf/ kattāb IV 28a (but /çaffīn/ VII 44a, /caffī/ IX 31a), /rabīt kārim u-fakkāk/ IV 41d, /kassābīt/ V 14b, /l-kātīb/ VII 24a, /tarīkīn/ VII 25b, /b-kēfī/ 'as I wish' VII 39a, /rikāyīb/ VII 41b, /sakan/ VII 42a, /kassāb/ VIII 7a, /kēf/ 'how?' VIII 14b (but /čēf/ VII 36a), (but /dīcīr/ VIII 5a), /sīmkallafātīn/ X 14b, /b-āl-kalāf/ X 30a, /yā rākba/ XI 13a (but /yā rāchīn/ III 39a, /yā rāch-ba-līn/ VI 5a), /w-mīlīkāy/ XI 19b, /sīkhīb/ XIII 9a, /sakkat/ XIV 45c. In some items the lack of affrication of /k/ is a genuine B feature. Thus, the form /kīl/, which in the present poems always has a non-affricated /k/, is commonly known by the sedentary

1 In the Bedouin dialects spoken in the neighbourhood the dialect of the Bani Ṣaxar is an exception: there the affricated variant is /g/ [ʣ]. PALVA, Bani Ṣaxar, p. 114f. The /g/ [ʣ] variant is used by the Fāyiẓ clan of the tribe.

2 As early as 1915, BERGSTRÄSSER reports that the affricated /tʃ/ reflex of kāf was avoided in es-Salt, Sprachatlas, p. 185f.; PALVA, Koineization, p. 22; id., Classification, p. 9, n. 6.
population as a hallmark of Bedouin dialects. The word kalaf may also lack affrication in genuine B, and, consequently, this bears upon mka'llafatin as well. In a number of instances no reason other than accidental stylistic fluctuation can be found.

The fact that the language of the poems does not follow the structure of the mother tongue of the reciter naturally called forth some inconsistencies in the pronunciation, but there is another reason that also might turn out to be important, viz. the original form of the poems. On the lexical and morphological levels this is self-evident, although only a small number of verses probably are identical with their original form. However, in certain cases it seems to exert some influence upon the pronunciation of the consonants as well. In this respect, poems IV and XIII are of special interest, because the frequency of the non-affricated variants of qaf and kaf in them is somewhat higher than in the remaining poems. In spite of many lexical items and formulae typical of Bedouin poetry, the former is a semi-literary creation, and the latter comes from el-Karak, the dialect of which does not display affricated variants of /k/ and /g/. On the other hand, it may be pointed out that the Karaki poem XIII is opened with the word yabci, which both morphologically and phonetically is a marked Bedouin form.

4.2. Syllable structure

One of the most important distinctive features in the dialect typology of the North Arabian area is the contrast between what was called by CANTINEAU "trochaic" vs. "atrocataic" syllable structure.4 Here a characteristic feature of the linguistic structure of the poems can be observed: while the affricated reflexes of qaf and kaf in the poems phonetically follow Cantineau's Group C—i.e. pre-'Anazi Syro-Mesopotamian Bedouin dialects—the syllable structure in the present poems rather follows Groups A and B (the 'Anazi and Sammari dialects of Northern Arabia, respectively). The reason is evident: the "trochaic" syllable structure of these dialect groups is more conservative and, because of a higher proportion of short syllables (CV), more readily applicable to the metrical patterns of the poems. However, the most important reason is probably the linguistic tradition of Bedouin poetry in which the language used in inner parts of Northern Arabia, the core area of the traditional nabati poetry, enjoys the highest prestige. Affrication vs. non-affrication of /g/ and /k/, on the other hand, is a more superficial stylistic feature which does not have any effect on the metrical structure; consequently, the reciter can use different variants at will.

Examples of a "trochaic" syllable structure which deviates from both S and B are relatively frequent in the poems: q'unana I 12a, nómaha IV 34b, imràbana V 19b, yitobana V 19b, isxúmana VI 11a, irzúmana VI 20b, sáyaltúhum VII 35a, fátor VII 28b, xétana IX 25a, fárin IX 28a, bizrotin IX 31a, fa'tana IX 33b, 'indana X 14a, sábbana X 28a, idwérìna X 30b, gámá'atuk X 35a, bístana X 36a, mánámaha XI 9b, fátorin XI 12b, wannotí XII 13a. A metrical reconstruction suggests that the original "trochaic" syllable structure has in many cases been reshaped and therefore tallies with

3 PALVA, Karak, p. 17; id., Classification, Criterion (c); cf. BERGSTÄSSER, Sprachatlas, Map 3 (c).  
4 CANTINEAU, Nomades II, pp. 227 and 230; PALVA, 'Agáarma, p. 54.
S, e.g. ʿiltīn IV 17c ← ʿiltīn, gultī IV 20b ← gultīlah, ṣarīmhum IV 29c ← ṣarīmhum, xallētna V 11a ← xallētna, ḥaṣētna V 13a ← ḥaṣētna. These kinds of changes in the syllable structure often radically affect the original metrical pattern which might become unrecognizable and unsatisfactory according to the taste of Nabaṭi poets and connoisseurs of Nabaṭi poetry in the core area of this tradition.

Metrically conditioned extralinguistic short final vowels occur sporadically only, almost exclusively in one poem: zōlo IX 26a, sōbo IX 26a, ʿaṣṣro IX 26b, ʿayyār IX 27b, ʿirwānū IX 29a, ʿalīro IX 31a, ṣaffīro V 11a, ṣummā VIII 10a. Although the final vowel in a majority of the cases formally corresponds to the Classical case morpheme, on the synchronic level it cannot be regarded as anything but a technique used for purely metrical reasons.5

In two cases the language of the poems almost systematically deviates from the syllable structure of Central and North Arabian dialects, as well as from the dialects of the Negev, Sinai, and Arabia Petraea: the C₁VC₂aC₃V ---> C₁C₂VC₃V- and aXC- ---> XaC- (rule above) patterns are as a rule not used in Bedouin poetry,6 plausibly because the developments for the most part are synchronic and, besides, would affect the metres. The occurrences of these syllable patterns are in the present poems limited to two verses: ʿabāro X 23a, ḫībānūn, ḫsībūlī X 23b, and ḫrācī, IX 12a, ma ṭaxābir IX 12b; the only additional instance is ʿnbarānī VI 12a, which is the perf. 3rd p. pl. fem. of ʿnbar 'to head' in rhyme position. There are a few further instances of similar syllable structures, but these can no longer be considered as synchronic developments; rather, they are results of earlier changes in the shapes of lexical items. Such cases are ḥala XI 24a (ʔahla > ʿahāla > ḥala; after the dropping of C₁, the diminutive is hēl VI 16b, XIII 12d; cf. the verb ḥalla = ʿahhāl), xaṣ̲tīlī II 18b, xaḍū VI 17a, xaḍūna III 55ab, (from ʾaxāḍ-, e.g. ʾaxāḍu/ʾaxāḍaw > ʾxaḍu/ʾxaḍaw > xaḍū/xaḍaw, which implies the development of the root ʾxaḍ > ṭxy, however, in the perfect only, cf. yāṣix).

4.3. Pronouns

Slight fluctuation occurs in the use of the personal pronoun for the 1st p. pl., but it is significant that the marked B-form ḥānā VI 19a, VI 20a, X 35b, XIV 4a, XIV 46a clearly predominates over the corresponding S-forms ḥnā X 28a, negated māḥnā X 35a. Although the S-forms actually are identical with those used by the majority of Bedouin dialects spoken in the neighbourhood,7 they are not felt as "poetic" enough, since they are stylistically neutral and do not belong to the tradition of poetic language.

Another conspicuous feature in pronominal morphology is the relatively frequent use of the marked B-form -a(h) as the suffixed pronoun for the 3rd p. sing. masc.: ʾiṣīrā II 24a, ʿarālī IV 20a, yīnfaʾa IV 20c, mālā IV 20c, yīʿizza IV 20d, kīṣāh IV

5 This phenomenon was first noticed and commented upon by WALLIN, ZDMG 6, p. 193; cf. WETZSTEIN, Zeitlager, p. 129f. (=ZDMG 22, p. 193); SOGIN, Diwan III, pp. 55-57 and 78f.; STUMME, Beduinenlieder, pp. 26-30; PALVA, ʿAṣrān, p. 16f.
6 PALVA, ʿAṣrān, pp. 13 (n. 10) and 16; cf. SOGIN, Diwan III, p. 165: "übregens gehört sie [diese Erscheinung] durchaus der Volks Sprache an und beginnt erst allmählich auch in die Poesie vorzudringen".
7 CANTINEAU's Group C; PALVA, ʿAṣrān, p. 54.
22a, lah VII 40a, manaxaVI 31b, rasa IX 30b, mā yinbačaba X 17b, sbaba X 26b, 27b, inababa X 36b, bah XII 17a. With this ‘Anazi form (CANTINEAU’s Group A), the S-form -o seems to occur in free variation: malo IV 43d, X 38b, eno VII 21a, markabo XIII 9d, even between -a suffixes: gulto IV 20b. In this case the S-form is practically identical with its counterpart in the Bedouin dialects of Group C, and, in addition, not very different from the Šammar (Group B) form -uh.8 Thus the ‘Anazi form is felt as the most distinct B-form. A third variant occurring in the poems is -e: hule XI 15b, which is either a front allomorph of -a(h) or, rather, a form occurring side by side with -ah in several Bedouin dialects of Southern Jordan and the Negev.9

The 2nd p. pl. masc. forms usually have a final /m/: w-intum X 35b, ġebātkum III 52a, 53a, min ‘águbkum III 56a, IV 42d, minkum VI 2a, IX 33a, tiwábiχkum X 35b, git‘ánkum XI 22a, ġerkum XI 23b, armitkulcum XI 28b, izzkum XIII 12d, lakum XIII 13d. This is a feature not only occurring in the Bedouin dialects of the Groups A and B but in several dialects of Group C as well,10 whereas the genuine S-forms are intu and -ku; only a few forms of this type occur in the present poems: ‘águbku III 51a, ġilku IX 16ab, mfsilku XI 23a, alēku XIII 16a, 17a.

There is one case in which the suffixed pronoun is a distinct F-form: antaxika VIII 9b, in a stylistic environment influenced by Literary Arabic in a number of respects. The form undoubtedly reflects the original wording, since it fits nicely into the metrical pattern of the line.

The relative pronoun is often rendered by the B-form (‘)alli IV 25b, 29a, 39c, VI 5a, 13b, VII 30a, 42a, X 25b, XI 11b, or halli VI 10b, VII 36b, 37a, X 19b, yalli (vocat.) VI 9b, 12b, VII 24b, X 25a, 29a, XII 6a, 7b, 8a. However, the S-form ‘illi is rather frequent: II 20b, III 14b, IV 20b, 22b, 31c, VI 19b, VII 25b, X 23a, 31b, 33b, 34b, XIV 47b. The literary loan alli occurs once (VIII 13a), in a poem having several other F-forms, but as a superficial, strictly lexical loan used as an invariable relative pronoun as in the dialect: alli bā‘ū waṭanhum b-iz-zahīd. The regular metrical pattern of the line suggests that it is recited in its original form and that the poet has had high-flown stylistic aspirations with Literary Arabic as the linguistic ideal. Also the Classical Arabic mà occurs as a relative pronoun (I 8a, IV 17a).

The B-type interrogative wi occurs once (VII 29b), while its S counterparts šu and ‘u8 are lacking. In a similar way, the interrogative pronoun referring to persons and used as relative pronoun as well, most often displays the form min VII 25a, X 28a, XIII 11d, XIV 47b, once man IV 19c, both of which are stylistically neutral.11

Among the demonstrative pronouns a markedly poetic form is found, viz. ūa, ġilku IX 16ab, mfsilku XI 23a, alēku XIII 16a, 17a.

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8 CANTINEAU, Nomades I, p. 72 (Group C: C-ø, V-h, with the exception of Wild ‘Ali: -øb), II, pp. 180-184 (Group B: C/V-ø, -ø/w-ø, Group A: C/øb, V-øb). In a similar manner, ‘Anazi forms are used in the poems of Nimr Ibn ‘Adwān in SPOER•HADDAD, Nimr, ZS 7, 11 and passim, and in the poems recorded among the ‘Ağārma, PALVA, 2, p. 16; id., ‘Ağārma, p. 45; cf. SOCIN, Diwan III, pp. 177-181.

9 BERGSTRÄSSER, Sprachatlas, Map 13; BLANC, Negev, p. 133f.; BANI YASIN & OWENS, Bduul, p. 218; YRTTIHAO, N-emät, p. 140 and passim; PALVA, Ewēżâ, p. 303; PALVA, North West Arabian, p. 163. Historically, this form has been back to *-ih.

10 CANTINEAU, Nomades I, pp. 70 and 72, II, p. 185.

11 At the present, the koine form mà is rapidly spreading at the cost of the genuine S man, min, manā, minf etc.
which here occurs in formulaic stock expressions only: *min xalaf dā 'after this' X 25a, 29a, XI 11a, ḏalak u-ḏalı 'this is yours and that is mine' VII 37b. This form, rather commonly used in all Nabāṭī poetry, is alien to all vernacular dialects of the area.

The definite article often occurs in the B-form al- (passim), frequently in clusters comprising several verses, e.g. XIII 11-12, once a whole poem (XII). However, only one case is found where the article is stressed:¹² al-ibḍa VII 43a.

4.4. Tanwín

The tanwín, which only sporadically occurs in the present narratives, is a well-established feature in the language of Nabāṭī poetry. In a few cases it has the phonetic shape -an (bǎyān XIII 16b, probably a kind of dissimilation after /y/; ḥalallī IV 29a), but otherwise it is as a rule displays its regular B-form -in. As in the North Arabian Bedouin dialects of the ‘Anazi and Ṣāmmari types, the morpheme has become generalized and can be suffixed to proper names, elatives, dual and sound masculine plural forms, too. Examples of these categories are: bugdādin IV 21c, daxtān VII 34a, nāṣirīn VII 35a, faṭrīn IX 28a; ʿinḍāfin IV 28c; daggtānīn XII 20a; māḍīnīn IV 23b. Although the tanwín sometimes is used freely as a traditional, often metrically-conditioned poetic form, in a majority of the cases it occurs in positions attested for the dialects of North Arabian Bedouin,¹³ viz.:

(a) in an indefinite noun followed by an adjectival attribute: ṣrāḥin niḍāl 'vile men' IV 25d, bkārin ḫarārā 'thoroughbred young she-camels' IV 39a, b-īdmūnīn sikība 'with copious tears' XIII 9a, ḥaggin ʿalzāmī 'due trial' VIII 6b, daʿswīn bāṭīlī 'an unrighteous claim' VIII 14b, byūān īmbānāyātī ib-nīmrīn 'tents pitched at Nimrīn' X 31a, faṭrīn ᵒṢdālīya 'an old she-camel of Ṣaʿfīd stock' XI 12b, ḫīḥīmīn Ṽāhab 'a flaming hell' XII 10a (if Ṽāhab = Ṽāhib);

(b) in an indefinite noun followed by a prepositional phrase: min ʿīltīn b-il-galb 'out of an agony in the heart' IV 17c, mā lāqīt šadīgīn maʾ in-nās 'I did not find a friend among the people' IV 21d, rūʿīn b-il-līgā 'a group of fellow tribesmen on the day of encounter' IV 30b, rābīn ʾala ʿsr il-mīḥādī 'fellow tribesmen at the sight of the enemies' IV 30c, mīṣīdīlīlī 'he helps me' IV 42a, āwwāltīn bī w-tālī 'both my first and last (sufferings)' VII 23b, ʿawī ṣīḥīn b-id-daww xāli 'a wolf's lamenting in the waste desert' VII 32b, ʿubnīn ʾala l-mayyīt 'sorrow because of the deceased' VII 43b, mwaggafīn min ǧer ḥaggin 'arrested without trial' VIII 6b, sayyīdīn min sayyīdīn mītalīsālī 'a sayyid in the chain of sayyids' VIII 8b, ʿādīwīn lak 'an enemy of yours' VIII 11b, bīṣūtīn min ʾaṭīf xayyīr 'a bullet from the hand of a valiant soldier' IX 31a, maƙallāfātīn b-al-galaf 'saddled with saddlebags' X 14b, bēṭīn miṭīl sūg id-dāgītīn 'a tent as long as a line of booths in the market' X 16a, dītnī b-ṭāra ḏīn

¹² In Bedouin dialects the definite article is often stressed when preceding a word of the syllabic patterns CV (ʾal-ma), CVCV (ʾal-ma, ʾal-ibḍa < — ʾal-biḍa), or CVCVC (ʾal-walad, ʾal-bil, already lexicalized after an earlier synchonistic development < — ʾal-bīl, cf. the st. pron. form bīl). CAN-TINEAU, Nomades I, p. 69, SOCIN, Diwan III, p. 230; for dialects outside the North Arabian and Syro-Mesopotamian dialect areas, see PALVA, Ḥwēṭāt, n. 11.

¹³ See note 23, in 3.2.6.
'I swear once and over' X 18a, 26a, il-miftaliḥ mitʿallgin bī xarabā 'the cultivated land meets the desert' X 24b, biyyīn imbannaytīn ib-nimrā 'tents pitched at Nimrān' X 31a, yā rācbin fūg maddād 'you who ride a far-going camel' XI 11a, gadd ramlīn b-il-ilbād 'numerous as the sand of the land' XI 21a, daggtēnin 'ala l-galb 'two blows on my heart' XII 20a, mitwaqqāthin yamm il-fūgū 'directing the course toward the open defiles' XIII 15b;

(c) in an indefinite noun followed by a clause: dahrīn maqāli 'a time I spent' II 18a, ṣilāfīn tībārā 'the foremost ones contending with each other' II 21p, ṣagrin rāḥ 'a falcon which perished' II 24a, fī zīmānīn tiʿadda 'a time which passed' IV 33a, igmūʿin yiğānnūn 'a band that yells' VI 15a, 'a-dahrīn ḡaffānī 'a time I left behind' XII 18a, b-ṣāḥīn yiğrāḥ al-galb 'with a voice that gashes the heart' XIII 11b, sōlin yiğrī 'a stream which flows' IX 5b;

(d) in a participle governing an object: yā rācbin biğīn [...] 'awdītin naqḍītin 'you who ride a full-blooded camel... an old she-camel from Najd' III 39-40, yallī ẓāsimūn kill nōmās 'doer of every kind of glorious deeds' VI 12b, yā bānyān bētak 'you who build your house' XIII 16b;

(e) in a nominal predicate followed by a verbal clause or a prepositional phrase: luḥ ʿetṭīn ġaadāt 'he has a family which is afflicted' III 46a, luḥ minsafīn 'ind il-ʿasīr 'he has a mansaf in the afternoon' III 47a, luḥ idīlānīn ʿala ḡwīl in-nār 'he has coffee-pots on the side of the fire' III 48a, if ʿīltīn b-agaša q-qaṃāyīr I 'have a disease in my innermost' XI 8b, luḥ raβāatin yiğhar baha r-ruzz 'he has a household in which rice is seen' VII 40a.

Apart from the above-mentioned cases, tanwīn is used in fixed pairs of words, e.g. min ʿidīmin u-ʿami 'not for ever so long' XII 16b, ẓalātīn wala ẓaym 'neither the prayer nor the fast' XIII 14d, dibbin walād dībb 'a bear, son of a bear' XII 16a, ḍaḍīn walād ḍādīn 'a load camel, a load camel's progeny' IV 42b. The use may also be brought about by obvious rhythmic reasons, e.g. ib-gāzin ʿa-gīrās 'with petroleum and paper' VI 19b, ib-ṣālin u-mṣītās 'in shadow and bewilderment' IV 42d. Some cases are associated with the poetic word order: b-rās ruğīn miqṭīha 'whose resting place is on the top of a cairn' I 12b, ważnin tiğitha 'its heaviest weight' I 15b (here the suffixed pronoun has been moved from the head noun to the adjectival attribute). The remaining cases display a free use of tanwīn in indefinite nouns: mā fārsīn suwa ʿmēr 'there is no horseman equal to 'Omēr' I 19a, ṣam sābgin 'how many runners' I 11a, ẓūrīn u-lā-luḥ...miqṭī 'a noble one, having no equal' III 39b, luḥ saḥyīn 'he is in distress' III 46b, miqṭī sālin yiṣīl 'its streams like a stream' III 48a, māṣīyaṭīn ẓīhāra 'walking stately' IV 39b, ṣīlī lamā ... sterīle (pl.) when...' VI 6a, ib-sāʿatīn yimadd ʿl-bābī 'in a while the rope will be pulled out' VI 21b, min biʿīdīn ʿanālī 'he had sent me a message from far away' VII 24b, sabrin 'patience!' VII 28b, miṣṣālimīn ḏizzī VII 30b, miṭṭayyīrin 'perplexed' VII 38a, bāsilīn 'brave' VIII 9a, 'ala bilādīn 'to a region' IX 25b, sālin yiṣīṣīn 'like a stream they will wipe out' X 37b, ẓūrīn simīḥ iz-zor 'a thoroughbred camel, with a stately chest' XI 12a, ʿalīnn hala, ʿalīnn ẓabāḥ il-xīr w-ʿalīnn tahlīya 'a thousand times 'Welcome!', one thousand times 'Good
morning!’ and one thousand times ‘May God give life to you!’ XI 21ab, 24ab, šammālin ‘alēh bāgh ilya ‘a water carrier, that is what I deserve’ XI 27b, miğ‘idin il-‘abīd ‘you who wake up the slave’ XIII 16c (cf. miğ‘id il-xōda ‘you who wake up the women’ XIII 17b), mantūs ‘izzin ‘you have no honour’ XIV 47a.

4.5. The verb

In the verb inflection the language of the poems deviates from the local dialect in a number of respects. However, only one deviation is systematic: the absence of the b-morpheme in the imperfect. This is a major feature of the language of Nabāṭī poetry,\textsuperscript{14} and the narrator, who frequently uses b-imperfects in the narratives—although not often in straight narration—carefully avoids them in the poems. The remaining divergences occur sporadically, apparently often depending on the conscious aspiration of the reciter to stick to the traditional linguistic form.

Perhaps the most striking, at all events the most frequent, difference between S and the language of the present poems bears upon the vocalization of the imperfect preformative in Form I of strong and C3y (tertia e y) verbs. In the poems the vowel is often /a/, whereas it in S is /i/ or /u/: yatru III 40b, yatru XI 10b, ta‘fi III 43a, yaṣi IV 29a, yabdi V 13b, yaḥdir VI 20b, taḥf IX 7b, 10a, X 31a, XI 14a (but taḥfi III 42a, yilfinnak II 19b), yafu X 37a, taflun X 16a, taflu X 17a, talga IX 8a, 9a (but tilga III 41a), nanja X 36a, tabga XI 18b, namši XI 23a, taḥam XII 9a, narkab XII 12a, yarkabu XIII 15c, taqī XII 13a, yaḥnab XII 14a, talḥab XII 17a, yabci XIII 9ab, tasri XIII 10b, naṣrī XIII 12a, yaṣarfu XIII 14cd, tar‘a XIV 45b. This vocalization is not consistent, however, and considerable fluctuation can be noticed between different poems. Thus, there are five imperfect forms having /a/ in the preformative in poem XII, whereas only two S-forms can be found: tisma‘ XII 6a and yilḥag XII 19a. This does not depend on mere chance, but is probably caused by the fact that three of the forms occur in rhyme position. Strictly speaking, the vowel of the initial syllable does not belong to the rhyme, but the words occurring in rhyme position have a prominent place in the poem and are therefore more fixed in form than words in other positions. The S-type vocalism in the imperfect preformative varies freely with the B-type vocalism, e.g., tisma‘ III 56b, tīg‘al III 57b, tinfa‘ IV 19c, yinfa‘a IV 20c, yinfa‘ XIV 47c, yilghāb IV 22b, nil‘ab IV 38b, yizhin VII 26b, yigm‘in VII 26b, timnaḥni VIII 15b, yigri IX 5b, yiṣdin IX 27b, yilkid IX 28b, yigtu‘un (B y - S -i- + B -ūn) XI 11b, yinsu‘ XI 20a, yigrab XIII 11b, yīghar XIII 13d, tālub IV 30b, yuhkum IV 31c, 35d, nuṭub X 15b, nūsūr XI 23b.

The use of /a/ in the preformative of the imperfect in Form I is not only a phonetic trait characteristic of traditional Bedouin poetry, but it is inseparably associated with the morphological system of Bedouin dialects (Groups A and B), in which internal, apophonic passive forms are productively used. In the imperfect of Form I, the vowel

\textsuperscript{14} Bedouin poetry composed in the Negev and Sinai is an exception to this rule. It makes free use of the b-imperfect, which belongs to the dialects of the local tribes, see BLANC, Negev, p. 139 [28]; for occurrences in poetry, see BAILEY, Bedouin Poetry, 1.3.2, 1.5.1.3.8.9, 1.9.17.18.19, 1.11.3 and passim.
of the preformative is morphologically distinctive: /a/ is the active marker, /i/ the passive marker,15 the only one in verbs having /a/ as the stem vowel in the imperfect. However, in the passive forms found in the present poems, the passive is marked by the vowel sequence -iCCaC-: yi backers 'is pitched' X 36b (but byuttin tabas IX 8b, obvious hyper-Bedouinization, cf. act. yabni, S yibni), yi akar 'is mentioned' XI 22a (cf. act. yakur, S yudkur); yi fag 'is sympathized' XI 26b is probably a passive of Form IV. In C2w/y (verba mediae infirmae) and C2=C3 (verba mediae geminatae) verbs no vowel contrast is needed in the preformative, because the active vs. passive contrast in a majority of cases—with the exception of the relatively few verbs having /a/ or /a/ as the stem vowel in active (e.g. yihab IX 28b)—is evident from the stem vowel. Instances of this kind of passive forms are yigas 'is measured' VI 21b, yisah 'is hit' IX 30b, yedgam 'is wronged' XII 7b, yimadd 'is pulled out' VI 21b. Internal passive perfect forms are few; birrmina 'we are forbidden' III 56a (cf. footnote to the passage), qil 'it was said' IV 43d, qil id. VII 35a.

In the perfect afformatives some variation can be found: side by side with the B-form kasirum III 51a, S-forms qinatu V 10a, dasathtum VI 19b are used; one instance of the Bedouinizing -um suffix also occurs: tiwada'um (Form VI, 3rd p. pl. masc.) VI 9b. An additional feature deviating from S is the 3rd p. pl. fem. affirmative -an: yidurani, yibuman, ixtan IV 40abc, rzzaman(ni), bayyanan(ni), rabbatan(ni), sabbanan(ni), nisan(ni), nharan(ni), sibban(ni), b'adan(ni) VII 5a – 17a, which all occur in rhyme positions. In other positions the pl. fem. affirmative is identical with the dialectal S form: maddin, yamin IV 40ac (these lines have -an in the rhyme words), maddin VI 8a, tiraya'in VI 17b, tarrakin VIII 25b, marrin VIII 27b, tihaddadin VIII 28a, tabbin IX 27a, bassin IX 32b, t'galla'n X 36b, tixaffarina XII 13b. The imperfect affirmative is the same: trakkabin I 14a, yilfinnak II 19b, yequm IV 25d, yarin VI 7b, yirwin VI 8b, yizhin VIII 26b, yiga'in ibid., yidirfin VIII 27a, yidin IX 27b, yisabin IX 31b (rhyme position, rhyming with -aba, ab), yigisin X 37b, yisrin X 38 a.

In the imperfect there are several instances of the B-form -un: yinigiluno III 47a, yigun III 54a (2x), yigannun VI 15a, talfin X 16a (but talfu X 17a), yigutun XI 11b. The suffix -um which probably follows the analogy of perfect inflection in some Bedouin dialects, occurs once only: tib'tum XIII 12a.18 However, the shorter

15 According to ABBOUD, there is a morphological contrast in the dialect of Ha'il between yasflab (act.) and yislab (pass.), corresponding to two different perfect forms fitab (act.) and fitub (pass.), Najdi, p. 20, and id., The Verb, p. 476 and passim; SOCIIN, Diwan III, p. 152; PALVA, Bani Sahar, p. 125.
16 For the afformatives -tam/-tow and -am/-ow in the Bedouin dialects of the Syrian desert, see CANTINEAU, Nomades I, pp. 79-81; cf. PROCHAZKA, Saudi Arabian Dialects, p. 28: in the simple verb -tam and -am Rwala, -tu, -tow and -aw in the remaining dialects included in the inquiry.
17 Most of the Bedouin dialects in the adjacent areas have -an, CANTINEAU, Nomades I, pp. 79 and 82; cf. PALVA, Bani Sahar, p. 124f. -in; id., 'Agharma, p. 32 -en. In Bedouin dialects the fem. pl. affirmative may behave like a consonantal ending: in different syllable patterns it may display two variants, e.g. kidbin (kitab + an) and kidban (ktb + an), PROCHAZKA, Saudi Arabian Dialects, p. 25.
18 E.g. in the dialects of the tribes 'Umur, Shit and Manqare, the personal morpheme of the perfect 3rd p. masc. is -on (-am) / -o, which the Manqare has transplanted to the 2nd and 3rd persons masc. of the imperfect: yikotum, tıkotum, "peut-être sous l'influence analogique de l'accompli", CANTINEAU, Nomades I, pp. 80-83.
affirmatives of S type clearly dominate, e.g. yinidūlu III 47a, yiqšakūli XI 17b, tāxḏūnī XI 27a, 28a, tībāšīru XIII 12d, tībuṣṭu XIII 13a, w-īthaddmu XIII 13b, w-ītaddamu XIII 13c, yāʕarfu XIII 14cd.\(^{19}\) The forms do not consistently follow either S or B structure, but contaminations are usual. Thus, although the vowel of the preformative is Bedouinized, the affirmative may remain in the short form of the S type: talfu X 17a, yalfu X 37a, yarfu XI 10b, yarkabu XIII 15c. In prohibitive forms the absence of /n/ (lā tigtašu III 52a, lā tigšalu III 52b, lā tawwalu III 53a, lā tisšalu IX 33a) could perhaps be explained as a classicizing device (jussive), but more probably it simply is an S feature.

The perfect form ǧdbahūnī X 23b follows the C₁V₁C₂V₁C₃V- \(\rightarrow\) C₁C₂VC₃V-syllable structure of B, found twice in the same verse (w-illī ǧbabo, mā basībūlu), the -ān being a hypercorrect feature following the analogy of the imperfect inflection.\(^{20}\)

Among the most frequent verbs, 'to come' as a rule displays the B-form, which lacks the prothetic radical /\(\text{f}\)/ typical of most sedentary dialects of the area: ǧānī VII 24a, ṣān VI 9a, VI 15a, ḡān VI 11b, ṣāli VII 31b. 'To ask' is rendered both by ǧāyāl and sāl: ǧāyaltuhum VII 35a, tsāl VII 35b. The verb 'to take' also follows the characteristic B pattern ʾadaša, ʾayāšid: ʾaddašīl II 18b, ʾaddu VI 17a, ʾadduṇa III 55ab, tāxḏūnī XI 27a, 28a. In the 1st and 2nd persons of the perfect, ʾašaf and ʾašal tend to have the /i/, in these verbs commonly associated with Bedouin dialects: ʾāfīf IV 35b, ʿašīl II 22b. However, in semi-literary contexts the S form gult—which has the /u/ vowel in common with Literary Arabic—is found (IV 42c and VIII 7a).

There are two cases in which derived verbal forms are neither S nor B, but pure F: lā turāšīhum VIII 13b, ʿantāxižka VIII 9b. As in the last-mentioned form, also in niṯtādi VIII 5a, the vowel of the reflexive infix is a clear-cut F feature. An instance of the F type verbal noun of Form V also occurs, but its phonetic shape has become merged in the phonetic structure of the dialect: ʾṭafīrīg XII 19b, used instead of the pure F pattern ʾṭafārīg and the dialectal II + V form ʾṭafīrīg/\(\text{g}\).

Since Form IV is a productive inflectional category in the Bedouin dialects of Northern and Central Arabia, as well as in the Syro-Mesopotamian Bedouin dialects, it naturally also belongs to the language of Nabāṭī poetry. Examples in the present poems are agbāl IV 35a, misʿidilli IV 42a, arḥāqīna V 14a, ʾṣbāban(ni) VI 14a, ʾyḍirčin VII 27a, ʾabīg (imperat.) X 26a.

The defective verb ʾabī 'to wish', which in Šammari and ʿAnazi dialects is developing toward a volitive and future preverb,\(^{21}\) occurs twice in the present poems,

\(^{19}\) The Karaki origin of poem XIII does not suffice to explain the frequent S-forms occurring in it, since the poem in other respects abounds in B features.

\(^{20}\) The use of the plural affirmative -ān before the suffixed pronoun for the 3rd p. sing. masc. is a common feature in poetry. Often its use is due to the rhyme, e.g. DALMAN, Diwan, p. 251f., where the second hemistichs rhyme in -ānū: az-ʾalūnū, ʾāšūnū, šāraddūnū, gaʾašādūnū etc.

\(^{21}\) In the Gulf dialects the verb ʾabī (probably ʾašabi as already suggested by WALLIN, ZDMG 6, p. 210; see also SOGIN, Diwan III, p. 168) has developed one step further and become a volitive and future preverb b-. JOHNSTONE, Eastern Arabian, pp. 143 (volition, Kuwait), 152 (volition, Bahrain), 169 (future, Trucial Coast); cf., e.g., INGHAM, Handbuch (abāʾījīk ʿill come to you', p. 132,15, abaʿiṭījīyāh ʿill give it to him' p. 132,25); id., Dhafir, p. 77 l. 19 ʾabābīr 'I wish to give good news'. As far as the etymology is concerned, it is interesting to compare the form ʾab-ʾatamanna 'I wish' in a poem
once in volitive/future function: čef ab-anām VII 36a, and once as a full verb: mā tabī VII 22a. In the Balqa these forms do not occur in any dialect but are exclusively known as belonging to the poetic language.

4.6. Particles

When used with suffixed pronouns, the prepositions b(i)- and l(i)-/la- often follow a B pattern: baha III 48b, VII 31a, 40a, biha VI 21b, laha IV 17c. The forms lakum XIII 13d and lahum VIII 14b belong to the relatively few F-forms. The S-forms are of common occurrence, but are sporadically bedouinized by a final -h: luh 'he has' III 39b, 46a, 47a, 48a.

In poetic comparisons different poetic expressions are favoured at the cost of the usual dialectal miṣl or zayy: lūm IV 34d, 39d, VI 11b, X 21a, XII 12b, tigl 'as if', II 17b,22 tigl 'you might say' IV 18b, 'idd VII 30a.

There is one occurrence of ēgda 'also' XII 17b, which probably does not belong to any spoken dialect. Yet it cannot be regarded as a literary loan, but rather as a traditional poetic item occasionally used in Nabāṭi poetry, as a rule occurring in the same metric position, viz. in the beginning of a hemistich.23 An additional example of a traditional poetic item is ḍumm VIII 10a, X 18a, 26a, XI 7a, as well as b-ṣar X 18a, 26a, which occurs in the same context.24

The adverb kud occurs three times, always preceded by negation: ma-xṭar kud nær 'ēni II 22a, mā yinfa'a kud māla IV 20c, (mā baha ...) kud it-tiyūr VII 31b.

In North Arabian Bedouin dialects there are several different reflexes of the Old Arabic variants ʿidda/ʿilla.25 In the present poems, different forms of the latter variant occur: lāy VI 20a, ʿilāy IV 39d, lā XII 6a, lā XII 19a, XIII 17a, and lān IX 15b, whereas no forms of the former type are to be found. The use of reflexes of ʿilla is a marked B feature so closely associated with Nabāṭi poetry in general, that reflexes of probably originating from Northern Arabia, PALVA. Hesbān, E 42a, with abgī atamānna, MUSIL, Rwala, p. 514, and mā tabī VII 22a with the variant recorded at Hesbān: īl bāghat, see footnote 104 above, line 2a. According to CANTINEAU, Nomades II, p. 198, the Šammar forms are yābī, tābī, yābīn (imperf. only), whereas the 'Anazi dialects use the verb bāga, yebīg.

22 By CANTINEAU regarded as a kind of injunctive form related to the OA jussive, Nomades II, p. 196; PALVA, Hesbān, p. 43 n. 85. KAYE, in his review of INGHAM'S Dhafīr, ZAL 21, p. 89, suspects that tigl 'you would say', meaning 'perhaps', might be what he has termed 'weakness jumping'. Cf. SOWAYAN, Arabian Narrative, 423 tigl 'you might say', 435 tigl 'like'; MUSIL, Rwala, pp. 84 2a, 108 b, 285 2b, 318 3a, 590 11b, 598 7a, 608 17b teqel 'like', 'as'; SPOER, Nimr, ZDMG 66, 33 2b, SPOER&HADDAD, Nimr, ZS 7, p. 279 8a, 288 XV 5a, 292 XIX 19a tigil.


24 ḍumm is frequently used by Nimr ibn 'Adwān, e.g., SPOER&HADDAD, Nimr, ZS 7, XII 6a, XIV 13a, XVI 2a, XX 15a; SPOER, Nimr, ZDMG 66, IV 2a (ḍumm IV 8b); MUSIL, Rwala, p. 192 I. 4: ḥalaf an w-sallih dīn ḏar ḏin; SPOER&HADDAD, Nimr, p. 282 VIII 3a an a-na'īk dīn ḏar ḏin, p. 289 XVI 3a wallāh wallāh allf alif dīn ḏar ḏar ḏin. SOWAYAN, Arabian Narrative, Gl., points out that the use of ḍumm "is restricted to a very specialized context which has religious overtones showing that it is borrowed from CA".

25 For references, see FISCHER, Dem., p. 154f; JOHNSTONE, Eastern Arabian, p. 16 n. 6.
>idā occur only sporadically.26 The presentatives harī and hari occur in the present narratives but not in the poems, which only use tara IV 18b, 19a, VI 19a, IX 33a, and ṣari-. The latter appears in different variants: ṣāri IX 32b, ṣārīni III 51b, tarīha IV 37c, and tara IV 20c, the last of which might be interpreted as a contamination of ṣari- and tara, parallel with the form tarīk XV 12D.

4.7. Negation

The negations used in poetry are as a rule relatively conservative and do not differ from B. Therefore the instances manīs 'I am not' VII 44a and manūs 'you are not' XIV 47a are conspicuous. Though such forms have the appearance of being marked S-forms, they actually are sporadically used in Bedouin poetry as emphatic negations, found for example in some poems by the famous Nimr Ibn Adwān.27

The verb in the perfect is in S negated with the particle mā, with the exception of the coordination lā/mā ... wala/w-lā. Because Literary Arabic makes use of both mā and la as negations of the imperfect indicative, whereas S exclusively uses mā, it is not surprising to find pseudocorrect use of lā as a negation of the perfect: lā lagēt 3illa daxtlin VII 34a.

The nominal negation mā fārsin suwa 'mēr 'there is no horseman equal to 'Omēr' I 9a looks like a contamination of Classical Arabic lā fārisa and the purely dialectal mā ft /mā bf fāris.28 with the addition of the generalized tanwīn. The Classical negation also occurs: lā-luh b-ir-rēb mištī 'he has no equal among the riders' III 39b.

4.8. Lexicon

Traditional Bedouin poetry naturally abounds in lexical items which do not belong to vernacular dialect. As put by MUSIL, Bedouin poets "hold that the words used in a poem must be out of the ordinary, not those heard in common everyday life. The more unusual words the Bedouin can put into his composition, the better he thinks it."29 In the present poems such a tendency is not conspicuous; rather, the choice of words is determined by a conventional division of the language into the stylistic domains of vernacular dialect and different artistic forms of the spoken language. Thus, in narrative style a specific traditional vocabulary is preferred, and in poetry traditional poetic vocabulary is used, which strikingly differs from the vocabulary of the everyday vernacular speech. Certain words also have metrically conditioned phonetic shapes which do not occur outside poetry, e.g. figāra V 9b (instead of fogara, which

26 In collections of Nabāṭī poetry printed with Arabic characters >idā is often found, but this does not necessarily reflect the actual pronunciation. Also in SOCIN, Diwan 1, the Arabic manuscripts in this respect follow conventional orthography (>idā), whereas the transcriptions display the normal Bedouin variant (lā), e.g. 1:12, 4:11, 6:5, 13:8 (lā), 20:13, 21:7, 9, 25:9, 27:9, etc.
27 See n. 113 to VII 44a.
28 'There is not' in genuine plain S is 'a-bīs.
29 MUSIL, Rwala, p. 284.
does not fit the traditional quantitative metres), σιγάρα II 20a (instead of σιγήρ), διώτυα XI 11b (instead of δαώ or δίνα, in rhyme position), δαμβά XIII 11c (instead of δάμβα/ε, in rhyme position), ζιβύν II 25a (common poetic variant of ζάμν), σιλάφ II 21a (metrically conditioned poetic variant of σαλάφ), οωλί IV 41c (ωλί).

4.9. Conclusion

The distribution of the unaffricated and affricated variants of καφ in the present poems follows the same pattern as in the prose narratives: the affricated variant is frequently but not consistently used; when used, it always is phonetically conditioned, and no hyper-Bedouinizing forms are found. This is only natural, since the distribution of the variants in the older genuine dialect of the region of es-Salṭ is identical with the Bedouin pattern. However, no hyper-Bedouinizing affricated variants of καφ are found either, although /g/ in Salṭ has no phonetically-conditioned affrication. The affricated variant ɣ occurs frequently but not consistently; when used, it follows the Bedouin pattern.

The Bedouin-type syllable structures CVCaCV- —> CCVCV- and the so-called gahawá syndrome do as a rule not occur as synchronic processes in the poems. The forms xάðα and hάλα are associated with the latter process, but they have already become lexicalized and therefore are freely used in poetry. A major feature of the syllable structure is the optional use of the so-called tochaic syllable pattern (xέλανα, bίζραυ), a trait which belongs to the dialects of the ‘Anazi and Ṣammari tribes living in the core area of Central and North Arabian Bedouin poetry, and, consequently, to the traditional language of this kind of poetry.

In morphology, a number of characteristic Bedouin forms occur, but in this context they should rather be regarded as poetic forms. The most striking feature among these is the frequent use of the generalized τάνωιν. Another noticeable feature is the total absence of the b-morpheme in the imperfect as well as the form of the imperfect preformative of Form I, which often has the vowel /a/. This is associated with the morphological system of the ‘Anazi and Ṣammari dialects, which make productive use of apophonic passive: in these dialects /i/ is part of the vowel sequence which is used as passive marker (act. yabnī, pass. yibnā). In personal suffixes of the perfect and imperfect, both Bedouin and sedentary forms occur; the same holds true of personal pronouns and suffixed pronouns, although Bedouin forms predominate. Among the latter the most striking is -ά(h), the suffixed pronoun for the 3rd p. sing. masc., which in the local sedentary dialect as well as in the neighbouring Bedouin dialects is -ο (or -u̯). Used in the Balqa, it is most appropriately regarded as a poetic form.

The local forms άου and μής of the interrogative pronoun are not used, and μί has been preferred to μαν. The conjunction σίμα /ίλά only has variants of the latter type (σίλα, σίλα, la, la, lan), which is considered as the poetic form. The verb ‘to come’ always occurs without the secondarily developed /i/ (γα, not σαγά/ιγά); the ‘Anazi
and Šammari defective verb yabi (imperf. only), unknown in the local sedentary and Bedouin dialects, occurs as a poetic verb. Other traditional poetic items are for example 'ēqa 'also', ụmm 'then' and b-ajar 'after'. These might be suspected of being literary loans, but most probably they are borrowings old enough to be regarded as inherited items of Bedouin poetry.  

As the result of the fixed form of poetry, many linguistic features occurring in poems are carried together with the poems from one dialect area to another without essential changes. It is therefore only natural that the poetic language in a large area is relatively homogeneous, in this case covering the whole Central and North Arabian cultural area with its peripheries. It also is more homogeneous than the language of oral narrative style, which, although using Bedouin dialects as its linguistic ideal and sticking to conventional phraseology and other stylistic means, lacks a fixed form and is therefore more subjected to the influence of the local dialect.

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30 ụmm is used in Central and Northern Arabian dialects, but, as in poetry, restricted to religious contexts: "In Peninsular dialects, the use of this conjunctive is restricted to a very specialized context which has religious overtones showing that it is borrowed from CA. When the speaker wants to appeal to another person he makes the appeal first to God and then, as next in rank, to the addressed person", SOWAYAN, Arabian Narrative, Gl.