Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale"

The Baṭḥari Language of Oman

Towards a Descriptive Grammar

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Aknowledgements

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I also thank Miranda Morris for her precious help and advice.

List of Abbreviations

1	1st person	IPFV	Imperfective
2	2nd person	Mh	Mehri
3	3rd person	J	Jibbali
ACC	Accusative	M	Masculine
AD	Arabic Dialect	MM	From Miranda Morris' corpus
Adv	Adverb	MSAL	Modern South Arabian languages
AUX	Auxiliar	MY	Mehri of Yemen
B	Baṭḥari	N	Neutral
CONJ	Conjunctive	NEAR	Near
DEM	Demonstrative	NEG	Negative
DET	Determinative	PART	Participle
DU	Dual	PFV	Perfective
EXIST	Existential	PL	Plural
F	Feminine	REC	Recoursive
FAR	Far	S	Singular
FUT	Future	Sq	Soqotri
GEN	Genitive	SBJ	Subject
Hb	Hobyot	SBJV	Subjunctive
IMP	Imperative	SING	Singulative
INTERJ	Interjection	STRONG_PFV	Strong perfective

Summary

1. Introduction

This dissertation concerns a preliminary description of the Baṭḥari language of Oman. It is the result of a three-years work for my PhD at the University of Naples "L'Orientale".

My interest in Baṭḥari rises from it being one of the few Semitic languages for which a grammatical analysis has not been carried out yet. Its status of extreme endangerment and imminent death added even more curiosity and desire to get to know the language and its speakers. Notwithstanding all the difficulties that such a goal inevitably entails, I can genuinely say that I managed to achieve most of my initial purposes: namely, to develop a preliminary analysis of Baṭḥari.

Baṭḥari being an endangered language on the verge of extintion, I tried to focus my analysis on the traits that the speakers consistently share. However, variation will be addressed where pertinent.

My work covers the most relevant phono-morphological features of the language, with minor insights into syntax and semantics. Chapter 1 gives a general introduction to MSAL studies, to Baṭḥari and presents the background of my research. Chapter 2 is devoted to an analysis of Baṭḥari phonology, with major attention to topics such as the realisation of emphatics and the relationship between stress, vowel length and syllabic structure. Chapters from 4 to 10 cover the main morphological categories of Baṭḥari. A very brief report over Baṭḥari syntax and lexicon is given in chapters 11 and 12. Lastly, a sample text is reported in chapter 13.

1.1. The place of Modern South Arabian within Semitic

The Genetic classification of Semitic languages has been attracting scholarly attention for a long time. More precisely, trying to identify a family tree structure for the Semitic family, on the model of what was done for the Indo-European languages[1], was thought to be a primary goal for Semitic studies. Traditional typology, as was proposed by great Semitists of the past like Nöldeke (1899; 1911) and Brockelmann (1908-13), was questioned and later modified by Hetzron (1974; 1975; 1976), who emphasized the importance of morphological innovations and typological resemblance to determine reliable genetic correlations between languages. The structure of the family tree as proposed by Hetzron is that of figure 1 (after Huehnergard & Rubin 2011: 263):

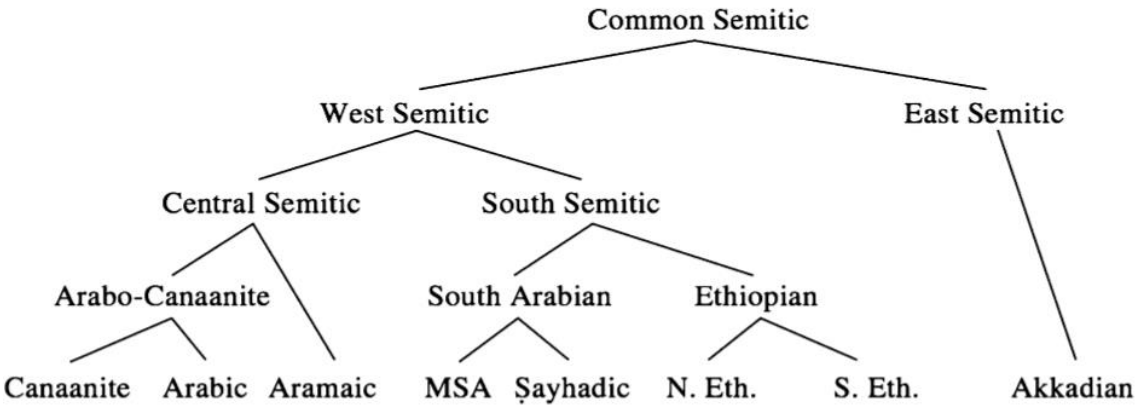

Figure 1. Hetzron's Tree Model

Porkhomovsky (1997) questions the unity of the South Semitic group by addressing the **yaqattal* imperfective form, previously supposed to be peculiar of the South Semitic branch, now to be considered a simple shared retention (it being present

[1] See Blažek (2007) for a compendium about the development of the idea of a tree-model for Indo-European.

also in Akkadian), opposed to an innovative **yaqtulu* form of Central Semitic. D. Cohen (1984) and Lonnet (2017) strongly question even the reconstruction of a **yaqattal* form for MSAL itself, proposing a phonetic derivation of the type **yvktubu > ikōtəb.*

A tree-model that considers the aforementioned studies is presented in fig. 2 (following Huehnergard & Rubin 2011: 263 and Kogan 2015: 600):

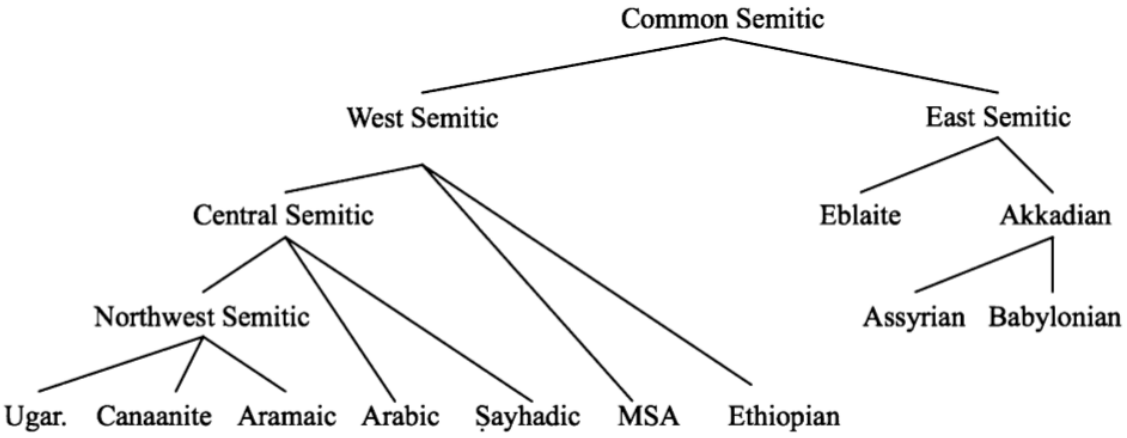

Figure 2. Huehnergard & Rubin's tree model

1.1.1. Problems of a tree-model for Semitic languages

Notwithstanding the evident practical usefulness of a tree-model scheme, there are various problems that should be faced. A tree-model intrinsically suggests the idea of isolation and independent development of a language spoken by well-defined communities, which often does not reflect a real-world setting. Furthermore, it is not always easy to separate shared innovations from typologically-motivated developments (Labov 2007) from one side and developments for which only intermittent chronological documentation is attested from the other side (Huehnergard & Rubin 2011: 265). Therefore, it is helpful to introduce the concept of wave-model as proposed by Labov (already Schmidt (1871) and Bloomfield (1933)), after Huehnengard & Rubin (2011).

Such an approach, if applied to MSAL, can take into account the areal isoglosses shared between some of the Arabic dialects of the Southern Arabian Peninsula, Ancient South Arabian and Ethio-Semitic languages of the Horn of Africa, without the need to create a Southern Semitic unitary family.

The most frequently cited isoglosses relating to an alleged existence of a Southern Semitic family (see Goldenberg 2013: 45 f.) are:

- a phonological development of *p > f;
- the distribution of broken plurals;
- presence of a L-Stem (*qātala*);
- presence of a -k suffix for the 1st singular and 2nd persons in the suffix stem.

These isoglosses do not appear to be reliable diagnostic indicators, however: first, the phonetic development *p>f is typologically predictable (and also attested in Aramaic and Hebrew as an allophone of /p/ in various contexts). It would be more appropriate to consider this trait as an areal feature, at best.

As for broken plurals, proof of their presence across the whole Semitic family can be found, and Greenberg (1955) describes it as possibly belonging originally to the Afro-Asiatic family. In peripheral languages such as those considered here, broken plurals as a productive process of inflectional morphology should be considered as a shared retention, also motivated by lack of contact with languages using suffixes for plural derivation instead (as happened for Akkadian with Sumerian and, after that, for North-Western Semitic and Akkadian itself). This last point is debatable and matter of disagreement between scholars, but it is not my intention to discuss this specific topic.

This line of thought can work for the "L-stem" too: Zaborski (1991: 371) states the presence of similar forms in Beja (Cushitic), opening to the possibility of a common Afro-Asiatic trait which has been retained in peripheral languages while getting lost in the others.

Huehnengard & Rubin (2012: 273) reconstruct a *-ku* form for the 1st singular person and a *-ta* and *-ti* form for 2nd singular masculine and feminine respectively. Because of typologically-predictable levelling and paradigmatization, we find **-tu* 1st sg, **-ta* 2nd ms and **-ti* 2nd fs in Arabic and North-Western Semitic, while in the rest of Western Semitic we have **-ku* 1sg, **-ka* 2nd ms and **-ki* 2nd fs. This fact cannot be considered a reliable isogloss, and the presence of *-k- forms in various Yemeni Arabic varieties would prove it to be an areal feature (Naïm 2009).

What said so far explains why the option firstly outlined by Porkhomovsky (1997) should be considered more reliable and adherent to the complicate reality of the Semitic varieties, keeping in mind that contact and population movements might have played an important role in the development of the individual languages[2] – and this is even more true for the internal classification of MSAL.

1.2. The Modern South Arabian languages

Modern South Arabian Languages are an endangered group of unwritten languages currently spoken in Eastern Yemen and Soqotra, Western Oman and in the southernmost part of Saudi Arabia (see fig. 3). The MSAL belong to the West Semitic group. There are six MSAL: Mehri (Mh), Hobyōt (Hb), Ḥarsūsi (H), Baṭḥari (B), Jibbāli (J)

[2] See Magidow (2017).

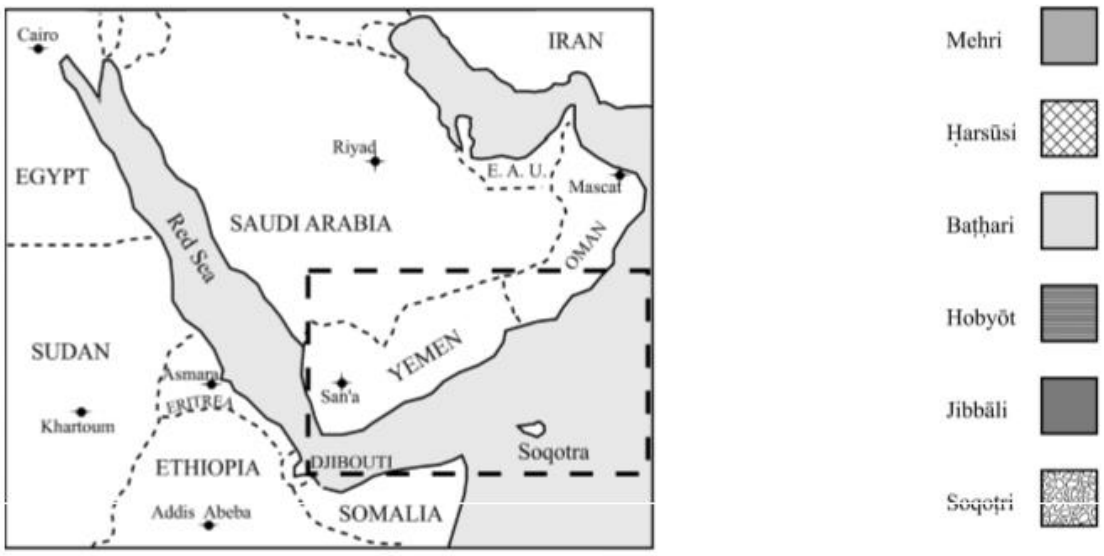

Figure 3. MSAL-speaking area (from Simeone-Senelle 2011:1078)

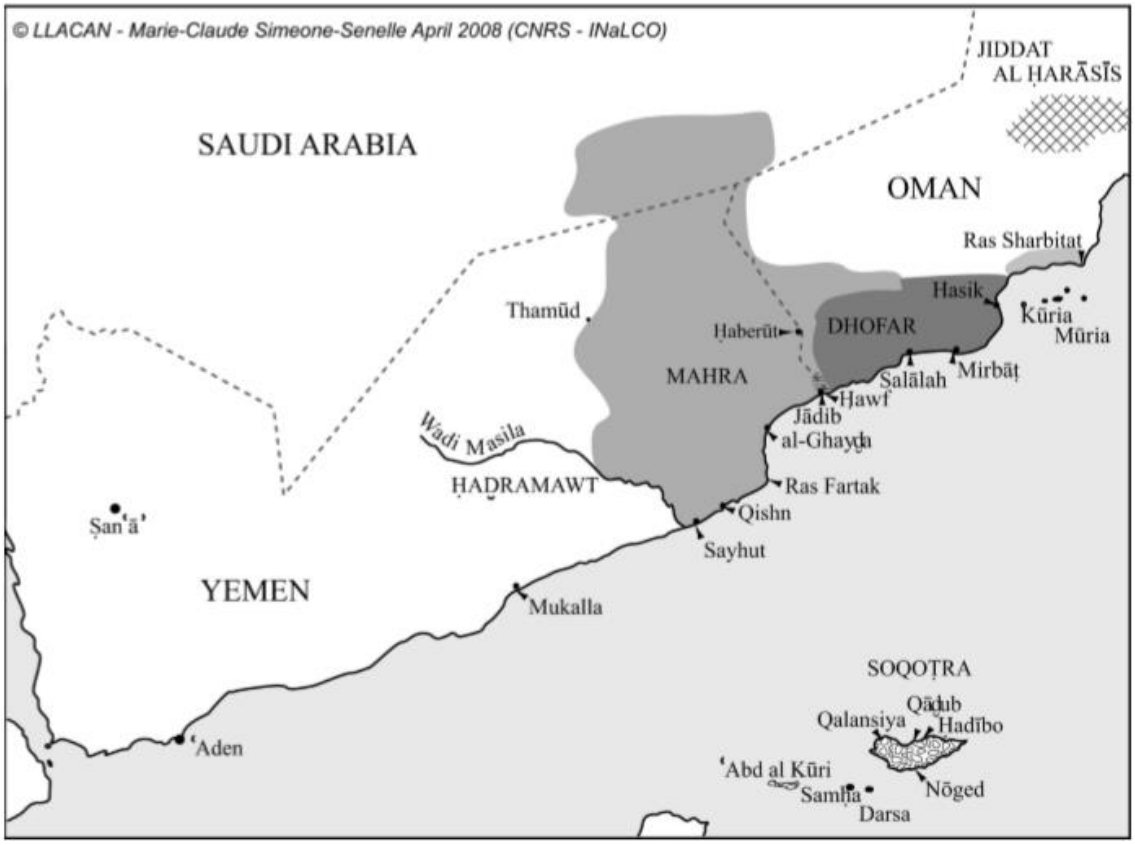

Figure 4. MSAL-speaking area (2) (from Simeone-Senelle 2011: 1078)

Figure 5. The area inhabited by the Baṭāḥira (Sharbithat is indicated by a red circle)

(also known as Śḥehri) and Soqoṭri (Sq). They are spoken by around 200,000 people in Eastern Yemen and Western Oman. Apart from Sq, all of them are spoken in Oman, while Mh and Hb are also spoken in Yemen.

Mh, H and B are genetically subgrouped together, while J and S show an independent evolution. Although the position of Hb is still not totally clear, it seems to belong to the Mh group (Arnold 1993). The basis for a calling into question of the position of B within this scheme can be found in section 1.4: I think it would be important to reconsider the status of the language after a deeper analysis of the data we now have.

The most widely spoken MSAL were discovered during the 19th century (Wellsted 1837). The first scientific research project on MSAL was conducted by the Austrian Südarabische Expedition (SAE: A. Jahn, W. Hein, D. H. Müller), at the very beginning of the 20th century (1898-1903), resulting in the publication of Mh and Sq grammars and texts of Śḥawri (sic). This preliminary work managed to introduce MSAL as a new field of research in Semitic and linguistic studies. Baṭḥari and Ḥarsūsi were reported later

in the 20th century by Thomas (1937), while Hobyōt was firstly reported in Johnstone (1981). It is worth mentioning that T. M. Johnstone's work - interrupted by his premature death - set a real turning point in MSAL studies with the publication of some preliminary remarks on the phonology and morphology of the group (1975) and of dictionaries for Mh (1987), H (1977) and J (1981).

B is the language of the *Baṭāḥira* of the far Eastern coast of Dhofar, in the Jazir area. The only source for B texts available so far is the preliminary work by Morris (1983), in which a few poetry texts are published. Morris is about to publish a wide collection of Baṭḥari texts which will finally fill the huge gap in its documentation - together with the present work, hopefully.

1.3. Baṭḥari

1.3.1. State of the field

Very little is known about the Baṭāḥira in general. Even their mentions across literature are almost non-existent, and this has surely happened for a reason, namely that the tribe occupies an area evidently far from being hospitable and hard to travel through, being completely desert and bare, apart from few water springs. This area probably seemed way less welcoming than the green, reassuring coasts of Salalah, so that Western visitors and scholars (wisely?) preferred to focus their interests far from the area of the Baṭāḥira.

The first documented report was written by the famous British explorer Bertram Thomas (1929: 100). It should be noted that Thomas did not have the chance to visit the tribe. His brief description is based on the words of neighbouring tribes and on his

encounter with a lone fisherman. The Baṭāḥira themselves have a poor consideration of Thomas' words:

The Bautahara is a still smaller tribe, primarily engaged in shark-fishing, which they carry on in a primitive way, swimming on inflated skins. They have a few camels, and their habitat extends from Ras Sharbatat to Ras Nils. They are held by their neighbours, with whom they cannot marry, to be of ignoble origin, and until recently were so wild and disreputable that no traveller could pass in safety even accompanied though he might be by a rafiq. Ghafari in politics, the Bautahara are now subject to the western Janaba. The only Bautahari I could get hold of, passing as I did on the desert side of their habitat, was a fisherman from the coast. He appeared to be a very low type, though his complexion was comparatively light brown for South-East Arabia; he had comparatively straight hair and high cheek-bones. A greater local antiquity is allowed to the despised Bautahara, who were once largely pastoral, than to any other local tribe save the Shahara."

The only person able to conduct fieldwork with the Baṭāḥira, as well known, was Miranda Morris, who worked in the area between the '70s and the '80s, collecting many recordings which have been left unpublished until recently: now, part of the material collected at the time (together with her more recent recordings for her project "Documentation and Ethnolinguistic Analysis of Modern South Arabian"[3], with Janet

[3] The project is funded by Leverhulme Trust. Over 2,000 sound files are now lodged at ELAR [Endangered Languages Archive] at SOAS (School of Oriental and African Languages), London. Around 300 texts have been transcribed and translated by Morris and a selection of them will soon be published.

Watson) is available at Elar website[4]. Morris is also the author of two papers concerning Baṭḥari, one (1983) dealing with Baṭḥari songs and poems and one (2017) reporting thoughts and problems concerning the study of endangered languages (particularly addressing Hobyōt and Baṭḥari) with various considerations and samples from the languages in question.

Some Baṭḥari vocabulary can be found in Johnstone's Mehri Lexicon (1981: xi), almost entirely thanks to Morris' contribution:

Baṭḥari, which is spoken mainly in Shuwaimiyya on the coast to the east of Salala, is the speech of a community dispossessed by the Mahrah at the time of the great tribal invasions of Dhofar and resettling on the coast as cave-dwelling fisherfolk and acquiring the language of their conquerors. Formerly in client status to the Mahrah they are now fairly prosperous and aggressive in their social attitudes towards their former overlords. Although I collected forty or fifty Baṭḥari words in Shuwaimiyya and Sharbithat, most of the comparative material cited comes from the field-notes of Mrs. Miranda Morris.

Virtually all existing quotes in MSAL literature about Baṭḥari come from one of the aforementioned sources. It is evident that scientific material covering this language is much needed.

1.3.2. The Baṭāḥira: environment, history and lifestyle

This section aims at giving a brief and basic description of the setting in which Baṭḥari speakers has been living now and then. This is fundamental to understand why

[4] https://elar.soas.ac.uk/Collection/MPI984105 (last access on 13/10/2017).

the language is on the verge of extinction, but also why it remained understudied for such a long time, on one side, and how difficult fieldwork must have been (and still is, in a way) in Morris' time, on the other. It should be remembered that Dhofar has remained untouched and almost unknown to outsiders until the '70, with the unification of the country. Before that, its inhabitants would live in a tribal context, conducting a semi-nomadic lifestyle apart from few sedentary settlements along the coast (as that of Salalah) and had almost no contact with the outside world.

The Baṭāḥira nowadays are settled on the coastal area of the extreme East of Dhofar, near the border with the al-Wusṭā governorate. Members of the tribe are scattered from the village of Liqbi until Sawqara, the most of them living between Shwaymiya and Sharbithat.

A small part of the tribe moved in past times to the urban area of Salalah, where they still live. They have completely replaced their daily language with Jibbāli and Arabic.

Reports from some of the members of the tribe (but it should be noted that the Baṭāḥira living in Salalah are particularly insisting on this point) say that their tribal territory once would reach the two homonymous *wādī ġadān* which can be found approx. 30 km to the West of Ṯamrīt and 10 km East of Sawqara respectively, stretching South near the mountains that divide Salalah from the desert inland. Migrations and invasions by the Janayba from the North-East and from the Mahra coming from Yemen reportedly pushed the Baṭāḥira towards the area which they inhabit nowadays. Because of these invasions, they lost the control of their land and became subject to the conquerors. As the short quote from Thomas (1929) reported in the previous section hints, the Baṭāḥira were at the lowest scale of the tribal power relationships in

the area, to the point that they could not carry weapons (being labelled as *ḍaʕīf*, "weak") and marry women from outside the tribe.

Memory of fierce fights against the so-called *burtuġaliyīn* is still preserved: for example, during my stay in Oman I was shown a cave along the beach of Wārx (at the end of a *wādī* to the East of Shwaymiya, reachable by boat only), where the foreign invaders would be imprisoned. A discrete number of graves grouped together in the same area would be connected to a great massacre of children and women perpetrated once again by the invaders.

As weird as it may sound, Portuguese sailors, members of Vasco de Gama's navy, did stop for several months between 1502 and 1503 in Hallaniya (formerly known as Kuria Muria), an island not far from the shores of Shwaymiya (Mearns et al. 2016). There is no historical evidence for any conflict between the Baṭāḥira and the Portuguese navy, which apparently had good relationship with the islanders, according to the records. At the origin of these narratives some truth might yet be found, but at the present moment we can only take these for what they are: folkloristic tales.

The area traditionally inhabited by the Baṭāḥira is characterised by a severely dry weather, left untouched by the *xarīf* season (that of tropical monsoons, between June and August) which, on the contrary, makes the plain of Salalah prosperous and fertile. The desert and desolate landscapes of the area did not offer much to live from: paucity of natural springs, vegetation and wild animals to hunt for made traditional life very harsh, according to what the oldest members of the tribe (which are also the last speakers of Baṭḥari) recall.

The diet was composed almost exclusively of fish and turtles, which the ocean is rich in, camel and goat milk and occasionally rice and dates, depending on the time of

the year. Water was fetched by women from various springs along the coast, often located miles away from their areas of settlement. Conducting a semi-nomadic way of life, the Baṭāḥira would be either cave-dwellers or build small stonehouses, still recognizable especially around Sawqara. Daily activities were carried out almost exclusively during daylight, as leaving the camp during night time was extremely dangerous and done only in case of emergency: evidence for the vital importance of performing specific tasks in certain moments of the day can be found in the semantic link between verbs of movement and time of the day in which the action is performed (see section 12.2).

These harsh life conditions, made worse by chronic starvation and diseases, eventually came to an end with the advent of Sultan Qaboos bin Said al Said, who rose to power after overthrowing his father, Said bin Taimur, in a palace coup in 1970 and transformed the newborn unified nation from a poor, underdeveloped country to a modern state, essentially putting an end to traditional, tribal life. The Baṭāḥira completely gave up their nomadic lifestyle and live a quiet and relatively healthy life in regular houses with all the standard comforts of contemporary world. The whole tribe soon switched to Arabic (and other MSAL) and at the present time less than 15 Baṭḥari native speakers exist.

1.4. The status endangerment of Baṭḥari

1.4.1. Community attitudes towards Baṭḥari

It is striking to note how fast the process of Arabisation led the Baṭāḥira to adopt almost completely an Arab Bedouin identity. Daily informal talks with younger members of the community (scholarised young adults, some of whom attended or were

attending university) during my stay in Shwaymiya revealed that the new generations are eager to present and identify themselves as *bedu* and not as an ethnically separate group from the neighbouring tribes. It is likely that this widespread self-representation reflects what they were taught by their families, suggesting that a systematic process of identity replacement took place. The strong will to integrate into the newborn Omani modern society and to improve life conditions inevitably meant getting rid of any memory related to a past of hunger and poverty, intrinsically connected to the traditional way of life of the Baṭāḥira. Being the language itself a vestige and a constant reminder of those times, the need to get past their own negative reputation was so urgent that parents started to talk to their children only in Arabic – and education and media did the rest. Before Morris' return to the field in 2014, the few speakers left reportedly had not spoken Baṭḥari for entire decades and it was only thanks to Morris' continuous efforts that they managed to recall their long-unspoken mother tongue.

Very few of those young men show interest in their (great)grandparents' language and knowledge, who in turn were often mocked for being illiterate. Some of them can understand few words, but no one has any real competence in the language. The most common reason for their lack of interest, as explained by them, is that Baṭḥari would result to be completely useless in their daily life, since no one outside their hometowns would understand them even if they knew how to speak the language. They look at Arabic as a powerful tool to enrich themselves and move to bigger cities (either Salalah, Muscat or the Emirates). Not even the last speakers seem to feel any will or need to try to teach the language, all of them being very old, tired and scarcely interested in speaking it. In fact, all of them consider Baṭḥari to be a virtually dead language – which is true from a sociolinguistic point of view, the use of

the language being maintained in no social domain whatsoever. With the disappearance of Baṭḥari, a whole world of intangible cultural heritage will be gone too.

1.4.1.2. Free thoughts over language policies, identity and beyond

I think it would be now important to consider the macro-social factors involved in language shift and loss and to what extent macro-factors can influence observable micro-realities. A series of factors, some of which were already outlined in section 1.3.3.1., determined the endangered status of MSAL in general and the imminent disappearance of Baṭḥari. Here I want to focus on the socio-political reasons that led to this situation: in its minimum terms, the sociolinguistic status of local languages under the influence of the contemporary globalised world.

To clarify, let us focus on folk approaches to the language(s) they speak and the relationship between what is considered "proper" language and what is dialect. A clear and unanimous definition of these two terms is surprisingly hard to make and long discussed in linguistic studies, but this is not the right place to examine in detail a really huge literature. Bloomfield itself (1933: 54) recognised "the purely relative nature of the distinction". If one thinks about it, "the notion of "language", paradoxically enough, is not a particularly linguistic notion at all" (Chambers & Trugdill 1998: 4).

Leaving these linguistic thoughts aside, what matters here is what speakers mean when they talk about language and dialect, and to what extent this influences social practices related to language use.

Since the rise of modern nation-states and the ideologies behind them in the Europe of the XIX century, the distinction between an official language versus "local" or "vernacular" languages has been seen as crucial in order to enhance a shared

identity" from the point of view of central governments, often struggling against different conflicting identities coexisting under the same political entity (the case of Italy on this regard is a classic example). From the speakers' perspective, the acquisition of the official language was considered as a means of cultural redemption allowing individual acceptance and integration into society[5]. A recurring concept in many definitions of what a modern nation is refers to an aggregation of people inhabiting a delimited territory and speaking the same language[6]: this same idea can be found at the basis of panarabist movements from the late XIX century onwards.

It is safe to say that the influence of colonialism and the growth of Arab nationalism during the XX century played a crucial role in shaping the contemporary linguistic situation of the Middle Eastern area[7]. The positivist idea of the need of an official language to unify such a wide area under the same macro-identity led to the rise of Modern Standard Arabic as a shared official language, which was undoubtedly beneficial under many aspects. A major fallout, though, is that most of the already struggling minority languages and communities scattered in this very wide territory were definitely put at risk of survival under the pressure of culturally hegemonic (and sometimes violent) central governments.

In that, Oman is a peculiar case, since its process of Arabisation is way more recent. A noteworthy element of Sultan Qaboos' reign is that he never acted against the heterogeneity of Omani ethnic composition, by means of repression or forced cultural substitution. Nonetheless, there are no ongoing safeguard programs

[5] See Gramsci (2017ed.)

[6] This idea spread after Fichte (1807-1808) and the writing of many other intellectuals belonging to Romanticism in the first instance.

[7] See Khalidi et al. (2001) for a general account over Arab Nationalism and Miller (2003) for an analysis of the effects over language policies of this movement.

addressing endangered languages[8] nor is there any interest in doing so, since without any inclusive policy remaining competent in the "traditional" language would only mean to be cut out of contemporary world (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000). We can see its ongoing effects right under our eyes, with younger generations of Dhofaris from MSAL-speaking families[9] progressively losing their linguistic competence in favour of Arabic (and the puzzling linguistic situation of a city like Salalah would be a very interesting study in itself), because of Arabic-only scholarisation, lack of written material and medias making use of MSAL, among other things. Arabic is considered to be the one and only language of Oman, necessary to be granted a good job and to travel abroad (especially to the Emirates, whose charm and cultural influence over youngsters is getting stronger and stronger), while MSAL are seen as the vernacular, dialectal medium used in family/local context, with poor intellectual dignity (mostly because they are unwritten, which seems to be a very critical factor in determining speakers' opinions).

1.4.1.3. Baṭḥari: language or dialect?

Now, going back to the discussion over the status of Baṭḥari, from a purely emic point of view Baṭḥari is not considered a language. Baṭḥari speakers usually recognise their language to be different from the other MSAL. This is not the case for speakers of

[8] Which Oman is rich of: see https://www.ethnologue.com/country/OM/languages (last access: 29/08/2017).

[9] These qualitative observations are based on many informal talks with young locals of heterogeneous background during my stay in Oman. A very common reaction to me sharing my interest in MSAL can be summarised in the following statement: "Why are you interested in that? They are not languages!"

other MSAL, which would strongly argue against this statement, judging Baṭḥari as a variety of Mehri, at best.

Out of curiosity, I tested whether there was any mutual intelligibility with some Mehri and Śhehri speakers who I met during my stay in Dhofar, letting them have a listen at some recordings. Some Mehri speakers could randomly understand the general meaning (but with many lexical hesitation), while Śḥehri speakers usually ended up with harsh debates over Baṭḥari being a "real" language or "just some broken Mehri/Śhehri" (meaning that they could hardly understand a single word). It is quite clear that these judgements are influenced by extralinguistic factors (as belonging to a certain tribe, social power relationships and other such variables) which I am not going to discuss here.

On the other hand, Baṭḥari speakers are usually competent in (or can easily understand) both Mehri and Ḥarsusi, along with Arabic, thanks to frequent intertribal marriages and occasional (but continuative) relationships with nearby tribes. Such a situation might have had an influence over the development of these languages, suggesting perhaps the presence of a dialectal continuum, or of some degree of influence from a Mehri superstratum over the other two languages, or many other more or less realistic (and equally unexplored) scenarios which would challenge the aprioristic assumption of a discrete Mehri/Ḥarsusi/Baṭḥari subgrouping.

All in all, from a linguistic point of view, it is still not clear whether Baṭḥari should be considered a tribal dialect of Mehri or a language of its own. What is clear is that Baṭḥari undoubtedly shares some features with Omani Mehri (and, presumably, with Ḥarsusi) at various levels of the language system and that there is a certain degree of lexical influence from Jibbāli, while it retains many peculiarities at every level of its grammar.

The absence of many phonological processes typical of the nearby varieties, a peculiar vocalization of verbal stem patterns and syntactic features unique to Baṭḥari would validate the option of considering Baṭḥari a linguistic entity of its own, penalised by lack of studies and small number of speakers, and by earlier "discovery" and analysis of the other MSAL which shadowed the importance of minority languages inside what is already a minority group. However, a careful comparative study has to be carried out before putting an end to this discussion.

1.5. The study

1.5.1. Fieldwork description

Finding a way to meet the Baṭāḥira required time and preparation. My first plan was to get to Oman and try to go visit the people of Shwaymiya and its surroundings by myself, but this naïve plan was surely too vague and uncertain in its outcomes to be pursued. Then I got in touch with Professor Miranda Morris from the University of St. Andrews, the only scholar who had been able to work with the Baṭāḥira so far, who very kindly agreed to help me by sharing her local connections. A first meeting with her and her main field collaborator, Khalifa Hamoud alBaṭḥari, a member of the community himself, took place in November 2015 in St. Andrews, Scotland, where the two were currently working on Morris' corpus of ethnographic recordings. During this stay, it was possible to discuss with Mr. Khalifa about a possible period of fieldwork in Oman with his assistance, to which he gladly agreed. The following months were focused on a first analysis of a small selection of recordings and transcriptions from Morris' corpus, in order to collect working hypotheses to be investigated during fieldwork with native speakers. It was necessary to wait until the end of the Kharif

season to travel to Dhofar, due to the extremely high temperatures to which the area of the Batahira rise (and prohibitive travel expenses) before starting fieldwork, which was conducted over two stays between October and November 2016 and March and April 2017. During my first stay I settled in Shelim, a small town on top of the plateau surrounding the plain of Shuwaymiya mostly inhabited by South Asian labourers working in nearby oilfields and local shops, while the second time it was possible to arrange an apartment in Shwaymiya, which made the whole work much easier due to daily contact with the community. The recording sessions were planned with the help of Khalifa, which assumed the role of the gatekeeper in this context. His presence in the end turned out to be essential to reach a positive outcome and usable data.

One of the major problems that I faced during my fieldwork was surely related to speakers' payment (which was already planned in advance, of course, but the deal I eventually had to agree to consisted in the payment of a very high amount of money per hour). Due to my limited finances I had to change most of the plans I had made in advance, so that I could gather the largest quantity of data in the least possible time. For this reason, I was sadly forced to strongly reduce specific tasks like entire sessions focused over the elicitation of paradigms and verbal forms, lists of words formerly planned for phonetic insights, detailed lexicon and so forth. Rather, the gathering of narratives and ethno-texts was preferred. Elicitation was still possible, but it was limited to informal meetings with the speakers outside the recording sessions and not recorded (only handnotes were taken). The material was then checked and translated into Arabic with Khalifa, who proved to be a valid help, notwithstanding his not being a fully proficient speaker.

1.5.2. Methodology

The present study is based on fieldwork. Interviews with speakers focused on various aspects of past daily life, mostly inquiring about ethnographic details and personal stories prior to Qaboos' rise to power. Recordings were made in high-quality WAV format using a Zoom H4N recorder. A part of the interviews were also video-recorded through a Go Pro Hero. Analysis was later made through software like Praat, Elan and Flex. Digitalization of the whole material is still ongoing at the present moment.

1.5.3. Consultants

The consultants I worked with are all elderly men and women from the Baṭāḥira tribe. Out of the few speakers left, I have been able to work with 6 men and 3 women whose mother tongue was Baṭḥari. Their exact age is not clear, but they were born years before the advent of Sultan Qaboos (i. e. the '70es), by the time of whose arrival they were young adults, so that now they should be between 60 and 70 years old.

Nowadays all of the interviewees are bilingual with Arabic, which has become their daily means of communication, and almost all of them know at least another MSAL, either Mehri or Ḥarsusi, as a consequence of frequent intertribal marriage. Reportedly, one of the speakers is a bilingual Baṭḥari/Arabic only, but I could not work with him.

It took time and patience to let the elder speakers get acquainted with my presence and my visits, which were very limited during my first stay and negatively conditioned by my not having independent means of transport and relying exclusively on Khalifa's schedule, and ultimately gaining their trust. However, the second stay turned out to be undoubtedly more satisfying, pleasant and well-received by locals.

1.5.4. Presentation of data

Examples from my collected corpus are reported where pertinent. It was not possible to report the entirety of the texts recorded due to lack of time, but a Flex folder is on its way towards completion and it will be made available together with Elan transcribed audio (and video, where available) files.

2. Phonetics and phonology

This chapter is an outline of Baṭḥari phonetics and phonology. In section 2.1 the phonological inventory is presented, followed by an analysis of its most interesting properties in the ensuing sections. Vowels, syllabic structure and accent system are presented all together in section 2.2, as they are closely related within each other. Data supporting the prerogatives made in this chapter are reported where appropriate.

2.1. Consonants

The following table illustrates the phonemic inventory of Baṭḥari.

			Lab.	Interd.	Alv.	Lat.	Pal.	Vel.	Phar.	Lar.
Obstruents	Stops	Vs			t [t]			k [k]		ʔ [ʔ]
		Vd	b [b]		d [d]			g [g]		
		Emph[10]			ṭ [t’]~[tˤ]			ḳ [k’]		
	Fricatives	Vs	f [f]	ṯ [θ]	s [s]	ś [ɬ]	š [ʃ]	x [x]	ḥ [ħ]	h [h]
		Vd		ð [ð]	z [z]			ġ [ɣ]	ʕ [ʕ]	
		Emph		ð̣ [ðˤ]	ṣ [sˤ]~[zˤ]	ṣ́ [ɬˤ]	(ṣ̌)			
Sonorants	Nasal		m [m]		n [n]					
	Liquids				r [r]~[ɾ]	l [l]				
	Glide						y [j]	w [w]		

Table 1. Phonemic inventory of Baṭḥari

[10] The use of the term “emphatic” and the phonetic realisation of emphatics are explained and discussed in section 2.1.6.

The Baṭḥari phonetic system is not subject to many of the consonantal loss/elision processes attested elsewhere in MSAL. It is not (and probably will never be) clear whether some peculiar features found in the language, such as the retention of /ʕ/ or the pharyngealized realization of part of the emphatics, are due to contact with Arabic or are an original feature, but it is sure that at the time of Morris' first recordings such traits were already present. Only a synchronic outline will be given, with comparison to Omani Mehri (henceforth MO) when needed.

2.1.1. The status of /ṣ̌/

Morris (1983: 143) lists /ṣ̌/ as part of the phonological system of Baṭḥari, but this phoneme seems to have undergone merging with /ś/, so that ethimological /ṣ̌/ is synchronically undetectable (see table 2 above).

Root	MO	B	Meaning
ṣ̌bʕ	[tʃˀoːbəʔ][11]	[haɮˤabaːʕ]	finger
ḳṣ̌b	/ḳəṣ̌awb/[12]	[kʼaɮˤaʼp]	to cut into pieces
nḳr	/minṣ̌érót/[13]	[nkʼɛːɮˤetʰ]	middle finger

*Table 2. Realization of *ṣ̌*

[11] Castagna (p. c.)
[12] Johnstone 1987: 243
[13] Johnstone 1981: 190

2.1.2. The status of /ʕ/

Unlike some of the other MSAL[14], /ʕ/ is conserved in Baṭḥari in any environment and its effects on the surrounding vowels have an important role especially in verbal morphology (see section 6.1).

Root	Word	Meaning
ʕbrm	ʕābremət	terapon (MM[15])
bʕr	bāʕar (pl. baʕarēn)	camel
bʕl	biʕl (pl. biʕōl)	sawfish
ʕmr	ʕəmōr	to_say.PFV
	yʕamɛ̄r	to_say.SBJV
brḳʕ	abarḳāʕ	to_gallop.PFV
nkʕ	nōkaʕ	to_come.PFV

Table 3. Realization of /ʕ/

2.1.3. The status of /ʔ/

Root	Word	Meaning
ʔbn	ʔābən	rock
ʔrm	ḥārəm[16]	road
ʔṭb	ʔaṭeb	teat

Table 4. Realization of /ʔ/

[14] see Lonnet & Simeone-Senelle (1997: 348)

[15] From Miranda Morris' corpus.

[16] The definite article underwent a process of lexicalisation within this item, which derives from a */DET + ʔarēm/ form.

/ʔ/ is realised only in word-initial position with indefinite nouns. Its presence systematically triggers allomorphy of the definite article (see section 2.4.2).

Various nouns of very common use developed an /ʕ/ from an original /ʔ/ in initial position. However, it is not clear whether the presence of /ʕ/ instead of /ʔ/ should be considered an independent development /ʕ/ < /*ʔ/ internal to Baṭḥari or, on the contrary, a retention versus the rest of MSAL, which consistently show a subjacent /ʔ/ within these lexemes:

Root	MO[17]	Word	Meaning
ʔbw	ḥābū	ʕābù̀	people
ʔnṯ	ḥəynīt	ʕaynəṯ	women
ʔbl	ḥəybīt	ʕaybɛ̀t	she-camel
ʔrw	ḥāràwn	ʕārɔ̀n	goats (collective)

Table 5. Realization of /ʔ/

2.1.4. The status of /l/

In Johnstone's Mehri texts the palatalization of liquid /l/ is a rather common phenomenon[18]. Baṭḥari, however, does not exhibit such a phenomenon in any environment observed so far.

[17] From Johnstone (1987).

[18] Rubin 2010: 17-18.

B	MO[19]	Meaning
kəlṯōt	kəwṯēt < *kəlṯēt	story
əḳəblɛ̀tkəm	aḳəbɛ̄tkəm < *aḳəbáltkəm	your (m.pl.) tribe
ləbōn	əwbōn < *ləbōn	white
ləbōd	əwbūd<*ləbūd	he hit
ślɛ̄ləs	śəlɛ̄s < *śəláls	take it (IMP)

Table 6. The status of /l/

2.1.5. Guttural consonants

The guttural consonants (/h/, /ḥ/, /x/, /ġ/, /ʕ/, /ʔ/) constitute a natural class in that they influence the vocalic patterning of verbal stems. This topic is treated in section 6.1.

2.1.6. The "emphatics"

After Johnstone's (1975: 6) claim about MSAL emphatics showing (pre-) glottalized realization, many have argued about this topic[20]. While many scholars focused on Mehri and Jibbali emphatics, virtually nothing was published concerning other MSAL. Gasparini (2017) gives a first description of Baṭḥari emphatics, presented in the following paragraphs.

The term "emphatic" is used in this context as a cover-term for a class of phonemes contrasting with their plain voiceless and voiced counterparts by the

[19] Rubin 2010: 17-18.

[20] See for example Lonnet & Simeone-Senelle (1997); Simeone-Senelle (2011); Naumkin & Porkhomovskij (1981); Lonnet (2009); Watson & Bellem (2010; 2011); Ridouane et al. (2015); Dufour (2016); Ridouane & Gendrot (2017).

presence of some sort of constriction in the vocal trait. The nature of such constriction is intentionally kept vague by adopting this terminology, since research proves that both glottalization and pharyngealization play an important role in the realization of emphatics. In the following sections, a definition of the two labels will be given, followed by an analysis of Baṭḥari emphatics.

2.1.6.1. Glottalization

Glottalization refers to a secondary articulatory process in which narrowing or closure of the glottis takes place. Ejectives are produced by the action of the closed glottis, while there is an occlusion in the oral cavity. The action of the larynx compresses the air in the vocal tract which, once released, produces a greater amplitude in the stop burst (Ladefoged & Maddieson 1996: 78)

Glottalization can be determined according to two different parameters on a continuum: the degree of closure leads from modal voice (no closure) to stiff voice and creaky voice (partial closure) to ejective articulation (full closure); the time of release can vary too, ranging from a simultaneous segment to an onset or coda or to glottal reinforcement (Ladefoged & Maddieson 1996: 73-81).

The acoustic characteristics of ejectives can be different cross-linguistically, both in terms of Voice Onset Time (henceforth, VOT) and spreading of the glottalization process to the following vowel (Kingston 1985, Wright & al. 2002). Voice lag is an easily detectable factor in determining ejective realization: usually, the longer the VOT, the higher the supraglottal pressure and therefore the ejective burst (Fallon 2002). The presence of creaky voice (phonation with irregular pulses) at the onset of the following vowel can also be a marker of glottalization, but this feature seems not to be universal. Finally, the high burst amplitude of the release is another hint of ejective

realization (Bellem 2007: 31). As for creaky voice, it shows irregular F0 and aperiodic voice (Keating et al. 2015).

2.1.6.2. Pharyngealization

Pharyngealization is a kind of secondary articulation involving a constriction of the pharynx usually realized through tongue root retraction (Ladefoged & Maddieson 1996: 365). It is a process well attested throughout the whole Semitic family but not enough investigated outside Arabic dialects.

There can be variation on the locus of constriction, and scholars themselves came to different results on the matter. In fact, according to the variety taken into consideration one should more properly talk about laryngealization or uvularization (Ali & Daniloff 1972, Ghazeli 1977). I will use the term "pharyngealization" as a cover term to indicate a general involvement of the pharynx region leading to a "backed" articulation.

As Yeou (2001: 4) says, "pharyngealization can be studied from an acoustic point of view by examining its effects on the formant frequencies of the adjacent vowels". In fact, acoustic analysis shows that a backed articulation of emphatics in Arabic causes strong lowering of F2 and slight raise of F1 (Giannini & Pettorino 1982), particularly at vowel onset where F2 drop is particularly dramatic and might be the most important factor determining a "backed" perception of a given sound (Obrecht 1968).

It is important to point out that pharyngealization is not the only trait that builds what we usually call an "emphatic" (leaving aside the discussion over the exact locus of constriction in the pharyngeal trait itself). Rather, it contributes with other

phenomena, such as lip protrusion (as happens in Ṣanʕāni Arabic, Watson & Bellem 2011), lowering of the jaw and sulcalization of the tongue dorsum (Bellem 2007: 44-47).

In the following sections I will deal separately with emphatic and fricative stops in initial and intervocalic position. Utterance-final position was proven to trigger a whole set of phenomena also involving other phonological classes: evidence on this regard will be shown in section 2.4.1.

Recordings from 4 speakers - 2 women (S1 and S2) and two men (S3 and S4) - were taken into account. In order to obtain easily comparable data it was chosen to take into account tokens in initial, intervocalic and pre-pausal position. Each token comes from natural speech. As shown in Table 2, a total of 169 tokens were included in the acoustical analysis.

	Utterance-initial	Intervocalic	Pre-pausal	Total
/ḳ/	20	25	5	50
/ṭ/	20	15	8	43
/ð̣/	10	10	3	23
/ṣ/	10	15	3	28
/ś/	10	10	5	25
Total	70	75	24	169

Table 7. Number of tokens analysed

Greater attention was given to segments in which the emphatic was followed by the vowel /a/. This choice was made mainly for two reasons, namely 1) abundance of occurrences of the aforementioned environment, /a/ being present both in stressed and unstressed syllables and 2) clearer backing processes triggered by the emphatics,

which allowed an easier individuation of pharyngealization processes. This does not mean that observation of other environments was neglected; a higher number of occurrences was thought to be more appropriate for a better statistical perspective, lacking a proper list of elicited words. Positional variants for the other vowels need to be studied with greater attention. Only descriptive statistics will be given, though, since the analysed sample is too small to be proven significant at an inferential level. As the work proceeds I hope to be able to bring further evidence for the preliminary findings presented in this work.

Acoustic data was segmented and analysed manually using PRAAT software (version 6.0.23). In order to detect the presence of pharyngealization, formants of the following vowel were measured at 1/3 and 1/2 of the vowel. As for glottalization, presence, length and number of pre- and post-emphatic glottal lags were considered. VOT was measured from the start of the oral release burst to the first glottal pulse associated with the vowel. Frication length and intensity at midpoint for fricatives was also investigated.

2.1.6.3. The emphatic stops

	Utterance-initial		Intervocalic		Total
	/ḳ/	/ṭ/	/ḳ/	/ṭ/	
S1	6	5	6	5	22
S2	5	4	9	3	21
S3	5	5	5	3	18
S4	4	6	5	4	19
	20	20	25	15	80

Table 8. Counts of tokens analysed divided for each speaker

Analysis of emphatic stops proves that /ḳ/ strongly shows signs of glottalization both in initial and intervocalic position. A first clue comes from waveform analysis, the ejective burst being clearly visible (fig. 6).

Emphatic stops clearly differ from their plain counterparts in terms of VOT in the case of utterance-initial /ḳ/ (SD 10,83 ms) and intervocalic /ṭ/ (SD 0,52 ms) (see table 9). F0 measurements show a slight increase of F0 at vowel onset in the case of utterance-initial stops (F0 at onset – F0 at midpoint = 12,53 Hz, SD 7,9), while for intervocalic stops the rise of F0 is less salient (2,79 Hz, SD 1,21).

S4 diverges from the other speakers by showing significantly lower VOT for utterance-initial /ḳ/ (25,9 ms, SD 0,4) (see fig. 6 and 7). He also shows creaky voice at the onset of the following vowel for 2,3 ms (SD 0,2) and a weaker release burst, akin to that of plain /k/.

Vowel formants analysis of the following vowel showed signs of pharyngealization in the case of /ṭ/, while for /ḳ/ formants did not prove to be relatable to clear pharyngealization processes (Table 10). For utterance-initial /ṭ/a lowering of F1 of 16,48 Hz (SD 7,92) from onset to midpoint was detected together with raising of F2 of 128,42 (SD 41,06). For intervocalic /ṭ/ F1 undergoes a lowering of 7,85 Hz (SD 2,75), while F2 shows a rise of 93,28 (SD 23,91).

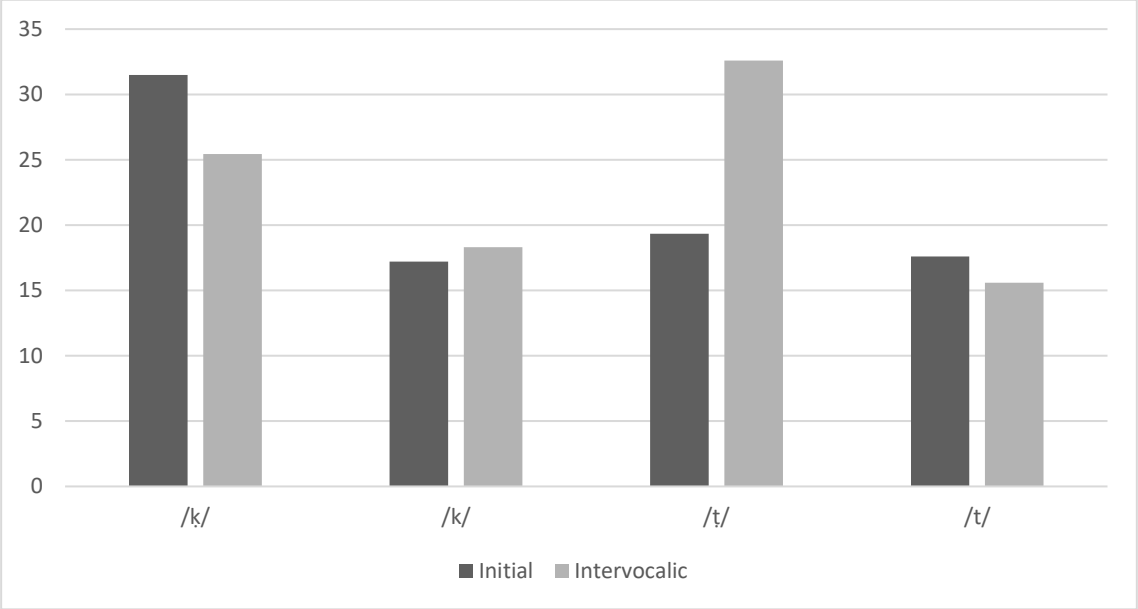

Table 9. VOT values (ms) for emphatic stops

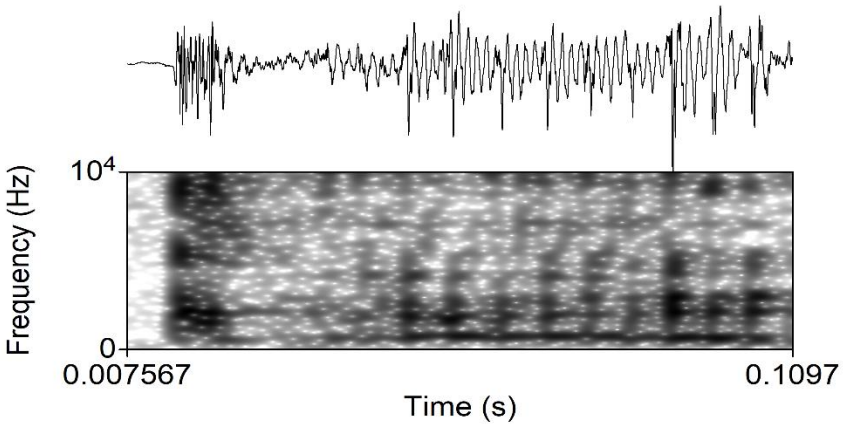

Figure 6. S1 pronouncing /ḳa/: strong burst and long VOT

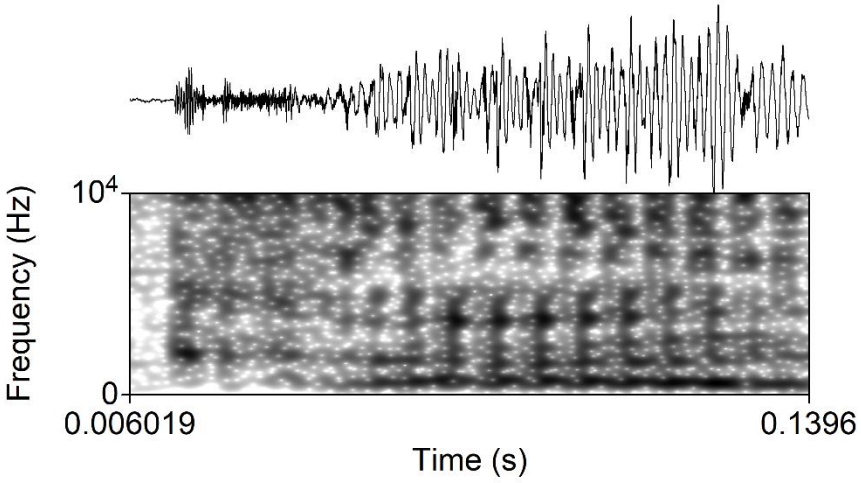

Figure 7. Waveform and spectrogram of S4 pronoucing /ḳa/: weak burst, low VOT and aperiodic vowel onset

		F2 - F1 at onset (Hz)	F2 – F1 at midpoint (Hz)
/ḳ/	Utterance-initial	862,72 SD 57,172	879,52 SD 30,176
	Intervocalic	796,954 SD 72,98	803,648 SD 66,72
/ṭ/	Utterance-initial	699,58 SD 65,55	754,65 SD 74,45
	Intervocalic	621,98 SD 70,72	709,6 SD 50,05

Table 10. Values for F2 - F1

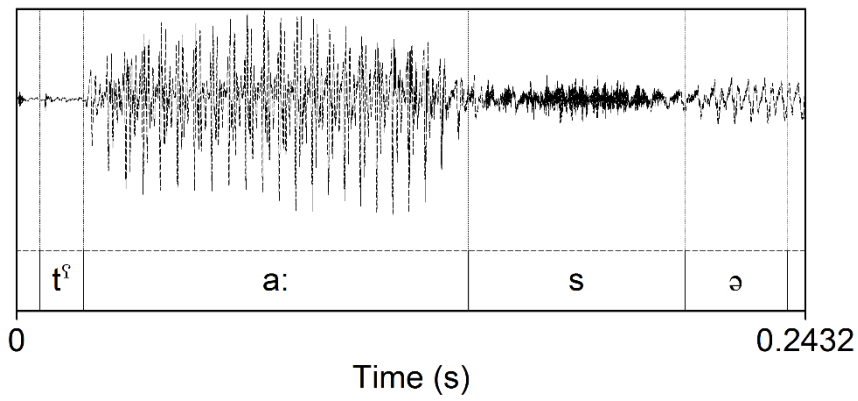

Figure 8. Waveform of S03 pronouncing /ṭāsəh/ "bowl"

2.1.6.4. The emphatic fricatives

	Utterance-initial			Intervocalic			Total
	/ð̣/	/ṣ/	/ṣ́/	/ð̣/	/ṣ/	/ṣ́/	
S1	3	2	3	1	3	3	15
S2	2	2	2	4	4	1	15
S3	2	3	4	3	4	2	18
S4	3	3	1	2	4	4	17
	10	10	10	10	15	10	65

Table 11. Counts of tokens analysed divided for each speaker

The study of emphatic fricatives is more problematic than that of emphatic stops. The main problem consists in determining whether and how ejectivity is

involved in the realization of emphatics, since there is a natural articulatory incompatibility between the continuing air flow typical of frication and the increase of air pressure in the oral cavity leading to ejective realization (Maddieson 1998). In fact, only 3,7 % of the world's languages show at least one ejective fricative segment (Maddieson 2013).

Since there was no chance to organize any recording session in a proper lab for phonetic analysis (nor would I have ever dared to pursue such a challenging task with my old interviewees living hundreds of kms away from Ṣalalah), only direct observation was possible of how Baṭḥari emphatics are articulated as far as lips and jaw position are concerned. This observation is not rigorous enough as an articulatory analysis, so it cannot be held as a satisfying description and cannot be considered properly reliable in this context. Futhermore, it would be interesting to compare these articulations with those of – so far undescribed - Janaybi Arabic, but lack of data prevents from pursuing such a task at the present time.

Pre-frication and post-frication silent lags were proven to be systematically absent in the data (Figure 9). No speaker ever produced any sort of silent lag while articulating emphatic fricatives, nor affrication processes seem to happen, unlike in Mehreyyet (Ridouane et al. 2015).

- */ð̣/:* Emphatic /ð̣/ is uniformly articulated as a pharyngealized voiced dental fricative [ðˤ]. Measurement of formants of the following vowel proves this statement (Table 12), with a raising of F1 at vowel onset of 23,48 Hz (SD 8,02) and a strong lowering of F2 of 168,83 Hz (SD 36,27). Frication length and intensity are higher than their plain counterparts for /ð̣/ and /ṣ/, while they are lower for /ṣ̱/ (table 13 and 14). Sibilants, on the other hand, are much more

unstable, as Standard Deviation values might suggest. Still, pharyngealization seems to be more salient than glottalization in this context. Variation happens at idiolectal level and more data should be analysed before making safe assumptions on this matter.

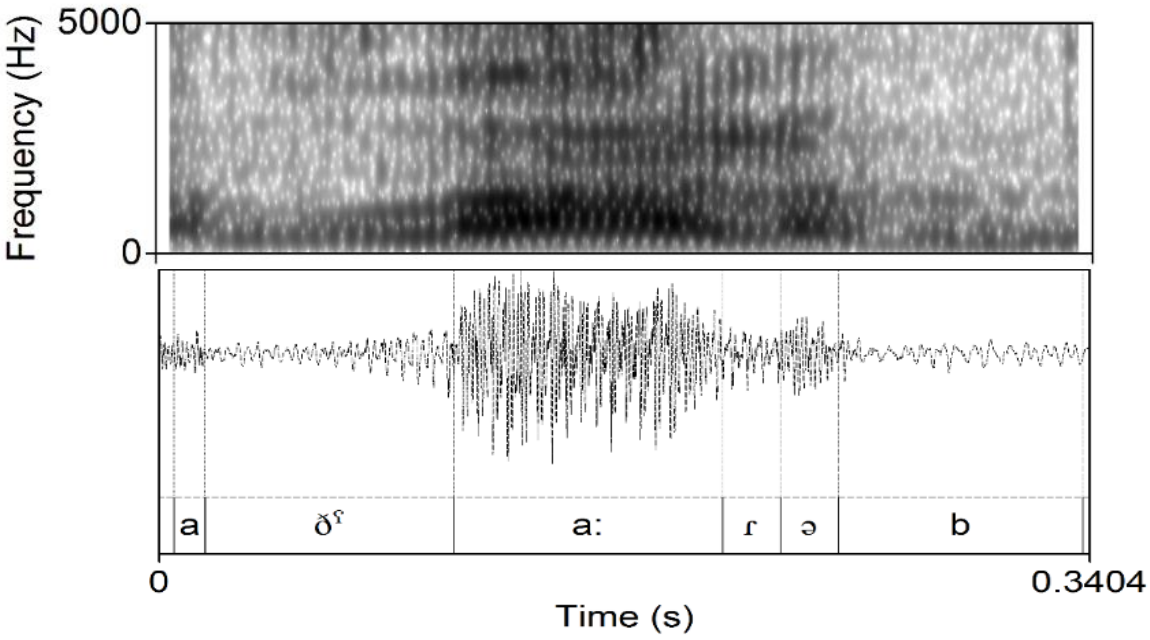

Figure 9. Pronouncing /aḍarb/ "stick"

- *Sibilants:* from spectrogram analysis voicing processes for both sibilants were detected through the presence of a voice bar during frication time (7/25 occurrences for /ṣ/ and 12/20 occurrences for /ʂ/). It is unclear whether voicing is conditioned only by idiolectal variation or there are phonotactical constraints for this to happen, given the low number of occurrences that I could examine. There appears to be a correlation between voicedness and the position of the token inside the word – namely, voiced realization is favoured

in intervocalic position, while in word-initial position voiceless realization shows up in few cases (only 1/10 for /ṣ/ and 2/10 for /ʂ́/). Moreover, I do not have physiological data on vocal fold vibrations so I can only make an educated guess on this matter. However, there is enough evidence to claim voicedness not to be contrastive within the emphatic system.

		F2 - F1 AT ONSET (HZ)	F2 – F1 AT MIDPOINT (HZ)	FRICATION LENGTH (MS)	FRICATION INTENSITY (DB)
/ɒ/	UTTERANCE-INITIAL	548,98 SD 32,45	775,735 SD 45,34	94,1 SD 11,3	60,59 SD 1,56
	INTERVOCALIC	572,319 SD 23,94	673,005 SD 21,72	48,6 SD 15,7	63,39 SD 1,32
/ṣ/	UTTERANCE-INITIAL	589,121 SD 67,79	609,02 SD 81,66	91,5 SD 15,39	57,10 SD 0,98
	INTERVOCALIC	577,48 SD 78,32	579,52 SD 56,37	75,13 SD 11,02	56,88 SD 2,80
/ʂ́/	UTTERANCE-INITIAL	583,159 SD 85,61	627,056 SD 74,45	60,49 SD 8,87	57,08 SD 1,62
	INTERVOCALIC	601,531 SD 50,83	627,75 SD 73,11	78,45 SD 9,64	55,25 SD 3,205

Table 12. Values measured for emphatic fricatives

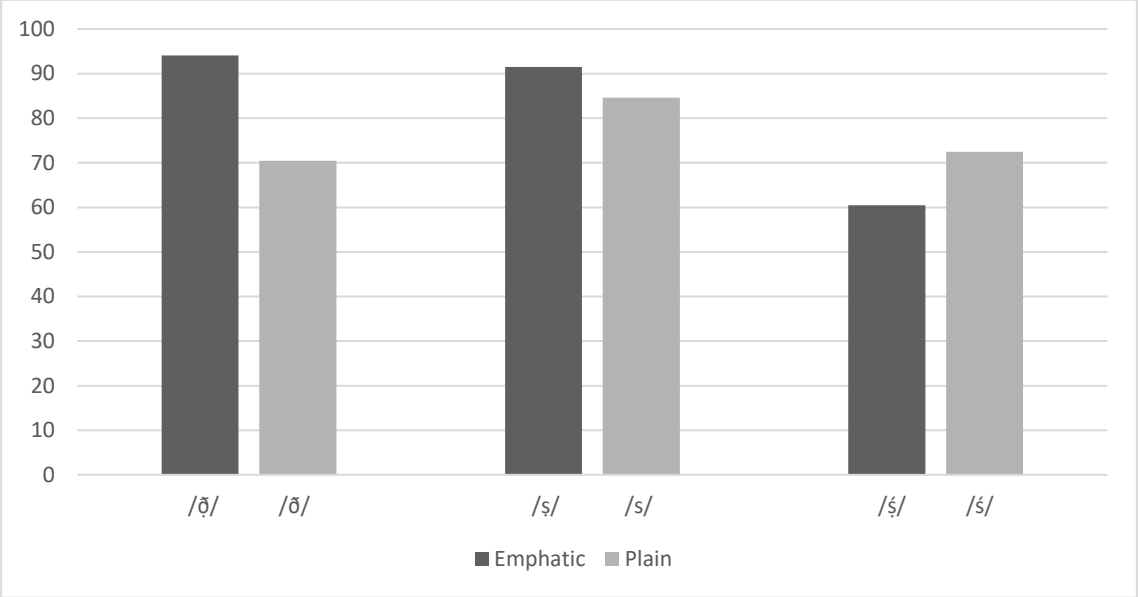

Table 13. Frication time (ms) of emphatic fricatives compared to that of their plain counterparts in utterance-initial position

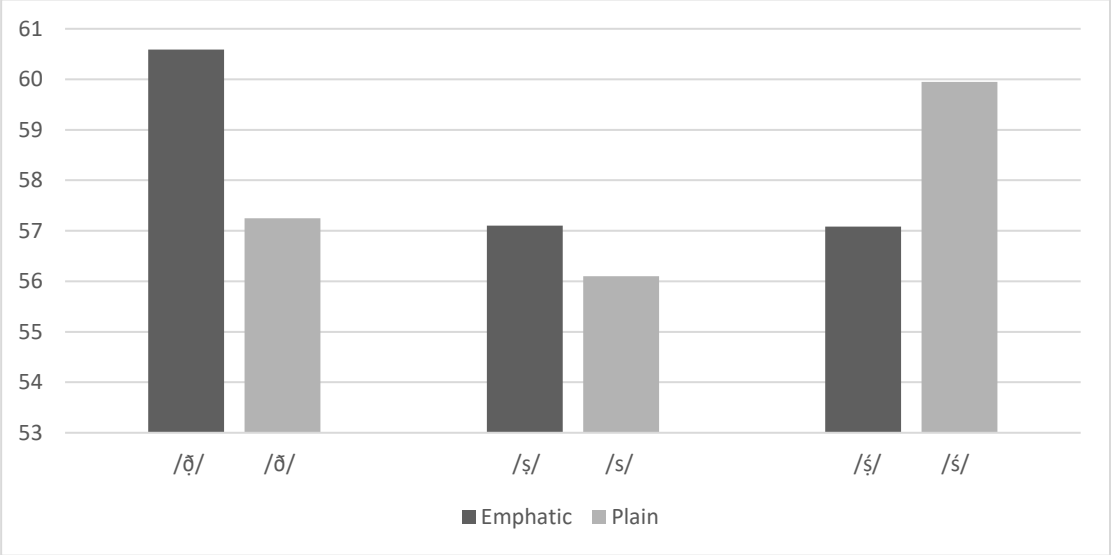

Table 14. Values of frication noise intensity (dB) of emphatic fricatives compared to that of their plain counterparts in utterance-initial position

2.1.6.5. Gemination

Gemination is present in Baṭḥari, although it does not have any role either in inflectional or in derivational morphology, as happens, in sharp contradistinction, in other Semitic languages such as Arabic. Gemination can be either lexically or phonetically motivated. Most of the words belonging to the first case are Arabic loans (for example, names designating occupation with a $C^1VC^2C^2\bar{V}C^3$ pattern and verbs belonging to the II derived form):

Word	Meaning
dallal	guide
sabbaḥ	to pray
kabbər	to say “allahu akbar”
śarray	seller

Table 15. Gemination in Arabic loanwords

There are various MSAL elements showing lexical gemination too:

Word	Meaning
əDəkkàt	toponym
Fəttūr	proper name
ḳannōn	small
kəff	palm, handful
məġarrəb	inland

Table 16. Lexical gemination in MSAL elements

The presence of the definite article can cause the gemination of nouns starting with a CV syllable (see section 2.4.2). Gemination can also happen in final position, for example with 3M.SG. suffix-stem verbs derived from $C^1C^2C^2$ reduplicated roots.

Word	Meaning
ittew < e + tew	the food
gell	to boil
l-əttèk	I drink (SBJV)

Table 17. Morphologically-motivated gemination

Morphologically-motivated gemination is induced with the infixation of /-t-/ within T-stem verbal forms: */na<t>ṭāb/ > /naṭṭāb/ “to drop”.

2.2. Vowels, syllabic structure and stress system

Vowels are distinguished by their point of articulation, timbre and quantity (see Table 18 below). Vowel length is linked to syllabic structure and tonic accent. Each vowel apart from /ə/ can vary in its quantity according to syllabic structure and the position of the stress accent (see the following sections). Due to the strict entanglement between vowel quality and length, syllabic structure and stress accent, it is convenient to treat these features all together in the same section.

The study of the vocalism in Baṭḥari is particularly challenging, the language being extremely endangered and subject to major idiolectal variation between speakers in this regard. If on the one hand speakers regularly agree on the entity of stressed vowels, on the other hand one could not say the same concerning unstressed

vowels. In general, there is a tendency for unstressed vowels to shift towards [ə], especially in closed syllables. However, at the present stage of this study it is not possible to produce reliable statistics concerning the distribution of vowels in such contexts. In the rest of this section the status of stress in Baṭḥari will be the means by which a general theorization of vowel distribution will be proposed.

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i, ī		u, ū
Near-Close	e, ē		
Close-Mid	ɛ, ɛ̄		o, ō
Mid		ə	
Near-Open	a, ā		

Table 18. Baṭḥari vowels

Diphthongs: *ay, aw, uw*[21]

The study of accent in MSAL and its relation to vowel quantity and syllabic structure has been puzzling scholars for quite a long time (see Bendjaballah & Ségéral 2017, to which this section refers as a means of comparison). It has only recently become evident that, in order to fully understand MSAL accentual systems, multiple factors have to be taken into consideration. In fact, syllabic structure and vowel length appear to be closely connected to word stress.

[21] (Only as a PL.M marker in verbal morphology: see section 6.1.4.2.4).

Baṭḥari has word stress accent, meaning that a combination of vowel lengthening, change in pitch and intensity contribute to give prominence to one and only one syllable for each lexeme. Keeping in mind this initial description, the terms "stress" and "accent" will be therefore used interchangeably.

According to what Johnstone (1975: 10) states about Mehri, "long vowels occur only in stressed open syllables or stressed final-VVC syllables". This general rule can be held true also for Baṭḥari. The distribution of long and short vowel theoretically corresponds to that of Table 19 below:

	CV/CVC#	CVC
stressed vowel	V̀̀	V̀
unstressed vowel	V	V

Table 19. Distribution of stress according to syllabic structure (Bendjaballah & Ségéral 2017: 162)

This means that long vowels can appear only in stressed CV or CVC final syllables. If compared to Mehri, this scheme seems to be very closely adherent to what we can actually find in the data. There are only two conditions which allow the presence of a long vowel in an unstressed syllable, namely:

i. the presence of /ʕ/ itself, or
ii. the presence of a glide as one of the root consonants.

The phoneme /ʕ/ can cause a following vowel to lengthen when in an open syllable, without affecting the position of the accent.

As for the glides, we know that in MO "if y or w [i. e. the glides] are in coda position, compensatory lengthening takes place, if they are in an onset position following a coda, the vocalization of the glide — when it occurs — results in a short vowel" (Bendjaballah & Ségéral 2017: 167). Baṭḥari on this regard shows massive idiolectal variation and it does not seem possible so far to provide predictive rules. Any correlation between diphthongisation and the nature of the surrounding consonants seems to be unlikely – that is, gutturals do not specifically trigger diphthongization. In fact, speakers themselves may produce both realizations for the same words no matter the context:

Root	Form	Meaning
wgš	šawgűś (PFV)	to travel in the late evening
	yəšugōś (IPFV)	
	yəšawgəś (SBJV)	
wzm	zōm ~wəzōm (PFV)	to give
	yəzām ~ yəwzām (IPFV)	
	yəzēm ~ yəwzɛ̄m (SBJV)	
hwb	ehwēb ~ ehēb (PFV)	to sing to a camel at water to
	yehwēben ~ yehēben (IPFV)	encourage him to drink (MM)
xym	xeymɛ̄t ~ xīmāt	shadow
syr	sīrīt	to go (PART.S.F)
twy	tew ~ tow ~ tō (PFV)	to eat
	ytéw ~ytē (IPFV)	
	yətē ~ yətéw (SBJV)	

ṣ́ym	šeṣ́yōm (PFV) yšeṣ́yōm (IPFV) yšaṣ́yəm ~ yšaṣ́am (SBJV)	to be in a shortage of milk (MM)
ḳry	eḳeri (PFV) yəḳeren (IPFV)	camel, to walk in such a way that the back feet are placed in the footprints of the fore feet (MM)
mry	emēri (PFV) yemēryen (IPFV)	to take a newborn camel and slaughter it (MM)

Table 20. Examples of verbs and nouns with glides as radicals

From the examples reported in Table 20, it is evident that glides do not follow precise rules in their realisation, nor in onset or coda position. Variation is not given by the surrounding context, but presumably by individual speakers' linguistic backgrounds and fluency. However, whether the glide is realised as a diphthong or as a long vowel the position of the accent is not affected.

To conclude, accent and vowel length are connected and are conditioned by these two constraints:

i. a stressed vowel is always lengthened (but a long vowel is not always stressed);
ii. a stressed vowel in any closed syllable apart from the last syllable (and which is not a glide or preceded by /ʕ/) is never lengthened.

Assuming identity between vowel length and stress accent, in my transcriptions the position of the accent is signalled by the presence of a long vowel V̄. Whenever the accent falls elsewhere, it is signalled by a grave accent V̀.

2.3. Other suprasegmentals

Other suprasegmental features operate at a syntactic level inside the language, namely intonation and prosody. Still no framework in terms of autosegmental analysis has been applied to the study of intonation and prosodic structures in MSAL, as far as I know at least. Still, a specific study on this topic should be carried out to make exhaustive and safe statements. However, it could be said that a high-pitch accent is commonly employed to convey focus, but the exact entity of the relation between the two needs to be investigated. Furthermore, question tunes are usually terminally rising, Baṭḥari lacking any morphological means to express a y/n question.

2.4. Phonotactics and other phonological processes

2.4.1. Pre-pausal phenomena

Pre-pausal position systematically triggers multiple phonotactic processes involving voiced and voiceless stops (both plain and emphatic) and liquids. Notably, pharyngealization in pre-pausal context does occur only with emphatic fricatives. Idiolectal variation concerning this domain is nearly absent. These findings may partially recall Watson & Bellem's (2011) description of the same phenomena concerning MO.

We can summarize the occurrence of glottalization in pre-pausal position as follows:

- voiced (/b/, /d/, /g/) and emphatic (/ḳ/, /ṭ/) stops and /ġ/ regularly show devoiced (or voiceless) ejective realization (Table 21):

Word	Phonetic Realization	Meaning
ḳarīb	[k’aɾiː’p]	close
ṭād	[tˤaː’t]	one
ġayg	[ɣay’k]	man
xatāḳ	[xataː’k]	fabric
śəyāṭ	[ɬəjaː’t]	fire
ṣabġ	[sˤaːb’x]	dye

Table 21. Pre-pausal phenomena (1)

- /r/ undergoes devoicing and pre-glottalization when -V̄C#:

Word	Phonetic Realisation	Meaning
naxrīr	[naxriː’r̥]	nose
yəġbēr	[jəɣbɛː’r̥]	he knows (SUBJ)
ġāber	[ɣaːber][22]	he knew (PFV)

Table 22. Pre-pausal phenomena (2)

- words ending with a voiceless stop are usually aspirated, but occasionally /k/ can be pre-glottalized:

[22] /r/ does not undergo the process of pre-glottalization not being the last syllable stressed.

Word	Phonetic Realization	Meaning
nḳēṣ̌et	[nkʼɛːɮˤetʰ]	middle finger
nəšāhəd lōk	[nəʃaːhəd loːʼk]	we say the *šahada* for you

Table 23. Pre-pausal phenomena (3)

2.4.2. Definite article allomorphy and gemination

The presence of an underlying /ʔ/ in C¹ can produce allomorphy of the definite article. The concrete outcome of the interaction between these two elements depends on the phonetic development of /ʔ/. Two main patterns can be outlined.

- If *#/ʔ/ > #/ʔ/, when DET + #/ʔ/ > /ḥā-/ allomorph is expected; or
- if */ʔ/ > /ʕ/, the expected outcome is a /ā-/ prefix, with shortening of the post-guttural vowel if not stressed.

Root	Word	DEF form	Meaning
ʔṭb	ʔaṭeb	ḥāteb	teat
ʔbw	ʕābŭ	āʕabŭ	people
ʔnṯ	ʕaynəṯ	aʕaynəṯ	women
ʔbl	ʕaybə̀t	aʕaybə̀t	she-camel
ʔrw	ʕārə̀n	āʕarān	goats (collective)

Table 24. Allomorphy of the definite article (1)

In presence of voiceless, non-guttural consonants (/k/, /t/, /r/, /m/, /l/), in #C_, the article tends towards a fronted realization and it can optionally cause gemination:

Word	DEF form	Meaning
kèdedi	ekkēdedi	female cousin
tew	ittèw ~ itèw	food
mətwè	emmətwè	food
ribāten	eribāten	friends, relatives
rih	errih ~erīh	head
məkān	eməkān	place
lēl	elīl ~ ellīl	night

Table 25. Allomorphy of the definite article (2)

3. Grammatical categories

As the other Semitic languages[23], Baṭḥari morphology is largely based around consonantal roots and vocalic patterns. This means that a considerable part of derivational and inflectional morphology consists of changes internal to the stem, which are complementary to affixation processes.

Semantically related lexical items often share a consonant root which usually consists of three consonants which are vocalised through non-concatenative stem-pattern morphology. It is often the case that lexemes sharing a given grammatical value also share a vocalic pattern: different grammatical categories are defined by such patterns and by the kind of affixation they can undergo.

Some features can be expressed both through non-concatenative morphology and affixation. A well attested example in Semitic morphology is given by plural nouns[24]:

S	PL	Meaning
moġdɛ̀ft	maġādəf	fishing net
ġayg	ġayāg	man
rih	rih-ōten	head
ʕayn	ʕayàn-tən	eye

Table 26. Non-concatenative morphology vs. affixation

[23] See Hetzron (1992) and Huehnergard (1995) for a general introduction to Semitic morphology.
[24] For a detailed discussion on internal plurals in semitic see Villa (2010).

Mood distinction between IPFV and SUBJ in verbal morphology is usually delivered by variation in the stem pattern and vowel quality:

IPFV	SBJV	Meaning
yiḥētəb	yiḥtāb	to cook
yeṭḳōḳ	yeṭḳēḳ	to grind

Table 27. Verbal non-concatenative morphology

In the following sections the most important features of Baṭḥari grammatical categories will be presented.

4. Nouns

Noun forms presented in this section come for the most part from narratives. The reader must be aware that elicitation of noun lists is particularly problematic in the case of Baṭḥari speakers since it is often the case that, for example, plural forms might not be recalled by speakers when directly elicited. In such a case, either a generic /-Vten/ suffixed form or the apposition of the quantifier /mākən/ "many" following a singular form is given. In fact, many discrepancies between elicited material and nouns in context were found: I chose to make limited use of the former, willing to give a more accurate and honest description.

Part of the material is taken from a Toolbox folder shared with me by Miranda Morris, which I thank once more. A careful study of her soon-to-be published collection of texts will hopefully grant a more complete description of the patterns encountered.

Remarkably, I could not collect enough material concerning diminutives, which I regret.

4.1. Gender and number

Bathari has two grammatical genders (masculine and feminine) and three numbers (singular, dual and plural). Contrary to pronominal and verbal duals (see section 5.1.1), nominal dual is well attested and productive.

Gender can be lexical, i. e. not expressed by any overt marker, it being inherent to the referent or grammatically determined and detectable by agreement at phrase and clause level:

Masculine Nouns		Feminine Nouns	
ġayg	man	tēṭ	woman
Fɛ̄raḥ	Proper Name	Zəyūn	Proper Name
hɛ̄bi	father	ʕāməh	mother
ɛmbɛ̄re	baby	ḥāfi	she-camel with newborn calf
bāʕar	camel (generic)	ʔābən	rock
enīd	water-skin	śɛwɛ̄r	fishing line
mōh ~ mūh	water	śəyāt	fire
śxāf	milk	ḥārəm	path

Table 28. Inherent gender in Baṭḥari nouns

Feminine nouns are often marked by a /-(V̄)t/ suffix. The quality of the vowel of this suffix seems not to be connected to the nature of the last consonant it is suffixed to, so it might be only lexical. The most common endings are /-āt/ and /-ēt/.

Word	Meaning	Word	Meaning
fərśīt	opening out of a *wadi*	mətaʕāt	food
məlḥāt ~ məlḥɛ̄t	salt	baʕārɛ̄t	female camel
moġdɛ̀ft	fishing net	xarifɛ̄t	Xarīf, the month of monsoons
śtəwēt	season between December and February	neḥerōt	lateral passage to get out of a *wādī*

Table 29. Feminine nouns with /-V̄t/ ending

There are examples of a singulative[25] derivation from a masculine noun through the suffixation of a /-V̄t/ suffix: /śif ~ śaft/ “hair” > /śəfēt ~ śɛ̄fit/ “one single hair”; /ʕarf/ > /ʕarfit/ “Nannorrhops ritchiana (kind of local small palm plant)” (MM).

Nouns borrowed from Arabic have an /-a(h)/ feminine ending :

Word		Meaning
S	PL	
sāʕah	saʕāt	hour; watch
ṣāḥan	ṣḥūn	bowl

Table 30. Arabic loanwords

Plural in Baṭḥari can be expressed both only through suffixation (i. e. external plural) and through modification of the vocalic pattern of the singular noun according to the mechanisms of non-concatenative morphology (i. e. internal plural).

Due to the status of extreme endangerment of the language, it is often the case that, when speakers are not able to recall any internal plural form for a given word, a “standard” external plural form is used. This strategy is commonly adopted by speakers.

Plural nouns do not encode gender morphologically when they rely over internal pattern variation of the singular stem when they express plural. Plural suffixes occurring in external plural formation can be found on both masculine and feminine nouns, therefore they do not encode gender (see below). However, syntactic

[25] The reader can refer to Corbett (2000) for an exhaustive discussion over the singulative category.

agreement with other elements within the utterance reveals that plural nouns usually maintain the same gender in the plural.

4.1.1. The suffixed dual marker /-i/

Dual is expressed by an /-i/ suffixed to the singular noun (either masculine or feminine) followed by the numeral /ṯrōh/, /ṯrɛ̄h(i)/ "two". There are no occurrences of the /-i/ morpheme without the use of the numeral.

(1)	ġayg-i	ṯrōh	(2)	tēṯ-i	ṯɛ̄rṯī
	man-DU	two.M		woman-DU	two.F
	Two men.			Two women.	

4.1.2. Plural marking

Plural in Baṭḥari can be expressed both by external and internal plural. Only few nouns exhibit suppletivism in plural formation: /tēṯ/ > /ʕaynəṯ/ "woman"; /ḥōz/ > /ʕārə̀n/ "she-goat".

4.1.2.1. External marking

External plural marking consists in the use of inflectional morphology specifically expressing plural value. It can combine with internal stem-pattern variation. So far, there does not seem to be any kind of correlation between type of plural patterns and presence of external suffixation.

The most common plural-marking suffix which occurs without stem-pattern variation is /–(V̄)ten/. Its use is extended to both masculine and feminine nouns.

S	PL	Meaning
ḥad	ḥadōten	hand
rih	rihōtən	head
ɛmbɛ̄re	ɛmbɛrwāten	child
ʕayn	ʕayànten	eye
ḳafīr	ḳafərōten	basket of woven palm-fibre
ḥāfi	ḥafētən	she-camel with a newborn calf

Table 31. External plural

Before possessive clitic pronouns the plural suffix is reduced to /–(V̄)t=/:

(3)	ḥad-òt=ka	ʕayàn-t=ha	ġobò-t=sa
	hand-PL=2S.M	eye-PL=3S.M	brother-PL=3S.F
	Your hands.	His eyes.	Her brothers.

4.1.2.2. Internal marking

A variety of patterns for plural formation can be found in Baṭḥari. There is only little predictability as to what specific plural pattern a singular form may exhibit. Below a general subgrouping of the main plural derivation patterns encountered is shown. Some nouns may combine more than one of these strategies for plural formation.

- Plurals with apophony of the tonic vowel ē/ī > ō:

Root	S	Pattern	PL	Pattern	Meaning
ʕlg	ʕelēg	CeCēc	ʕalōg	CaCōC	young male camel
ʕntr	ʕantēr	CvCCɛ̄C	ʕantōr	CaCCōC	mosquito
ʔṭb	ʔaṭèb	CaCeC	ʔaṭōb	CaCōC	animal teat
ḥslb	ḥaṣalīb	CaCaCīC	ḥaṣalōb	CaCaCōC	small white stone (MM)
rkb	rəkīb	CəCīC	rikōb	CiCōC	riding camel

Table 32. Plural nouns (1)

- Plurals with /-w-/ infixation:

Root	S	Pattern	PL	Pattern	Meaning
ʕḳm	maʕḳām	ma-CCāC	mʕawḳam	m-CawCaC	club
brḳʕ	berḳàʕ	CeCCaC	berawḳaʕ	CeCawCaC	traditional bedouin mask for women
dng	dɛ́nneg	CɛCCeC	dənawg	CəCawC	small boat
dxšr	daxšīr	CaCCīC	dəxawšīr	CəCawCīC	cave, lair
kfy	kōfi	CōCi	kwāfi	CwāCi	immature hammerhead (MM)
ḳhr	ḳahōr	CaCōC	ḳwāher	CwāCeC	she-camel close to the end of lactation (MM)
ḥṯm	maḥṯām	ma-CCāC	mḥawṯem	m-CawCeC	leading rein (MM)
ḥḳb	mḥaḳabēt	m-CaCaC-ēt	mhawḳab	m-CawCaC	camel harness (MM)

Table 33. Plural nouns (2)

- Plurals with /-y-/ infixation:

Root	S	Pattern	PL	Pattern	Meaning
gzr	gezōr	CeCōC	gəzēyer	CəCēyeC	old and thin she-camel (MM)
ḳʕf	ḳaʕf	CaCC	ḳaʕayf	CaCayC	unpregnant she-camel
ṯbr	ṯəbrīn ~ ṯɛ̄bər	CəCC-īn ~ Cɛ̄CəC	ṯɛbyɛ̄r	CɛCyɛ̄C	hyena

Table 34. Plural nouns (3)

- Nouns with a glide in C² often show a rising diphthong in the plural:

Root	S	Pattern	PL	Pattern	Meaning
byl	bilōt	CiC-ōt	biyāl	CiCāC	cold wind from the inland during *śtəwēt*
gwny	gəni	CəCi	gwɛ̄ni	Cwɛ̄Ci	sack
ġyg	ġayg	CayC	ġayāg	CayāC	man
lyl	lēl	CēC	lyēli	CyēC-i	night
lyx	līx	CīC	lyōx	CyōC	net

Table 35. Plural nouns (4)

- Plurals with /-Vn/ suffixation:

Root	S	Pattern	PL	Pattern	Meaning
ʕlg	ʕalōg	CeCōc	ʕalgēn	CaCC-ēn	young male camel
mdy	mədīt	CəC-īt	mdāyen	CCāy-en	wind (generic term for favourable wind)
xṭḳ	xaṭàḳ	CaCàC	xaṭḳān	CaCC-ān	fabric

Table 36. Plural nouns (5)

- Plurals with /ḥā-/ prefixation:

Root	S	Pattern	PL	Pattern	Meaning
bwʕ	bāʕ	CāC	ḥabwāʕ	ḥa-CwāC	the span between tip of the middle finger of one hand to that of the other hand, arms outstretched (MM)
ðrʕ	ðerāʕ	CeCaʕ	ḥaðərāʕ	ḥa-CəCāC	span between elbow and middle finger (MM)
fṭr	feṭer	CeCeC	ḥafṭār	ḥa-CCāC	span between thumb and forefinger (MM)
mry	meri	CeCi	ḥāmerè	ḥā-CeCē	she-camel in milk without calf (MM)

Table 37. Plural nouns (6)

- Plurals with /a-/ prefixation and movement of the tonic vowel from $C^1\bar{V}C^2$ to $C^2\bar{V}C^3$:

Root	S	Pattern	PL	Pattern	Meaning
bṯn	baṯn	CaCC	abṯān	a-CCāC	seasonal watercourse (MM)
gmṣ	gamṣ	CaCC	agmāṣ	a-CCāC	span between tip of elbow to clenched fist (MM)
mnn	munn	CuCC	amnān	a-CCāC	measure
nwʕ	nawʕ	CawC	anwāʕ	a-CwāC	kind, type

Table 38. Plural nouns (7)

- Some feminine nouns marked by /-Vt/ in the singular form only lose the suffix in the plural:

Root	S	Pattern	PL	Pattern	Meaning
byl	bilōt	CiC-ōt	biyāl	CiCāC	cold wind from the inland during *śtəwēt*
frsl	furūsəlt	CuCūCəC-t	furūsəl	CuCūCəC	4 amnan (measure for incense) (MM)
nḥr	neḥerōt	CeCeC-ōt	nəḥār	CəCāC	lateral passage to get out of a *wādī*

Table 39. Plural nouns (8)

- Quadriliteral nouns often insert a long, stressed vowel between C^2 and C^3:

Root	S	Pattern	PL	Pattern	Meaning
bxxr	baxxār	CaCCāC	bxà̀xīr	CCāCīC	storehouse (MM)
krmm	kermàm	CeCCāC	karà̀mīm	CaCāCīC	mountain
krsʕ	kersāʕ	CeCCāC	kerè̀sāʕ	CeCēCāC	lower part of the leg of an animal
ḳrḳr	ḳarḳār	CaCCāC	ḳarà̀ḳīr	CaCāCīC	fishtrap from plant materials (MM)

Table 40. Plural nouns (9)

4.2. The definite article

A definite article /a-/ form exists in Baṭḥari. Its phonetic representation and allomorphy is outlined in section 2.4.2. The formal relation with the definite article of other MSAL is rather clear[26]; however, one may wonder about its real value within the language. It seems likely that its value as a determiner has become dim at least, since there are many examples through my recordings in which the presence of the article is not connected to a regularly grammaticalised expression of definiteness. This aspect becomes clear when examining long texts, but for a brief example consider (4) below:

(4)	na=ʕīš	əl=a=ṣayd	w	na=ʕīš	l=e=sefelḥēt,
	1PL=to_live.IPFV	of=DET=fish	and	1PL=to_live.IPFV	of=DET=seashell

We would eat fish and seashells,

[26] See Simeone-Senelle 2014.

w	na=ʕīš	əl=śidfɛ̄t	w	śīsənāt	w	ə=ləxām
and	1PL=to_live.IPFV	of=fish_name	and	rabbitfish	and	DET=shark

we would eat *śīdfɛ̄t* and rabbitfish and shark,

w	kəll=əh	na=ʕīš	l=ih
and	all=3S.M	1PL.to_live.IPFV	of=3S.M

we would live of all these things.

As one can see, the use of the article is not connected to the status of definiteness of the items enlisted (which all refer to aspecific, generic referents appearing at the start of a narrative, which obviously were not mentioned earlier) and appears with only a part of the items. Proof for the dim connection between the definite article and proper encoding of definiteness is given also by its recurrent use with proper names and toponyms.

I chose to segment and gloss each single occurrence of the article anyway, even when it appears to be crystallised and merged with the noun (for example, /eribātən/ "friends, close members of the tribe"). Therefore, the reader should keep in mind its ambiguous grammatical status.

4.3. Adjectives

Adjectives are hardly distinguishable from other nominal entities as to their morphological shape. In fact, they follow the same inflectional processes of full nouns (apart from the absence of dual marking). They are detectable only by means of syntactic constraints which determine the adjectival status of an element.

Both predicative and attributive uses of the adjective are attested. Adjectives agree in gender and number to their nominal referent. When the adjective is used as a predicative, the verb /ykūn/ can occur as a copula with a resultative aspectual value.

(5) n-emōl=eh attā y-kūn mɛlī
1PL-to_fill.IPFV=3S.M until 3S.M-to_be.IPFV full
We fill it until it gets full.

(6) t-kūn ɛ=rɛwna ḳow-ōt
3S.F-to_be.IPFV DET=sea strong.S-F
The sea is rough (before it was not).

(7) a=ʕaynəṯ den-ōtən
DET=women pregnant-PL
The pregnant women/the women are pregnant.

Adjectives do not mark dual number. When the referent is a dual noun, it is modified by a plural adjective:

(8) ġayg-i ṯrōh ṣaḥḥ-ōten
man-DU two.M well-PL
The two healthy men / the two men are in good health.

4.3.1. Elatives

Elatives are undeclinable. They generally follow an /aCCV̄C/ pattern: /aḥrēḳ/ < /ḥarḳ/ “hot”, /aṣlēḥ/ < /ṣālәḥ/ “fat”; /aḳrāb/ < /ḳarīb/ “near”.

Some adjectives have a suppletive form for the elative: /axayr/ < /śūrī/ “good”; /āʕḳar/[27] < /nawb/ “big”; /axàss/ < /śɛyē/ “bad”.

The comparative is expressed by the elative + /mən/ + compared noun:

(9) heh aʕḳar mən=ī
SBJ.3S.M older than=1S
He is older than me.

[27] I received the following paradigm while eliciting material, but I do not think it is trustworthy because it does not match what found in the texts, in which the S.M form is the only one found: S.M /āʕḳar/, S.F /āʕḳarəh/, PL /ɛʕɛ̄keru/.

5. Pronouns

5.1. Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns, like nouns, morphologically encode the categories of number (singular and plural; see below for dual) and gender (masculine and feminine), plus three persons (1st, 2nd, 3rd). They are inherently definite. The distribution of independent and dependent pronouns seems to be different from the one found in the rest of MSAL, and would surely deserve a closer look.

5.1.1. About dual forms

Morris (p. c.) reports that Baṭḥari still maintains both pronominal and verbal dual forms. However, despite many efforts in trying to elicit these forms, I could regrettably not get a single example of them. This might suggest the hypothesis of dual being obsolete. The following examples record both sentences from narratives and free elicitation.

(10)	ʕemōr-en	ḥa=skān=an	“na-ḥām
	to_say.PFV-1PL	DET=parents=1PL	1PL-to_want.IPFV
	We (two) told our parents: “we (two) want		
	na-ʕāris”		
	1PL-to_marry.SUBJ		
	to get married”.		

In (10) above the use of dual was expected (the interviewee talking about how a couple goes into marriage) with multiple items (independent subject pronoun,

possessive pronoun, inflectional verbal morphology), but the speaker makes consistent use of a 1PL form through the whole speech act (and in the rest of the narrative).

(11)	hoh	w	xalifa,	ənḥa	mən	ḳəblēt	ṭād
	SBJ.1S	CONJ	Xalīfa	SBJ.1PL	from	qabīla	one
	me and Xalifa, we are from the same *qabīla*.						

(12)	hēt	w	hēt	asbāḥ-ko	axayr
	SBJ.2S.M	and	SBJ.2S.M	to_wake_up.PFV-2PL.M	well
	You and you woke up feeling good.				

(13)	gəhəm-ū	e=Mingi
	to_go_in_the_morning.PFV-3PL.M	DET=Mingi
	they (two) set off in the morning to Mingi.	

(14)	zɛm=ənī	t̪rɛh
	to_give.IMP=1S[28]	two
	Give me both (from a group consisting of two objects only)	

The sentences from (11) to (14) were directly elicited giving a broader context by which the speakers would have been expected to produce dual forms. No direct translation from a corresponding Arabic sentence was asked, in order to avoid contact

[28] The use of the /-ənī/ form in this context probably is a case of contact with Arabic; an equivalent sentence like /zɛm t=ī t̪reh/ with the use of the /t-/ accusative marker to which the 1S object pronoun is suffixed was judged acceptable, but it was not naturally produced.

phenomena. However, no dual form would surface – which eventually led me to focus over other tasks.

For this reason, the interested reader will not be able to find any reference about dual forms in the following paragraphs. I might conclude that pronominal duals are obsolete in Baṭḥari, but before giving an ultimate answer to this topic I hope that Morris' work will bring evidence for the presence (or absence) of pronominal and verbal dual forms in Baṭḥari.

5.1.2. Independent personal pronouns

The following are the independent pronouns of the Baṭḥari pronominal system:

	S.	PL
1	hoh	(e)nḥā(n)
2M	hēt	itō ~atēm
2F	hit	atēn
3M	heh	hū ~ hem
3F	seh	sen

Table 41. Independent personal pronouns

The presence of a final /h/ for the singular vowel-ending forms (which can be lost in fast speech) is proved when the pronoun is placed before a word #V_:

(15) [ʻheh] aʕḳar mən=ī

SBJ.3S.M older than=1S

He is older than me.

The independent pronouns are used as subjects for any kind of predicate. The expression of a pronominal subject is obligatory only in case of a nominal clause.

(16) hoh aʕḳar mən=k / ah?

SBJ.1S older than=2S.M INTERJ

I'm older than you, right?

(17) *aʕḳar mən=ī

older than=1S

*Older than me.

An emphatic use of the independent personal pronoun is found in the expression of possession (see section 11.2).

5.1.3. Dependent pronouns

The dependent pronouns function as possessive or object pronouns.

When used as the object of a divalent, transitive verb, direct object pronouns are in complementary distribution with object pronouns suffixed to the /t-/ accusative marker (see section 10.1.3). A pronoun is directly suffixed to a verbal stem when there is no inflectional suffix attached to the verb stem.

When used as possessive pronouns, it is often the case that the definite article is used too; however, its presence is not mandatory.

Dependent pronouns can have different shapes according to the morphological base they are suffixed to, as follows:

a) Pronouns suffixed to most of the prepositions: they show a long, stressed vowel;
b) Pronouns used as possessive pronouns suffixed to singular nouns and as object pronouns with verbal forms and a few prepositions, which are not stressed;
c) Pronouns attached to plural nouns and few other prepositions.

5.1.3.1. a)-type pronouns

	S	PL
1	=ī ~ =(ə)nī[29]	=ēn ~ =nā
2M	=ōk	=īko
2F	=īš	=īkən
3M	=əh	=īhəm ~ =īho
3F	=ēs	=ēsən

Table 42. a)-type dependent pronouns

The form /-īho/ shows morphological parallelism with the 2PL.M form /-īko/ and with 2/3PL.M ending /-uw/ in verbal inflectional morphology (see section 6.1.4.2.4).

[29] The occasional use of this suffix might well be a phenomenon of contact with Arabic; it happens with 3ms p-stem verbs.

Its use is not as common as that of /=īhəm/, which parallels the other MSAL 3PL.M forms: it might therefore be the Baṭḥari-specific form as well as a consequence of paradigmatization.

These forms are always stressed apart from the 3S.M form.

Table 43 exhibits the conjugation of the accusative /t-/ particle:

	S	PL
1	tī	tēn
2M	tōk	tīko
2F	tīš	tīkən
3M	tih	tīho ~ tīhəm
3F	tēs	tēsən

Table 43. Conjugation of /t-/ accusative marker

Following this pattern are all the monosyllabic prepositions of the like of /l-/ "to", /h-/ "to, "for", /b-/ "with", "in", /š-/ "with", /bərk/ "inside", /baʕd/ "after", /š-/ "with" and /fənē-/ "in front of".

5.1.3.2. b)-type pronouns

These pronouns attach to singular nouns, few prepositions like /ḍār/ "on" and to verbs other than the 3S.M forms without inflectional suffixes.

	S	PL
1	=ī	=ən ~ =na
2M	=k	=ko
2F	=š	=kən
3M	=əh ~ =o	=hū ~ =həm
3F	=əs	=sən

Table 44. b)-type dependent pronouns (1)

Table 45 gives an example of possessive pronouns attached to the noun /hɛ̄bə/ “father”.

	S	PL
1	hɛ̀bī ~ hɛbɛ̄ya	hɛ̀bna
2M	hɛbk	hɛ̀bku
2F	hɛbš	hɛ̀bkən
3M	hɛ̄bəh ~ hɛbō	hɛbhū ~ hɛ̀bhəm
3F	hɛ̀bs	hɛ̀bsən

Table 45. b)-type dependent pronouns (2)

5.1.3.3. c)-type pronouns

The last group of pronouns is suffixed to plural nouns and few prepositions.

	S	PL
1	=ya	=yən
2M	=ka	=ko
2F	=ša	=kən
3M	=yəh ~ =he	=həm
3F	=sa	=sən

Table 46. c)-type dependent pronouns (1)

Plural nouns with a /-V̄ten/ ending lose the /-en/ ending. In table 46 the possessive pronoun is suffixed to the plural noun /rihōten/ “heads”.

	S	PL
1	rihōtya	rihōtyən
2M	rihōtka	rihōtko
2F	rihōtša	rihōtkən
3M	rihōtyhe	rihōthəm
3F	rihōtysa	rihōtsən

Table 47. c)-type dependent pronouns (2)

Table 48 shows the annexation of dependent pronouns to the preposition /nəxāl/ “under”.

	S	PL
1	nəxālya	nəxālyən
2M	nəxālka	nəxālko
2F	nəxālša	nəxālkən
3M	nəxālyəh	nəxālhəm
3F	nəxālysa	nəxālsən

Table 48. c)-type pronouns (3)

5.2. Reflexive pronouns

Reflexivity can be expressed through the suffixation of dependent pronouns to /ḥanēf/ "self" (which is occasionaly realized as /ḥanōf/, as in MO):

	S	PL
1	ḥanēfi	ḥənēfyen ~ ḥənfāyen
2M	ḥanēfk	ḥənēfku
2F	ḥanēfš	ḥənēfkən
3M	ḥanēfh	ḥənēfhəm
3F	ḥanēfs	ḥənēfhən

Table 49. Reflexive pronouns

5.3. Reciprocal pronouns

Reciprocal pronouns are expressed through derivation from the form /ṭād/ "one". It seems that the form /əttādyen/ has become invariable, but I did not gather enough data on this topic.

(18) nə-ġterōb b=əttādyen

1PL-to_know.IPFV with=REC

We know between each other.

5.4. Demonstrative pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns have a two-way number and gender distinction (singular/plural; masculine/feminine). They also encode relative spatial distance through a proximal vs. distal distinction.

	NEAR		FAR	
	s	PL	S	PL
M	ðānəməh, ðah	dōl	ðākəməh, ðik	əlākməh
F	ðɛ̄nəh, ðih		ðīkəməh, ðik	

Table 50. Demonstrative pronouns

5.5. Relative pronouns

Baṭḥari relative pronouns are distinguished only by number (S *l-, lī*; PL *əllī*). This relative is used only when the linked element is specific and definite, otherwise use of the anaphoric pronoun is made.

5.6. Indefinite pronouns

Many elements can function as indefinite pronouns in Baṭḥari. They are inherently indefinite and are never prefixed with the definite article. Indefinite pronouns with [+ human] referents include the numeral /ṭād/ “one” (where the

masculine form indicates an indefinite referent), /(ə)ḥād/ “someone”, /mənēdəm/ “someone” and /ʕabū/ “people”, very common in impersonal sentences.

/śā/ “thing”, “something” is the most common indefinite pronoun used with [-human] referents. Among its other functions, it concurs in the formation of negative (/śālā/ “nothing”, anything”) and universal (kəll(i)śī/ “everything”) indefinite pronouns.

5.7. Interrogatives

The most common interrogative elements in Baṭḥari are the [+human] pronoun /mən/ “who?”, the [-human] pronoun /hinī/, /hinɛ̄/ “what?”, /hɛ̄ni/ “why?”, /hibō/ “how?”, /hān/ “where?”, /kam/ “how many/much?”, /bkəm/ “how much (price)?”. They can be found both in initial and final position inside the question utterance:

(19) hēt mən?
SBJ.2S.M who
Who are you?

(20) mən ḥam=s?
who name=3S.F
What is her name?

(21) te-ʕɛ̄mer-uw h=ēs hinī?
2-to_name.IPFV-PL.M to=3S.F what
What do you (pl.) call it?

(22) hān y-sēkən-uw?

where 3-to_inhabit.IPFV-PL.M

where do they live?

Interrogative elements can be preceded by prepositions:

(23) t-əśxāṭ e=śeyāṭ b=hinī?

2S.M-to_light.IPFV DET=fire with=what

What did you light fire with?

(24) t-əwrɛd-uw e=moh mən hān?

2-to_fetch.IPFV-PL.M DET=water from where

From where did you fetch water?

6. Verbs

6.1. Stems

Baṭḥari, as the other MSAL and, more generally, the other Semitic languages, makes use of a defined set of derivational processes ruled by root-and-pattern morphology mechanisms (namely, changes to the vocalic pattern of the stem) and optional affixation (infixation or prefixation of a consonantal element), to which are attached affixes marking person, number and gender.

The term "stem" will be used in this context to denote the morphological category to which each verb belongs, and which allows to predict its conjugation. Stems are thus composed by the combination of a lexical (usually tri- or quadriconsonantal) root, carrying a specific semantic value, with a specific vocalic pattern and optional additional elements, either infixes or prefixes. The verbs are quoted at the 3S.M.PFV form, following traditional Semitic practice, it not being marked by any inflectional affix and thus useful for an easier classification.

Root	Lexeme	Pattern	Meaning
ḥsb	yḥēsəb	yCēCeC	to count (IPFV)
ghm	šəghām	šəCCāC	to come back in the morning (PFV)
xdm	yəxdām	yəCCāC	to do (SBJV)

Table 51. Baṭḥari verbal stems

Different systems have been employed to describe MSAL verbal system, based either on stem patterns or on the semantics underlying each of them[30]. As for other Semitic languages, it is possible to trace a vague semantic domain to which each stem roughly corresponds, but there is hardly any coherence within each stem-pattern.

The system hereby used is based on the former criterion and it is taken from Dufour (2017: 92 – 93), after Rubin (2010: 89). This choice allows a better and easier comparison among the various MSAL and is intended to try to give a basic comparative perspective to Baṭḥari verbal system.

It would be of major interest (for scholars specialising in MSAL as much as for Semitists in general) to deepen this area of morphology, Baṭḥari being peculiar under many perspectives. One striking feature is surely the kind of vocalism adopted in the stems, which consistently differs from that of the rest of MSAL.

Still no deep comparative study was carried out – nor is it my intention to pursue this goal here – but the inclusion of Baṭḥari into this perspective could shed new light over many unclear aspects of the MSAL verbal system.

Baṭḥari verbal stem patterns are shown in Table 52.

[30] For example Simeone-Senelle (1998).

	PFV	IPFV	SUBJ
Ga	CVCōC	y-CV̄CəC	y-CCēC
Gb	CāCəC	yə-CāCVC	yə-CCV̄C
Ȟ1	aCCōC	y-VCCōC	y-eCCV̄C
Ȟ2	aCōCVC	yə-CōC(ə)C-Vn	yə-CōCeC
Ȟ3	eCēCeC	y-eCēCeC-Vn	y-eCēCeC
Ȟ4	?	?	?
Ȟ5	aCāCaC	y-aCāCC-Vn	y-aCāCaC
Š1	šəCCōC	yə-šəCCōC	yə-šeCCəC
Š2	šəCCāC	yi-šəCaCāC	yi-CəCCāC
T1	CatCV̄C	yi-CtəCōC	?
T2	eCteCōC	y-eCteCēC-Vn	y-eCteCV̄C
N	enCīCōC	y-enCīCōC	y-enCeCC
⁴Ȟ1	aCaCCaC	y-əCəCāCaC	y-əCaCCaC
⁴Ȟ2	aCaCCaC	y-CaWCC-Vn	y-CaWCaC
⁴Š	šəCeCCiC	yə-šCeCCəC	?
⁴Y	CaCīCōC	ye-CCīCōC	yə-CCɛ̄CəC
⁴W	CCWC	yəCCCōC	yəCCaWC

Table 52. Baṭḥari verbal stem-patterns

The presence of an undefined /V/ vowel indicates that variation among speakers is so high that no generalization seems to be possible. Stressed vowels are usually stable, on the other hand.

The forms replaced by a question mark are not attested in my data.

Following Dufour (2017: 93), the "D/L" label was discarded "puisqu'elle présuppose que ce thème est cognat des thèmes D et L des autres langues sémitiques (arabe II *faʿʿala* et III *fāʿala*), ce qui pourrait bien être vrai mais doit être démontré" (Dufour 2017: 93). The Ĭ2 label is used instead. Apparently, no verb paradigm was found matching Dufour's Ĭ4 pattern, but future research might find new evidence.

Vocalic length does not have any morphological value in verbal derivation, as already outlined in section 2.2: it is rather a consequence of syllabic structure and stress.

In order to simplify the table above, the presence of guttural consonants in the root was not considered. They have an influence over the structure of G-stem forms only, while in derived stems they only trigger minor vocalic allomorphy phenomena.

Consider the following paradigms:

Root	PFV	IPFV	SBJV	Meaning
ʕgb	ʕagāb	yaʕgāb	yaʕgāb	to want, to like
ʕrṡ	ʕarāṡ	yaʕrāṡ	yaʕrāṡ	to wean
bʕr	baʕār	yəbʕār	yəbʕār	to go by night
fxś	fexāś	yefxāś	yefxāś	to squeeze a single squirt of milk from a teat
ġmṡ	ġamāṡ	yiġəmāṡ	yiġəmāṡ	to choose so. randomly
ḳḥb	ḳəḥāb	yəḳḥāb	yəḳḥāb	to go at noon
mġṭ	maġāṭ	yemġāṭ	yemġāṭ	to ride a camel astride

Table 53. Guttural G-stem patterns

We see that the presence of gutturals in either C^2 or C^3 and of /ʕ/ in any position modifies the vowel quality of PFV, resulting in a $C^1VC^2āC^3$ pattern, and neutralises the pattern variation between IPFV and SBJV, giving a yv-$C^1C^2āC^3$ pattern.

Gutturals (other than /ʕ/) in C^1 do not trigger this phenomenon:

Root	PFV	IPFV	SBJV	Meaning
ġbr	ġāber	yəġābər	yəġbēr	to meet
ḥsb	ḥēsəb	yiḥēsəb	yiḥsēb	to count
śmd	śamōd	yśamed	yeśmēd	to ride a camel with both legs on one side
xdm	xodōm	yəxādəm	yəxdām	to do

Table 54. Gutturals in C^1

6.1.1. Overview of Baṭḥari Stem-Patterns

Five stem groups can be outlined, according to the type of derivational affixation which marks them. Within each stem group different combinations of vocalic patterns can be found, originating further subcategorization within each stem group.

The G-Stem (from German *Grundstamm*, as in Bittner (1911)) refers to trilitteral stems with no derivational affixation. There are two main patterns (excluding verbs with gutturals as explained in the previous section), conventionally called G*a* and G*b*, differing between them in the distribution of vowels (and consequently of accent). There is no clear connection between these forms and specific semantic domains and their occurrence is equally high.

Below the reader can find some Ga-Stem verbs:

Ga stems				
Root	PFV	IPFV	SBJV	Meaning
ʕmr	ʕamōr	yʕāmer	yʕəmɛ̄r	to say, tell
dlf	dəlōf	yədílf	yədlēf	to jump
fḏr	fēḏōr	yfēḏer	yefḏɛ̄r	to swell
frś	ferōś	yfēreś	Yefrēś	to sprinkle
gdb	gədōb	yigēdəb	yigdɛ̄b	to take s.t. out
ġdl	ġadōl	yġādel	Yaġdēl	to carry a heavy load
ġrf	ġarōf	yġēref	Yaġrēf	to scoop
ġsm	ġasōm	yġīsəm	yəġsèm	to travel at first light
hfr	hɛfōr	yəhɛfer	yəhfɛ̄r	to dig
ḥṭf	ḥaṭōf	yḥīṭef	yaḥṭāf	to mount a camel from behind (MM)
ḥgm	ḥegōm	yḥēgem	yeḥgēm	to leave camels in a safe place (MM)
ḳdr	ḳədōr	yḳāder	yəḳdɛ̄r	to can
ḳbś	ḳebōś	yḳābeś	yeḳbɛ̄ś	to herd camels
lbd	ləbōd	yilɛ̄bəd	yəlbēd	to beat, shoot
lkd	ləkōd	ylēked	ylkēd	to tan (leather)
nfr	nfōr	ynīfer	yənfēr	to go missing
rkś	rekōś	yrīkeś	yerkōś	to buck
xdm	xodōm	yəxādəm	yəxdām	to do

Table 55. Ga-Stem verbs

Gb-stem forms result to be of particular interest from a comparative point of view. Consider the following examples of Gb-stems:

Root	PFV	IPFV	SBJV	Meaning
ġbr	ġāber	yəġābər	yəġbēr	to meet
ḥsb	ḥēsəb	yiḥēsəb	yiḥsēb	to count
ḥtb	ḥātab	yiḥētəb	yiḥtāb	to cook
ḥzl	ḥāzəl	yəḥāzəl	yəḥāzəl ?	to meet
kṡb	ḳəṡāb	yḳēṡəb	yəḳṡāb	to break, chop
nṡʕ	nāṡaʕ	ynāṡaʕ	yenṡaʕ	to gurgle
nkʕ	nōkaʕ	yə-nākaʕ	yinčāʕ[31] ?	to come
rkb	rēkəb	yirēkəb	yərkāb	to mount on st
rdf	rēdef	yridef	yerdōf	to mount a camel behind someone else (MM)
ṯbr	ṯēbər	yṯēbər	yiṯbēr	to break

Table 56. Gb-Stem patterns

Now consider Table 57:

	J	Sq (eastern)	MO	Hb	B
PFV	féðər	zégɛḍ	θíbər	fíðər	ġāber
IPFV	yəfeðór	yezɛǵod	yəθbőr	yfaðőr	yəġābər
SUBJ	yəfðór	ʎizgod	yəθbőr	yəfðőr	yəġbēr

Table 57. Comparison with MSAL Gb-Stem Patterns (from Dufour 2016: 92)

[31] I was given this form multiple times: it often occurs in the texts from two different speakers. The affrication of /k/ is not attested elsewhere and is probably a consequence of contact with Arabic.

It is evident that the Baṭḥari Gb-Stem patterns considerably differ from those found in the other MSAL, not only in terms of vowel quality but also for the position of the accent in IPFV forms.

The Ĥ-Stem shows the presence of a prefixed /*(h)V-/. In fact, the prefix is invariably realised as a vowel whose quality varies between a mid open [a] and a near-front close-mid [e]. Ĥ-Stems are subgrouped according to recurring variations in the vocalic patterning.

In the table below some examples are reported:

Pattern	Root	PFV	IPFV	SBJV	Meaning
Ĥ1	brk	abrōk	yəbrōk	yebrek	to couch a camel
	śbṭ	aśbōṭ	yaśbōṭ	yaśbāṭ	to give s.o. to drink
	ṭḳḳ	eṭḳōḳ	yeṭḳōḳ	yeṭḳēḳ	to grind
Ĥ2	bsl	ebōsel	yəbōselen	yəbōsel	to train a camel to race
	šrġ	ešōraġ	yšērġan	yšōraġ	to encourage a camel to give milk by making it to sniff something good (MM)
Ĥ3	hjr	ehējer	yhējeren	yhējer	to travel in the heat of midday
	hwb	ehwēb	yehwēben	yehwēb	to sing to a camel to make it drink
		ehēb	yehēben	yehēb	
Ĥ5	nḳʕ	anāḳaʕ	yanāḳʕan	yanāḳaʕ	to encourage a camel to give milk by clicking fingers

	ḥmṣ	aḥmāṣ	yaḥāmṣen	-	to take camels in poor condition to an area of saline grazing (MM)

Table 58. Ḥ-Stems

T-Stems show a /-t-/ infix between C^1 and C^2. At the PFV form it can be attached either right before C^2 (T1: $C^1V<t>C^2\_\#$) or after C^1 (T2: $əC^1<t>VC^2\_\#$).

Below some examples:

Pattern	Root	PFV	IPFV	SBJV	Meaning
T1	kḥl	kətḥəlēt	tkətḥāl	-	to put koḥl on
	nṭb	naṭṭāb	yintəṭōb		to drop s.t.
T2	xrṯ	extəreṭōt	texterɛ̄ṯen	texterɛ̄ṯ	to give birth
	frs	efterōs	yefterēsən	yefterōs	camel, to pant in the heat (MM)

Table 59.T-Stems

A /š(ə)-/ prefix is featured in the Š-Stems. Notably, verbs indicating the movement action of "coming back at a certain moment of the day" usually take this form. Below some examples:

Pattern	Root	PFV	IPFV	SBJV	Meaning
Š1	fls	šəflōs	yəšəflōs	yəšefles	to be considered old enough to be weaned (young animal) (MM)

	wgś	šawgūś	yəšūgōś	yšawgəś	to travel in the late evening
Š2	ḳḥb	šəḳḥāb	yišəḳaḥāb	yišəḳaḥāb	to come back at midday
	mnḥ	šemnaḥ	yšemnaḥ	yšemnaḥ	to ask someone to lend an animal in milk

Table 60.Š-Stems

There is also a now lexicalised N-Stem class for which there is only one verb attested in the language:

Root	PFV	IPFV	SBJV	Meaning
frr	enfirōr	yenfirōr	yenferr	to snort (camel)

Table 61. N-Stem

Quadriliteral stems are attested for Ȟ1 and Ȟ2, Š1 plus two patterns in which there is infixation of a glide[32].

Pattern	Root	PFV	IPFV	SBJV	Meaning
⁴Ȟ1	brḳʕ	abarḳaʕ	yəbərāḳaʕ	yəbarḳaʕ	to gallop (camel)
⁴Ȟ2	ḳwbʕ	aḳawbaʕ	yḳawbʕan	yḳawbaʕ	to carry a heavy load on the head
⁴Š	drbš	šəderbiš	yəšderbəš	-	to flap lips to make camels come
ᵠY	bxrr	baxīrōr	yebxīrōr	yəbxɛ̄rər	to gurgle (camel)

Table 62. Quadrilitteral stems

[32] Compare similar instances in Yemeni Arabic as discussed by Naïm 2009: 57-59.

6.1.1.1. "Anisomorphic" Stems

Some verbs apparently do not fit the patterns outlined above. These verbs are the outcome of a process of adaptation of a bi- or trilitteral root to a pattern in which more consonantal slots require to be filled: namely, "[l]'adaptation d'une racine bilitère à un schème trilitère ou d'une racine trilitère à un schème quadrilitère se fait ainsi par répétition de la dernière consonne radicale; celle d'une racine bilitère à un schème quadrilitère se fait par répétition de la base bilitère entière" (Dufour 2016: 105). This phenomenon is called "anisomorphisme" by Dufour (2016: 104).

Root		PFV		IPFV		Meaning
C^1C^2	ḳṣ	$C^1vC^2C^2$	ḳɛṣṣ	yə-CCōC	yəḳṣōṣ	to cut
	ḳb	$C^1vC^2C^1ōC^2$	ḳebḳōb	y-CeCCōC	yḳebḳōb	to kick out
$C^1C^2C^3$	bxr	$C^1aC^2īC^3ōC^3$	baxīrōr	ye-$C^1C^2īC^3ōC^3$	yebxīrōr	to gurgle (camel)

Table 63. Anisomorphism

The derivational processes in which these stems are involved and their phonomorphological behaviour still need to be studied.

6.1.2. Voice

MSAL usually distinguish active and passive voice. More research is needed in order to make safe assumptions on this topic, but it seems that loss of the apophonic passive can be estabilished. Passive voices (apparently) never occur in my corpus and during elicitation I was given impersonal structures only. This is not a surprising phenomenon in Semitic, since almost all of the documented Arabic varieties

underwent (or are going through) the same process[33], while passive constructions are frequent and productive in Mh and J (Watson, p. c.).

6.1.3. Tense, mood, aspect

In the following section TMA (Tense, Mood, Aspect) system of Baṭḥari will be discussed.

According to Dahl's statement, "[...] the TMA System [of any language is] focused and imprecise" (Dahl 1985: 3) – meaning, one should not expect the expression of TMA to be always discrete in its morphological behaviour and coherent within itself.

It is useful to clarify what we mean here by talking about Tense, Aspect and Mood. Tenses are typically deictic categories, in that they relate time points to the moment of speech (Dahl 1985: 25), while aspect is a non-deictic category: it is not concerned with relating the time of the situation to any other time-point, but rather with the internal temporal constituency of the one situation; one could state that tense is the grammaticalisation of location in time, and aspect is the "grammaticalisation of expression of internal temporal constituency" (Comrie 1985: 6). Mood [34] is the grammaticalisation of speakers' subjective attitudes and opinions. This category can be even more blurry than the other two.

The term grammaticalisation, as used in the definitions from Comrie cited above, is salient only in the case of a specific grammatical item encoding such properties. Secondary temporal and aspectual information can be conveyed through different means, as adverbs and other contextual nominal elements. TMA markers are instead obligatory and necessary to deliver the intended message.

[33] See Ingham (1982).

[34] I use this term as a synonym of modality; see Palmer (1986).

Traditionally, tense and aspect are seen as grammatical categories of verbs. They are also conceptually close, since both deal with time. However, they may also interact with the semantic value of a given verbal form, which can convey temporal and aspectual values inherently.

The description of TMA can be problematic and confusing, especially when trying to refer to categories of typological interest. Here I will try to describe the most important means of expression of TMA found in the language; however, there is still uncertainty over some details which would deserve a closer description. Further research might shed light over these points.

6.1.3.1. Tense

Being an aspect-based verbal system, tense is morphologically encoded in Baṭḥari only in a partial way, entangled with the expression of aspect (see section 6.1.4). The only instance of a grammatical encoding of time is in the future tense.

6.1.3.1.1. Future marker /yḥām/

Baṭḥari makes use of the IPFV form of the verb /yḥām/ "to want" as a future tense marker. The verb clearly underwent a very common process of grammaticalisation of volition verbs as future markers[35]. /yḥām/ is still commonly used as a volition verb, and the future marker value is given only by context. /yḥām/ is conjugated only at the IPFV stem and normally agrees with its subject. The dependent verb is conjugated at the subjunctive mood (but see section 6.1.4.2.5 concerning the grammaticalization of /ḥām/).

[35] See Bybee et al. (1994: 251 and forth) for details.

(25) a=ʕaynəṯ t-ḥām-ən t-ɛxterēṯ-ən
DET=woman.PL 3PL-FUT-F (or) 3.PL-to_give_birth.SBJV-F
3PL-to_want.IPFV-F
the women (are going/want) to give birth.

(26) ʕemōr-en ḥaskān=an “na-ḥām na-ʕāris”,
to_tell.PFV-1PL family=1PL 1PL-to_want.IPFV 1PL-to_marry-IPFV
We would tell our families “we want to marry”,

{u-rīd zwāg}[AD 36]
1S-to_need.IPFV marriage
I want to marry.

(27) gɛ̄həməh n-ḥām nə-ghām ðufār
tomorrow 1PL-FUT 1PL-to_go_in_the_morning.SBJV Salalah
Tomorrow we are going to Salalah.

Only context would permit to interpret sentence (25) in either one of the two possible meanings. The meaning of (26) is clarified by a contextual translation in Arabic of the ambiguous sentence. The presence of a time adverbial in (27) (together with the broader context of the speech event) leaves no doubt about the value of /ḥām/.

[36] Arabic Dialect: by this label I refer to the so far undescribed Janaybī Arabic dialect as also spoken by the Baṭḥari speakers (and the rest of the local community).

6.1.4. Aspect and mood

Verbs normally have two main types of aspect: perfective, which prototypically refers to an action conceived by the speaker as a completed whole, with no internal subdivision, contrasting with the imperfective, which presents an event whose composition is segmentable (be it ongoing, continuous, habitual etc.). The perfective (as commonly in Semitic) is conjugated through subject suffixes expressing gender, number and person (s-stem), while the imperfective is conjugated through prefixes expressing person and suffixes expressing number and gender (p-stem). The imperfective aspect shows a two-way mood distinction between indicative and subjunctive.

6.1.4.1. Perfective

The perfective suffixes are given in Table 64:

	S	PL
1	-(V)k	-Vn
2M	-(V)k ~ -ka	-ko
2F	-(V)š	-kən
3M	-ø	-uw
3F	-V̄t	-ən

Table 64. Perfective inflectional suffixes

Variation in the quality of /V/ is given by the entity of the last stem consonant.

- The 3S.F form is always stressed and it shows a high degree of variation in vowel quality. It does not seem to be influenced by the entity of the last stem consonant:

PFV-3S.F	Meaning	PFV-3S.F	Meaning
śxaf-ēt	to drink	xaṭaf-ēt ~ xaṭf-āt	to get through s.t.
ʕamer-ēt	to say	ṣabʕāt	to be on heat (camel) (MM)
awkaʕ-āt	to wait	nəkaʕ-āt	to come
ġawm-ōt	to faint	šekḥab-ōt	to come back in the early morning
exteriṯ-ōt	to give birth (humans)	gəll-ōt	to boil
dəfər-ōt	to push	esilb-ōt	to abort (camel)

Table 65. 3S.F perfective forms

A full conjugation of the Ga-stem verb /xədōm/ "to do" can be found in table 66:

	S	PL
1	xodòmk	xodōmən
2M	xodòmk	xodòmko
2F	xodòmš	xodòmkən
3M	xədōm	xèdəmuw
3F	xadəmōt	xodōmən

Table 66. Conjugation of /xədōm/ "to do"

6.1.4.1.1. Use of perfective forms

In neutral contexts perfective forms of dinamic verbs indicate complete states or events which experienced a beginning, a middle and an end, implicating a past time reference:

(28) əḳoèṣ-k lā
to_end.PFV-1S NEG
I'm not finished.

(29) nōkaʕ-an t=eh bərk a=ṣāṭər
to_carry.PFV-1PL ACC=3S.M inside DET=basket
We would carry it inside the basket.

(30) fezāʕ=ak b=ī
to_scare=2S.M with=1S
You scared me.

(31) ġəràb-t {aš=šams}^{AD}
to_set.PFV-3S.F DET=sun
The sun set off.

The perfective form of a stative verb can have ingressive meaning indicating entry in a state which still has effect over the present of the relative utterance time, as it is typologically common in many languages of the world (Comrie 1976:19).

(32) elḥōr ġayām l=əh, abṣār-ən śālā
today fog to=3S.M to_see.PFV-1PL nothing
Today it is foggy, we can't see anything at all.

(33) ʕāgōb-k le-ḳātəl b=e=rɛwna
to_like.PFV-1S 1S.SBJV-to_fish.SBJV at=DET=sea
I love fishing at the sea.

The perfective can be used to express durative aspect with stative verbs:

(34) śḥōlɛ̄l-ən arbaʕ {saʕāt}[AD] bawməh
to_sit.PFV-1PL four hours here
We sat here for four hours.

(35) səkān heh b=ēs ʕāśər sənī
to_live.PFV.3S.M SBJ.3M.S in=3S.F ten year.PL
He has lived in it (i. e. house) for ten years (and still is).

(36) ber səkān b=ēs ʕāśər sənī
STRONG_PFV to_live.PFV.3S.M in=3S.F ten years
He lived in it (i. e. house) for ten years (but not anymore).

The perfective can be used as a cohortative with a 1PL reference.

(37) śxōlɛ̄l-ən mən ə=barr

to_sit.PFV-1PL from DET=outside

Let's sit outside.

6.1.4.2. Imperfective

The imperfective aspect is marked by a series of affixes encoding person, gender and number. The stem-pattern which the affixes attach to is different from that of the perfective form and varies according to the stem class.

The imperfective aspect varies in mood. Baṭḥari has three moods: indicative and subjunctive, which are encoded through changes in the internal vocalic pattern, and imperative, derived from the subjunctive stem.

6.1.4.2.1. Indicative

The indicative is the basic mood used to refer to events or states occurring in the past, present or future with a generically imperfective aspect. Table 66 shows the affixes of the imperfective indicative:

	S	PL
1	ə-	n(ə)-...(-uw)
2M	t(ə)-	t-...-uw
2F	t-...-i	t- ... -ən
3M	y(ə)-	y-...-uw
3F	t(ə)-	t-...-ən

Table 67. Baṭḥari imperfective affixes

At the 1PL an /-uw/ suffix can occasionally be present, probably due to paradigmatic extension from the 2nd and 3rd masculine plural forms. Speakers differ in its use, though, by some of them never using it and few others applying it with no apparent connection to a given context. Idiolectal variation makes it hard for *-uw* to be regarded as a stable and grammaticalised suffix.

Table 68 shows the conjugation of the indicative form for the verb /yəxādem/ "to do":

	S	PL
1	əxādəm	nəxādəm
2M	təxādəm	təxādmuw
2F	txād(ə)mi ~ təxaydəm	təxādmən
3M	yəxādəm	yixādmuw
3F	təxādəm	təxādmən

Table 68. Conjugation of /yəxādəm/ "to do"

The indicative imperfective forms of Ĥ2, Ĥ3, Ĥ5, T2 and ⁴Ĥ2 show the presence of an additional /-ən/ suffix throughout the conjugation:

	S	PL
1	ə-...-ən	nə-...-ən
2M	t(ə)-...-ən	t-...-ən
2F	t-...-ən	t- ... -ən
3M	y(ə)-...-ən	y-...-ən
3F	t(ə)-...-ən	t-...-ən

Table 69. Imperfective affixes with /-ən/ suffixation

The conjugation of the verb /ehēb/ "to sing to a camel to encourage it to drink" is shown in Table 70:

	S	PL
1	əhēbən	nhēbən
2M	thēbən	thēbən
2F	thēbən	thēbən
3M	yhēbən	yhēbən
3F	thēbən	thēbən

Table 70. Conjugation of /yhēbən/ "to sing to a camel to encourage it to drink"

Few verbs belonging to the G-Stem exhibit the suffix /-ən/ with the imperfective form. The presence of the suffix with these verbal forms is rather peculiar and hardly explainable as to now:

Root	PFV	IPFV	SBJV	Meaning
ʕḏy	ʕɛ̄ḏi	yʕɛ̄ḏyən	yʕɛ̄ḏi	to pass
nbl	nābel	ynābelen	ynābel	to pluck long hair from a camel's back (MM)
ṣfʕ	ṣāfaʕ	yṣāfʕan	yṣāfaʕ	to pass soft or liquid dung (camel) (MM)
wn	wēzən	yəwzānən	yewzān	to weight s.t.

Table 71. G-Stem verbs with /-ən/ at the imperfective

6.1.4.2.2. Subjunctive

The subjunctive mood is used in dependent clauses and after modal verbs or particles indicating uncertainty. This set of affixes differs from that of indicative because of the presence of a /l-/ marker at the 1S and the absence of the suffix /-ən/ in all verbs. They are suffixed to the subjunctive stem, which in most verbs shows different vowel quantity, quality and/or pattern.

	S	PL
1	lə-	n(ə)-...(-uw)
2M	t(ə)-	t-...-uw
2F	t-...-i	t- ... -ən
3M	y(ə)-	y-...-uw
3F	t(ə)-	t-...-ən

Table 72. Subjunctive affixes

In table 73 the conjugation of indicative and subjunctive for the verb /ləbōd/ "to beat" is given for comparison.

	IPFV		SBJV	
	S	PL	S	PL
1	əlɛ̄bəd	nəlɛ̄bəd	Ləlbēd	nəlbēd
2M	təlɛ̄bəd	təlɛ̄bəduw	Təlbēd	təlbēduw
2F	tlɛ̄bədī	təlɛ̄bədən	təlbēdi	təlbēdən
3M	yəlɛ̄bəd	yilɛ̄bəduw	Yəlbēd	ylbēduw
3F	təlɛ̄bəd	təlɛ̄bədən	Təlbēd	təlbēdən

Table 73. Imperfective and subjunctive conjugation of /yəlɛ̄bəd/ "to beat"

6.1.4.2.3. Imperative

Imperatives express the wish from a speaker about a future state of affairs in which the addressee is the person in control of the desired state of affairs (van der Auwera et al. 2013).

The imperative is synchronically derived from the subjunctive stem minus the inflectional prefixes. Prohibitives are realised through the use of the subjunctive followed by the negative particle /lā/.

(38) ġaleḳ a=bɛ̄rīt!
to_look.IMP.2S.M DET=game
Look at the wild game! (MM)

(39) xadm-ī Atāh
to_do.IMP.2S-F like_this
do like this!

(40) śḥawlɛ̄l-uw hɛ̄nəh!
to_sit.IMP.2-PL.M Here
sit (PL) here!

6.1.4.2.4. About the -u/-uw masculine plural ending

Baṭḥari differs from the rest of MSAL in that a /-uw/ PL.M. ending is present throughout the whole conjugation, with any pattern and stem. This suffix is present also in in the dependent 2/3PL.M forms /=ko/ and /=ho/ ~ /=hu/.

The presence of this suffix might bring evidence for an underlying /*-u/ ending for other MSAL. Rubin (2017: 5) suggests for MO the presence of a subjacent /-ə-/ in 2nd/3rd plural masculine verbs which would come evident when object suffixes are present:

"a. 3mp perfects:

wəzáwmhəm "they gave them" [...] (< **wəzáwmə-həm*), but *wəzəmáthəm* "she gave them" (< **wəzəmūt-həm*) [...]

b. 2mp/3mp imperfectives: [...]

yəśīməh "they sell it" [...] (< **yəśīmə-h*)

tḥáymәs "you (mp) want her" [...] (< **tḥáymə-s*, not ***tḥáym-s* > ***t-ḥáms*) [...]

c. 2mp/3mp subjunctives:

yəsīləh "they may collect (a debt) from him" [...] (< **yəsīlə-s*)" (Rubin 2017: 5).

The PFV.3PL.M person sometimes shows apophony within the stem, similarly to what happens in the rest of MSAL. This phenomenon is not regular and a lot of variation can be found among speakers, which are often not coherent within the same utterance. It is peculiar to find both plural-marking strategies and it would be interesting to determine its occurrences and constraints. A greater amount of texts should be analysed to gather more evidence of this fact, though.

6.1.4.2.5. The use of the imperfective

In neutral contexts the imperfective in the indicative mood is used when referring to ongoing states or actions recurring at the relative utterance time, or to habitual actions which repeat cyclically, depending on the context:

(41) hēt t-kɛ̄teb

SBJ.2S.M 2S.M-to_write.IPFV

You write (habitually)/you are writing.

(42) t-ṣarifōf ʕaṣār men ḥaderəh

3S.F-to_blow.IPFV ʕaṣār_wind from West

The *ʕaṣār* wind usually blows/is blowing from West.

For certain verbs only the imperfective form is attested. This is the case of the verbs /yḥām/ "to want" in (43), which also has an invariable grammaticalised form /ḥām/[37] as in (44):

(43) ham t-ḥām ta-ʕāris, t-kūn

if 2S.M-to_want.IPFV 2S.M-to_marry.SBJV 2S.M-to_be.IPFV

if you want to get married, then you might be

tə=xrɛ̄m e=dirīhəm

2S.M=to_need_badly.SBJV DET=money

needing money very badly.

(44) ḥām lə-ttəḳ mūh

to_want 1S.SBJV-to_drink.SBJV water

I want to drink water.

[37] The invariable form /ḥām/ never occurs as a future marker.

The verb /ykūn/ “to be” can occur either on its own - in which case it can have continuous or resultative meaning - or as an auxiliary verb in periphrastic constructions expressing continuous aspect in the past:

(45) tə-nāsəl b=eh baʕdēn
3S.F-to_be_exhausted.IPFV for=3S.M after
She would be exhausted because of it but afterwards
y-kūn ṭōb
3S.M-to_be.IPFV good
it would be good, eventually.

(46) ʕabū yə-śḥōlul-u bərk wādī, fərśīt,
people 3M-to_stay.IPFV-PL inside wādī opening_out
People would stay inside the *wādī*, at its opening out,
y-kūn š=āhu raḥmāt
3S.M-to_be.IPFV with=3PL.M rain
they would have rain (there).

(47) bə={l}^{AD}=xarifēt y-kūn ḳasay e=moh, ɛ=rrɛwna
in=DET=Xarīf 3S.M-to_be.IPFV rough DET=water DET=sea
During the Xarīf month the water is rough, the sea.

(48) n-awākaʕ ðar e=śəyāt w mən y-kūn
1PL-to_put.IPFV on DET=fire and when 3S.M-to_be.IPFV
We put (the bowl) on the fire and when it is

mòġli a=ʕābū yì-śxaf-uw

boiled DET=people 3M-to_drink_milk.IPFV-PL

boiled, the people drink the milk.

Time adverbials are often used to place the predication in relative time:

(49) ḥāwwəl a=ʕaynəṯ t-ḥām-ən t-əxterēṯ-ən

once DET=women 3PL-to_want-F 3PL-to_give_birth.SBJV-F

Once, women would need to give birth

dən-ōtən w məġārəh ta-ṭawy-ən

pregnant-PL and then 3F-to_visit_at_night.IPFV-PL

(them being) pregnant, so then they would come in the night

t=ī hoh

ACC=1S 1S

right to me.

6.2. Participles

In Baṭḥari the use of the participle (called "active participle" by Rubin (2007, 2010: 135) or "future participle" by Watson (2012: 98)) is very rare and restricted to few uses.

Only one male speaker appears to use it relatively more frequently than the others and with a future value; he is also the one who shows higher degrees of contact with Mehri though, so this fact should not be surprising:

(50) nāṣərəh, wtō, nḥā mo-ġtery-ōtən w kəl
now so SBJ.1PL PART-to_talk.SBJV-PL and everything
now, well, we are going to talk
ta-ḥamm-u=ha a-ʕzɛ̄m lə-ġterī
2M-to_want-PL=3S.M 1S-to_intend.IPFV SBJ.1S-to_talk.SBJV
and everything you want, I am willing to say
t=ih
ACC=3S.M
it.

The active participle is hardly used as a means of expression of future elsewhere, Baṭḥari possessing other means to encode this value (see section 6.1.3.1.1). The few occurrences that I have of participles show a present progressive value concomitant with the moment of utterance:

(51) y-kūn ʕamr lə=ḥaḳ m-šīf-ā
3S.M-to_be.IPFV ʕamr to=inside PART-to_sleep.SBJV?-S.M
'Amr is inside home, (he) is sleeping.

(52) het m-śḥawl bə={majlis}[AD]
SBJ.2M.S PART-to_sit.SBJV in=*majlis*
You are sitting in the *majlis.*

(53) hoh m-šəghə̀m-ā

SBJ.1S PART-to_come_back_in_the_morning-S.M.

I am coming back (in the morning).

The /-a/ termination found in (51) and (53) is surely interesting since it is shared by Yemeni Mehri (henceforth MY) for the S.M. form of the active participle of the derived stems (Watson 2012: 100), while in (52) the participle is built through a bare /m+SBJV/ strategy (Lonnet 1994: 234; Rubin 2007: 384). Unfortunately, I could not elicit full paradigms for these forms, which were hardly used during interviews, mostly based on topics concerning traditions and past life.

7. Numerals

Table 74 shows Baṭḥari numerals from 1 to 10, which work both as ordinal and cardinal numbers:

Number	M-agreement	F-agreement
1	ṭād	ṭayṭ[38]
2	ṯrēh / ṯrōh	ṯɛrṯ(i)
3	śəwtēṯ	ślīṯ
4	rəbaʕāt	ārbaʕ
5	xammah	xāmah
6	yət(t)ēt	hɛ̄t
7	ḥəbəʕēt	ḥābah/ḥɛ̄bəh
8	ṯəmənēt	ṯəmɛ̄ni
9	saʕēt	sāʕ
10	ʕaśərīt	ʕāśər

Table 74. Numerals

The numeral for "two" occurs in the expression of nominal dual number (see section 4.1.1).

From numbers 3 to 10 there is reversion of gender agreement, so that morphologically feminine forms agree with masculine names and *vice versa,* as usual in Semitic.

Below some examples of numbers in context can be found.

[38] The feminine form for "one" shows glottalised realization of the ending consonant in every context and not only in pre-pausal position, as is the case with the masculine form.

(54) līrekātəh marṣ́ɛf ṯrɛ̄hi ʕan ṭād
fish_name equals two.F for one
The *līrekātəh* fish is worth two for the price of one.

(55) səkān-ən kəl ṯrɛ̄hi məkān
to_live.PFV-1PL each two.F place
We lived in both places.

(56) šī śotēṯ anwaʕ l-ə=riyēś
EXIST three kind.PL of=DET=snake.PL
There are three kinds of snakes.

Numerals from 10 to 19 and tens are expressed through suppletivism with correspondent Arabic forms: /ʕašrīn ḥabbah/, "twenty habba". Arabic forms are used also for tens. The form for "hundred" is /meyōt/, but /miy/ is not uncommon.

7.1. Special forms for days

Baṭḥari, as the other MSAL[39] has special forms for counting days, as table 75 shows (the forms past "six days" were not elicited):

3 days	śəlɛ̄ṯ ayām
4 days	ɛrībaʕ ayām
5 days	xām ayām
6 days	hīt ayām

Table 75. Numerals for days

[39] Simeone-Senelle 2011: 1089.

8. Prepositions

Prepositions encode different kinds of relationship between the predicate and its nominal arguments. Authentic, fully grammaticalised prepositions are characterised by the fact that they do not carry any lexical meaning *per se* and cannot stand without being accompanied by a noun or a dependent pronoun of the a)-type (to this category belong all the monosyllabic prepositions like /bə-/, /lə-/ and so forth), while other elements may also appear independently.

Prepositions in Baṭḥari encode spatial, temporal, modal and/or instrumental information. It is often the case that the same preposition has multiple functions, and only the context can help discerning.

Function	Particle	Meaning
Locative	*bərk*	in
	bə-	in
	ðār	on
	nəxāl	under
	bayn	between
	lə-	at
	fēn-	in front of
	baʃd	beyond
Allative	*mən*	from
	(at)tā, tē	to, until
	bərk	into
	lə-	towards

Temporal	*fēn-*	before
	baʃd, mən baʃd	after
	hes, ka	when
	mən	since
	(at)tā, tē	until
	lə-	for (duration)
	kə-	at (punctual time)
Other oblique values	*bə-*	with (company)
	mən, məšān	because of
	lə-	for (purpose)
	ha-	for (dative), with (instr.)
	bə-	for (dative)
	š-	for (dative)

Table 76. Prepositions

It would be interesting to study the connection between prepositions and valency and the distribution of the accusative marker /t-/ and some of these prepositions (namely, /ha-/, /lə-/. /bə-/) which can introduce indirect objects.

Below a few examples of the contextual use of prepositions are reported:

(57) kəm ayām h=ōk bawməh?
how_many day.PL to=2S.M here
For how many days are you staying here?

(58) n-àśxaṭ h=eh e=śeyāṭ

1PL-to_light.IPFV with=3S.M DET=fire

We light the fire with it.

(59) səyār-uw mən=əmbō w=mbō, mən məkān

to_travel.PFV-3PL.M from=here and=here from place

They traveled here and there, from place

tā məkān

to place

to place.

(60) kəl bɛre mɛ̄t, n-kuss=həm

each baby to_die.PFV.3S.M 1PL-to_find.IPFV=3PL.M

every baby was dead, we found them

bɛ̄r=u mātū

STRONG_PFV=3PL.M to_die.PFV=3PL.M

already dead

mən e=gāʕ

because of DET=hunger

of hunger.

(61) y-kūn a=ṣayd mākən nəxāl=yen

3S.M-to_be.IPFV DET=fish many behind=1PL

There was a lot of fish below us.

(62) w=baʕd=ēs n-ətḳòḳ=sən

and=after=3S.F 1PL-to_grind.IPFV=3PL.F

And after that we grind them

bərk a=ṣātər

inside DET=bowl

inside the bowl.

9. Adverbs

Specific adverbial elements can be found in Baṭḥari. As in many of the other Semitic languages, adverbial derivation is no longer productive, so the only adverbial forms present in the language derive either from earlier stages (for example, many adverbs show the suffixation of /-əh/ and /-ən/, the latter being common for time adverbials) or from the grammaticalisation of NPs (this is the case of many PPs expressing spatial or temporal information)

The table below shows a series of adverbials grouped according to the semantic area they belong to.

Word	Meaning	Word	Meaning
bawməh, bōh	here	*həlàkməh*	there
mənembō	around here	*menembō w əmbō*	here and there
aġawf	up, uphill	*mṣāʃ*	down, downhill
əbàrr	outside	*lə=ḥàḳ*	inside
ḳrīb	near	*rāḥaḳ*	far
fənāna	in front	*aġayrəh*	behind

Table 77. Spatial adverbs

In the following table temporal adverbs are presented. They can be sub-categorised in basic adverbs and grammaticalised ones. Part of the temporal adverbs function as a syntactic connective between sentences.

Word	Meaning	Word	Meaning
nāṣərəh	now	*fənānəh*	earlier
ḥawr ~ ḥōr ~ əlḥōr	today	*gēhəməh*	tomorrow
yimšī	yesterday	*fənənàmšī*	before yesterday
ðawbən	on early morning	*nəhōren*	at midday
ġaserɛwwən	right before dusk	*ġamōdən*	right after sunset

Table 78. Basic temporal adverbs

Word	Meaning	Word	Meaning
ḥawīl ~ ḥawwèl	formerly, back then	*kəssaḥ*	in the morning
kelʃaynī	in the evening, before sunset	*bəllīl*	at night
śhəleṯ men elēl	period of time between midnight and dawn (MM)	*śhəleṯi ṯereh men elēl*	period of time between midnight and dawn, closer to the latter (MM)
wəḳt ~ wəḳtēn[AD]	Sometimes		

Table 79. Grammaticalised temporal adverbs

Function	Word
Consequential (then, after that)	*məġārəh, emtɛllī*
Adversative	*ləkān, ʃar*

Table 80. Conjunct temporal adverbs

Other adverbs include both basic adverbs and grammaticalised ones:

Word	Meaning	Word	Meaning
wṭōməh, wṭōh	so	*aṭàh*	like this, this way
ṭōb	well, good	*fàxərəh*	together
xaraw xaraw	slowly	*ʃaynet*	a little
yəḳāʃ	approximately	*mākən*	a lot

Table 81. Other adverbs

10. Other particles and minor categories

Under this section other particles which do not fit any of the other categories are presented.

10.1. Verbal modifiers

Baṭḥari possesses a series of particles which occur as verbal modifiers. The exact value of some of them needs a more thorough analysis and wider textual documentation than can be offered here.

10.1.1. /ber/

The particle /ber/ can accompany a perfective. This particle can be described as a strong perfective marker (Dahl & Vellupilai 2013) - what Dahl (1985) calls "conclusives" and Bybee et al. (1994) "completives" – and indicates an emphasis over the completion of an action or state:

(63) bɛr ə̣koɛ̀ṣ-k
STRONG_PFV to_end.PFV-1S
I'm (completely) finished.

(64) ḥa=skān=ka saḥ-ōten wula ber
DET=family=POS.2S.M alive-PL or STRONG_PFV
Is your family alive or
māt-u?
to_die.PFV-3PL.M
are they dead already?

10.1.2. /əl/

A /əl/ preverbal particle can be found with both dynamic and stative perfective verbs. Its precise value is still obscure to me, but it might parallel the MO particle /ðə-/[40]. Pennacchietti (2007) describes the latter as a grammaticalised form of the relative pronoun, which could be true for Baṭḥari /əl/, which in turn corresponds to the relative article. I cannot yet make any safe assumption over this topic, though – for this reason, it is glossed with a question mark.

(65) seh el =ṣebiy-āt ahawbis ḳannėt (Morris 2017: 14)
SBJ.3S.F ?=to_dress.PFV-3S.F as if little.F
She dresses as if she were young.

(66) ʕābū el=geʕ-uw w n-kun
people ?=to_be_hungry.PFV-3PL.M and 1PL-to_be.IPFV
People were hungry and we were
n-ḥam itēw
1PL-to_want.SBJV food
wanting food.

[40] Cf. Watson (2012: 93) and Simeone-Senelle 2003: 248–249; see also note 69 from Watson (2012: 93): "Hofstede describes *ḏ-* (or *d-*) as having asseverative force before a perfect verb in Śḥerēt; however, the data cited suggests that *ḏ*-PERFECT has ingressive meaning in Śḥerēt also (Hofstede 1998: 151–152)".

10.1.3. Accusative /t-/

The accusative particle /t-/ introduces direct object complements with many transitive verbs. It can occur only with dependent personal pronouns of the a)-type (see section 5.1.3.1).

10.1.4. Existential /šī/

Existentiality is expressed by the particle /šī/. Time reference is only contextual and it is given by temporal adverbs when needed.

(67) šī ʕārān

EXIST goat.PL

There are goats.

(68) ḥawēl šī ʕābū māken bə=warx

in_past_times EXIST people many at=Warx

In the past there was a lof of people in Warx.

(69) šī śotēṯ anwaʕ l-ə=riyēś

EXIST three kind.PL of=DET=snake.PL

There are three kinds of snakes.

/śālā/ “nothing” is also used non-existentiality marker, optionally accompanied by a temporal adverb which determines the temporal dimension of the clause. /śālā/ can occur together with /šī/.

(70) ḥawēl śālā doktūr

past_times nothing doctor

In the past there was no doctor.

(71) nāṣərəh šī śālā ə=məxāt

past_times EXIST nothing DET=needle

In the past there was no needle.

According to Rubin (2010: 46) few occurrences of a correspective MO form /śī-lā/ can be found in Johnstone's Omani Mehri texts too: the difference between Omani Mehri and Baṭḥari consists in that the former is at a previous stage of Jespersen's Cycle[41], where negation is still circumfixed, and it seems not to have completed the grammaticalization process towards a full indefinite pronoun, *śī-lā* being still segmentable into two distinct lexemes: /hē əl śī-lā ðār ḥəmoh/ 'there was nothing at the water' (Rubin 2010: 46); /əl śī moh fənwīkəm lā/ 'there is no water in front of you' (Rubin 2010: 46).

10.1.5. Negative /lā/

Negation in Baṭḥari is expressed by the particle *lā*. It can operate both as an answer to a y/n question and as verbal negation. Differently from other MSAL, negation in Baṭḥari is postverbal, Baṭḥari having completed Jespersen's Cycle. However, in certain contexts the presence of the preverbal negation can still be found.

[41] Watson & Rowlett 2013.

(72) a=garrat l=aʕrān a=ḍ̣āy=es el heh

DET=bolus of=goat.PL DET=scent=3S.F NEG SBJ.3S.M

The scent of goat bolus

śūri la

good NEG

is not good. (MM)

10.2. Conjunctions

10.2.1. Coordinators

Coordinators are used to correlate two independent sentences of equal syntactic importance. /w-/ "and" is the main coordinator found in the language.

10.2.2. Subordinators

Subordinators conjunct an independent clause to a dependent or to an adverb clause. In the latter case they affect the relationship between the two clauses by indicating time, space, cause etc.

Table 82 shows Baṭḥari subordinators.

Function	Particle
Condition	hām ~ hes
Time	tā ~ attā ~tɛ̄; hes; mən; baʕd
Purpose	məśān; lə-
Cause	mən; məśān
Comparison	ahawbīs

Table 82. Subordinators

11. Syntax

It was not possible to conduct a detailed work over syntax, since such a task could only be performed after the analysis of a large amount of material which would have far exceeded the temporal terms of my enrollment as a PhD student - this is much to my regret, since it is evident that the syntactic behaviour of various items of Baṭḥari is undoubtedly peculiar to the language, if compared to the other MSAL (as to say, the relationship between cleft sentences and focalisation processes, syntactic behaviour of independent and dependent pronouns, valency and so forth). Hopefully, continuing this path of study will allow a full description of these interesting (and neglected) topics.

The following section will give only a very general account over few syntactic features of Baṭḥari, while section 11.2. will give a general account over the expression of possession.

11.1. Word order

The favourite word orders are VSO and SVO. VSO order is the unmarked one and it is favoured when S has a generic, indefinite referent introduced within the utterance for the first time.

The order of constituents is rather flexible, thanks to a rich morphology. The use of resumptive pronouns allows phrases (or entire sentences) to move from their unmarked positions, as happens with cleft sentences.

(73)	aglōl	teh	lā	əmūh
	to_boil.PFV.3S.M	ACC=3S.M	NEG	DET=water
	He did not boil it, the water.			

Neutral word order predicts the negative particle /lā/ to be placed at the end of the sentence. The direct object /əmūh/ “the water” is moved to the right of the negation since it is placed in a focused position. Its syntactic function within sentence structure is expressed through the use of a pronominal object placed after the verb and agreeing in gender and number with its nominal referent.

(74)	{taqweyya}[AD]	y-ʕɛ̄mer-uw	h=ēs	“tāḳa”
	Pomatomus saltatrix	3M-to_name.IPFV-PL	to=3S.F	“tāḳa”
	The bluefish, they call it “taḳa”.			

(75)	e=dɛnnəg	y-kūn	b=es	delīl
	DET=boat	3S.M-to_be.IPFV	in=3S.F	navigator
	The boat, there would be a navigator on it.			

Left-movement is another focalisation strategy widely applied by speakers, as examples (74) and (75) show.

The neutral order for the other constituents is of the Head + Mod type (as to say, head-initial). More specifically:

Adjectives	N ADJ
Definite article	DET = N
Demonstratives	(DET-)N + (DET-)DEM ~ DEM + N
Possession	Head + Mod
Prepositional Phrase	Head + Mod

Table 83. Word order

11.2. Possession

11.2.1. Possession at phrase level

Lacking any morphological nominal case-marking system, Baṭḥari makes use of syntax to express the relationship of possession and belonging[42]. In fact, we find genitive constructions where the head of the genitive phrase is always placed before the modifier.

There can be both synthetic and analytic constructions. The choice between one of the two options is determined mostly by the semantic nature and the nominal vs. pronominal status of the elements put in relation.

11.2.1.1. Syntetic constructions

11.2.1.1.1. Construct state

When a genitive relation is established between two overt nouns, a construct state is used. This kind of structure has very limited productivity: one can only find some fixed expressions of inalienable belonging, such as family names, tribe names and locatives.

[42] See Simeone-Senelle (2014) for a general treatment about the expression of possession in MSAL.

Noun Phrase	Meaning
ʕalī ber ḥazēn	ʻAli son of Ḥazēn
bēt kaṯīr	the al-Kaṯīr tribe
ʕabū eMingi	the people of Mingi
kerēsəh əl-ḥagərīm	Toponym (lit. “low legs of the goat”)

Table 84. Construct state (1)

The presence of the definite article on any of the nouns is irregular and apparently not related to definiteness.

A lexicalised genitive construction is found for the expression of some nouns semantically designating expertise in or exclusive property of something. In this context, we find the use of /baʕal/ followed by the modifier.

Noun Phrase	Meaning
bəʕɛ̄li eśwaymiyet	the people of Shwaymiya
baʕal edɛ̄neg	the owner of the boat

Table 85. Construct state (2)

Finally, the term /bɛr/ “child”, “son” is used to form lexicalised kinship terms such as:

Word	Meaning
ber ġay (PL bənī ġay)	nephew (M)
brī ġay	nephew (F)

Table 86. Construct state (3)

11.2.1.1.2. The use of the pronominal possessives

Whenever the modifier is expressed by a pronominal element, it takes the form of the possessive suffix pronoun (see section 5.1.3). In this case, there is no syntactic distinction as to what kind of relationship exists between the two elements. The presence of the definite article in this context is preferred, but not mandatory and a lot of inter- and intra-speaker variation exists, making it hard to make any safe assumption in this regard.

(76) a=ʕayn=ī
DET=eye=1S
my eye.

(77) rəh-ōt=ən
head-PL=1PL
our heads.

(78) ḥa= skān=ka
DET parents=2S.M
your (s.m.) family.

There are instances of a pragmatic use of subject personal pronouns to emphatically enforce the relation of possession: if present, they anaphorically agree in gender and number wth the suffixed possessive pronoun and are always postponed to the possessed noun.

(79) ḳəblɛ̄t =ī hoh

tribe =1S SBJ.1S

my own tribe.

(80) ḥa= skān =ka hēt

DET family =2S.M SBJ.2S.M

your own family.

11.2.1.2. Analytic constructions

Analytic constructions are surely more widely employed than synthetic ones. The prepositional element is prefixed to the possessed noun. This element in Baṭḥari corresponds to the relative pronoun /lə=/ ~ /əl=/.

(81) eḳāʕ lə= bəṭáḥrīt

land of= Baṭāḥira

The land of the Baṭāḥira.

(82) faḳḥ lə=gəni

half of=sack

Half of a sack.

The use of the preposition /ð-/ as a genitive marker is absent in normal speech (in my corpus, at least); when present, the value of /ð-/ has to be interpreted as another kind of noun phrase-internal specification, in which the modifier indicates the material the head noun is made of (but /lə-/ is more commonly used in this context):

(83) ṭāsəh ðə=maʕdin

bowl of=aluminium

A bowl made of aluminium.

(84) ḥəlḳāt lə= fəśśát

ring of= silver

A ring made of silver.

/ð-/ as a genitive marker can be found in poetry (attested in Morris 1983: 123), in which a vocabulary both archaic and strongly influenced by Jibbali is employed, resulting in a language pretty distant from spoken Baṭḥari. In this work no poetry text was included in the analysis (aside from the fact that I only have four songs in my recordings, since I am not primarily interested in this textual genre).

Simeone Senelle (2014: 17) argues that "[e]n B., la construction indirecte se distingue par une marque de GEN. /e/, à rapprocher du /ɛ́/ en J. Comme en J, c'est à la fois la marque de DEF. ["definite"] et de GEN. ["genitive"] La confusion entre DEF. et GEN. est impossible quand le Dant est un nom propre (intrinsèquement défini)".

In the following two examples discussed by Simeone-Senelle (2014: 17) taken from Morris (1983) are reported:

(85) məʕaali e= rəḳəbiit (Morris 1983: 136)

inlet GEN? Rəḳəbīt

The inlet of Rəḳəbīt

(86) ben e= mesmuun (Morris 1983: 139)
son GEN? Mesmuun
The son of Mesmun

I would not consider /e/ to be a distinct GEN marker, since proper names in Baṭḥari can occur either with or without the definite article – to which this hypothetic genitive marker would be formally identical, anyway. Examples (85) and (86) should in this case be analysed as two normal occurrences of the construct state, in which the dependent noun is marked by the definite article.

11.2.2. Possession at Clause Level

The particle /š-/ followed by a suffixed object pronoun expresses predicative possession. Time reference can be optionally given by the use of temporal adverbials.

(87) ḥawēl š=ēn śālā {bəyūt}^{AD}
time_ago to=1PL nothing house.PL
In the past we did not have proper houses.

12. Lexicon

12.1. Few words about lexical peculiarities of Baṭḥari

Baṭḥari (as for the rest of MSAL) exhibits various lexical peculiarities which cannot be related to the rest of the Semitic family. Very recent (and still ongoing) research from Castagna (forthcoming) shows that a significant part of such peculiarities can be related to a plausible Austronesian superstrate. Most of these words are related to traditional sea-life (/ɛrēwna/ "sea", /tāḳa/ "bluefish", /bilōt/ "wind name"), but also to the human body (/ðēr/ "blood"). I am not competent to discuss this topic in detail, but it is without any doubt that Castagna's research will shed light over this topic.

Below various lists of lexical elements divided by semantic fields are briefly presented.

12.2. Verbs of movement during the day

As it is common among MSAL, one can find a series of motion verbs lexically encoding information concerning the moment of the day during which the movement action is executed. The generic verbs of movements not showing connection to temporal information are /sīr, ysīr, ysīr/ "to go" and /kōnəḥ, ykānəḥ, - / "to come back". There is a stable correspondence between a G or H-stem verb indicating allative movement and a derived Š-stem verb meaning coming back at a given time. Such verbs are presented in table 85 below, together with the noun of the corresponding moment of the day:

Time of the day	Translation	"to go"	"to come back"
ġabśet	dark before sunrise	*ġəsōm*	
beheret	moment right before sunrise when sky reddens		
fɛ̄jer	dawn		
ðawben	early morning	*gəhām*	*šəghām*
kəssaḥ	morning		
nahōre, nhōren (rahōnəh)[43]	Midday, when the sun is at its zenit	*ḳəḥāb*	*šəḳhāb*
ḏəbəlīl	mid afternoon		
mūgōś	between afternoon and evening		
kəlʕayni	Evening, around 5 p.m.	*watxaf*	*ewgāh*
ġaserɛwwən	right before dusk		*šəwgūś*
ġaserɛw	dusk		
ġadrer, məbṣərūtən	sunset		
ġamōdən	early evening, right after sunset	*eġmōd*	

[43] This form was given multiple times by one male speaker. It presents subversion of the syllabic structure, and I guess this is due to confusion of the speaker itself; I am reporting it only for completeness' sake.

lēl	night	*baʃār*	*ṭəwō*
śhəleṭ men elēl (MM)	period of night between midnight and dawn		

Table 87. Time of the day

12.3. Kinship Terms

S	PL	Meaning
ʃāməh	-	mother
hēb	-	father
ḥaskān	*ḥaskanīn*	family; parents
ġayg	*ġayāg*	boy, young man (unmarried); male
ġayyet	*ġayōtən*	girl; female
tēṭ	*ʃaynəṭ*	adult woman, wife
fōrək	*forkūtən*	divorced woman
ʃagūz	*ʃagōyəz*	old woman, grandmother
xāxar	*xixār*	old man, grandfather
ber ġay	*bənī ġay*	nephew (son of son)
kɛdɛdī	-	female cousin
məbrīh, mbrīh	-	newborn baby
əmbēre	*əmberwāten*	child
sərbàt	-	baby
jetīm	-	orphan
sbāt	-	patrilinear genealogy

Table 88. Kinship terms

12.4. Body Parts

S	PL	Meaning	S	PL	Meaning
rīh	*rihōten*	head	*ḳannet*	-	index finger
śɛ̀dḳ	*śɛdōḳ*	cheek	*nkēṣ́et*	-	middle finger
ʃayn	*ʃayànten*	eye	*bəssāfəh*	-	ring finger
ʔiðēn	*ʔiðānten*	ear	*ḥansər*	-	little finger
naxrīr	*naxrēr*	nose	*ðafīr*	*ðufūr*	human nail
xaʔ	*xawāʔ*	mouth	*ḳɛlb*	*ḳulūb*	heart (probably AD)
śəfēt (SING)	*śaf*	hair	*ṯādəh*	-	breast
kənsīd	*kənsōd*	top of the shoulder	*hōfəl*	*ehfōl*	belly
keff	*ḥakfēf*	palm, hand	*šīt*	-	penis
ḥād	*ḥadōten*	hand, arm	*fāʃm*	*faʃām*	leg
ḥabī	-	thumb	*xāf*	*axfīf*	foot
ṯɛbər	*ṯɛwābər*	broken bone	*ṯēkəl*	-	umbilical cord
ðēr	-	blood			

Table 89. Body parts

12.5. Tools

S	PL	Meaning	S	PL	Meaning
kərmāś	-	stuff	*śɛwēr*	*śurīn*	rope, line
līx	*lyōx*	net	*dɛnneg*	*dənàwg*	small boat
moġdèft	*maġādəf*	fishing net	*bərḳāʃ*	-	woman mask
gwēnī	*gewēnī*	sack	*xataḳ*	*xatḳān*	fabric
sirwāl	-	pants	*səlīb*	-	rifle

Table 90. Tools

12.6. Environment

S	PL	Meaning	S	PL	Meaning
ʕābīr ~ḥēbīr	*ʕāberyēt ~hēberyēt*	camel	*ṯɛbrīn*	*ṯɛbyēr*	hyena
rəkīb	*rikōb*	camel (for transportation)	*kəlb*	*kəlūb*	wild dog
baʕar	*baʕāren*	camel	*ḳafl*	*ḳəfūl*	louse
ḥāməs	-	turtle (generic)	*ṣayd*	-	fish
əmmənaṯōt	-	female turtle	*ləxām*	-	shark
tawnīk	-	kingfish	*fīdīm*	-	kind of shark
mətaʕāt	-	food	*ḍarb*	*ḍarāb*	wood stick
ɛrèwna	-	sea	*məḳatēl*	-	fishing site
ḥārəm	*ḥɛyrēmten*	path	*ʔēbən*	*ḥawbōn*	rock
kərmām	*karāmīm*	mountain	*ṣərfēt*	-	big, flat rock
gēbəl	*gəblīl*	mountain	*səḥāb*	*saḥbēn*	rain cloud

Table 91. Environment

12.7. Colour Terms

Word	Meaning	Word	Meaning
ləbōn ~ ləbūn	white	*ḥawēr*	black
ʕāfər	red; brown	*həśār*	green; yellow
ʕannābī[AD]	dark red	*àṣfar*[AD]	yellow
mzarrik[AD]	blue	*ðaḥwēr*	brown

Table 92. Colour Terms

12.8. Greetings

Expression	Meaning
habō aṣbāḥko	Greeting in the early morning
habō agsānko	Greeting in the morning
habō ġamadko	Greeting in the afternoon
habō šaʃarko	Greeting in the late evening
uʃdēko	Goodbye
hagēb helōk	Thank you

Table 93. Greetings.

13. Sample texts

13.1. Story of labouring women

Female speaker, age >70

1. *ənḥā* *a=ʃaynəṯ* *ḥawēl /* *nḥā* *a=ʃaynəṯ* *ḥawēl*
   SBJ.1PL DET=women once SBJ.1PL DET=women once

   ət-kūn-ən *t-ḥām-ən* *t-əxtərēṯ-ən /*
   3PL-to_be.IPFV-F 3PL-to_want.IPFV-F 3PL-to_give_birth.SBJV-F

   dən-ōtən *t-ḥām-ən* *t-əxtərēṯ-ən /*
   pregnant-PL 3PL-to_want-F 3PL-to_give_birth.SBJV-F

   Us women in the past / us women, in the past they were in the need of giving birth / the pregnant women needed to give birth /

2. *w* *ṁġārəh* *ta-ṭāwy-en* *t=ī* *hoh /*
   and then 3PL-to_come_by_night.IPFV-F ACC=1S SBJ.1S

   i-kūn *šaf-k* *ka* *ta-ṭawy-ən*
   1S-to_be.IPFV to_sleep.PFV-1S when 3PL-to_come_by_night.IPFV-F

t=ī /	*b=ə=llīl /*	*w*	*ta-ʃśōś-ən*	*t=ī*
ACC=1S	in=DET=night	and	3PL-to_wake_up.IPFV-F	ACC=1S

mən	*šənōt /*	*w*	*baʃār-k*	*š=ēsən*
from	sleep	and	to_go_in_the_night.PFV-1S	for=3PL.F

and then / they would come right to me in the night / I was asleep when they came to me/ during the night / and they would wake me up from my sleep / so I would go for them /

3.

w	*kəll=ən*	*ə-kəss=ən*		*b=ēs*	*mən*
and	all=3PL.F	1S-to_find.IPFV=3PL.F		with=3S.F	from

a=ṣaxāb /	*mən*	*a=ṣaxāb*	*tə-skōk-ən /*		*tə-ṣaxāb-ən /*
DET=pain	from	DET=pain	3PL-to_scream.IPFV-F		3PL-to_suffer.IPFV-F

b=ehfōl=sen /	*w*	*ʃàd=sən*	*əl*	*əxterèw-ten*
in=belly.PL=3PL.F	and	yet=3PL.F	PROG	to_give_birth.PART-PL

lā /	*mən*	*aṭaywō-k*	*hoh*	*mən /*
NEG	when	to_arrive.PFV-1S	SBJ.1S	when

and all of them, I would find them in labor pains / because of the pain they would be screaming / they would be in pain / from their bellies / and still they would not be going to give birth / when I arrived, when... /

4. *mən* *ṭaywo-k* *hoh* *zayd* *a=ṣaxāb /*
when to_come_by_night.PFV-1S SBJ.1S much DET=pain

śxolēl-k *h=ēsən /* *mən* *fənānəh /* *aywa* *mən*
to_sit.PFV-1S in_front_of=3PL.F from front yes from

fənāna / *nōkaʃ* *ɛ=mbēre /* *ðākəməh* *nàṭṭab*
front to_come.PFV.3S.M DET=child DEM.FAR.S.M to_drop.PFV.3S.M

w *mēnʃ-ak* *t=ēh*
and to_hold.PFV-1S ACC=OB J.3S.M

when I come to them they are in great pain (lit. great is the pain) / I sit in front of them / face to face / yes, face to face / the baby comes / that (baby) drops out / and I hold him /

5. *mbēre* *naṭṭāb* *mən* *e=tēṯ /* *mən*
child to_drop.PFV.3S.M from DET=woman from

ʃāmə=h / *w* *mənʃ-āk* *t=ih /* *nàṭṭab*
mother=3S.M and to_hold.PFV-1S ACC=3S.M to_drop.PFV.3S.M

w *mənʃ-āk* *t=eh /* *xarēg* *mən* *ə=ttēṯ /*
and to_hold.PFV-1S ACC=3S.M to_exit.PFV-3S.M from DET=woman

baʃdēn /	*ḳōt-ak*	*t=īh*	*foḳày /*	*w*	*[inaudible]*
then	to_cover.PFV-1S	ACC=3S.M	fabric	and	

the baby drops out from the woman/ from his mother, and then / it drops and then / it comes out from the woman / after that... I cover him with some fabric / and [inaudible] /

6.

ḥɛlōb-en	*h=ēh*	*ḥawēl*	*śālā /*	*ḥelōb-ən*
to_milk.PFV-1PL	for=3S.M	once	nothing	to_milk.PFV-1PL

h=ēh	*śxāf /*	*mən*	*ʕarān /*	*bərk*	*tāṣəh /*	*śālā /*	*w*
for=3S.M	milk	from	goats	inside	bowl	nothing	and

kōf-en	*t=ēh*	*mbrīh /*	*śānəh /*
to_feed_with_hands-1PL	ACC=3S.M	newborn	to_look.IMP.2S.M

ġalàḳ /	*ðɛh*	*a=śxāf*	*w*	*ðɛh*
to_watch.IMP.2S.M	DEM.NEAR.S.M	DET=milk	and	DEM.NEAR.S.M

mbɛrī
child

there was nothing to milk for the baby at the time / we would take milk for them / from goats / inside a bowl / nothing / and we would give milk to the newborn with our hands / and the newborn / see, pay attention / this is the milk and this is the newborn (mimes gesture of feeding milk to a baby) /

7. *w* *kòff-ən* *t=ēh* *bərk* *əðàh*
and to_feed_with_hands.PFV-1PL ACC=3S.M inside DEM.NEAR.S.F

w *y-ttōka /* *mbērri* *ḳannòn /* *ʃayneṯ /* *ə=ttēṯ*
and 3S.M-to_drink.IPFV child small women DET=woman

ber=s *ab=xayr* *w* *kunaḥ-āt* *ə=kod-ōt /*
STRONG_PFV=3S.F with=better and to_come_back.PFV-3S.F DET=home-PL

sew *ebaʃàrs* *kɛllə* *nàṭṭab* *śay* *kəlləh /*
[not undersood] everything to_drop.PFV.3S.M thing everything

ṯ̱ēkel / *kəllə /*
umbilical_cord everything

and we feed him from the inside (of our hands) and he drinks / a small baby / women – the woman, once she feels good again, goes back home / once she is better / ??? / everything has dropped, the umbilical cord, everything /

8. *fənānə* *mbɛrī* *mġārəh* *e=ṯ̱ṯ̱ākəl /* *ʃɛmer-ī {ḥabèlət}^{MO} /*
before child after DET=umbilical_cord to_call-? {ḥabèlət}^{MO}

ḥādi *{ḥəbelēt}^{MO} /* *ḥad* *y-ʃāmer* *h=ēh*
DEM.NEAR.S.F {ḥabelēt}^{MO} one 3S.M-to_call.IPFV to=3S.M

ṯākəl	*w*	*y-ʃāmər*	*h=ēs*	*həbəlēt*
umbilical_cord	and	3S.M-to_call.IPFV	to=3S.F	umbilical_cord

first the newborn and then the umbilical cord (other speaker in the room: "it is called "ḥabēlət") / that is "ḥabelèt" / one calls it "ṯākəl" and one calls it "ḥəbəlèt" /

9.

mən	*nəkaʃ-āt*	*həlōk /*	*śxōlēl-ən*	*w*	*kəlḥad*
from	to_become.PFV-3S.F	tired	to_rest.PFV-1PL	and	everyone

y-siyūr	*məkān /*	*w*	*a=ʃaynəṯ*	*kəl=sən*	*[inaudible]*
3S.M-to_go_back.IPFV	place	and	DET=women	all=3PL.F	

ðakəməh /	*daxtēr*	*śālā /*	*l=i=ttēṯ*	*[not clear]*
DEM.FAR.S.M	doctor	nothing	to=DET=woman	

and when she gets tired / we rest and each one goes back to his place / and all the women (inaudible) that / there was no doctor / for women / (not clear) /

10.

nəkaʃ-āt	*b=ṯrɛyh /*	*b=ġayyet*	*w*	*ùmbara /*	
to_come.PFV-3S.F	with=two.F	with=female_baby	and	male_baby	

w	*mbērī /*	*fənāna /*	*nāṭṭab*	*e=brīh /*	*w*
and	child	before	to_drop.PFV.3S.M	DET=male_newborn	and

mġārəh	*nəkaʃ-āt*	*ə=ġayyet*
then	to_come.PFV-3S.F	DET=female_baby

she had two babies / a girl and a little boy / a baby / first / she gave birth to the boy / and then she gave birth to the girl /

11.

w	*ṁġārəh /*	*mən*	*taṭb-at*	*ḥablɛ̀t*
and	then	from	to_give_birth.PFV-3S.F	umbilical_cord

əkaʃ-āt	*ṯrɛ̄hi /*	*tā*	*ʃamā=s*	*embō /*
to_become.PFV-3S.F	two.F	until	mother=3S.F	here

t-ḳəṣ́āb	*mən*	*ə=mbɛrīh*	*mənəmbo*	*w*	*ḳaśāb-ək*
3S.F-to_cut.IPFV	from	DET=child	from=here	and	to_cut.PFV-1S

mən	*a=ġayyēt*	*mən=əmbō /*	*hū*	*ṯrɛ̄hī*
from	DET=female_child	from=here	SBJ.3PL.M	two.F

and then / when she gives birth there would be two umbilical cords / attached to the mother here / she cuts it from the child here and I cut it from the girl there / they are two /

12.

ḥawɛ̄l	*ġār=i*	*hoh*	*doktər /*	*kəl*	*b=ēs*	*a=ðàrb*
before	only=1S	SBJ.1S	doctor	all	for=3S.F	DET=childbirth

kəllə=s	*a-ṭāwī /*	*mən*	*kəṣ́āb-ən*	*w*
all=3S.F	1S-to_come_in_the_night.IPFV	after	to_cut.PFV-1PL	and

śəll-ət /	*śḥoll-ən*	*t=eh*	*tā*
to_take.PFV-3S.F	to_rest.PFV-1PL	ACC=3S.M	until

kod-ōt /	*sēn*	*bə=šwaymiyya /*	*bawmah*	*a=ʕaynēṯ /*	*w*
house-PL	SBJ.3PL.F	in= šwaymiyya	there	DET=women	and

ḥəlōb-ən	*h=eh*	*w*	*{xallas-àt}*[AD]
to_milk.PFV-1PL	to=3S.M	and	to_end.PFV-3S.F

back then... I was the only doctor / for every childbirth / I would come in the night for each one / after having cut the umbilical cord she takes the baby / we bring it at home / they live in šwaymiya / the women are here / and we take milk for him/ and it's over/

13.2. Hunger and catching turtles

Male speaker, age > 60

1. *aḥawēl* *ə=ḳaʃ* *ðānəməh* *b=eh* *śālā* *b=etuy /*
   before DET=land DEM.NEAR.S.M in=3S.M nothing to=food

   kūl *šay* *b=rəkīb* *wəllə* *šay* *mən* *ɛrɛwna /*
   all thing with=riding_camel or thing from sea

   kell=em *nə-xādəm* *b=īs /* *nə-ġāləḳ*
   all=3PL.M 1PL-to_do.IPFV with=3S.F 1PL-to_see.IPFV

   ḥē=bēryet /
   DET=female_camel

   Once this land did not give anything to eat / everything would come with riding camels or something from the sea / all of those were made with it / we would look after the female camel /

2. *ʕamōr-u* *h=eh* *ḥawēl* *l=ittew /* *ḥalāl*
   to_say.PFV-3PL.M to=3S.M once to=eat ḥalāl

   lā / *kul* *bēr=eh* *mēt /* *wə*
   NEG every STRONG_PFV=3S.M to_die.PFV.3M.S and

agōdəḥ	*m=ə=rrɛwna /*	*wəlla*	*ət-təwè*	
to_bring.ashore.PFV.3S.M	from=DET=sea	or	3S.F-to_eat.IPFV	

t=eh	*e=ṯṯebrīəh /*	*kəlōb /*	*nḥā*	*n-ətō /*
ACC=3S.M	DET=hyena	dog.PL	SBJ.1PL	1PL-to_eat.IPFV

n-ətō	*mən*	*ə=gāʃ /*	*mən*	*ə=gāʃ*
1PL-to_eat.IPFV	from	DET=hunger	from	DET=hunger

They did this to eat, before / food was not ḥalal / everything was dead already / either brought from ashore by the sea / or eaten by a hyena / stray dogs / we would eat / we would eat (the dead animals) because of hunger / because of hunger /

3.

ə=mōh	*y-kūn*	*lə*	*śūrī*	*lā*	*e=moh /*
DET=water	3S.M-to_be.IPFV	NEG	good	NEG	DET=water

məlaḥ-ēt /	*y-kūn*	*məlḥ-ēt*	*w*	*y-kūn*
salty-S.F	3S.M-to_be.IPFV	salty-S.F	and	3S.M-to_be.IPFV

ṭayf /	*śay*	*mɛlḥēt*	*w*	*nə-ḳuy*
bitter	thing	salty	and	1PL-to_throw_up.IPFV

The water was not good, the water / salty / it was salty and it was bitter / the stuff was salty and we would throw up [...]

4. *{miṯəl}*[AD] / *nōkʃ-an* *a=ḥāməs* / *a=ḥāməs* / *nə-śān=es*
for_example to_come.IPFV-1PL DET=turtle DET=turtle 1PL-to_see=3S.F

mzāʃ *b=ərɛwna* / *mzāʃ* / *mzāʃ* *nə-ġāleḳ* *enḥā* *mən*
below in=sea below below 1PL-to_see.IPFV SBJ.1PL from

ðār *ə=gəblēl* / *mən* *aġawf* / *y-eḳāʃ* *rāḥaḳ*
above DET=mountain.PL from above 3S.M-to_be.IPFV far

rāḥaḳ / *mən* *aġāwf* *nə-śān=es* *mzāʃ* /
far from above 1PL-to_see=3S.F below

For example / a turtle comes / the turtle / we see it from above looking down in the sea / below / below we see her from the top of the hill / from above / it might be very far / from above we see her below /

5. *zēn* *š=ēn* *b=śəwēr* *[inaudible]* *ḥēmā-k* / *seh*
good to=1PL with=line to_hear.PFV-1S SBJ.3S.F

et-tō *lā* *gandēwi* / *et-tō=s* *lā* /
3S.F-to_eat.IPFV NEG hook 3S.F-to_eat.IPFV=3S.F NEG

ʃemōr-ən *aṭāh* / *šān=es* *mən* *aġawf* /
to_say.PFV-1PL like_this to_see.IMP=3S.F from above

sēh	*bō /*	*urīd-ən*	*ə=śśəwēr*	*rāḥaḳ*
SBJ.3S.F	here	to_cast.PFV-1PL	DET=line	far

Good, we have a fishing line (inaudible) did you hear me? it does not catch the hook / it did not catch it / we do like this / see her from above / she is here / we cast the line far /

6.	*/ [inaudible]*	*nōkʕ-an*	*b=ēs*	*mən*	*embō /*	*a=ḥāməs*
		to_come.PFV-1PL	with=3S.F	from	there	DET=turtle

šī /	*irīd- ək /*	*ʕamor-k*	*hoh*	*ʕamor-k*	*aṭāh /*
EXIST	to_cast.PFV-1S	to_say.PFV-1S	SBJ.1S	to_say.PFV-1S	like_this

irīd-ək	*hoh*	*rāḥaḳ*	*rāḥaḳ*
to_cast.PFV-1S	SBJ.1S	far	far

/ (inaudible) we get to it from there / the turtle is there / I cast the line / I do like this / I cast the line very far /

7.	*w*	*seh /*	*lebed=ēs*	*l=e= gendēwi /*	*lebed=ēs*
	and	it	to_catch=3S.F	to=DET=hook	to_catch=3S.F

l=e= gendēwi /	*l=ə=bərkàt /*	*w*	*xaraw xaraw*	*[not understood]*
to=DET=hook	to=DET=pool	and	slowly	

tā	*t-ḳṭāʃ /*	*mən*	*ḳṭāʃ-āt*
until	3S.F-to_be_exhausted.IPFV	when	to_be_exhausted.PFV-3S.F

gədō-k	*t=īs /*	*wa*	*xarēg-an*	*t=īs*
to_drift_ashore.PFV-1S	ACC=3S.F	and	to_kill.PFV-1PL	ACC=3S.F

wa	*əḥtēd-en*	*t=īs*
and	to_divide.PFV-1PL	ACC=3S.F

And it / it catches the hook / it catches the hook / from the basin / and slowly [not understood] until it is exhausted / when it is exhausted / I drift it ashore / and we kill it and we divide it.

14. Bibliography

Abbreviations:

A: Anthropos

AAL: Afro-Asiatic Linguistics

AION: Annali dell'Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale"

BJALL: Brill's Journal of Afroasiatic Languages and Linguistics

BSOAS: Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies

IJNA: International Journal of Nautical Archaeology

JIES: Journal of Indo-European Studies

JRAIGBI: The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland

JRAS: Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society

JRGS: Journal of the Royal Geographical Society

JSS: Journal of Semitic Studies

L: Lingua

MAS: Matériaux arabes et sudarabiques, nouvelle série

NP: Nomadic People

PAMBLS: Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistic Society

PASC: Problemi Attuali di Scienza e di Cultura

PBA: Proceedings of the British Academy

PSAS: Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies

QuadRi: Quaderni di Ricognizioni

RFLJ: Revue de La Faculté des Lettres El Jadida

SL: Studia linguistica

ZAL: Zeitschrift für Arabische Linguistik

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