A SKETCH OF THE ARABIC DIALECT OF THE CENTRAL YAMANI TIHĀMAH

*By Joseph Greenman, Ann Arbor**

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

1. Introduction

1.0. This article represents preliminary partial findings of research[1] concerning a contemporary Arabic dialect which the author believes sheds significant light on the history of the Arabic language. Furthermore, it is hoped that this research will be useful to specialists in general Semitic linguistics who should gain some new insights into problems of the development of Semitic through the data presented. Finally, it is my desire to bring the very existence of this little-known dialect to the attention of scholars with the profound hope that the topic will stimulate wider interest in it, and the Yamani dialects in general,[2] that might result in further inquiries, now that the outlook for research in this long-isolated corner of the Arabian Peninsula seems to be improving.[3]

1.1. Recognition of this dialect, or at least of one of its features, since early in the Islamic period is indicated by the recording of the ḥadīt *laysa min m-birri m-ṣiyāmu fī m-safar* 'fasting (during the holy month of Ramaḍān) while travelling is not (considered) piety'.[4] Its obscurity, on the other hand, seems related to Yaman's relative inaccessibility until recent times, and the insalubrious environment of Tihāmah which swelters under temperatures of 35° C and 85% humidity for a good

part of the year.[5] Also, though Yamanis have left their homeland in pur-
suit of employment and other commercial activities for centuries, inhab-
itants of Tihāmah rarely move beyond the borders of the Arabian Peninsu-
la. I have inquired about the presence of a Tihāmah native in the rather
large Yamani communities in the Buffalo, New York and Detroit areas with-
out success and, to the best of my knowledge, there are none in the U.S.
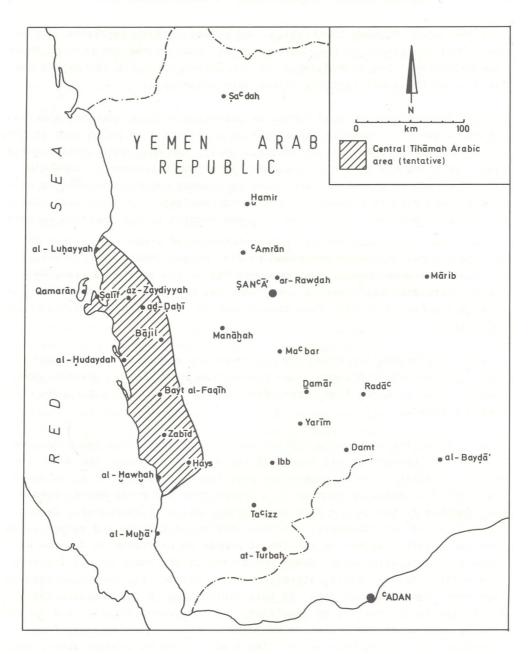
1.2. Although the designation "Tihāmah" refers to the entire area along
the western Arabian coast south of the Ḥijāz, the research at hand is con-
cerned only with that portion in the Yemen Arab Republic whose epicenter
is the city of al-Ḥudaydah.

Other urban centers which fall within the geographic limits of the
study are az-Zaydiyyah and aṣ-Ṣalīf in the northern area, al-Marawʕah,
al-Quṭayʕ, and Bājil to the northeast along the Ṣanʕāʔ road, and al-Man-
ṣūriyyah and Bayt al-Faqīh to the south. Zabīd, the long-renowned center
of Islamic scholarship and former capital of the area has been intention-
ally excluded as I was unable to undertake first-hand research there be-
cause of time limitations and was only able to elicit one brief passage
from an individual who was a native of that city. Also, I was told by sev-
eral of the many people who assisted me that the Zabīd dialect is quite
different from that under scrutiny, and this would seem to justify its
exclusion on linguistic grounds as well, though I suspect that it would
probably be most properly classified as a sub-dialect of Central Yamani
Tihāmah Arabic (hereafter CT), rather than as a completely separate en-
tity.

1.2.1. Though a precise boundary will only be determined by extensive
in-depth research, the geographic area in which CT is spoken is roughly
indicated on the map. It may be said that this area comprises the govern-
orate or *liwāʔ* of al-Ḥudaydah, whose capital is the city of the same name.
Henceforth, incidentally, all references to "al-Ḥudaydah" are to the lat-
ter, i.e., the city.

2. The "Target Language" of the Study

2.0. "Sprachenbabel" is the term used by DIEM to describe the language
situation in al-Ḥudaydah,[6] and with good justification. As modern Yaman's

---

5 During the period when the research was carried out (see n.1) the weath-
  er in Tihāmah was ideal. Daytime temperatures averaged 75°- 80° F., drop-
  ping at night to 65°- 70° F. The humidity was in the 60-70% range.
6 DIEM ibid. 15.

principal gateway to the sea, and consequently her commercial center, people have gathered in the city from many areas, both inside and outside the country. The tremendous development that has taken place is, however, quite recent. Before the expansion of the city's harbor facilities by the Russians in the 1950's al-Ḥudaydah was not much different

from the other Tihāmah towns which had housed Turkish garrisons during
their long occupation of the country, except that it was the port of their
disembarkation.[7] Its significance to the present research is that it was
the site of the great majority of the data collection.

2.1. The methodology used herein is essentially synchronic and American
structuralist. The phonetic transcription of examples is based upon TRAGER:
Phonetics: Glossary and Tables. (Buffalo 1964), the only modification being
that I am using the macron to designate long vowels instead of TRAGER's
dot. Place-names, paradigms, and items in slashes may be construed as nor-
malized according to a superficial phonemic analysis, but this will almost
certainly be modified when a more complete version of the research appears.

Some apparent discrepancies in the phonemicized items are related to
the urban-rural dichotomy described in 2.4. below. Others are the result
of historical development, e.g. phonetic [ē] is the reflex of literary
Arabic (hereafter LA)[8] /ay/ in some examples, but in others it is analyzed
as an allophone of CT /ī/. This discrepancy is dealt with in 3.0.1., 3.1.2.,
and 3.1.3.

2.1.1. By necessity, since the entity we are examining is a "known"
one, viz., an Arabic dialect, some comparisons with LA will be made. Also,
examples will be drawn from other contemporary dialects to illustrate
specific points.

2.2. Since the revolution against the Imām in 1962 Yaman has undergone
a variety of changes at all levels of her society. Perhaps the most im-
portant catalyst in this process has been the construction of roads which
has allowed internal relocation to a degree that was never before possi-
ble. Another factor is the relatively large influx of foreigners, from
the Arab world and elsewhere, who have introduced customs and values which
have had a marked effect on the Yamani people in practices as diverse as
dress and linguistic usage. Since the latter is the focus of our interest,
I have tried to pay careful attention to the problem of linguistic innova-
tion when regarding this data. In this dialect sketch the language repre-
sented is, to the best of my knowledge, the indigenous variety of Arabic
used by natives of the region in conversation with other natives. "Con-
versation" is defined here as covering a wide range of mundane speech acts
such as might occur during commercial intercourse in the *sūq*, domestic
discussions in the home, and the verbal exchange that occurs during the

7 Cf. J.BALDRY: *al-Yaman and the Turkish Occupation 1849-1914.* Ar 23 (1976) 156ff.
8 This variety is also known as "Modern Standard Arabic".

daily $qāt$[9] sessions which are an integral part of the social life of Ti-
hāmah residents, as they are for many Yamanis. Excluded under this rubric
are poetry, discussions of religious matters, school classes, and other
situations when a more formal style is required.

2.3. It is a well-known sociolinguistic fact that factors of age and
sex manifest themselves in patterned ways within any linguistic communi-
ty. In the research at hand only adult, male speech is being considered.
Although undoubtedly this variety shares many features with those of wom-
en and children it seems imprudent not to draw a distinction since nei-
ther of the latter two groups was interviewed to the degree necessary to
isolate their sub-dialects because of limitations of time.

2.4. Within the group of adult males whose speech was examined a pat-
terning emerged which has been analyzed as the distinction between urban
and rural sub-dialects; in the examples "U" refers to the urban variety
and "R" to the rural.

"Urban", in the present sense, refers to the speech of certain inhab-
itants of al-Ḥudaydah which manifests a group of particular linguistic
features, while "rural" is the designation for the speech variety that
does not exhibit these features, i.e. the definition is language-based
and has nothing to do with the birthplace or place of residence of the
individual who uttered the item. I was unable to ascertain whether the
U variety is, in fact, used by people in other Tihāmah urban areas out-
side al-Ḥudaydah. In contrast, though, it became readily evident that
many inhabitants of the city, either born there or long-time residents,
speak the R sub-dialect, even in situations, such as during the lingui-
stic interviews during which this group of data was elicited, when they
might have used what would generally be perceived by native speakers as
a more prestigious variety.[10]

2.5. The data that have been selected for inclusion in this article
represent only some of the more noteworthy features of the dialect. Those
not mentioned may be assumed to be either similar to findings in other
dialects or wanting lengthy attention that is beyond the scope of this
brief sketch.

9 See W. LUQMAN and T. S. DANOWSKI: *The Use of Khat (Catha edulis) in Yemen.
   Social and Medical Observations.* Annals of Internal Medicine 85/2 (1976)
   246-49.

10 For a detailed discussion of this phenomenon see FREDERICK J. CADORA:
   Some Linguistic Concomitants of Contactual Factors of Urbanization.
   Anthropological Linguistics 12/1 (1970) 110-19.

3. Phonology

3.0. Vowels

3.0.1. In one- or two-syllable words which contain the emphatic pho-
nemes /ṣ/, /ḍ/, /ṭ/, /ọ̌/, or /q/ the phoneme /ī/ has the allophone [ē].
Elsewhere the allophone [ī] appears, e.g.

	LA		CT	
	/qalīl/	→	[qalēl]	'small, a little'
	/ṭawīl/	→	[ṭawēl]	'tall'
	/qīmah/	→	[qēmah]	'value'
	/ṭīn/	→	[ṭēn]	'cultivable land'
cf.	/xafīf/	→	[xafīf]	'light in weight'
	/sīdī/	→	[sīdī]	'sir'

It seems appropriate to mention at this point also that the status of
"secondary emphatics" such as /ḅ/, /ṛ/, and /ḷ/, which occur in Egyptian
Arabic, has not been ascertained.

3.0.2. The phoneme /ā/ has two main allophones and a third which seems
to be morphophonemically conditioned. Low back unrounded [ɑ̄] appears in
the environment of the emphatics including /q/, while low central unroun-
ded [ā] appears elsewhere.[11] The third allophone [ɛ] appears only as a
variant of the 3rd feminine singular bound pronoun /-hā/ → [-hā] ~ [-hɛ],
although the phonetic environments which condition this lower-mid front
unrounded vowel remain unclear.[12]

3.0.3. The phoneme /ū/ is affected by the same environments as /ī/. The
resulting situation is somewhat more complex, though, because the result-
ing change varies in its realization according to the U/R dichotomy. In
U speakers render one allophone [ō] in the environments mentioned above
and [ū] elsewhere. R speakers, however, have a diphthong [əw], i.e. a mid-
central unrounded phone which glides back and higher to a high back roun-
ded one, where U speakers have [ō]; [ū] is pronounced in other environments,
e.g.

---

11 This seems to be a well-known areal phenomenon and has been described
   in B. INGHAM: *Some Characteristics of Meccan Speech*. BSOAS 34 (1971) 274,
   and T. M. JOHNSTONE: *Eastern Arabian Dialect Studies*. London 1967, 23.

12 Professor ERNEST McCARUS of the University of Michigan has suggested in
   personal communication that this may be a pre-pausal phenomenon. While
   this solution seems quite promising it has not yet been confirmed.

	LA		CT		
			U	R	
	/sūq/	→	[sōq]	[səwq]	'market'
	/mabsūṭ/	→	[mabṣōṭ] [13]	[mabṣəwṭ]	'content'
	/ṭūl/	→	[ṭōl]	[ṭəwl]	'length'
cf.	/θūm/	→	[θūm]		'garlic'
	/yakūn/	→	[ykūn]		'he is'

3.1. Diphthongs

3.1.1. The LA diphthong /aw/ is always pronounced [ō] in U. In R, however, it is rendered with this pronunciation only in certain lexical items, e.g., [lyōm] 'today' and [dōm] 'the doom palm' (a type of tree). Outside of these and a few other examples it is pronounced as in the literary variety.

3.1.2. The reflex of LA /ay/ is always pronounced [ē] in U. Among rural speakers, however, there are two allophones which appear to be related to a subtle perception of "things urban" as opposed to "things rural". A rather clear example may be seen in the pronunciations of the names of regional towns. Three of the larger centers are rendered with the "urban" realization of /ay/, i.e., [ē]: [lḥodēdah], [bētElfₐqīh], and [lḥosēnīyah]. Three small villages, on the other hand, are rendered [mqǫṭayʔ], [mdUrayhami], and [mtₑḥaytEh] which, in addition to retaining the pronunciation of the diphthong, are also regularly realized with the more common R version of the definite article, viz., the version based on m- (see 4.0 – 4.0.2. below).

Note that this alternation in R is not restricted to place names. The common word for 'house' is pronounced [bayt] which is in contrast to the name of the town mentioned above 'the house of the sage', i.e., [bētElfₐqīh]. Also, the 'buqsha', (the smallest unit of currency, equal to 1/40 of a *riyāl*), seems to be associated with things "rural" or perhaps "traditional" since 'two buqshas' was always pronounced by the several R speakers I interviewed as [bUqšatayn]. 'Two riyals', on the other hand, though the *riyāl* has been the major unit of currency in Yaman since long before the 1962 Revolution, was uniformly pronounced by this same group of R speakers, as well as by all U speakers, [riyālēn].

---

13 The subscript circumflex indicates a loss of voicing in a sound which is normally voiced.

3.1.3. There are two features which seem to indicate the existence of
a separate dialect, or more likely a sub-dialect of CT, in the area of
Wādi Mawr which is situated about 110 kilometers north-northeast of al-
Ḥudaydah. The first of these to be considered was elicited in only one
paradigm and, unfortunately, I was unable to test its patterning in other
contexts. Nevertheless, its uniqueness does not seem to minimize its sig-
nificance since it exhibits a phenomenon which was not elicited in any of
the other data, yet was used by several speakers of this variety in the
same, very common paradigm.

The feature in question is the result of what may be considered as the
sequence /āy/ which in turn can be related to the LA sequence /-āʔi-/
since, morphologically, the item in question is the *faʕil* measure of a
hollow verb, CT /bāk, ybūk/ 'to go'. In this area it is realized as [ē].

In all the elicitations from both U and R speakers from all over the
dialect area, with the exception of those individuals from Wādi Mawr, the
paradigm was pronounced [bāyku], fem. [bāykEh], pl. [bāykīn], 'going'.
Those individuals from Wādi Mawr, however, pronounced these items [bēkUn],
[bēkEh], [bēkīn].

The -*u*/-*Un* alternation which may be observed in the masculine forms of
this paradigm will be discussed in 4.7.1.

3.2. Consonants

3.2.1. One of the better-known features of CT among Yamanis (another
being the *m*-definite article), is the rendering of the reflex of LA *ʕayn*
as a glottal stop [ʔ]. This occurs in all phonetic environments and is
so pervasive that it appears even in circumstances when features that in-
dicate a higher register are employed.

Though numerous examples supporting this statement occur in the data,
I believe that the best illustration of the tenacity of this practice is
relayed by an anecdote. It was told to me by several of the people who
contributed to the data, but more interestingly, was also related by an
Imām at one of the mosques in al-Ḥudaydah who, while refusing to be for-
mally interviewed, supplied many fascinating observations about CT, and,
having studied at the Islamic college at Zabīd, knew the works of the
Arab grammarians to the degree that he was able to quote the passage from
SĪBAWAYH mentioned in 3.2.3. below.

In brief, it seems that during the period of the Civil War in Yaman,
1962-67, the son of one of al-Ḥudaydah's religious leaders went to Cairo
to study at al-Azhar. Much to his family's surprise the chagrined student

returned home after only a few months with the explanation that he had
been dismissed because this particular feature of his native dialect, viz.,
"pronouncing ⁹ayn as *hamzah*", had apparently found its way into his reci-
tation of the Holy Qur'ān and this was deemed unacceptable by his mentor.

The veracity of this anecdote, or whether the linguistic problem was
the only reason for the student's dismissal seem immaterial. What is sig-
nificant is that it indicates the inhabitants of the dialect area's sen-
sitivity to their language, and to this feature in particular. Further-
more, it indicates that the CT reflex of LA /⁹/ is [ʔ] even in the high-
est registers of the dialect and this is corroborated by virtually all
of the data which I recorded.

3.2.2. The reflex of LA ظ is pronounced as an emphatic[14] voiced inter-
dental fricative, [ḏ̣].

3.2.3. The dialectal rendering of LA ض seems to be an extremely in-
teresting problem, but I must admit from the outset that my "objectivity"
in perception may have been impaired as a result of having been told by
the Imām mentioned in 3.2.1 above that Tihāmah residents pronounce this
sound من بين أوّل حافة اللسان وما يليه من الأضراس 'between the front of the edge
of the tongue and the molars which are next to it'.[15]

In brief, I observed among most of the individuals whom I interviewed
that the pronunciation of this sound is identical with that of the reflex
of LA ظ , as described above. Among others, however, I observed *visually*,
that some speakers released this sound from only one side of the mouth
with the result that only one cheek "puffed" during articulation.[16] Sub-
sequent listening to tapes of these individuals, however, did not reveal
a noticeably lateralized pronunciation, although some difference was per-
ceived.

3.2.4. The reflexes of LA ث and ذ retain their interdental natures in
R. In U, however, the most common reflexes are /t/ and /d/ respectively.

---

14 A discussion of the articulatory nature of "emphasis" in Arabic may be
   found in SALMAN AL-ANI: *Arabic Phonology: An Acoustical and Physiolo-
   gical Investigation*. The Hague 1970 (= Janua Linguarum, Series Practi-
   ca, 61). It should be noted though, that the subscript dot here refers
   to this phenomenon and not to the alveolar position used by TRAGER.

15 SĪBAWAYH: *Kitāb*. Ed. DERENBOURG II 453 = Ed. Būlāq II 405.

16 For full discussions of the nature of the pronunciation of this sound
   as analyzed by the Arab grammarians see W. H. T. GAIRDNER: *The Arab Pho-
   neticians on the Consonants and Vowels*. Moslem World 25 (1935) 247 and
   K. VOLLERS: *The System of Arabic Sounds as Based upon Sibawaih and Ibn
   Yaish*. In: Transactions of the 9th International Congress of Oriental-
   ists. Vol. II. London 1893, 145-48.

The qualification "most common" is used because pairs like Cairene /tanya/
'second, f.s.' (i.e. the ordinal number), and /sanya/ 'second' (i.e. the
unit of time), were not elicited and I am not absolutely certain as to how
this problem is handled in the U variety of CT.

One might be tempted to explain the U reflexes as the result of the ex-
tensive Egyptian presence in al-Ḥudaydah between 1962-67, but ROSSI had
already observed this phenomenon in the city in 1938.[17] This feature is
also well documented for other urban Arabic dialects.

3.2.5. The phoneme /j/ seems to have three allophones: a voiced velar
(prevelar?) stop [g], a voiced mediopalatal affricate [j], and a voiced
mediopalatal stop, slightly palatalized [ɟ$_y$]. These appear to occur in
free variation.

The following examples were all elicited from the same speaker and the
two variant pronunciations of 'cigarette' were uttered by this individual
in consecutive sentences. Checking data from other speakers, much to my
dismay, revealed the same, apparently random patterning.[18]

[mgEsr]	'the bridge'	[mjEras]	'the bell'	[ɟ$_y$Esr]	'bridge'
[gUzar]	'carrot'	[jUdUd]	'new pl.'	[ɟ$_y$Urḥu]	'a wound'
[sigārah]	'cigarette'	[sijārah]	'cigarette'	[ɟ$_y$āhalEh]	'children'

3.2.6. The phoneme /q/ is always realized as a voiceless postvelar
stop. However, it is of some interest to note that, in a few lexical items,
sounds that have been analyzed above as allophones of /j/ occur where the
LA items from which they seem to derive have /q/. The fact that all of the
items in question have /d/ somewhere in them may be significant but I be-
lieve it is necessary to elicit more data before making a definitive state-

17 E. ROSSI: *Nuove osservazioni sui dialetti del Yemen*. RSO 17 (1938) 460-
   72. Also DIEM ibid. 66 and cf. INGHAM ibid. 274.

18 The analysis of a similar problem for the dialect of Mecca by INGHAM
   ibid. 277, is not suitable for CT. On a related note I would comment
   that the data from CT and other Peninsular dialects seems to corrobo-
   rate BLANC's conclusion regarding the pronunciation of /j/ in Old Ara-
   bic as stated in *The Fronting of Semitic G and the Qāl-Gāl Dialect
   Split in Arabic*. In: Proceedings of the International Conference on
   Semitic Studies. Jerusalem 1969, 7-37, and refute A. S. KAYE: *Arabic
   /žiim/: A Synchronic and Diachronic Study*. Linguistics 79 (1972) 31-
   72, and W. COWAN: *A Reconstruction of Proto-Colloquial Arabic*. Cornell
   Univ. Ph. D. Thesis, 1960. It should be noted that KAYE's "Yemenite
   (other)" data, ibid. 64, is unattested in DIEM's extensive research on
   the Yemeni dialects cited in n. 2. It may be assumed that the former
   is relying on LANDBERG's data, which he cites on pp. 39f. of his arti-
   cle, which in turn raises the issue of the consideration of the dia-
   lect(s?) of the Ḥaḍramawt and/or Ḍofār among the Yemeni dialects.

ment. The examples below are all the occurrances of this phenomenon which appeared in the thirty hours of elicitations.

LA		CT	
/qaʕādah/	→	[ɟ_ya?ādah]	'a bench made of a wood frame with woven palm-rope for a seat'
/bunduqiyyah/	→	[bUndUj] ∼ [bUndUg]	'rifle'
*/yanqadiru/	→	[yIngIdIr]	'he is able to afford...'
/?uqdum/	→	[ɟ_ydUm]	'advance!' (imperative m.s.)
/qaddūm/	→	[ɟ_yaddūm] ∼ [gaddūm]	'adze'

This phenomenon, */q/ → /j/, seems to be limited to these and perhaps a few other items not elicited which form a closed class.[19]

3.3. The phonological rules of the dialect permit initial consonant clusters. An apparent result is that the epenthetic /?v-/, where "v" stands for any vowel, was not observed in CT as it is in LA or Cairene Arabic imperatives, e.g.

LA		Cairene	CT	
/?ijlis/	→	/?iglis/	[ɟ_ylIs]	'sit down'
/?uktub/	→	/?iktib/	[ktUb]	'write'

4. Morphology

4.O. The feature mentioned in 3.2.1. as attesting the antiquity of CT, the definite article *m-*, is quite well documented.[20] Among Yamanis it is commonly attributed to Ḥimyaritic, the extinct language that was widely spoken in the area even after the advent of Islam, but its true history remains uncertain.[21] In any case, this phenomenon is still heard regularly in CT though, as might be expected, it is the very first feature to change to the "standard form", i.e. the article based upon *l-*, when the social situation requires such a change.

19 This statement seems to be corroborated by observations of JOHNSTONE ibid. 4 n.13, referring to RABIN ibid. 55. Also, by his total silence on this alteration in his detailed study *The Affrication of Kāf and Qāf in the Arabic Dialects of the Arabian Peninsula.* JSS 8 (1963) 210-226, JOHNSTONE seems to imply that this unconditioned variation requires an independent historical analysis. INGHAM ibid. 277, in his synchronic analysis of Meccan /j/ has either chosen not to address the issue or missed the point by listing the word for 'parts', which he transcribes [?ʌdzsʌ:m], i.e., [?aɟ_ysām] in the present transcription, merely as an example of the particular allophone, and does not even allude to the fact that this item is the dialectal reflex of LA /?aqsām/.

20 See RABIN ibid. 34-37.   21 ibid.

4.0.1. During the entire course of the research I did not encounter a
single conversation in which the *m*-article was used exclusively, and this
seems to be the practice among CT speakers in all domains of usage. As
might be expected, R speakers use it more regularly than U speakers. The
typical case is that the *m*-article would be interchanged, apparently ran-
domly, with the appropriate *šamsī* or *qamarī* form of the *l*-article, e.g.

[fiyān rUḥtIlyōm[22] rUḥtEmxaḅt]   'Where did you go today, did you
                                     got to the desert?' (U)

[mšanṭah dahi bēnEmrUkn]   'The suitcase, that's it in ·the
                                     corner.' (U)

[whi ʔatan lamməmbāb yaʔni   '... and she came as far as the door,
  lbāb ḥaqqEmbayt]   that is, the door of the house.' (R)

4.0.2. In CT, in the cases where the *l*-article occurs, the sounds that
are subject to the *šamsī* gemination are the same as in LA. Unlike LA, how-
ever, in which the *šamsī* process requires that all consonants homorganic
with [l], i.e., the alveolars, are geminated, the CT *m*-article does not
undergo this progressive assimilation with homorganic consonants, see the
last of the examples in 4.0.1. and also the ḥadīṯ quoted in 1.1. above.[23]

4.1. The paradigms listed by DIEM in his section on the "Küstenebene"
dialect, which seems to be identical with what I am calling CT, contain
several discrepancies with my data. This may be due to the fact that his
informants, identified as hailing "... aus der Gegend von Bāǧil ..."[24]
which is on the very eastern edge of the dialect area as indicated in the
map, may have come from an area whose dialect shows features that are dif-
ferent from CT. Also to be considered is the fact that he further describes
them as "zwei Gewährsmänner(n) ..., die ich in der Gegend von Ḥamir kennen-
lernte."[25]

4.1.1. One discrepancy is the systematic appearance in DIEM's data of
separate masculine and feminine forms in the second and third person plu-
rals of verb paradigms, which were never produced by any of my informants.
The same may be said for the same phenomenon in the pronoun paradigms.

This feature is well documented, though, for other Yamani dialects,

---

22 Though both [lyōm] and the name of the country, [lyaman], were always
   rendered with the *l*-article, the item [myābɪs] 'the dry...' indicates
   that the *m*-article does appear before [y].

23 See the discussion in RABIN ibid. 36.

24 DIEM ibid. 65.

25 ibid. This town is located in the heart of the central highlands on
   the road between Ṣanʕāʔ and Ṣaʕdah.

especially in mountain areas. Since Bājil is situated fairly close to the
foothills and, furthermore, since the Ḥamir dialect exhibits this distinc-
tion,[26] it is quite possible that the men DIEM interviewed were either
from an area outside the CT region or that they were influenced by the
linguistic environment in which they were interviewed.

4.2. The independent personal pronouns as extracted from the data sup-
plied by my informants are:

1.	m.	ʔana	
	f.	ʔani	ḥna
2.	m.	nta	
	f.	ntin	ntun
3.	m.	huwa	
	f.	hiya	hun

4.2.1. There are several variances with DIEM's data here. One, the com-
mon forms in the 2nd and 3rd plurals, has been discussed in 4.1.1. A sec-
ond point, the forms with initial consonant clusters, follows the rule in
the dialect mentioned in 3.3., though this could also be the result of
the point in 4.1.1.

4.3. The bound object pronouns are:

1.	m.	-na	
	f.	-ni	-aḥna
2.	m.	-(a)k	
	f.	-(i)k	-(a)kun
3.	m.	-ah	
	f.	-(a)ha	-(a)hun

4.3.1. Noteworthy are the singular first-person forms which parallel
the situation in the independent pronouns. The first-person plural, though
mentioned by DIEM, is transcribed in his book as *"ḍarab 'iḥna"*[27] (ḍarab
ʔiḥna in my transcription), which gives the impression that he perceives
this sequence as two separate words. I am unable to explain this, but I
am quite certain that this form must be analyzed as a bound morpheme.

4.4. The paradigm of the most common verb in the dialect meaning 'to
arrive, to come' (given here as in U) is:

26 DIEM ibid. 26f.   27 ibid. 69.

	Perfect		Imperfect	
1.	ʔatēt	ʔatēna	ʔēti	nʔēti
2. m.	ʔatēt	ʔatētun	tʔēti	tʔētun
2. f.	ʔatētin		tʔētin	
3. m.	ʔata	ʔatu	yʔēti	yʔētun
3. f.	ʔatan		tʔēti	

4.4.1. The imperative forms are:

      m. ʔēt   f. ʔēti   pl. ʔētu

4.5. The most common lexical item for expressing "simple desire", e.g. English "I want" or "I'd like" is with an Imperfect form of the verb *ša/ yša. I have used the asterisk in this case to indicate that I did not en- counter a Perfect form of this verb; hence, the form *ša is hypothetical.[28]

4.5.1. The paradigm attested for this verb is:

1.	ʔaša	nša
2. m.	tša	tšun
2. f.	tšin	
3. m.	yša	yšun
3. f.	tša	

4.6. Among the thirty or so hours of tape recorded, three separate par- ticles appeared, all of them prefixed to the "Imperfect" form of verbs, which indicate "future action". One of these, ḥ-, was quite infrequent and, I believe, may be directly attributed to the influence of Egyptian Arabic.

4.6.1. The other two forms, š- and h-, of which the former was more fre- quent, may be related to regional intra-dialectal differences, but this is not yet clear.

4.7. One of the more remarkable features of CT seems to be a residue of the LA "case" system. This occurs in the form of a suffix, -u, which ap- pears with indefinite nominal measures (excluding ʔafʕal patterns, i.e., adjectives of comparison and colors), that do not have an /a/ or /ā/ in their ultimate syllables.

---

28 When specifically questioned about "a desire in the past" an informant (U) gave me the following: [kunt ʔašE šʔētīlak Ettāmis wlakIn mʔi ʔamalu] 'I wanted to come to you yesterday but I had work (to do)'.

Unlike the LA "case" system, though, this form does not alter regard-
less of the syntactic relationship the item in question enters into, i.e.,
it does not change to /i/ and /a/ as in LA, e.g., [štUktUb ki̱tābu] 'Will
you write a book?'. From the foregoing example it may also be seen that
this -u occurs in utterance-final position.

4.7.1. A variant of this phenomenon is the other feature mentioned in
3.1.3. which seems to identify the dialect of the Wādi Mawr area as a re-
gional sub-dialect of CT. In this area this suffix has the form -un, iden-
tical to that of standard Arabic but, again, invariable.[29] Citing the same
sentence from which the analysis in 3.1.3. was made, the general CT ren-
dering is [ʔana bāiku msōq] while in Wādi Mawr the pronunciation is [ʔana
bēkUn əmsōq] 'I am going to the market' (said *before* the noon prayer).[30]

---

29 This phenomenon surfaces in the book by A. Ḥ. ŠARAFADDĪN: *Lahaǧāt al-
   Yaman qadīman wa-ḥadītan*. Cairo 1970, 111, and the author's lack of
   analysis seems to have led to DIEM's uncertainty in *Skizzen* 67 n.3.
   I am still confused by the former's transcription of what I believe
   to be [bēkUn] as بَيكن , though it could also represent yet another
   variation *[bāikUn] which I did not encounter.

30 The phrase used *after* the noon prayer in CT is [ʔana nāširu msōq] and
   in Wādi Mawr [ʔana nāširUn əmsōq].