A Grammar of the Bedouin Dialects
of Central and Southern Sinai
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A Grammar of the Bedouin Dialects of Central and Southern Sinai

By

Rudolf E. de Jong

LEIDEN • BOSTON

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B-form</td>
<td>Bedouinized form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>com.</td>
<td>communis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cf.</td>
<td>confer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coll.</td>
<td>collective noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constr.</td>
<td>construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dem.</td>
<td>demonstrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dim.</td>
<td>diminutive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fem.</td>
<td>feminine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gen.</td>
<td>genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ibid.</td>
<td>ibidem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imper.</td>
<td>imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperf.</td>
<td>imperfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.P.A.</td>
<td>International Phonetic Alphabet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intrans.</td>
<td>intransitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-form</td>
<td>Koine form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lit.</td>
<td>(translated) literally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masc.</td>
<td>masculine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDS</td>
<td>Multi-Dimensional Scaling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nom.</td>
<td>nominal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n.u.</td>
<td>nomen unitatis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obj.</td>
<td>object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p.</td>
<td>person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perf.</td>
<td>perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pl.</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pos.</td>
<td>possessive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pron.</td>
<td>pronominal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rel.</td>
<td>relative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sg.</td>
<td>singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for the Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subj.</td>
<td>subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suff.</td>
<td>suffix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trans.</td>
<td>transitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>stressed a or ā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>short high vowel i or u</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Í stressed short or long high vowel (stressed i, u, ī or ū)
T feminine morpheme (tā marbūṭah)
v any short vowel
V any short or long vowel
visión any long vowel
C any consonant; a following subscript number (1, 2, 3 or 4) refers to the numbering of the radical in the root.
X any back fricative (x, ḡ, ḥ, ʿ, h)
M any velarized consonant (primary or secondary emphatics)
[] phonetic representation between the square brackets
// phonemic representation between the slashes
|| representation of underlying base form
* precedes historical forms or phonemes, intermediate forms in illustrations of rule ordering, or follows a form with a remark given below
· precedes a form not heard in the dialect discussed and the form is deemed unlikely to occur in that dialect
+ followed by…
Ø zero
> develops into (synchronically) or developed into (historically)
< develops from (synchronically) or developed from (historically)
≠ does not equal
= equals, is identical with
≈ is almost identical with
… any combination of Vs (vowels) and/or Cs (consonants) within word boundaries
~ co-occurs with
/ co-occurs not in free variation with
# speech pause

The list below shows abbreviations used for tribal varieties of Arabic (the asterisk ‘*’ following the abbreviation indicates that the dialect has been described or partially treated in De Jong 2000). The tribes/non-tribal dialect communities are listed here more or less from north (-east) to west and then south (see map in Appendix ‘Approximate distribution of Bedouin tribes in Sinai and surrounding regions’). Roman numbers indicate to which typological group the dialects have been concluded to belong. In brackets the names of the tribes follow in a classicized transcription:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialect</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Name of Tribe/Social Entity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>the dialect of the LOBALAM (of the Negev Desert, not in Sinai), as described in Blanc 1970 (LOBALAM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA*</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>SMELIY, the dialect of the SMELIAT (SMELIAT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA*</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>SWERKIY, the dialect of the SWERKAIH (SWERKAIH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIA</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>MALLAHY, the dialect of the MALLAH (MALLAH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘AA*</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>‘ARAYS, the dialect of ‘ARAYS (not a tribe, but a town)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nTA*</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Northern TURBIY, the dialect of the northern TARABIN (TARABIN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BaA*</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>BALAWIY, the dialect of BALIY (BALI) (BALI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DA*</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>DWEGRIY, the dialect of the DWEGRAH (DWEGRAH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA*</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>BAYADIY, the dialect of the BAYADYYAH (BAYADYYAH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AxA*</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>AXRASIY, the dialect of the AXARSAH (AXARSAH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SaA*</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>SMENIY, the dialect of the SAMAINAH (SAMAINAH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘AgA*</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>‘GELY, the dialect of the ‘AGAYLAIH (‘AGAYLAIH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA*</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>MASUDIY, the dialect of the MASAIID (MASAIID)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘AyA*</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>‘AYAYDIY, the dialect of the ‘AYAYDAH (‘AYAYDAH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eSHA*</td>
<td>near III</td>
<td>eastern SARQAIY, the dialect of the eastern SARQAIYYA (a region in the eastern Nile Delta, not a tribe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HWA</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>HWETIY, the dialect of the HWETIYAH (HWETIYAH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HWJ</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>HWETIY, the dialect of the HWETIYAH (HWETIYAH) in Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AhA</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>AHAYWIY, the dialect of the AHAYWAIH (‘AHAYWAIH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TyA</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>TITHIY, the dialect of the TAYAIH (TAYAIH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DbA</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>DIBRIY, the dialect of the DIBUR (DIBUR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAŠ</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>TURBIYAH of SADR, the dialect of the TARABIN of RA’S SADR (TARABIN of RA’S SADR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ĠRA</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>ĠARAGRIY, the dialect of the ĠARAGRAH (ĠARAGRAH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAN</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>TURBIYAH of NWABI, the dialect of the TARABIN of NWABI (TARABIN of NWABI)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Abbreviations and Symbols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BdA</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Badriy, the dialect of the Badārah (Badāra or Badārā)¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'LA</td>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>'Lēgiy, the dialect of the 'Lēgāt (Ulayqāt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HmA</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Ḥmēdiy, the dialect of the Ḥamādah (Ḥamāda)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŠwA</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Šālhiy, the dialect of the Šawālḥah (Šawāliha)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GrA</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Garrāšiy, the dialect of the Garāršah (Qarāriša)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ĜbA</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Ĝbāliy, the dialect of the Ĝbāliyyah (Ĝibāliya)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASA</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Saʿidiy, the dialect of the Awlād Saʿīd (Awlād Saʿīd)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HnA</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Hindiy, the dialect of the Hanādwhah (a non-Bedouin family in Wādiy aṭ-Ṭūr) (Hanādiwa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŢwA</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Ţawara Arabic: in collective reference to the dialects of the Ĝbāliyyah, Awlād Saʿīd, Šawālḥah, Garāršah and Ḥamādah (Ţawara)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MzA</td>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Mzēniy, the dialect of the Mzēnah (Muzayna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BWA</td>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Wāṣliy, the dialect of the Banī Wāṣil (Banū Wāṣil)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ See remark *' in Introduction I.d.
PREFACE

For too long our knowledge of the dialects of the central and southern Sinai had remained scanty, and many questions about the linguistic characteristics of these dialects remained unanswered, or at best guessed after. After completing *A Grammar of Bedouin Dialects of the Northern Sinai Littoral* (published in 2000) a logical next step was therefore to research the dialects of Bedouin tribes in the central and southern parts of Sinai as well.

In 2002 I submitted a research proposal to the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (in Dutch Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, abbreviated as N.W.O.) to undertake such investigations. In the following year N.W.O. graciously made funds available for the execution of this linguistic research under their post-doctoral programme named VENI. The research proposal was submitted under the title ‘The Bedouin Dialects of the Bedouin Tribes of Central and Southern Sinai; Testing and Adapting Models of Quantitative Comparison’.

The Amsterdam Center for Language and Communication (abbreviated as A.C.L.C.) at the University of Amsterdam acted as host for my research and provided institutional support. Manfred Woidich again allowed me to profit from his extraordinary expertise in the field of Arabic linguistics and dialectology, as well as to be inspired by his thoughts on a variety of topics. I owe N.W.O., A.C.L.C. and Manfred Woidich my gratitude.

To gather linguistic data I spent 8 periods of between 4 and 7 weeks in the area. I usually rented an apartment in ٔDahab for my stay. For always taking care of my local needs such as a reasonably priced apartment, for answering any questions local authorities might have about my activities, and for being a good friend, I wish to thank here ٔAliy Mḥammad al-‘Āyiš, who is the owner and general manager of Mirage Village in ٔDahab and who is himself a member of the Biyyāḏiyyah in the north of Sinai.1 In the course of time, apart from being a superb host for his guests, which comes naturally to him, he has proven himself a true friend on numerous occasions.

The person without whom my research and interpreting the results would have been impossible—and much less entertaining in any case—and

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1 The dialect of the Biyyāḏiyyah was described in De Jong 2000:chapter III.
to whom I am at least equally grateful, is ‘Īd Silim ‘Īd ‘Awdiḥ al-Aṭraš, known by many as ‘Īd at-Tuṛbāniy. He is a member of the Taṛābin of Ṛās Ṣadr (where he was born and raised) and he has travelled the desert since he was seven years old, when as a young boy he would accompany his father on trips to nearly every corner of the Sinai peninsula and into Jordan. His experience in desert travel made him eminently suitable to act as a guide and he could at the same time introduce me to members of the different tribes (he knows virtually every wadi and almost everyone living there). His gentle nature and sense of humor make him an ideal travelling companion, and these qualities combined with his loyalty have made him a good friend for life. Not only did he travel with me, he also made recordings for me in my absence, and sat with me—for weeks on end—behind my desk to make sure I could write it all out, word by word. He would also explain to me many details of Bedouin life in Sinai often not available in books.

For his invaluable help in producing illustrations by means of various computer programs of the SPSS, processing of the data collected during the research for this study, and for his assistance in the interpretation of the outcomes of various calculated plotted maps, I owe my gratitude to Geer Hoppenbrouwers of Hogeschool Zuyd in the Netherlands (in the province of Limburg). In our at times very frequent e-mail contact, but also during our face-to-face meetings, he brought statistics to life, and showed me that it is far removed from the dullness that I had previously associated with this discipline.

Finally, my gratitude is due to all the people who have contributed to this research as informants. Telling stories or speaking about daily activities as subjects for my recordings, or answering questionnaires may not be everyone’s favorite pastime, but my interviewees never gave me the feeling that I was overburdening them. I attribute this willingness to cooperate to the generosity of my ‘victims’ and at the same time often detected a sense of pride among them, that a westerner would come all the way from his homeland with the sole purpose of studying their speech.

Any shortcomings still remaining in this study are of course my own.

Amsterdam, 26 September 2010

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2 ‘Īd is of the Gṣār clan, for a tribal genealogy of the Taṛābin see Bailey 1991:290.