FUNCTIONAL VARIATIONS OF THE SO-CALLED FEMININE MARKER IN ARABIC

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The linguistic category of gender has been extensively studied from both the synchronic and diachronic points of view. The present article can only touch on some of the most provocative issues of these studies. Its proper aim is to propose a short synchronic survey of the most outstanding functional variations of the suffix -a /-at in a number of linguistic systems of Modern Written Arabic and some of its colloquial varieties.

1. The inflectional category of gender played an important role as a classificatory criterion in a number of languages with a not quite clear genetic relationship. The membership of a language in the Hamito-Semitic (Greenberg's Afro-Asiatic) linguistic family, for instance, has frequently been considered as cogently proved by the mere presence of gender therein. In this context, the Hamito-Semitic gender, possibly correlated with the extra-linguistic category of sex, was usually opposed to the Bantu system of non-gender nominal classes. With some investigators (Lepsius, Meinhof), the relative importance of sex-gender, as a classificatory criterion, was exaggerated to such an extent that it led to patently erroneous results. C. Meinhof's classification of Hottentot as a Hamitic language may well illustrate the misuse of this classificatory approach (Greenberg 1966: 43-44).[1]

The evolutionary relationship between non-gender nominal classes and gender classes has been seriously studied by Semitologists and Arabicists as well. According to some of the widely accepted hypotheses, advanced to this effect, Semitic gender may have evolved from non-gender nominal classes (Brockelmann's *Wertklassensystem* : 1908:404), still reflected in a number of derivational classes, and their relationship to the biological category of sex, in nouns

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[1] According to GREENBERG (1966: Index to Language Classification) the Hottentot language belongs to the Khoisan family (Central South African Khoisan).

denoting higher animate beings, may well be interpreted as a matter of a parallel or even a secondary development.[2]

1.1. When disregarding some intra-root means that may play a part in Arabic gender-marking, such as *'aRRaR* (masculine) - *RaRRā'* (feminine), e.g. *'aswad - sawdā'* "black", or *'aRRaR - RuRRā* , e.g. *'aḥsan - ḥusnā* "better, (the) best /adj./), the Arabic gender system may formally be presented in terms of the following opposition:

unmarked (masculine): stem + *0*   marked (feminine): stem + *a* :
as in: *muslim* "Muslim";   - in pre-pausal position, as in: *muslima* "Muslim woman", and:
                                       stem+ *at-* :
                                       - in pre-juncture position, as in:
                                       muslimatun "id." (nominative, indefinite).

The atypical reflexes of this suffix (*bint : bin + t* "girl, daughter", *'uḫt : 'uḫ + t* "sister"), as well as some other, less commonly occurring feminine markers, will not be taken into account.

Unless occurring in phrasal contexts, the examples quoted will be presented in pausal forms and, for the sake of simplicity, the suffix *-a* / *-at* will henceforth be referred to in its pausal form, too.

1.2. Hypotheses, trying to clear up the genetic background of the suffix *-a* in its presumed pre-gender stage, show a rather confused and controversial picture. Brockelmann´s *Wertklassensystem* is said to be reflected in a number of residual semantic categories (*Bedeuntungskategorien*), such as diminutives, deterioratives and the like (1908:404). Further, this second-class ranking, with its connotation of inferiority, is sometimes presented as compatible with the natural femininity of female entities (ibid.: 405).

The general connotation of inferiority may manifest itself as restrictiveness that may best be observed with a number of nouns, organized in pairs, as members of some types of binary derivational systems, such as unit nouns (UN), opposed to collective nouns (CN), in the well-established CN-UN system; or instance nouns (IN), opposed to verbal nouns (VN), in the VN-IN system,[3] and the like. Some of these cases will more closely be examined in the following paragraphs.

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[2] Cf. also Moscati (1964:86): "The feminine morpheme is employed not only to indicate the corresponding natural gender but also nomina unitatis, diminutives and pejoratives, abstract and collective nouns. This multiplicity of function points to the probable origin of the feminine ending in a more complex system of classes within which the category of number has to be included as well (by way of the collective)." For other references see also Fleisch (1961:326).

[3] Terminologically, collective nouns (*nomina collectiva*) of the CN-UN system correspond to *'asmā' al-ǧins* of the Arab grammarians, to Brockelmann's (1913) Kollektiva als Gattungsbegriffe, Reckendorf's (1921) Gattungswörter, Fischer's (1972) Gattungskollektive,

In contrast to restrictiveness, the suffix -*a* may, in some cases, signal a quite opposite value that might perhaps be labelled as augmentativeness or, in a more straightforward linguistic wording, as plurality, that is derived from or rather inherent in the derivational value of collectiveness. From a genetic point of view, the close interaction between collectiveness and plurality is supported by the well-known hypothesis of the collective origin of the Semitic broken plurals (cf., Brockelmann 1908:426 ff., Fleisch 1968:92-93, Petráček 1960-1964, esp. 1962:362-383, et al.). Collective nouns, represent the first vague step towards a linguistic expression of plurality which is not yet distinctly separated from the basic concept of unity. While the broken (i.e., pattern-marked) plurals have lost their ancestral collective nature, the latter is maintained in what Fischer (1972:52) classifies as abstract nouns (Abstrakt-Substantive). These operate as plural-collectives (*Pl.-Kollektive*) when referring to human entities, as in *ḥammāla* "status of a porter or a carrier, his work and trade;[4] porters, carriers" (Lastträgerschaft; Lastträger /pl./) or *muslima* "Muslimdom; Muslims" (Moslemschaft; Moslems), formally coinciding with the inflectionally conveyed membership of this noun in the female-feminine sex-gender class, viz. "Muslim woman". The genetic relationship between collectives and broken plurals may even be extended to verbal abstracts on the basis of a far-reaching identity of forms common to broken plurals and verbal abstracts (Fleisch 1961:470).

In the current lexicographical practice, however, these -*a*-marked plural-collectives are mostly classified separately as either plurals, as in *ḥayyāla* "horsemen, riders" (alternating, in this application, with a parallel plural form *ḥayyālūn*), or genuine collective nouns, as in *ḥayyāla* "cavalry". This lexico-

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Fleisch's (1961) noms d'espèce, etc. The unit nouns (*nomina unitatis*), *'asmā' al-waḥda*, have to be identified with Brockelmann's Einzelnomina, Fleisch's noms d'unité, etc. For the verbal nouns (*nomina verbi, nomina actionis*) of the VN-IN system (see §2 in what follows), *maṣdar* (plur. *maṣādir*), *'ism al-fiʿl* (plur. *'asmā' al-'afʿāl*), and various calques of the traditional Latin terms in the European linguistic descriptions of Arabic. Owing to the striking syntactic similarity of the Arabic verbal nouns with the Indo-European infinitive, some authors (Lane et al.) use the term infinitive noun. The abstract value of verbal nouns is reflected in terms, like verbal abstracts (Beeston 1970). The instance nouns of the VN-IN system, *'asmā' al-marra* in the Arabic sources, are mostly referred to as *nomina vicis* (Wright, Brockelmann, Fischer).

[4] In this sense, it is nearly synonymous with another abstract noun: *ḥimāla.* The pluralcollective *ḥammāla*, has to be kept apart from the instrumental *ḥammāla* "support, pillar; suspenders"; the inflectionally featured *ḥammāla*, as female-feminine counterpart of *ḥammāl*, seems to be excluded from the lexicon of Modern Written Arabic, as a socio-culturally atypical unit, although it is still accepted, in this application, in some colloquial varieties, as e.g. in the Takrūna Arabic *ḥammāla*, fem. of *ḥammāl*, "woman porter". The plural interpretation of the plural-collective -*a* seems to prevail in all varieties of Arabic, as in Standard: baqqār - (plur.) *baqqāra* "cowhand, cowboy"; *ḥammār - ḥammāra* "donkey-driver"; *fallāq - fallāqa* "bandit, highwayman, highway robber"; *naẓẓār - naẓẓāra* "spectator"; Egyptian Arabic: *šawīš - šawišiyya* "sergeant, policeman" (Mitchell 1960:225); Iraqi Arabic: *ǧannāz - ǧannāza* "person who accompanies the deceased from where he died to the city where he is to be buried"; *ʿakkās - ʿakkāsa* "photographer", etc. For the -*a*-marked plurals in both endo- and exocentric relationships see §§ 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3.

graphically sanctioned autonomy of the two functions (cf. Wehr 1979) will also be maintained in the present analysis.

1.3. Irrespective of the evolutionary background of Semitic gender, most synchronic manifestations of this inflectional category show, in Arabic, a relatively large number of colliding points with the derivational domain. In Arabic grammars, however, the suffix -*a* is usually classified as a feminine marker. Such a presentation reflects, to be sure, the most important and the most conspicuous function of this morpheme despite the obvious fact that the bulk of its applications cannot satisfactorily be described in terms of a mere gender marking. Beyond the inflectional paradigm of sex-gender: male-masculine / female-feminine, the -*a*-marked feminine gender may be associated with a variety of derivational values. Some of them, such as collectiveness, unitness or instantness, have already been mentioned above. In some other cases, the suffix -*a* displays an exclusively derivational value and its presence does not signal the feminine gender class membership of its bearer. Or, on the contrary, the absence of this marker, with some types of nouns, need not necessarily imply the gender class value of masculinity.

The proper aim of the study is to survey all the main functions, representative of the suffix -*a* , and to illustrate them on nouns which maintain their systemic identity as well as on those which have already lost their unique systemic membership and can be reclassified in terms of different linguistic systems.

2. The suffix -a, as a multifunctional morpheme, may summarily be characterized as an inflectional-and/or-derivational marker. Its functional complexity, by far exceeding mere gender marking, may best be expressed in terms of the following trichotomy which will constitute the starting point for all subsequents considerations: (i - id - d), where (i) stands for the inflectional function of gender marking, (id) for the shared inflectional-and-derivational marking, while (d) for an exclusive derivational marking, as in:

(i) signalling the feminine gender-class membership in nouns denoting animate beings which can be organized in sex-gender pairs, as in *mudarris* (male-masculine) "teacher, instructor" - *mudarrisa* (female-feminine) "woman teacher, schoolmistress" or *kalb* "dog"- *kalba* "bitch";

(id) signalling the gender-class membership in nouns which may simultaneously be classified as members of one of the -*a* - marked derivational classes, as in:

maktab (masculine, *nomen loci*) "office; school; desk" - *maktaba* (feminine, -*a* -marked *nomen loci*) "library; bookstore".

The latter type of shared (id) marking may be even more clearly observed in the well-established binary systems, such as collective (CN) and unit nouns (UN); verbal (VN) and instance nouns (IN); or in the intensive system *fa^ccāl* - *fa^ccāla* , and the like. Some examples:

CN-UN: *waraq* (masculine, CN) "leaf (-ves), foliage" - *waraqa* (feminine, UN) "a (=one) leaf";

naḫl (masculine, CN) "bee(s)" - *naḫla* (feminine, UN) "a bee (one single specimen of the species)", etc.;

VN-IN: *ḍarb* (masculine, VN) "beating, striking" (verbal abstract of the verb *ḍaraba*) - *ḍarba* (feminine, VI) "blow, knock; stroke" (i.e., one single act of the VN);

ṣurāḫ, *ṣurāḫ, ṣarīḫ* (masculine, VN) "crying, yelling; clamor" - *ṣarḫa* (feminine, VI) "cry, outcry, yell, scream", etc.;

faᶜᶜāl - faᶜᶜāla : *ḫayyāl* (masculine, *faᶜᶜāl*-type intensive: agential) "horse-man, rider" - *ḫayyāla* (feminine, *faᶜᶜāla*-type intensive: collective) "cavalry";

ṭayyār (masculine, intensive: agential) "flier, aviator, pilot; - *ṭayyāra* (feminine, intensive: instrumental) "airplane, aircraft";

ᶜassāl (masculine, intensive: agential) "gatherer of honey; bee-keeper, apiculturist) - *ᶜassāla* (feminine, intensive: instrumental/lo-cal) "beehive"; and the like.

As evident from the examples adduced, *faᶜᶜāl - faᶜᶜāla* derivatives may equally well be of a deverbative (*ṭayyār-ṭayyāra* < *ṭāra*) as of a denominative origin (*ḫayyāl - ḫayyāla* < *ḫayl* ; *ᶜassāl - ᶜassāla* < *ᶜasl*);

(d) signalling a derivational value devoid of any implication of gender mark-ing, as in: *rāwin* (*nomen agentis,* nonintensive) "narrator; transmitter (of ancient Arabic poetry) -*rāwiya* (intensive stem, unmarked for gender: its male-mascu-line classification is due to socio-cultural constraints of the traditional Arab so-ciety) "id." (with a connotation, however, of a recognized status of profession-ality and excellence),[5] or:

ʾallām (intensive $_{(1)}$) "knowing thoroughly, erudite" - *ʾallāma* (intensive $_{(2)}$) "most erudite, very learned (possibly substantivized; in the latter case, the male-masculine status has to be ascribed to the same reasons as above)", etc.

2.1. In juncture, the suffix *-a* , represented by its pre-juncture form *-at-*, may carry out its marking action in two different processes:

(1) in an additive process, typical of the inflectional relationships: *-a + m =* *-at + m* , where *m* stands for any linguistic marker(s) compatible with the addi-tive process, as in: *madrasa + un = madrasatun* "school (nominative, indefi-nite)", or:

(2) in a substitutive process, typical of the derivational relationships: *-a + m* *= m* , where m symbolizes linguistic marker(s) compatible with this process, as in: *madrasa + ī = madrasī* "school (adj.), scholastic".

It is worthwhile noting that the substitutive process, by concealing an impor-tant (id) indicator, may lead, in some cases, to interpretational problems which cannot be settled in formal terms. Semantic evidence is, then, the only means to deal with the problem.

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⁵ BLACHÈRE (1952:99): *rāwin* (Blachère : *rāwī*) "transmetteur" - *rāwiya* "grand transmetteur".

Some examples:

bašar "man, human being; men, mankind",

bašara "epidermis; skin",

bašarī $_{(1)}$ "human",

bašarī $_{(2)}$ "epidermal; skin (adj.)".

The extent of ambiguity may become still greater by the effect of an incidental backformation, as in:

'umm "mother",

'umma "nation; community" (derivationally inactive on the singular basis, a plural-based relative adjective, however, does exist: *'umamī* "international"),

'ummīya "illiteracy" (derivational basis in the regressive process),

'ummī $_{(1)}$ "maternal, motherly",

'ummī $_{(2)}$ "illiterate".

2.2. The operational range of the *-a*-marker substantially varies with particular functional classes of the (i - id - d) trichotomy. The marking action of this morpheme, derived from its functional value, may be interpreted:

(1) as an exclusively affix-based process, independent of the other morphemic constituents of the nominal stem, or:

(2) as a combined affix-and-pattern-based process.

2.2.1. An exclusively affix-based process is peculiar to the (i) and (d) functional types of the (i - id - d) trichotomy, as in:

(i): sex-gender: *zero/-a* in e.g.: *muslim* "Muslim" - *muslima* "Muslim woman" (§§ 1.1; 2 (i));

(i): number: *zero/-a* in e.g.: *ḥammāl* "porter, carrier" - *ḥammāla*, plural (cf., § 1.2.);

(d): *zero / -a* in e.g.: *rāwin - rāwiya* or *ʿallām - ʿallāma* (as presented in § 2 (d) above).

2.2.2. A combined affix-and-pattern-based process is associated with the (id) class of the (i - id - d) system where *-a* , in a shared action with the pattern morpheme (the non-contiguous set of intra-root vowels, inclusive of their zero-representations, and of intra-root consonants which may, even if rather rarely, co-occur with them) or with what Erwin calls pattern complex (1963:52), i.e. the pattern morpheme, as defined above, combined with one or more affixes, as in:

(1) *-a* in a shared action with a ([ ]-marked) pattern in e.g.:

[*-a-0-*]*-a* : *naḥla* (feminine, UN) "a bee", or:

(2) *-a* in a shared action with a ({ }-marked) pattern-complex, as in:

{*ma-*[*-0-a-*]}*-a* : *maktaba* (feminine, *nomen loci*) "library; bookstore".[6]

3. The functional multiplicity of the suffix *-a* cannot avoid paradigmatic collisions of very various types. The phenomenon of formal fusion will be examined on sequences of the *a*-marked paradigmatic units, arranged in functionally contrasting pairs. When the fusion affects more than one single pair of function-

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[6] The pattern-complex *maktaba* corresponds, in a pausal presentation (the closing word-signalling morpheme *-(t)un* is unrepresented) to a word, the latter being contextually presented as *maktabatun.*

ally contrasting units (f_1 - f_2), then a sequence like f_1 - f_2 - f_3... will be rearranged as f_1 - f_2 , f_2 - f_3 , f_1 - f_3 , and so on.

The affiliation of formally coinciding units with any of the (i - id - d) functional classes will play an important part in the following classification. Units, belonging to the same functional class of the (i - id - d) system, will be classified as (1) endocentric, while those, pertaining to different functional classes of this system, will be referred to as (2) exocentric coincidences.

3.1. Endocentric coincidences will, then, include functionally contrasting pairs, identical as to their membership in any of the (i - id - d) functional classes, as in:

3.1.1. (i - i):

(i): sex-gender: male-masculine (unmarked) - female-feminine (-*a*-marked), e.g.:
 fallāḥ "peasant, farmer, felah" - *fallāḥa* "peasant woman; peasant girl";

(i): number: singular (unmarked) - plural (-*a*-marked), e.g.:
 fallāḥ, singular - *fallāḥa*, plural. [7]

Similarly:

(i): *naẓẓār* "spectator, onlooker" - *naẓẓāra* "woman onlooker, spectatress",

(i): *naẓẓār*, singular - *naẓẓāra*, plural (see note 7 above), etc.

As the sex-gender distinction need not necessarily be explicitly signalled with all nominal patterns, the co-occurrence of the implicit and explicit gender values may lead to the following relationships:

ḥaddām, male-masculine, "manservant, servant"; female-feminine, "woman servant, maid", alternating with *ḥaddām,* male-masculine - *ḥaddāma*, female-feminine. In the latter case, the same (i-i) gender-number coincidence will be obtained as that given above:

(i): *ḥaddām*, male-masculine - *ḥaddāma*, female-feminine,

(i): *ḥaddām*, singular, - *ḥaddāma*, plural (see note 7 above).

Takrūna Arabic:[8]

(i): *ᶜawwām*, male-masculine, "travailleur qui ne fait pas partie d'une équipe constituée, mais s'y adjoint en cas de besoin, pour l'accomplissement de tâches

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[7] Fischer-defined plural collectives (1972:52) present the major classificatory problem in the present inquiry, as their plural value entail a paradigmatic classification while their collective featuring falls within a clearly derivational domain. Since the classification, proposed in this paper, treats inflectional and derivational phenomena as separate, fully autonomous entities, these -*a*-marked plural-collectives will be classified as either plurals or collectives or as units alternatively classifiable in both these terms. The decisive criterion will be the interpretation sanctioned by the available lexicographical and grammatical sources evaluated to this effect. Accordingly, a plural-collective like *ḥayyāla*, will be presented as (i) *ḥayyāla* (co-occurring with *ḥayyālīn*), plural of *ḥayyāl* "horseman, rider" and (id) *ḥayyāla*, collective, feminine, "cavalry" (unless otherwise indicated, all Standard Arabic data are those of WEHR 1979). For the *fallāḥa* - *filāḥa* relationship see also note 4 above, viz. *ḥammāla-ḥimāla.*

[8] Takrūna Arabic is a rural variety of Tunisian colloquial Arabic. Longer, formally coinciding sequences, frequently occurring in some colloquial varieties of Arabic (less ordinarily in Standard Arabic), will not necessarily be presented in all combinatorily possible binary relationships.

occasionnelles" ("day laborer who does not belong to a regular gang and who is occasionally hired for special purposes") - *ᶜawwāma* , "travailleuse à qui est fait occasionnellement appel" ("occasional female day laborer"),

(i): *ᶜawwām*, singular - *ᶜawwāma*, plural; or:

(i): *ġəssāl*, male-masculine, "laveur des morts; laveur d'habits" ("washer of the dead; washer, laundryman") - *ġəssāla*, female-feminine, "laveuse; laveuse des mortes" ("washerwoman; woman washer of the dead /women/"), [9]

(i): *ġəssāl,* singular - *ġəssāla,* plural, etc. This (i - i) sequence will be presented later on as part of a much more involved relationship consisting of both endo- and exocentric constituents.

Iraqi Arabic:

(i): *bayyāᶜ*, male-masculine, "salesman, sales clerk" - *bayyāᶜa,* female-feminine, "salesgirl",

(i): *bayyāᶜ*, singular - *bayyāᶜa*, plural.

3.1.1.1. Endocentric relationships of the present type may occur in longer sequences, as those observed in Takrūna Arabic:

(i - i -i): (i - i)$_1$: male-masculine (plural) - female-feminine (singular), (i - i)$_2$: female-feminine (singular) - female-feminine (plural), e.g.:

(i - i)$_1$: *ḥəṭṭāb* "bûcheron; ramasseur de bois à brûler" ("woodcutter; gatherer of firewood") - *ḥəṭṭāba,* plural,

(i - i)$_2$: *ḥəṭṭāba* "ramasseuse de bois à brûler" ("female gatherer of firewood" - *ḥəṭṭāba,* plural.

Similarly:

fərrāž, "spectateur" ("spectator, onlooker") - *fərrāža,* plural,

fərrāža "spectatrice" ("spectatress") - *fərrāža,* plural.

3.1.2. (id - id):

(id): where (i<id) indicates gender: feminine, while (d<id) collectively interpreted plural-collectives, as in: *ḥammāla,* "status of a porter or a carrier, his work and trade; porter(s), carrier(s)" (cf., Fischer 1972:52: "Lastträgerschaft; Lastträger /plur./"),

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[9] As a result of socio-cultural constraints, the lexical meaning of the male-masculine and female-feminine constituents of the sex-gender relationship may differ so widely that it is questionable whether we have to do with autonomous lexical units or merely with various inflections of the same word, e.g.: *ṣarrāf* "money changer; cashier, tresaurer; paymaster, banker" - *ṣarrāfa* "(woman)cashier" or the Iraqi Arabic *daggāg (ǧidri)* "a man who gives smallpox vaccinations" - *daggāga* "a woman who does tatooing" or the Takrūna Arabic *ḥəmmāṣ* "grilleur de pois chiches; marchand de pois chiches grillés" ("chick-pea roaster or seller") - *ḥəmmāṣa* "(femme) habile à confectionner le couscous à gros grains nommé *mḥəmməṣ"* ("woman experienced in preparing a variety of couscous called *mḥəmməṣ"*). Divergences of the latter type are frequently covered by separate lexical units, as in the Egyptian Arabic *makwagi* "laundryman, ironer, starcher" as against *kawwāya* "laundrywoman" (Spiro 1929); or they may restrict the use to only one of the two constituents of the sex-gender pair, as in *qawwād* (only male-masculine) "pander, pimp, procurer" or *naffāṯa* (only female-feminine) "woman who spits on the knots (in exercising a form of Arabian witchcraft), sorceress", or the like.

(id): where (i<id) signals gender: feminine, while (d<id) indicates *fa^cc̄ala*-type instrumentalness: *ḥammāla,* feminine, instrumental, "(carrier) beam, girder; suspenders".

When relying, however, on the lexicographical evidence (Wehr 1979), we obtain an (i - id) exocentric sequence of the type examined in the following paragraph:

(i): *ḥammāla,* number: plural, co-occurring with *ḥammālīn,* coinciding with:

(id): *ḥammāla,* feminine, instrumental, of the (id - id) sequence quoted above.

3.2. Exocentric coincidences, involving contrasting units that belong to different functional classes of the (i - id - d) hierarchy, may be illustrated on the following cases of formal fusion:

3.2.1. (i - id): where (i) signals sex-gender: female-feminine, while (i<id) gender: feminine, and (d<id) *fa^cc̄ala*-type instrumentalness, as in:

(i): *saḥḥār,* male-masculine, "sorcerer, magician, wizard, charmer" - *saḥḥāra,* female-feminine, "sorceress, witch", (id): *saḥḥāra,* feminine, instrumental, "case, crate, box"";

Similarly:

(i): *ṭayyār,* "flyer, aviator, pilot" - *ṭayyāra,* "aviatrix, woman pilot",

(id): *ṭayyāra,* "airplane, aircraft; kite (toy)";

(i): *ġassāl,* "washer, washerman, laundryman" - *ġassāla,* "washerwoman, laundress",

(id): *ġassāla,* "washing machine", etc.

3.2.2. (i - id): where (i) indicates number: plural, while (i<id) gender: feminine, and (d<id) *fa^cc̄ala*-type instrumentalness, as in:

(i): *šayyāl,* singular, "porter, carrier" - *šayyāla* (possibly co-occurring with *šayyālīn*), plural,

(id): *šayyāla,* gender class: feminine; derivational class: *fa^cc̄ala*-type instrumental, "suspender", or:

(i): *ṭawwāf,* singular, "mounted rural mail carrier" - *ṭawwāfa,* plural,

(id): *ṭawwāfa,* gender class: feminine derivational class: *fa^cc̄ala*-instrumental, "patrol boat, coastal patrol vessel" (Egyptian regional usage).

3.2.3. (i - id): where (i) indicates plural, while (i<id) feminine gender, and (d<id) *fa^cc̄ala*-type collectiveness, as in:

(i): *ḥayyāla,* singular, "horseman, rider" - *ḥayyāla,* plural,

(id): *ḥayyāla,* feminine, collective, "cavalry", or:

(i): *baḥḥār,* plur. *baḥḥāra* (co-occurring with *baḥḥārūn*), "seaman, mariner, sailor",

(id): *baḥḥāra,* "crew (of a ship or an airplane)", etc.

Chad-Sudanese Arabic:

ḥayyālī, plur. *ḥayyāla,* (co-occurring with *ḥayyāl*) "horseman",

ḥayyāla, "cavalry", or:

ǧellābī, plur. *ǧellāba,* (co-occurring with *ǧalālīb*) "hawker, trader",

ǧellāba, "caravan; party of merchants", etc.

3.2.3.1. The plural suffix -*a* in cases like *ḫayyāla* "horsemen", possibly restated in terms of *ḫayyāla* "cavalry", may be, in a sense, compared to some other lexically relevant allomorphs of the plural morpheme. In a number of cases, the suffix -*īn*, may also be lexicalized in producing a sort of *nomina loci* which equal, by their connotation of localness, nouns belonging to the derivational class of *nomina loci et temporis* of the traditional classification in Arabic grammars. E.g.:

Hispano-Arabic:

šaᶜᶜārīn, presumably derived from the annexion-type construction *sūq aš-šaᶜᶜārīn*, (literally "market of the barley vendors") "marché où l'on vend de l'orge" ("barley market") (Dozy 1,1921: 764: *Gl.Esp.* 356-8). The singular treatment of this term is confirmed in Alcalá (1505): "cevaderia, lugar donde se vende cevada" ("barley market") (Dozy, ibid.; cf. also Corriente 1988: 108). Originally relatable to the singular:

šaᶜᶜār, "celui qui vend de l'orge" ("seller of barley") (Dozy, ibid.: Alcalá; also Corriente, ibid.). Or:

wazzāzīn, "endroit où l'on élève des oies" ("breeding place for geese") (Alcalá: "ansarería"), originally relatable to the singular:

wazzāz "celui qui prend soin des oies" ("goose breeder") (Dozy 2, 1921: 798; cf. also Corriente 1988: 216).

3.2.4. (i - d): where (i) indicates number: plural, (d) the derivational class membership: -*a*-marked intensiveness, frequently coincident with the intensive pattern *faᶜᶜāla* (invariable in gender and number), as in:

(i): *raḫḫāl*, singular, "great traveller, explorer; nomad" - *raḫḫāla*, plural,

(d): *raḫḫāla*, (invar.), -*a*-marked intensive, frequently coinciding with the pattern *faᶜᶜāla* "great traveller, explorer; globetrotter".

3.3. In some units, displaying paradigmatically well-established -*a*-marked plurals, longer coincident sequences are of a quite common occurrence, as in:

(i - id - d): where (i) signals plural, while (i<id) feminine gender, (d<id) *faᶜᶜāla*-type instrumentalness, and (d) an -*a*-marked intensiveness that is, once again, frequently coinciding with the intensive pattern *faᶜᶜāla*, as in:

(i): *ǧawwāl*, singular, "traveler, tourist; ambulant" - *ǧawwāla*, plural,

(id): *ǧawwāla*, feminine, instrumental, "motorcycle; cruiser"; or:

(d): *ǧawwāla*, intensive, "one given to roaming or traveling; hiker; wanderer, wayfarer".

In a binary representation, postulated in §3, the sequence just quoted would yield three coincident pairs of exocentric type: (i) - (id); (i) - (d), and (id) - (d).

3.4. Such sequences may simultaneously contain both endo- and exocentric relationships, as in:

Takrūna Arabic:

(i - i -id): where (i)$_1$ indicates sex-gender: female-feminine, (i)$_2$ number: plural, (i<id) gender: feminine, and (d<id) *faᶜᶜāla*-featured collectiveness, as in:

(i - i) : endocentric relationship:

(i): *fərrāž*, male-masculine, "spectateur" ("spectator") - *fərrāža*, female-feminine, "spectatrice" ("spectatress"),

(i): *fərrāž,* singular - *fərrāža,* plural, and:

(i - id): exocentric relationship, where (i) may alternatively be represented by $(i)_1$ or

$(i)_2$, as indicated above, in relation to:

(id): *fərrāža,* feminine, collective, "l'ensemble des femmes qui, dans les noces, sont venues assister à l'exposition de la mariée" ("the group of women who assist at the unveiling of the bride during her wedding");

or:

(i - i - i - id): female-feminine (singular) - female-feminine (plural) - male-masculine (plural) - feminine, *fa^{cc}āla*-type instrumental - occurring in coinciding pairs, such as:

(i - i):

$(i - i)_1$: *ġəssāla,* female-feminine (singular /for the *ġəssāl - ġəssāla* sex-gender pair, see § 3.1.1. above/) - *ġəssāla,* female-feminine (plural);

$(i - i)_2$: *ġəssāla,* female-feminine (singular) - *ġəssāla,* male-masculine (plural);

(i - id):

$(i - id)_1$: *ġəssāla,* female-feminine (singular) - *ġəssāla,* feminine, *fa^{cc}āla*-instrumental, "grand plat en terre employé pour la lessive" ("large pottery basin for washing");

$(i - id)_2$: *ġəssāla,* female-feminine (plural) - *ġəssāla,* feminine, instrumental, as above;

as well as other possible binary combinations.

3.5. When disregarding the explicative power of the context, the coincident units, like these, may only be distinguished from each other by a relatively variable distribution of alternative inflectional markers possibly co-occurring with them. In the (i - i - i - id)-featured *ġəssāla,* as quoted above, the set of co-occurring markers displays the following distribution:

ġəssāla, male-masculine (plural): *ġəssālīn,*

ġəssāla, female-feminine (plural): *ġəssālīn, ġəssālāt,*

ġəssāla, feminine instrumental (singular): *ġəssālāt,* as the only possible plural.

Since these alternative occurrences are of no direct relevance to the phenomenon examined, they will not be systematically indicated.

4. Formal fusion of the *-a*-marked inflectional and/or derivational units in the process of inter-systemic restatement.

(1) Cases of formal fusion, examined so far, involved several formally coincident, but functionally different units which did maintain, each of them, their systemic identity, i.e, their membership in one, and only one, linguistic system related to a unique functional class of the (i - id - d) trichotomy. This type of formal fusion will be labelled as Type (I), in what follows.

As stated in previous paragraphs, the Type (I) coincident units may belong either to the same or to different functional classes of the (i - id - d) system. The former type is classified as endocentric, the latter, as exocentric coincidence.

Symbolically presented:

f_1, f_2 - $F_{1,2}$: endocentric coincidence;

f_1, f_2 - F_1, F_2 : exocentric coincidence.

Symbols used:

f : any of the inflectional and/or derivational functions of the suffix -*a*, associated with any of the functional classes (F) of the (i - id - d) system, such as:

　(i): as a case of (i<id) in the coinciding units analysed: gender: feminine,

　(i): sex-gender: female-feminine,

　(i): number: plural,

　(d): derivational value of intensiveness (cf., §3.2.4: *raḥḥāla,* or §3.3. *ǧawwāla*),

　(d): (d<id): *fa^{cc}āla*-type instrumentalness, collectiveness, or the like.

F : any of the functional classes of the (i - id - d) system.

f_1, f_2 : number indexes with each pair of symbols have to be interpreted as "different from the neighboring unit as to their f-related functions";

F_1 : functional class compatible only with f_1 ;

F_2 : functional class compatible only with f_2 ;

$F_{1,2}$: functional class compatible with both f_1 and f_2 .

(2) The type of formal fusion (referred to as Type II) will include cases of formal coincidence between several functional manifestations of a word unit that may alternatively be classified in terms of two linguistic systems: S_1 - underlying (or what might synchronically be considered as the underlying or original system) and S_2 - restated linguistic system.

As the Type (II) cases of formal coincidence, examined in the present inquiry, are reduced to only two functional classes (F) of the (i - id - d) system, namely to (i) and (id), only two types of the F-related inter-systemic restatement will occur in the following symbolic representation:

S_1 (id) - S_2 (i) : exocentric relationship (cf., §§ 4.1 and 4.2), and

S_1 (id) - S_2 (id) : endocentric relationship (cf. § 4.3), in what follows.

(2.1) Formal fusion of the Type II will involve three different cases of inter-systemic restatement focused on the CN - UN system,[10] in both S_1 and S_2 positions. The aim of the inquiry is to provide some evidence for the study of interactions between stabilizing and destabilizing factors operating in the Arabic grammar and lexicon, and to show that even well-established derivational systems, such as CN - UN, *fa^{cc}āl - fa^{cc}āla,* and the like, cannot prevent the loss of the systemic identity of some of their members. The three types of inter-systemic reclassification, subsequently examined, are:

(1) a derivational system restated as an inflectional system (CN-UN reclassified as members of the sex-gender relationship);

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[10] With regard to the restatement processes, taking place in the Type II formal coincidences, a closer presentation of the CN-UN system seems to be useful. Collective nouns of the latter type denote various animate and inanimate entities of non-human reference, taken as a whole species or notional class of what is referred to, without any exact specification of number. In contradistinction to other types of Arabic collectives, they are opposed to the -*a*-marked unit nouns, denoting one single specimen of the respective species or class.

(2) a derivational system restated as an inflectional system (CN-UN reinterpreted in terms of what will later be defined as an autonomous singular - plural relationship; and

(3) a derivational system reclassified as a derivational system of a different type (the derivational system of the intensive stems $fa^{cc}\bar{a}l$ - $fa^{cc}\bar{a}la$ restated in terms of the CN-UN system).

4.1. CN - UN as sex-gender pairs: S_1 (id) - S_2 (i) :

4.1.1. The restatement is based upon the well-known fact that the derivational markers *zero/-a* of the CN- UN system formally coincide with the inflectional markers of gender classes: *zero* (masculine) / *-a* (feminine), which have to be, with living beings, classified in sex-gender terms: *zero*[11] (male-masculine) / *-a* (female-feminine), as in: *kalb* "dog", *kalba* "bitch". With some limitations,[12] the *zero* / *-a* opposition also signals substantially the same gender classes within the CN-UN system, irrespective of whether with nouns denoting sexless entities (*šağar* : CN, masculine, "tree(s)" - *šağara* : UN, feminine, "a tree") or with nouns denoting living beings that display the extra-linguistic category of sex (*ḥamām* : CN, masculine, "pigeon(s)", male(s) and/or female(s) - *ḥamāma* : UN, feminine, "a pigeon", male or female).

Atypically, however, the category of sex may be associated with the inflectional category of gender even in some nouns that may alternatively be classified as members of the CN-UN system. The latter type of the reclassified sex-gender relationship simultaneously puts an end to the CN-UN membership of the units involved, as in:

S_1 : CN - UN:
    CN: *ḥamām* "pigeon(s)", male(s) and/or female(s) -
    UN: *ḥamāma* "a pigeon", male or female; as against:
S_2 : male-masculine / female-feminine:
    male-masculine: *ḥamām* "pigeon", male, singular -
    female-feminine: *ḥamāma* "pigeon", female, singular.

That is:

CN - UN:	CN	-	UN
sex-gender:	male-masculine		female-feminine

Documentary evidence:
Classical Arabic:
ra'aytu ḥamāman ʿalā ḥamāmatin "I saw a male (pigeon) upon a female (pigeon)", or (verse) *waḏakkaranī ṣṣibā baʿda ttanā'ī - ḥamāmatu 'aykatin tadʿū*

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[11] *Zero*-marked paradigmatic and derivational classes may, of course, alternatively be classified as unmarked.

[12] With the present type of collective nouns, the gender class membership may show some variability. In Standard Arabic (irrespective of whether true Classical or Modern Written variant) these collectives are predominantly (FISCHER 1972:49, n.l) and, in modern Arabic dialects, exclusively masculine (for Iraqi Arabic, cf. ERWIN 1963:174; for Moroccan Arabic, cf. HARRELL 1962:78, etc.).

ḥamāman and a female pigeon of a thicket, calling a male pigeon, reminded me of youth, after estrangement (Lane 1, 636-7).

Maltese Arabic:

ħamiem (male of the species): *iz-zakak jaqbeż u jitfarfar, iżda l-ħamiem iżoqq u jgargar* "the wagtail hops and flaps its wings, but the male dove feeds and coos" (Aquilina 1972: 213; *ħamiem* "male dove" is, in this system, directly opposed to *ħamiema* "female dove"), or:

the sex-gender pair *wiżża - wiżż* "goose - gander" (ibid.: 43), as against the Standard Arabic *wazz (ʾiwazz)* "goose, geese", simultaneously operating both as a CN and as a UN (like e.g. *ṭayr* "bird(s)"), and the like.

Typically, however, as is the general case in all varieties of Arabic to which the Maltese language is genetically related, nouns belonging to the CN-UN system tend to maintain their CN-UN identity in resisting the sex-gender reinterpretation, as in:

CN-related *ħamiem: risq fil-ħamiem, bini bla tmiem* "luck in pigeons, numberless building"; *dar u ħamiem, farağ bla tmiem* "one's home and pigeons are endless consolation" (ibid., 203);

UN-related *ħamiema: kull ħamiema li bla ħjiena jtemmha s-seqer* every guileless dove is destroyed by the hawk" (ibid., 46).

Moroccan Arabic:

Harrell's (1962: 78) description of this phenomenon in Moroccan Arabic might be of interest: "Various animals and insects are commonly indicated by collective nouns. Among the larger animals where biological sex is immediately apparent, the singular in -*a* generally denotes the female of the species, the collective denotes the species as a whole, and there is sometimes (but not always) a separate word for the male of the species; e.g., *bgeṛ* "cattle", *begṛa* "a cow", *tuṛ* "a bull". In the cases where there is no separate word for the male of the species, the collective can be used in that sense; e.g., *bellarež* "stork(s)", *bellarža* "a (female) stork".

That is:

CN/masculine, of any sex: *bellarež* "stork(s)"; *brek* "duck(s); *wezz* "goose, geese";

UN/feminine, of any sex: *bellarža* "a stork"; *berka* "a duck"; *wezza* "a goose";

alternatively occurring as sex-gender pairs:

male-masculine: *bellarež* "male stork"; *brek* "male duck, drake"; *wezz* "male goose, gander;

female-feminine: *bellarža* "(female) stork"; *berka* "(female) duck"; *wezza* "(female) goose), etc.

Takrūna Arabic:

CN-UN: *ḥmām* "pigeon(s) - *ḥmāma* "a pigeon" (of whatever sex), as against:

male-masc.: *ḫallāni nenᶜi məṯl-əlḥmām frīd* "il m'a laissé réduit à gémir qui a perdu sa compagne" ("he left me in my sighs like a male pigeon who had lost his mate"); contrasting, in this system, with the female-feminine *ḥmāma.*

4.1.2. Another type of partial sex-gender restatement of the CN-UN system occurs in nouns the sex-gender membership is signalled both in inflectional (*zero/-a* contrast) and lexical (suppletive) terms. In the latter case only one derivational class of the CN-UN system, usually UN, undergoes the sex-gender reclassification while the other class, usually CN, does not. Some examples:

CN/masc., of whatever sex: *baqar* "cow(s), bull(s); bovines, cattle" -

UN/fem., of whatever sex: *baqara* "cow, bull", as against:

male-masc. by suppletion: *ṯawr* "bull"; female-feminine: *baqara* "cow".

Similarly:

The Standard Arabic *daǧāǧ* (CN/masc.) "cock(s), hen(s); chicken(s), fowl" in relation to *daǧāǧa* (UN/fem.); as well as *daǧāǧa* (female-feminine) "hen" in relation to *dīk* (male-masculine, suppletive) "cock, rooster".

In colloquial varieties of Arabic various modifications of these relationships may be found.

4.1.3. A somewhat different type of sex-gender relationshiop may occur in collective nouns derivationally unrelated to unit nouns which do operate, however, both as collective nouns and as nouns of individual reference. In accordance with this functional duplicity, they are sometimes classified as collective-and-unit nouns (cf. Wehr 1979: 677), e.g.:

CN/UN: *ṭayr* "bird(s); a bird", co-occurring with:

ṭayr "the male of the species"; *ṭayra* "the female of the species" (Dozy 2, 1927:79: *ṭayr* "pigeon que l'on emploie pour porter une lettre" ("carrier pigeon"); *ṭayra* "femelle de pigeon" ("female pigeon"); Wehr 1979: 677, etc.).

4.1.4. The atypical co-occurrence of CN-UN and sex-gender classes is admitted, for Standard Arabic, only with reluctance. The Arab grammarians and lexicographers tend to reject the latter usage altogether. The account of Ibn Sīda, a famous 11th century lexicographer of Muslim Spain, might appear relevant to the matter: *iᶜlam 'anna lmuḏakkara yuᶜabbaru ᶜanhu billafẓi lmu'annaṯi fayaǧrī ḥukmu llafẓi ᶜalā tta'nīṯi wa'in kāna lmuᶜabbaru ᶜanhu muḏakkaran fī lḥaqīqati wayakūnu ḏalika biᶜalāmati tta'nīṯi wabiġayri ᶜalāmatin fa'ammā mā kāna biᶜalāmati tta'nīṯi faqawluka hāḏihi šātun wa'in 'aradta taysan wahāḏihi baqaratun wa'in 'aradta ṯawran wahāḏihi ḥamāmatun wahāḏihi baṭṭatun wa'in 'aradta ḏḏakara* (Landberg 1920: 189): "You must know that a masculine can be expressed by a feminine word. The word behaves then as a feminine, even if the (entity) referred to is in reality masculine. This happens either by means of a feminine marker or without it. As for what involves the feminine marker, we may quote the following examples: *hāḏihi šātun* "this is sheep", even if you have in mind a ram, and *hāḏihi baqaratun* "this is a cow", even if you mean a bull, and *hāḏihi ḥamāmatun* "this is a pigeon", and *hāḏihi baṭṭatun* "this is a duck", even if you mean the male thereof."

4.2. CN - UN as autonomous singular-plural relationship: S_1 (id) - S_2 (i):

(1) The present type of restatement is based on two different ways in which the inflectional system of the Arabic number classes is related to the CN-UN system. It may be associated with any particular member of the CN-UN system as a satellite relationship which does not affect the derivational identity of the

CN-UN system, or it may operate as a fully autonomous inflectional relationship, independent of the CN-UN system. In the latter case we shall speak about an "autonomous singular-plural relationship".

The loss of the CN-UN identity in nouns subsequently reclassified in terms of an autonomous singular-plural relationship is usually accompanied by various modifications of the underlying lexical meaning in the nouns involved. This type of restatement may affect one or both members of the CN-UN system:

(id-i) CN : singular - plural;

(id-i) UN : singular - plural

(id-i) CN-UN : CN : singular - plural; UN : singular - plural.

(1) As far as the derivational identity of the CN-UN system is maintained, the inflectional system of number classes is related to two distinct derivational classes, CN and UN, which radically differ from each other by their respective ability to inflect for the plural (or the dual). While the CN does not normally inflect for the plural (dual), or it does so under special conditions only, the UN does inflect for number as freely as any Arabic countable noun. The extremely involved problem of pluralizing collective (and mass) nouns as against the substantially predictable patterns of pluralization, peculiar to unit nouns, deserves special attention. Some aspects of this problems will be illustrated on the CN-UN pair *šaǧar - šaǧara* in what follows.

šaǧar (CN) "tree(s)", i.e. any group, class etc. of trees; as a generic term, possibly including the whole species or the whole notional class of what is referred to, related to the plural *’ašǧār* "trees", [13] as a mere matter of formal analogy with the current count noun plural patterns, like *faras,* plur. *’afrās* "horse, mare"; *namaṭ,* plur. *’anmāṭ* "form, type", etc., as against:

šaǧara (UN) "a (one) tree", plur. *šaǧarāt* "trees".[14] Since any UN invariably displays both a CN-UN and a singular-plural relationship,[15] the numeric value of "one" seems to be redundantly signalled both by derivational and inflectional

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[13] Arabic collective nouns are only rarely matched with the corresponding English collectives, as in *waraq* (CN) "foliage", or the like. They are mostly rendered by the English plurals, as in *šaǧar* (CN) "trees". In view of their frequent generic application, Arabic collectives of the present type may alternatively be conveyed by the English generic singulars. In order to meet both these interpretations, some authors prefer to mark both of them, as in *šaǧar* "tree(s)". Further, meta-linguistic niceties of the traditional grammar that cannot convincingly be supported by recent linguistic data, such as the traditional distinction between plurals of paucity (*ǧumūᶜ al-qilla*) and plurals of multitude (*ǧumūᶜ al-kaṯra*), are here disregarded. Various plural-related lexical connotations, however, will be taken into consideration.

[14] The external plural of the type *šaǧarāt* is frequently denoted as 'individual plural' (FISCHER 1972:49, viz. "Bäume als einzelne"). Unlike the 'paucal' interpretation of *’ašǧār*, the 'individual' classification of *šaǧarāt* is in full harmony with the linguistic evidence provided by all main evolutional stages of Arabic. In the latter sense, it may be identified with what MITCHELL (1962:42) calls 'counted plurals' in Egyptian Arabic, as in *šagarāt* (counted or little plural) as against *’ašgār* (plural or big plural).

[15] The latter has to be kept apart from what we define as the autonomous singular-plural relationship.

means of the language. Nevertheless, the derivationally conveyed "oneness" of a UN like *šaǧara* differs in some respects from that implied by the inflectional value of singularness. The difference between the two may best be expressed by the following contrast:

UN: "one" related to "any number" of the CN, as against:

singular: "one" related to "more than two" of the plural.

(2) The impact of formal analogy between plurals drawn from the collective (and mass) nouns and the count nouns is in many cases a starting point for subsequent lexicalizations. Various lexical connotations, possibly associated with a number of these plurals, are to a considerable extent dependent on the context and cannot satisfactorily be recorded in current lexicons. They may involve some basic qualitative (brands, sorts, kinds, qualities) or quantitative characteristics (distinct amounts, numerically relevant groups, etc.) of what is referred to in these plurals, as e.g. in the Classical Arabic *laḥm* "meat", plur. *luḥūm, liḥām* "particular, considerable, massive, etc. quantities; particular, various, different, etc. brands of meat", etc. Exceptionally, some of these connotations are lexicographically recorded, as in:

faḥm (CN/MN) "charcoal(s); coal(s)", plur. *fuḥūmāt* "coals, brands of coal", etc.

Takrūna Arabic:

sžər (CN) "arbres" ("trees"), plur. *sžār* (with the definite article: *əssžār, ləsžār*), "beaucoup d'arbres; des arbres luxuriants" (many trees; splendid, sumptuous trees"); the UN-related plural *səžrāt* is only used with the numerals (counted plural); or:

tbən (CN/MN) "paille réduite en minces brins par le battage" ("straw flailed to bits in thrashing"), plur. *tbān* (with the def. art. *lətbān*), *tbūna, tbūnāt*. The plural *tbān* implies "qualités diverses de paille; quantités de paille" ("various qualities of straw; (great) amounts of straw"), as opposed to the plurals *tbūna* et *tbūnāt*, which connote still larger amounts of straw, viz. "des masses de paille" ("massive quantities of straw"), and the like.

(3) Lexicalized plurals may involve even more specialized connotations which sometimes imply the idea of tool or product made of the stuff or material referred to in the CN (MN). Since such connotations are of direct semantic relevance, they are, as a rule, recorded in the Arabic lexicons, e.g.:

ḥadīd (CN/MN) "iron", plur. *ḥadā'id* "iron parts (of a structure: forgings, hardware, ironware"; the lexicalized nature of this plural can even more clearly be seen in the corresponding UN/PN *ḥadīda,* viz. "piece of iron; object or tool made of iron", etc.[16]

(4) The loss of the CN-UN identity in some nouns originally relatable to the latter derivational system and their restatement in terms of what we call autonomous singular- plural relationship is accompanied by various modifications of

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[16] From the Colloquial Arabic data are excluded those that would otherwise co-occur with the simultaneously quoted Standard Arabic units.

their meaning value. The semantic relationship between the underlying (un-restated) and resulting (restated) linguistic systems will be rather arbitrarily referred to as inter-systemic polysemy. The point may preliminarily be illustrated on the Standard Arabic (i) *ᶜadasa* (UN of the CN-UN) "lentil" - (ii) *ᶜadasa* (singular of the autonomous singular-plural) "lens, objective", or the Egyptian Arabic (i) *ᶜinaba* "grape; vine" - (ii) *ᶜinaba* "staphyloma (a grape-like tumor of the cornea), etc.

(5) The individual members of the CN-UN system may be reclassified in terms of an autonomous singular-plural relationship either independently of each other or together with each other. From the point of view of the formally coinciding -*a*-marked units, only the UN-related type of restatement seems to be of interest. At the S_1 stage of the process, the UN members of the CN-UN system will be presented together with their CN counterparts, as well as with what we call *satellite* plurals related to them. Every plural, quoted at the S_1 stage of the process, has to be identified with the latter type of plural irrespective of whether explicitly denoted as such, or not. At the S_2 stage, the units are restated in exclusively inflectional terms of what we call *autonomous* singular-plural relationship. With nouns which do not inflect for number, the plural may be missing, or, under the impact of extra-linguistic restrictions, may be represented by a dual form.

S_1: *ᶜadas* (CN) - *ᶜadasa* (UN), satellite plural: *ᶜadasāt*, "lentil(s)",

S_2: *ᶜadasa* (singular) - *ᶜadasāt* (plural), "lens; magnifying glass; object lens"; similarly:

ḏubāb (CN) - *ḏubāba* (UN), satellite plurals: *ʾaḏibba, ḏibbān; ḏubābāt,* "flies, fly",

ḏubāba (singular) - *ḏubābāt* (plural), "tip (of the sword);

ḏarr (CN) - *ḏarra* (UN), plural: *ḏarrāt,* "tiny particles, atoms, specks, motes",

ḏarra (singular) - *ḏarrāt* (plural), "atom" (phys., chem.)

bayḍ (CN) - *bayḍa* (UN), plurals: *buyūḍ; bayḍāt,* "egg(s)",

bayḍa (singular) - *bayḍatān* (dual), "testicles"; *bayḍāt* (plural), "helmet; substance";

lawz (CN) - *lawza* (UN), plural: *lawzāt,* "almond(s),

lawza (singular) - *lawzatān* (dual), "tonsils", as in *iltihāb al-lawzatayn* "tonsilitis";

barad (CN) - *barada* (UN), "hailstone(s)",

barada (singular) - plural (unrepresented), "indigestion" (*ʾaṣlu kulli dā'in al-barada* "the origin of every disease is indigestion" (a muslim tradition); "the middle of the eye" (Lane 1, 184-185);

Iraqi Arabic:[16]

ḥašaf (CN) - *ḥašafa* (UN), plural: *ḥašafāt*, "under-developed, dried up, poor quality dates",

ḥašafa (singular) - *ḥašafāt* (plural), "glans penis" (vulg.);

rummān (CN) - *rummāna* (UN), plural: *rummānāt,* "pomegranate(s),

rummāna (singular) - *rummānāt* (plural), "knob, ball";

ṣammūn (CN), "a kind of bread baked in large, oblong loaves, similar to French bread"

- *ṣammūna* (UN), plural: *ṣammūnāt,* "a loaf of *ṣammūn*",

ṣammūna (singular) - *ṣammūnāt* (plural), "nut (for a bolt or screw"; etc.

Egyptian Arabic:

šōk (CN) - *šōka* (UN), plural: *šokāt,* "thorns, thistles",

šōka (singular) - *šuwak, šokāt* (plural), "fork, spur";

ᶜinab (CN) - *ᶜinaba* (UN), plural: *ᶜinabāt ,* "grapes; vine",

ᶜinaba (singular) - plural (unrepresented), "staphyloma" (med. pathol.);

naḫl (CN) - *naḫla* (UN), plural: *naḫlāt,* "honey-bee(s)".

naḫla (singular) - *nuḫal* (plural), "spinning top"; etc.

Takrūna Arabic:

ḫərrūb (CN) - *ḫərrūba* (UN), satellite plurals: *ḫərrūbāt, ḫrārəb,* "caroube(s); caroubier(s)" ("carob(s), St.-John's bread; carob-tree(s)"); (UN): *iṣəbḫək ᶜla-ṭōba urəjlēk mᶜəlqa-fi-ḫərrūba* "que Dieu te mette sur une motte de terre, les pieds suspendus à un caroubier" ("may God put you on a lump of earth with your feet suspended to a carob-tree!" (a malediction)),

ḫərrūba (singular) - *ḫərrūbāt, ḫrārəb* (plural), "ancienne monnaie valant 1/16ᵉ de piastre" ("an ancient coin equal to 1/16 of a piaster"), as in: *ma-yəswāš-ḫərrūbtēn* " ça ne vaut pas deux caroubes: c'est de nulle valeur" ("it is not worth two carobs: it is worthless");

ḏəbbān (CN) - *ḏəbbāna* (UN), plural: *ḏəbbānāt,* "mouche(s)" ("flie, fly); UN: *ḫfīf kīf-əḏḏəbbāna f-əlᶜsəl* "agile lui! comme mouche prise dans du miel!" ("active, as a fly caught in honey!"),

ḏəbbāna (singular) - *ḏəbbānāt* (plural), "point de mire d'une arme à feu" ("bead in the foresight of a firearm"); "petit tatouage en forme de croix qui se fait au front" ("small cross-like tattoo usually made on the forehead"); etc.

4.3. *faᶜᶜāl - faᶜᶜāla* as CN - UN : S$_1$ (id) - S$_2$ (id):

(1) The derivational system *faᶜᶜāl - faᶜᶜāla,* displaying a general value of intensiveness, is well represented in all linguistic varieties of Arabic. From a synchronic point of view, the derivational pattern *faᶜᶜāl* may be classified as an intensive pattern of the participial *fāᶜil* (Barth 1899: 11, 40, 48; Fleisch 1961: 366; et al.). As a substantive, it usually denotes members of various professions and trades. Here, the derivational value of intensiveness is reinterpreted in terms of habitual and professional activity. The latter type of intensiveness will be referred to, not quite unambiguously, as agentialness. The pattern *faᶜᶜāla* modifies the basic derivational value of intensiveness in a slightly different way, most frequently in terms of instrumentalness (*ṭayyāra :* aircraft), less ordinarily in terms of collectiveness (*ḫayyāla :* cavalry), as well as other more rarely emerging values.

(2) Atypically, some of these derivational values, associated with the patterns *faᶜᶜāl* and *faᶜᶜāla,* may be reclassified in terms of the CN-UN-featured collectiveness and unitness. Despite the fact that the latter type of intersystemic restatement may take place in the form of a *faᶜᶜāl*-related, or in that of a *faᶜᶜāla*-related process, only the latter type is of relevance for the study of the *-a-*

marked formal coincidences. At least one example of the *fa^{cc}āla*-related process:

S₁ : *fa^{cc}āl* (intensiveness: agentialness): *fa^{cc}āla* (intensiveness: instrumentalness):
saǧǧād "worshipper (of God)", *saǧǧāda* "prayer rug; carpet";
S₂ : CN: UN:
saǧǧād "prayer rug(s); carpet(s)", *saǧǧāda* "prayer rug; carpet".

Symbols used

CN - collective nouns, associated with the derivational system CN - UN;

UN - unit nouns, associated with the derivational system CN - UN;

(i - id - i) - trichotomous system of functional classes (F), here applied to the classification of functional variations of the suffix *-a,* both inflectional and/or derivational, in the process of their formal fusion:

(i) : inflectional function;

(id) : shared inflectional-and-derivational function;

(d) : derivational function;

F - any functional class of the (i - id - d) system;

f - any of the F-related inflectional and/or derivational functions of the suffix *-a,* such as:

inflection:

gender: feminine (with animate beings which can be organized in sex-gender pairs, sex-gender: female-feminine);

derivation:

unitness (UN), instantness (IN), intensiveness, collectiveness, instrumentaleness, and other less ordinarily associated functions;

$f_1, f_2 - F_{1,2}$ - endocentric coincidence;

$f_1, f_2 - F_1 - F_2$ - exocentric coincidence (for particulars, see § 4).

R - radical, root constituting consonant (§ 1.1).

$S_1 - S_2$ - linguistic systems in the process of inter-systemic restatement: S_1 refers to the underlying, S_2 to the restated linguistic system (§ 4 (2));

VN - verbal nouns of the VN - IN system;

IN - instance nouns of the VN - IN system;

CN/MN - collective nouns reinterpreted as mass nouns;

UN/PN - unit nouns partitively reinterpreted.

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Unless otherwise indicated, all Standard Arabic lexical data are drawn from Wehr (1979), as listed above. The English equivalents are given either in full or reduced quotations.

A limited number of data, derived from earlier evolutional stages of Arabic, may be identified in terms of the respective source indications (Lane, Dozy).

Maltese examples, quoted in the official Maltese orthography, are those of Aquilina 1972.

Colloquial varieties of Arabic represented:

Chado-Sudanese Arabic: Roth-Laly (1969);

Egyptian (Cairo) Arabic: Aboul-Fetouh (1969); Mitchell (1960); Spiro (1929);

Iraqi Arabic: Woodhead–Beene (1967);

Mediaeval Hispano-Arabic: Dozy (1927); Corriente (1988);

Moroccan Arabic: Harrell (1962);

Takrūna Arabic: Marçais–Guīga (1958-1961). The extremely involved allophonic presentation of Takrūna Arabic data has been considerably simplified.

No page indications are given with examples drawn from alphabetically arranged lexicographic sources. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, all linguistic data quoted should be related to Standard Arabic.