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

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.  

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 - RuRRē , e.g. 'aḫsān - ḥusnā “better, (the) best /adj./), the Arabic gender system may formally be presented in terms of the following opposition:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>unmarked (masculine): stem + 0</th>
<th>marked (feminine): stem + a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>as in: muslim “Muslim”;</td>
<td>as in: muslima “Muslim woman”, and:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stem+ at- :</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- in pre-pausal position, as in:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>muslimatun “id.” (nominative, indefinite).</td>
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The atypical reflexes of this suffix (bint : bin + t “girl, daughter”, 'uḥt : 'ub + 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 (Bedeutungskategorien), 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.

\(^2\) 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 'asma‘ al-gins of the Arab grammarians, to BROCZKLAMANN’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 ḥāmmāla “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 ṭamāla “horsemen, riders” (alternating, in this application, with a parallel plural form ṭamāla ), or genuine collective nouns, as in ḥayyāla “cavalry”. This lexi-
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 subsequent 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 fā’īl - fā’īla, and the like. Some examples:

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

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**nal (masculine, CN) “bee(s)” - nal (feminine, UN) “a bee (one single specimen of the species)”, etc.;**

**VN-IN:** 
- ḍarb (masculine, VN) “beating, striking” (verbal abstract of the verb ḍaraba) - ḍarb (feminine, VI) “blow, knock; stroke” (i.e., one single act of the VN);
- ṣurāḥ, ṣarīḥ (masculine, VN) “crying, yelling; clamor” - ṣarḥa (feminine, VI) “cry, outcry, yell, scream”, etc.;

**faʾāl - faʾāla : ḥayyāl (masculine, faʾāl-type intensive: agential) “horseman, rider” - ḥayyāla (feminine, faʾāla-type intensive: collective) “cavalry”;
- ṭayyār (masculine, intensive: agential) “flier, aviator, pilot; - ṭayyāra (feminine, intensive: instrumental) “airplane, aircraft”;
- ṣassāl (masculine, intensive: agential) “gatherer of honey; beekeeper, apiculturist) - ṣassāla (feminine, intensive: instrumental/local) “beehive”; and the like.

As evident from the examples adduced, faʾāl - faʾāla derivatives may equally well be of a deverbative (ṭayyār-ṭayyāra < ṭārā) as of a denominative origin (ṭayyāl - ṭayyāla < ṭāl);

(d) signalling a derivational value devoid of any implication of gender marking, as in: ṭāwīn (nomen agentis, nonintensive) “narrator; transmitter (of ancient Arabic poetry) - ṭāwīya (intensive stem, unmarked for gender: its male-masculine classification is due to socio-cultural constraints of the traditional Arab society) “id.” (with a connotation, however, of a recognized status of professional and excellence), or:

- ḥallām (intensive (1)) “knowing thoroughly, erudite” - ḥallāma (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 additive process, as in: madrasa + un = madrasatun “school (nominative, indefinite)”, 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 + i = madrasi “school (adj.), scholastic”.

It is worthwhile noting that the substitutive process, by concealing an important (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): ṭāwīn (Blachère : ṭāwī) “transmetteur” - ṭāwīya “grand transmetteur”.
Some examples:

bašar “man, human being; men, mankind”,
bašara “epidermis; skin”,
bašart (1) “human”,
bašart (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: ‘ummai “international”),
‘ummiya “illiteracy” (derivational basis in the regressive process),
‘ummi (1) “maternal, motherly”,
‘ummi (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));

(ii): number: zero/-a in e.g.: ‡ammÞl “porter, carrier” - ‡ammÞla, plural (cf., § 1.2.);

(d): zero / -a in e.g.: râwin - râwiya or ‡allÞm - ‡allÞma (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 : na†la (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”}.

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-

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 \(f_1 - f_2 - f_1\) will be rearranged as \(f_1 - f_2\), \(f_2 - f_1\), \(f_1 - f_2\), 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.: 
\(fallāh\) “peasant, farmer, felah” - \(fallāḥa\) “peasant woman; peasant girl”; 

(i): number: singular (unmarked) - plural (-a-marked), e.g.: 
\(fallāh\), singular - \(fallāḥa\), plural. 

Similarly: 

(i): \(nazzār\) “spectator, onlooker” - \(nazzāra\) “woman onlooker, spectatress”, 

(i): \(nazzār\), singular - \(nazzāra\), 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:

\(baddām\), male-masculine, “manservant, servant”; female-feminine, “woman servant, maid”, alternating with \(baddāma\), male-masculine - \(baddāma\), female-feminine. In the latter case, the same \((i - i)\) gender-number coincidence will be obtained as that given above:

(i): \(baddām\), male-masculine - \(baddāma\), female-feminine, 

(i): \(baddām\), singular, - \(baddāma\), plural (see note 7 above).

Takrùna Arabic:

(i): \(aawwām\), male-masculine, “travailleur qui ne fait pas partie d’une équipe constituée, mais s’y adjoind 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 \(bayayla\), will be presented as (i) \(bayayla\) (co-occurring with \(baya림\)), plural of \(baya\) “horseman, rider” and (id) \(baya\), collective, feminine, “cavalry” (unless otherwise indicated, all Standard Arabic data are those of \(\text{WEBR} 1979\)). For the \(fallāh\) - \(fallāḥa\) relationship see also note 4 above, viz. \(bammāla\)-\(bimmāla\).

8 Takrùna 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”) - "awwāma", “travailleuse à qui est fait occasionnellement appel” (“occasional female day laborer”),

(i): ‘awwām, singular - 'awwāma, plural; or:

(i): ḡassāl, male-masculine, “laveur des morts; laveur d’habits” (“washer of the dead; washer, laundryman”) - ḡassāla, female-feminine, “laveuse; laveuse des mortes” (“washerwoman; woman washer of the dead /women/”).

(i): ḡassāl, singular - ḡassāla, 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): bayyāq, male-masculine, “salesman, sales clerk” - bayyā’a, female-feminine, “salesgirl”,

(i): bayyāq, singular - bayyā’a, plural.

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

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

(i - i): ḥāṭṭāb “bûcheron; ramasseur de bois à brûler” (“woodcutter; gatherer of firewood”) - ḥāṭṭāba, plural,

(i - i): ḥāṭṭāba “ramasseuse de bois à brûler” (“female gatherer of firewood” - ḥāṭṭābā, plural.

Similarly:

farrāz, “spectateur” (“spectator, onlooker”) - farrāža, plural,

farrāža “spectatrice” (“spectatress”) - farrāža, plural.

3.1.2. (id - id):

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

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.: sarrāf “money changer; cashier, tressaurer, paymaster, banker” - sarrāla “(woman)cashier” or the Iraqi Arabic daggāg (qidri) “a man who gives smallpox vaccinations” - daggāga “a woman who does tattooing” or the Takrûna Arabic Ũanmāṣ “grilleur de pois chiches; marchand de pois chiches grillés” (“chick-pea roaster or seller”) - Ũanmāṣa “(femme) habile à confectionner le couscous à gros grains nommé mḥammad” (“woman experienced in preparing a variety of couscous called mḥammad”). Divergences of the latter type are frequently covered by separate lexical units, as in the Egyptian Arabic makwâqi “laundryman, ironer, starcher” as against kawwāqa “laundrywoman” (Swez 1929); or they may restrict the use to only one of the two constituents of the sex-gender pair, as in qawwwâd (only male-masculine) “pander, pimp, procurer” or naffāqa (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 faezala-type instrumentalness: hammala, 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): hammala, number: plural, co-occurring with hann嘛lin, coinciding with:
(id): hammala, 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) faezala-type instrumentalness, as in:
Similarly:
(i): oayyar, “flyer, aviator, pilot” - oayyara, “aviatrix, woman pilot”,
(id): oayyara, “airplane, aircraft; kite (toy)”;
(i): gassal, “washer, washerman, laundryman” - gassala, “washerwoman, laundress”,
(id): gassala, “washing machine”, etc.

3.2.2. (i - id): where (i) indicates number: plural, while (i<id) gender: feminine, and (d<id) faezala-type instrumentalness, as in:
(i): shayyal, singular, “porter, carrier” - shayyla (possibly co-occurring with shayylin), plural,
(id): shayyla, gender class: feminine; derivational class: faezala-type instrumental, “suspender”, or:
(i): tawwaf, singular, “mounted rural mail carrier” - tawwafa, plural,
(id): tawwafa, gender class: feminine derivational class: faezala-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) faezala-type collectiveness, as in:
(i): hayyla, singular, “horseman, rider” - hayyla, plural,
(id): hayyla, feminine, collective, “cavalry”, or:
(i): bahhar, plur. bahhara (co-occurring with bahharun), “seaman, mariner, sailor”,
(id): bahhara, “crew (of a ship or an airplane)”, etc.
Chad-Sudanese Arabic:
biyyali, plur. biyyala, (co-occurring with biyyali) “horseman”,
biyyala, “cavalry”, or:
gebbie, plur. geelaba, (co-occurring with geelib) “hawked, trader”,
geelaba, “caravan; party of merchants”, etc.

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3.2.3.1. The plural suffix -a in cases like *hayyāla* “horsemen”, possibly restated in terms of *hayyāla* “cavalry”, may be, in a sense, compared to some other lexically relevant allomorphs of the plural morpheme. In a number of cases, the suffix -ān, 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:**

šaʿārīn, presumably derived from the annexion-type construction *sūq aš-šaʿārīn,* (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): “cevadería, lugar donde se vende cevada” (“barley market”) (Dozy, ibid.; cf. also Corriente 1988: 108). Originally relatable to the singular:

šaʿārī, “celui qui vend de l’orge” (“seller of barley”) (Dozy, ibid.; Alcalá; also Corriente, ibid.). Or:

wazzāzin, “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 *faʿālā* (invariable in gender and number), as in:

(i): raḥāl, singular, “great traveller, explorer; nomad” - raḥāla, plural,

(d): raḥāla, (invar.), -a-marked intensive, frequently coinciding with the pattern *faʿālā* “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) *faʿālā*-type instrumentality, and (d) an -a-marked intensiveness that is, once again, frequently coinciding with the intensive pattern *faʿālā*, as in:

(i): *gawayl,* singular, “traveler, tourist; ambulant” - *gawwāla,* plural,

(id): *gawwāla,* feminine, instrumental, “motorcycle; cruiser”; or:

(d): *gawwāla,* 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) *faʿālā*-featured collectiveness, as in:

(i - i) : endocentric relationship:

(i): \textit{farrāž}, singular - \textit{farrāža}, plural, and:

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

(i)\textsubscript{2}, as indicated above, in relation to:

(id): \textit{farrāža}, 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, \textit{fa`cāla}-type instrumental - occurring in coinciding pairs, such as:

(i - i):

(i - i)\textsubscript{1}: \textit{gassāla}, female-feminine (singular) /for the \textit{gassāl} - \textit{gassāla} sex-gender pair, see § 3.1.1. above/) - \textit{gassāla}, female-feminine (plural);

(i - i)\textsubscript{2}: \textit{gassāla}, female-feminine (singular) - \textit{gassāla}, male-masculine (plural);

(i - id):

(i - id)\textsubscript{1}: \textit{gassāla}, female-feminine (singular) - \textit{gassāla}, feminine, \textit{fa`cāla}-instrumental, “grand plat en terre employé pour la lessive” (“large pottery basin for washing”);

(i - id)\textsubscript{2}: \textit{gassāla}, female-feminine (plural) - \textit{gassāla}, 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 \textit{gassāla}, as quoted above, the set of co-occurring markers displays the following distribution:

\textit{gassāla}, male-masculine (plural): \textit{gassālān},
\textit{gassāla}, female-feminine (plural): \textit{gassālān}, \textit{gassālāt},
\textit{gassāla}, feminine instrumental (singular): \textit{gassālāt}, 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;
\( f_1', f_2' - F_{1,2} : \) 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: raḥḥala, or §3.3. ḡawwāla),
- (d): (d<id): faṣāla-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:
\( S_1 \text{(id)} - S_2 \text{(i)} : \) exocentric relationship (cf., §§ 4.1 and 4.2), and
\( S_1 \text{(id)} - S_2 \text{(id)} : \) endocentric relationship (cf. § 4.3), in what follows.

(2.1) Formal fusion of the Type II will involve three different cases of inter-systemic reclassification 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, faṣāla - faṣāla, 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 faˈsāl - faˈsāla restated in terms of the CN-UN system).

4.1. CN - UN as sex-gender pairs: S₁ (id) - S₂ (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: zero¹¹ (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 (šaˈgar : CN, masculine, “tree(s)” - šaˈgara : 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:

S₁ : CN - UN:
CN: ḥamām “pigeon(s)”, male(s) and/or female(s) -
UN: ḥamāma “a pigeon”, male or female; as against:
S₂ : male-masculine / female-feminine:
male-masculine: ḥamām “pigeon”, male, singular -

That is:
CN - UN: sex-gender: male-masculine female-feminine
               CN      -           UN
Documentary evidence:
Classical Arabic:
raˈayatu ḥamāman ˈalā ḥamāmatin “I saw a male (pigeon) upon a female (pigeon)”, or (verse) waˈdakkarani ṣṣibā baˈda ṭtanāˈi - ḥamāmatu ʿaykatin tadˈāu

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.1) and, in modern Arabic dialects, exclusively masculine (for Iraqi Arabic, cf. ERWIN 1963:174; for Moroccan Arabic, cf. HARRELL 1962:78, etc.).
hamāman and a female pigeon of a thicket, calling a male pigeon, reminded me of youth, after estrangement (Lane 1, 636-7).

Maltese Arabic:

hamiem (male of the species): iz-zakak jaqbeż u jifjarfar, izda l-hamiem izzopq u jargar “the wagtail hops and flaps its wings, but the male dove feeds and coos” (Aquilina 1972: 213; hamiem “male dove” is, in this system, directly opposed to hamiena “female dove”), or:

the sex-gender pair wizzza - wizz “goose - gander” (ibid.: 43), as against the Standard Arabic wazz (‘iwazz) “goose, geese”, simultaneously operating both as a CN and as a UN (like e.g. Ṗayr “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 hamiem: risq fil-hamiem, bini bla tmiem “luck in pigeons, numberless building”; dar u hamiem, farag bla tmiem “one’s home and pigeons are endless consolation” (ibid., 203);
UN-related hamiena: kull hamiena li bla jiena 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., bger “cattle”, begra “a cow”, tur “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., bellarezh “stork(s)”, bellarža “a (female) stork”.

That is:

CN/masculine, of any sex: bellarezh “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: bellarezh “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.: ḥallānī nen’i maṭl-ḥtmmān 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: tawr “bull”; female-feminine: baqara “cow”.

Similarly:

The Standard Arabic daÞ” (CN/masc.) “cock(s), hen(s); chicken(s), fowl” in relation to daÞ’a (UN/fem.); as well as daÞˆga (female-feminine) “hen” in relation to dik (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 relationship 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: òåyr “bird(s); a bird”, co-occurring with:

òåyr “the male of the species”; òåyra “the female of the species” (Dozy 2, 1927:79); òåyr “pigeon que l’on emploie pour porter une lettre” (“carrier pigeon”); òåyra “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 Sida, a famous 11th century lexicographer of Muslim Spain, might appear relevant to the matter: i‘lam ‘anna lmu’akkarra yu’abbaru “anhu billaffi lmu’annati faya‘itri ëukmu lafzi “alà tta’ni‘i wa’in kôna lmu’abbaru “anhu mu’dakkaran fi lhaqqatii wayakûnu dalika bi’alâmâti tta’ni‘i wabiga‘i ‘alâmâti fa’ammû mà kôna bi’alâmâti tta’ni‘i faqawaluka hâdihi sàtun wa’in ‘aradta taysan wahâdihi baqaratun wa’in ‘aradta tawran wahâdihi hâmûmatun wahâdihi baqaratun wa’in ‘aradta dîjakara (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: hâdihi sàtun “this is sheep”, even if you have in mind a ram, and hâdihi baqaratun “this is a cow”, even if you mean a bull, and hâdihi hâmûmatun “this is a pigeon”, and hâdihi baqaratun “this is a duck”, even if you mean the male thereof.”

4.2. CN - UN as autonomous singular-plural relationship: S₁ (id) - S₂ (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.

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 ša'ar - ša'ara in what follows.

ša'ar (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 'aš'ār “trees”, 13 as a mere matter of formal analogy with the current count noun plural patterns, like faras, plur. 'āfrās “horse, mare”; namaāt, plur. 'ānmāt “form, type”, etc., as against:

ša'ara (UN) “a (one) tree”, plur. ša'arāt “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

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 ša'ar (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 ša'ar “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 (jumāt al-qašira) and plurals of multitude (jumāt al-kașira), are here disregarded. Various plural-related lexical connotations, however, will be taken into consideration.

14 The external plural of the type ša'arāt is frequently denoted as ‘individual plural’ (FISCHER 1972:49, viz. “Bäume als einzelne”). Unlike the ‘paucal’ interpretation of ‘ašgār, the ‘individual’ classification of ša'arāt is in full harmony with the linguistic evidence provided by all main evolulational stages of Arabic. In the latter sense, it may be identified with what MITCHELL (1962:42) calls ‘counted plurals’ in Egyptian Arabic, as in ša'arāt (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 ša’ara differs in some respects from that implied by the inflectional value of singularity. 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, liḥūm “particular, considerable, massive, etc. quantities; particular, various, different, etc. brands of meat”, etc. Exceptionally, some of these connotations are lexicographically recorded, as in:

faḥūm (CN/MN) “charcoal(s); coal(s)”, plur. fūḥūnāt “coals, brands of coal”, etc.

Takrūna Arabic:

ṣażr (CN) “arbres” (“trees”), plur. ṣażr (with the definite article: ʾassażr, laṣażr), “beaucoup d’arbres; des arbres luxuriants” (many trees; splendid, sumptuous trees”); the UN-related plural ṣażrāt is only used with the numerals (counted plural); or:

ṭbān (CN/MN) “paille réduite en minces brins par le battage” (“straw flailed to bits in thrashing”), plur. ṭbān (with the def. art. latbān), ṭbūna, ṭbūnāt. The plural ṭbān implies “qualités diverses de paille; quantités de paille” (“various qualities of straw; (great) amounts of straw”), as opposed to the plurals ṭbūna et ṭbūnāt, 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 re-
ferred to as inter-systemic polysemy. The point may preliminarily be illustrated
on the Standard Arabic (i) ʿadasa (UN of the CN-UN) “lentil” - (ii) ʿadasa (sing-
ular of the autonomous singular-plural) “lens, objective”, or the Egyptian Ara-
bic (i) ʿinaba “grape; vine” - (ii) ʿinaba “staphyloma (a grape-like tumor of the
cornea), etc. [3]

(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 S₁ stage of the process, the UN members of the CN-UN sys-

the m 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 S₁ 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 S₂ stage, the units are restated
in exclusively inflectional terms of what we call autonomous singular-plural re-

relationship. With nouns which do not inflect for number, the plural may be miss-

ing, or, under the impact of extra-linguistic restrictions, may be represented by a
dual form.

S₁: ʿadas (CN) - ʿadasa (UN), satellite plural: ʿadasāt , “lentil(s)”,
S₂: ʿadasa (singular) - ʿadasāt (plural), “lens; magnifying glass; object lens”;  
similarly:

stub (CN) - stuba (UN), satellite plurals: ’adibba, dībān; stubāt, “flies, fly”;
stuba (singular) - stubāt (plural), “tip (of the sword);
stub (CN) - stuba (UN), plural: ḍarrāt , “tiny particles, atoms, specks, motes”,
stuba (singular) - darrāt (plural), “atom” (phys., chem.)
bayda (CN) - bayda (UN), plurals: bayūd; baydāt, “egg(s)”,
bayda (singular) - baydāt (plural), “testicles”; baydāt (plural), “helmet; sub-
stance”;

lawza (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” (ʿашlu kulli dāʾin al-
barada “the origin of every disease is indigestion” (a muslim tradition); “the
middle of the eye” (Lane 1, 184-185);

Iraqi Arabic:16  
haṣafa (CN) - haṣafa (UN), plural: haṣafāt , “under-developed, dried up, poor
quality dates”;
haṣafa (singular) - haṣafāt (plural), “glans penis” (vulg.);
rummān (CN) - rummāna (UN), plural: rummānāt, “pomegranate(s),
rummāna (singular) - rummānāt (plural), “knob, ball”;
\(\text{sammmūn} \text{(CN)}, \text{“a kind of bread baked in large, oblong loaves, similar to French bread”}\)

- \(\text{sammmūnā} \text{(UN)}, \text{plural: } \text{sammmūnāt, “a loaf of sammmūn”}\),

\(\text{sammmūnū} \text{(singular) - sammmūnāt (plural), “nut (for a bolt or screw”}; \text{etc.}\)

\text{Egyptian Arabic:}

\(\text{sōk} \text{(CN) - sōka (UN), plural: } \text{sōkāt, “thorns, thistles”},\)

\(\text{sōka (singular) - ṣuwaq, sōkāt (plural), “fork, spur”};\)

\(\text{ṣināb} \text{(CN) - ṣināba (UN), plural: } \text{ṣinābāt , “grapes; vine”},\)

\(\text{ṣinaba (singular) - plural (unrepresented), “staphyloma” (med. pathol.)};\)

\(\text{naḥl} \text{(CN) - Ṿahla (UN), plural: } \text{naḥlāt, “honey-bee(s)”}.\)

\(\text{naḥla (singular) - } \text{nuḥl (plural), “spinning top”}; \text{etc.}\)

\text{Takrūna Arabic:}

\(\text{ḥarrūb} \text{(CN) - ḥarrūba (UN), satellite plurals: } \text{ḥarrūbāt, ḥrārob, “caroube(s); caroubier(s)” (“carob(s), St.-John’s bread; carob-tree(s)”); } \text{(UN): iṣābāhāq l’a-}

\(\text{ṭūba urajlēk m’alqa-fi-ḥarrūba “que Dieu te mette sur une motte de terre, les pieds suspendus à un caroubier” (“may God put you on a lump of earth with your feet suspended to a carob-tree!” (a malediction)),}\)

\(\text{ḥarrūba (singular) - ḥarrūbāt, ḥrārob (plural), “ancienne monnaie valant 1/16e de piastre” (“an ancient coin equal to 1/16 of a piaster”), as in: ma-y}

\(\text{ṣw-}

\(\text{ḥabbātn ”ça ne vaut pas deux caroubes: c’est de nulle valeur” (“it is not worth two carobs: it is worthless”);}\)

\(\text{ḥabbūn (CN) - ḥabbūna (UN), plural: } \text{ḥabbūnāt, “mouche(s)” (“flie, fly); UN: ḥṣīf kīf-ḥḥabbūna f-ā’sal “agile lui! comme mouche prise dans du miel!” (“active, as a fly caught in honey!”),}\)

\(\text{ḥabbūna (singular) - ḥabbūnāt (plural), “point de mire d’une arme à feu” (“bead in the foresight of a firearm”); “petit tatouage en forme de croix qui se fait au front” (“small cross-like tattoo usually made on the forehead”); etc.}\)

4.3. \(\text{fāʾāl - fāʾāla} \text{as CN - UN : S}_1 \text{(id) - S}_2 \text{(id):}\)

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

2. \(\text{Atypically, some of these derivational values, associated with the patterns }\text{fāʾāl and fāʾāla, 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 }\text{fāʾāl-related, or in that of a }\text{fāʾāla-related process, only the latter type is of relevance for the study of the }\text{-a-
marked formal coincidences. At least one example of the faʕʕāla-related process:

\[ \begin{align*}
S_1 & : \text{faʕʕāl (intensiveness: agentialness): faʕʕāla (intensiveness: instrumentalness):} \\
& \quad \text{saʕʕād “worshipper (of God)”; saʕʕāda “prayer rug; carpet”;} \\
S_2 & : \text{CN: UN:} \\
& \quad \text{saʕʕād “prayer rug(s); carpet(s)”;} \quad \text{saʕʕāda “prayer rug; carpet”.}
\end{align*} \]

**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, instrumentality, 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.

**REFERENCES**


REFERENCES


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 evolitional 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);
Takrûna Arabic: Marçais–Guága (1958-1961). The extremely involved allophonic presentation of Takrûna 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.