The historical reality of the plural of paucity and the plural diminutive in Classical Arabic

Evidence from *kalām al-ʿarab*
(Part One)

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This study investigates the semantics of the plural of paucity and the plural diminutive, based on their attestations in the non-literary source of Classical Arabic traditionally known as *kalām al-ʿarab*. In noun plural marking, the meaning of the diminutive is as elusive as that of the plural of paucity. What is known of both kinds of meanings is mainly derived from the indirect description of early lexicographers and grammarians. To assess the historical reality of this traditional semantic description, attestations from the *kalām al-ʿarab* are collected, then compared to data from Arabic dialects, and finally subjected to a distributional analysis. The grammatical categories of the collective, inherent plural, and the pseudo-dual are also considered in this assessment.

Keywords: plural of paucity, diminutive, *kalām al-ʿarab*, collective, inherent plural

1. Aims and introduction

This study pursues two related aims: on the one hand, a better understanding of the plural of paucity in Classical Arabic and, on the other, a better understanding of its diminutive in noun plural marking.

The two aims are related, in the sense that a better understanding of the plural of paucity leads to a better understanding of the diminutive in noun plural marking, and *vice versa*, as will become clear in due course.

The present study investigates the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking based mainly on the description of Classical Arabic provided by early grammarians and lexicographers, who drew their citations not only from well-known primary sources such as the Koran and pre-Islamic poetry, but also from another primary source, namely, the living speech of the Arabs of their time, during the second half of the eighth century and the first half of the ninth century CE.

In grammatical and lexicographical work, this kind of primary source is referred to as *kalām al-ʿarab*[1], and is usually signaled by a textual descriptor alluding to living usage: an ethnonym (e.g., *ahl al-ḥijāz*), a *verbum dicendi* (e.g., *yuqāl* 'it is said'), or a *verbum audiendi* (e.g., *samiʿnā* 'we heard').

The focus here is on attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* rather than on the theoretical framework in which early grammarians and lexicographers couched them.[2] Likewise, attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* are given precedence over attestations from Classical Arabic as a whole (*al-ʿarabiyya*). Therefore, in this study, the formal and semantic features of the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking will be derived mainly from the description of *kalām al-ʿarab.*

This is the first of two articles. It provides background information concerning the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking, collects and describes the available attestations from *kalām al-ʿarab,* and compares such attestations to similar data in modern Arabic dialects. The second installment will offer a distributional study of the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking, with special attention to their semantics.

2. The object of study

In the domain of noun plural marking in Classical Arabic, the plural of paucity is usually identified with the *circumfixal* morphemes *ʾa..u., ʾa..ā., ʾa..i.a, .i..a*, as in *ʾaqdām* 'feet'[3] (see, e.g., Ratcliffe 1998: 79-80); the

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[1] Definitions of *kalām al-ʿarab* found in literature and ultimately in the history of western Arabicist scholarship are apparently based on Arabic grammatical tradition, which abstracts linguistic features from the linguistic materials. For instance (see, e.g., Owens 2013), grammarians describe *taltala* (the *i*-vowel in the prefix of an imperfective verb) without reporting a stock of verbs including this feature. An alternative approach is adopted here, which privileges Arabic lexicographers and the linguistic materials of *kalām al-ʿarab* as recorded by them in massive detail. The definition of *kalām al-ʿarab* adopted in this study is therefore based on lexicographers' conception of it. They distinguished *kalām al-ʿarab* from the two other primary sources of Classical Arabic, the Koran and pre-Islamic poetry, on chronological and stylistic grounds. These two sources chronologically precede *kalām al-ʿarab* and stand out for their degree of literary elaboration, as opposed to *kalām al-ʿarab*, which represents a vernacular source: see Baalbaki (2014: 29). Literary elaboration involves metric structure not only in pre-Islamic poetry but also in the Koran. The issue of interpolation concerning *kalām al-ʿarab* is discussed in Section 6. below. Guillaume (2007: 176) provides a different definition of *kalām al-ʿarab*: 'Although the expression *kalām al-ʿarab* seems to refer to the living usage of the Bedouin Arabs, it should be taken in the restrictive sense of the literary variety of Arabic reflected in the Qurʾān and the ancient poetry.' According to this definition, *kalām al-ʿarab* is a sort of umbrella-term, which encompasses the Koran and pre-Islamic poetry. This definition is not followed here, since it somewhat obscures the features of *kalām al-ʿarab* that distinguish it from the Koran and pre-Islamic poetry, namely, its non-literary nature and more recent attestations.

[2] For instance, the same theoretical framework informs al-Khalīl's (d. 175/791) and Sībawayhi's (d. 180/796) description of number marking, as is shown by shared terms such as *adnā l-ʿadad* 'low number' and *taqlīl* 'diminution in number;' cp. Fück (1936: 628).

[3] In this study, initial *hamza* is transliterated only when relevant for linguistic description.

diminutive in noun plural marking is indicated by the infixal morpheme *.u.ay.* (the same form of diminutive is observed in noun singular marking as well).

Since Classical Arabic is partly derived from *kalām al-ʿarab*, a definition of the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking in Classical Arabic might also be valid as a first approximation for *kalām al-ʿarab* itself, for practical orientation.

If the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking are defined along the above lines, a clear distributional asymmetry is observed between them. While the plural of paucity can occur in isolation, the diminutive cannot. The latter must occur instead in certain environments, consisting of several kinds of collectives and plurals including the plural of paucity itself. For instance, in the diminutivized plural noun *ʾuqaydām*, the initial *hamza* and final *ā* show that the diminutive occurs within the environment *ʾa..ā.* already observed in the plural of paucity *ʾaqdām.*

This asymmetry influences the arrangement of linguistic materials in the present research: the diminutive will be presented and studied here in conjunction with the environments where it occurs, including the plural of paucity. With the exception of the plural of paucity, these environments are not an object of study in their own right in this article. Thus the plural of paucity plays a double conceptual role in the present research, to the extent that it is both an object of study in its own right and part of the object of study represented by the diminutive.

3. *Status quaestionis*

3.1. The plural of paucity

The plural of paucity has mainly been investigated in connection with the quantity of entities it may represent.

It is traditionally said to denote a set of *few* entities, ranging from three to ten in number, unlike the so-called plural of multitude, or of abundance, which denotes *many* entities, from ten onward (Fleisch 1961: 516, fn. 3; Ferrando 2006: 40).

Modern scholars, such as Ferrando (2006) and Waltisberg (2006), have assessed this traditional claim against statistical textual analyses, based on different sources, periods, and literary genres of Classical Arabic, as well as on different kinds of linguistic evidence, such as contextual meaning and agreement patterns. According to these statistical textual analyses, the traditional distinction between

the plurals of paucity and of multitude appears *not* to be empirically grounded.[4] In texts, the few entities traditionally said to be denoted by the plural of paucity are also denoted by the plural of multitude; likewise, the many entities traditionally said to be denoted by the plural of multitude are also denoted by the plural of paucity. In particular, the two different quantitative values of few and many entities can be diagnosed through two different kinds of agreement patterns. A plural noun agrees with a plural adjective or verb when it refers to *few* entities, while it agrees with a feminine singular adjective or verb when referring to *many* entities. To judge from data reported by al-Farrā' (d. 207/822), cited in Ferrando (2006: 55-6) and reproduced in 1. below, *kalām al-'arab* is among the primary sources of Classical Arabic that attest to both agreement patterns.

The same agreement patterns are also observed in modern Arabic dialects. The latter differ from Classical Arabic only in that, *ceteris paribus*, they attest an additional factor triggering the agreement of a plural noun with a plural adjective or verb.[5] Such an agreement pattern in fact takes place not only when a plural noun refers to *few* entities, as in Classical Arabic, but also when a plural noun is combined with virtually any numeral from two onward. Because of space limitations, only the agreement pattern concerning a plural noun denoting few entities is exemplified here, for both *kalām al-'arab* and Arabic dialects:

1.   Plural of paucity   *thalāthatu 'ayyām*   *khalawna*   (*kalām al-'arab*)[6]

    three days   remain.PL

    'three days remain [to the end of the month]'

    Dialectal parallel   *mātu-lha*   *rb'a d l-wlād*   (Moroccan Ar.)[7]

    died.PL-of-her   four of kids

    'four of her kids died'

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[4] Ratcliffe (1998) reaches the same results through a statistical analysis based on several Arabic dictionaries rather than on a corpus of texts.

[5] In Blanc's (1970: 52) own words: 'The literature contains scattered observations stating that PC [*scil.* plural concord] is either mandatory or preferred in expressions involving a numeral or some other enumerating or quantifying device.' By the latter term Blanc means a quantifier, including the quantifier *denoting precisely a few entities* (e.g., *shwayyit* 'some').

[6] Data cited in Ferrando (2006: 55-56).

[7] Data from Brustad (2000: 69).

Plural of multitude	*thalāthatu layālin*	*khalawna*	(*kalām al-ʿarab*)[8]
	three nights	remain.PL	
	'three nights remain [to the end of the month]'		

Dialectal parallel	*shwayyit malābis*	*kwayyisīn*	(Egyptian Ar.)[9]
	some clothes	nice.PL	
	'some nice clothes'		

Correlation:	few entities	↔	plural agreement

In sum, in *kalām al-ʿarab*, the plural of paucity, like the plural of multitude, may ambiguously denote few or many entities: in a componential notation (Table 1 in Section 3.3.), it conveys [SOME] *in conjunction with* [MANY]. For this linguistic reason, the plural of paucity *cannot* be identified with the paucal plural known from language typology, which exclusively denotes few entities, i.e., conveys [SOME] *to the exclusion of* [MANY]; nor can the plural of multitude be identified with the so-called multal plural, which exclusively denotes many entities, i.e., conveys [MANY] *to the exclusion of* [SOME].[10]

That said, the question remains *why* Arabic linguistic tradition assumed the plural of paucity to exclusively denote few entities (i.e., to be genuinely paucal from a modern perspective), and the plural of multitude to exclusively denote many entities (i.e., to be genuinely multal).

The discussion so far gives a good idea of the considerable amount of attention scholars have devoted to the number value of the plural of paucity. By contrast, Fück (1936) seems to be the only scholar to have investigated another semantic facet of the plural of paucity: its capability to denote a collection of entities (*kollektiven Grundbedeutung*). According to Fück (1936: 628), this is a corollary of the more general diachronic assumption that Classical Arabic broken plurals developed out of collectives ('*plurales paucitatis* [...] wie alle gebrochenen Plurale, alte Kollektiva sind').

Remarkably, Fück's collective interpretation of the plural of paucity implies that a *plural* nominal form can be associated with a *collective* meaning (collection), which is quite at odds with the received view of Western linguistics, which assigns to a plural nominal form member-semantics, and to a

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[8] Data cited in Ferrando (2006: 55-56).

[9] Data from Brustad (2000: 54).

[10] Cross-linguistically, the paucal plural denotes a few entities through a synthetic strategy, i.e., through a bound morpheme within a word. In 1. above it appears that Arabic dialects denote few entities, alternatively, through an analytic strategy, i.e., through a word combined with another word (cp. *shwayyit* + noun 'some').

collective nominal form collection-semantics. However, Fück's view cannot be dismissed so easily, for it is confirmed by recent semantic studies. A collective nominal form may convey member- in addition to collection-semantics (Corbett 2012: 102-104 and references therein), and likewise a plural nominal form may convey collection- in addition to member-semantics (Acquaviva 2008: 129). On this semantic level, collection is a multifactorial notion that includes, *inter alia*, cohesion and/or interchangeability. Cohesion defines entities linked together by a common source and/or space and/or function, which can be numerically low (a family) or high (a society) (Grimm 2018: 546-547, 650-651). Interchangeability defines entities perceived as lacking distinct identities, so that one can be replaced by another with no sensible difference, e.g., insects (Acquaviva 2008: 154, 177-178). Conversely, members are neither cohesive nor interchangeable.

Since a collective nominal form cannot be defined any longer through collection-semantics, nor can a plural nominal form be defined through member-semantics, the most straightforward manner of defining either kind of nominal form is mainly morphological, which is based on the cross-linguistic description of collectives and plurals proposed by Tiersma (1982). A collective nominal form is a stem denoting multiple entities; when expanded through a bound morpheme, it denotes a single entity. Conversely, a plural nominal form, *including the plural of paucity*, is a stem expanded through a bound morpheme to denote more entities. When not expanded by this morpheme, it denotes a single entity. Thus, collective and plural nominal forms tend to display opposite directions of markedness: from multiple entities to a single entity in a collective, and from a single entity to multiple entities in a plural (Grimm 2018: 530-531).[11] In summary:

2. Markedness: stem   +   additional marker
    Collective: more entities   >   single entity
    Plural (of paucity): single entity   >   more entities

Cases in point in *kalām al-ʿarab* are, respectively, the collective *tamr/a* 'date(s),' where the bound morpheme *at* denotes a single entity; and the plural of paucity *qadam/aqdām* 'foot/feet,' where the circumfixal bound morpheme *ʾa..ā.* denotes more entities.

To determine the member- or collection-semantics of a collective or plural nominal form, some diagnostic criteria are required. Regarding the collective nominal form, in English its member- or

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[11] The formally unmarked status of the collective is traditionally worded as 'morphologically singular' (see, e.g., Depraetere 2003: 86). More theoretically-oriented definitions describe it as displaying 'local marking' or 'subtractive morphology.'

collection-semantics is diagnosed through the presence of plural or singular agreement as in, respectively, *the aristocracy are…* vs. *the swarm is… .*[12]

In the search for a similar diagnostic criterion for *kalām al-ʿarab*, particularly useful is Sībawayhi's remark concerning the Koran (XXVII, 18), where the collective nominal form *naml* agrees with a verb bearing the ending *ū* in the clause *ayyuhā l-namlu-dkhulū masākina-kum* 'Ants, enter your dwelling-places.'[13] Sībawayhi (*al-Kitāb*, II, 47) explicitly states that this kind of agreement is possible only on the condition that *naml* stands for human beings (*l-anāsī*).[14] In this semantic context, the referent 'ants' is assimilated to the referent 'human beings,' who are loosely cohesive and not interchangeable, and so the referent 'ants' can be said in modern terms to convey member-semantics through the mediation of a metaphor, rather than the expected collection-semantics (typically ants are functionally cohesive and interchangeable):

3.   *l-namlu*   *-dkhulū*

                (ants intended as) human beings   enter!.PL[15]

      Correlation: member-semantics   ↔   agreement-marker *ū*

Sībawayhi (*al-Kitāb*, II, 46ff) also reports many examples of *kalām al-ʿarab* in which the same referent of human beings is expressed through the collective nominal form *qawm* 'people,' which accordingly conveys member-semantics. In these examples, the referent in question agrees with an adjective bearing, again, the ending *ū*, as in *qawmu-ka ḥasanūna* 'your people is handsome:'

4.   *qawmu-ka*   *ḥasanūna*

                (people, i.e.,) human beings   handsome.PL

      Correlation: member-semantics   ↔   agreement-marker *ū*

It follows from Sībawayhi's description that in *kalām al-ʿarab* (and perhaps in the Koran), member- and collection-semantics are diagnosed through the presence of agreement with a verb or adjective displaying the ending *ū*, or lack thereof.

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[12] See, e.g., Depraetere (2003: 101) and Corbett (2012: 102-104) and references therein.

[13] The English translation of the Koran is Arberry's.

[14] *wa-ṣāra l-namlu bi-tilka l-manzilati ḥīna ḥaddathta ʿan-hu ka-mā tuḥaddithu ʿan-i l-anāsī.*

[15] Abbreviations in morphemic glosses follow the Leipzig Glossing Rules.

Turning to the plural nominal form (which in principle includes the plural of paucity), it conveys collection-semantics when displaying some diagnostic properties internal to the stem, in which case it may be labeled an inherent plural. These properties distinguish an inherent plural from its counterpart with member-semantics, i.e., the traditionally recognized plural (Acquaviva 2008: 129). An inherent plural is irregular in that (I) it displays gender inversion with respect to the singular; (II) it may alternate with a regular plural; and (III) its morpheme 'is nowhere else in the language an exponent for plurality.' Furthermore, (IV) it denotes inanimates (V) that occur as a homogeneous subgrouping, such as (paired) body parts and measurement units.

An example from Italian is *braccia* 'arms,' which displays the irregular feminine-like ending *a* with respect to the masculine pair *braccio* 'arm'/*bracci* 'armrests:'

5. *braccia* 'arms.F'

    (I) gender inversion relative to the singular form: *braccio* 'arms.M'

    (II) a regular plural: *bracci* 'armrests.M'

    (III) not an exponent for plurality: *bracci-a* 'arms.F,' *cas-a* 'house.F,' *mel-a* 'apple.F'

    (IV) inanimate: 'arms'

    (V) (paired) body parts, measurements units: 'arms'

Specifically for *kalām al-ʿarab*, the inherent plural is still a virtually unexplored topic. The early lexicographer al-Khalīl (*Kitāb al-ʿAyn*, I, 117) attests the following utterance of *kalām al-ʿarab*: *inkharaʿat aʿḍāʾu l-baʿīr* 'the limbs of the camel became displaced,' in which the plural of paucity *ʾaʿḍāʾ* 'limbs' qualifies as an inherent plural in a loose manner, given that it displays only some diagnostic properties defining this kind of plural, one of which is indeed uncertain:

6. *aʿḍāʾ* 'limbs'

    (I) gender inversion relative to singular?: *ʿuḍw* 'arm.M' (*aʿḍāʾ* 'limbs' displays *syntactic but not inherent* feminine gender: see its agreement with *inkharaʿat* 'becomes displaced.F')

    (IV) inanimate: 'limbs'

    (V) (paired) body parts, measurements units: 'limbs'

The considerations concerning *aʿḍāʾ* in 6. also apply to some lexemes of *kalām al-ʿarab* mentioned by Sībawayhi (*al-Kitāb*, III, 491), which accordingly qualify as loosely defined inherent plurals: *ʾakuff* 'palms of the hands' – *ʾukayff, ʾarjul* 'feet' – *ʾurayjil, ʾaqdām* 'feet' – *ʾuqaydām, ʾafkhādh* 'thighs' – *ʾufaykhād.*

Interestingly, these loosely defined inherent plurals are *all plurals of paucity* like the lexeme *'a'ḍā'* cited by al-Khalīl and, what is more, they *all undergo diminutivization.*

Overall, this data clarifies the existence of nouns that partly behave as inherent plurals in *kalām al-'arab.* This data also shows that the study of the plural of paucity calls for a better understanding of the phenomenon of the inherent plural and that, generally speaking, a study of this sort should abandon the traditional conceptual pairs plural/member-semantics and collective/collection-semantics in favor of a more flexible conceptualization, in line with Fück's (1936) insights.

3.2. The diminutive in noun plural marking

The form and meaning of the diminutive in noun plural marking have been extensively studied in Arabic dialects,[16] while its Classical Arabic counterpart has been almost exclusively investigated on the level of form, with the notable exception of Fück (1936), who discusses its semantics with particular reference to collective and plural nouns.

It is also noteworthy that Fück (1936) includes *kalām al-'arab* among the sources of Classical Arabic that are the object of his study. Central to Fück's study is the observation that the Classical Arabic diminutive in noun plural marking seemingly oscillates between the meaning of 'small' and 'some.' On the one hand, Sībawayhi (d. 170/796) generally describes the diminutive in noun plural marking, e.g., the diminutivized broken plural *ṣubayya* (from *ṣibya* 'boys'), as referring to *some* boys. The relevant *locus probans* is the following: 'One makes the diminutive [...] since one means only to assign paucity to a plural [*taqlīl al-jam'*]' (see Section 4.1., Text 3).

On the other hand, texts do not necessarily confirm Sībawayhi's description: for instance, in a poetic line cited by Sībawayhi himself (*al-Kitāb*, III, 486), the semantic context, notably the elative *aṣgharu-hum* 'littlest of them,' forces instead the reading 'little boys' for the same lexeme. This example shows that Fück (1936: 630ff.) derives his observations partly from traditional medieval scholars (grammarians, lexicographers, Koranic commentators, polymaths) and partly from texts.

Reference works on Arabic grammar usually provide no translation for the diminutive in noun plural marking, i.e., for diminutivized plurals, which clearly points to their difficult semantic interpretation.[17] Recently, Lancioni (2011) has provided a critical translation of the ample section of *al-Kitāb* that Sībawayhi (d. 170/796) devoted to the diminutive, including its occurrence in noun plural

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[16] The literature concerning Arabic dialects is cited in Section 6. below.

[17] See, e.g., Wright (1896: I, 169-170) and Fleisch (1961: 386-387).

marking. Interestingly, *kalām al-'arab* is among the sources of Classical Arabic of which Sībawayhi avails himself to describe the diminutive in noun plural marking in that section.

In sum, Fück's (1936) study and Lancioni's (2011) translation bring to light a poorly explored topic, the semantics of the diminutive in noun plural marking in Classical Arabic, and especially in *kalām al-'arab*, which requires further investigation.

3.3. Terminology

From the foregoing review of current opinions on the subject of the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking, it emerges that these terms imply no clear indication for the semantics of the linguistic entities they describe, when they are applied to Classical Arabic and especially to *kalām al-'arab*. Actually, in the current state of knowledge, the term 'plural of paucity' describes no effectively attested paucal meaning in the case of *kalām al-'arab* (Section 3.1.). Likewise, the term 'diminutive in noun plural marking' refers to a linguistic entity whose meaning ambiguously denotes smallness or paucity (Section 3.2.). It follows that these terms are intended here to describe only formal features of the lexical attestations of *kalām al-'arab* under scrutiny, such as the vocalism *'a..ā.*, etc. (the plural of paucity), or the vocalism *.u.ay.* (the diminutive in noun plural marking).[18]

Accordingly, in this study the terms 'plural of paucity' and 'diminutive in noun plural marking' are non-committal with respect to the actual semantics of the formal features in question. Rather, the semantics of 'plural of paucity' and 'diminutive in noun plural marking' are expected to emerge from a preliminary description of attestations of *kalām al-'arab*, as well as from a distributional analysis of them; they do not constitute an assumption guiding the preliminary description and distributional analysis.

The terms 'plural' and 'collective' warrant attention as well. Albeit with different semantic nuances, in the scholarly literature 'collective,' just like 'plural,' basically describes plurality, i.e., entities numbering more than one (Corbett 2004, Acquaviva 2008). Thus, in spite of the obvious etymological connection, the very term 'plurality' may become misleading, if understood as describing 'plural' alone. Again, 'plural' and 'collective' are intended here to describe formal features of a noun: in practice, in this study these terms are shorthand for 'plural nominal form' and 'collective nominal form.'

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[18] As is well-known, the vocalism *.u.ay.* also occurs in noun singular marking.

To avoid conceptual misunderstandings, the componential notation [MORE] is adopted here to describe the semantic feature (component) of plurality, which occurs in both plural and collective nominal forms.[19] However, due to its wide currency, the term 'plural marking' is retained here, with the caveat that it describes [MORE], i.e., plurality as a whole, thereby encompassing 'collectives' in addition to 'plurals.' Componential notation is used in place of traditional terminology in this study for other semantic features as well, which are listed in Table 1.

Semantic feature	Traditional terminology
[ONE]	singular, singulative
[SOME]	few, some, little
[MANY]	many, much
[SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY]	paucal, paucity
[MANY] to the exclusion of [SOME]	multal

Table 1. Componential notation

Finally, the fine-grained terminological distinction between 'derivational' and 'lexical' morphemes is followed in this study, to stress the capability of noun plural marking to manifest itself, respectively, through bound morphemes or through a stem (Acquaviva 2008). To the extent that broken plurals resort to bound morphemes, notably infixal and circumfixal morphemes to express [MORE], and *may but need not* involve semantic specialization, they can be regarded as derivational plurals (Acquaviva 2008: 212).

4. Sources

Kalām al-ʿarab is a *primary* source of Classical Arabic that, unlike its other primary sources, namely the Koran and pre-Islamic poetry, has been transmitted only indirectly – encapsulated, so to speak, in grammatical or lexicographical sources.

Attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* concerning the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking will be drawn here from these *indirect* sources of grammatical or lexicographical nature, especially when such sources are coeval to the period of attestation of the primary source, *kalām al-*

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[19] Because of the occurrence of dual marking in *kalām al-ʿarab* and, generally speaking, in Classical Arabic and Arabic dialects, the componential notation [MORE THAN TWO] would be more accurate, but more cumbersome as well.

'arab, from the second half of the eighth century to the first half of the ninth century CE (Section 1). This kind of indirect source is generally referred to as an early (indirect) source. An important early source is Sībawayhi (Section 2.1), which is presented here in the English translation by Lancioni (2011), with some modifications. Unless otherwise stated, the remaining early sources are lexicographical. In some cases, attestations of *kalām al-'arab* are drawn from indirect sources dating after the first half of the ninth century, usually referred to as late sources. They are all lexicographical, except for Ibn Ya'īsh (d. 643/1245), a grammarian, and al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333), a polymath. Early and late sources are arranged here by genre (grammar, lexicography, erudite works) and in chronological order.

4.1. Sībawayhi (d. 180/796)

al-Kitāb, III, 335-6 (Text 1):

Regarding the irregular change of apophony, they say *hudhayl/hudhaliyy* [...], *banū 'abīda/'ubadiyy*, with *u* after *'* and *a* after *b*: they said precisely *'ubadiyy.*[20]

al-Kitāb, III, 378 (Text 2):

You say *nafariyy, raḥṭiyy* expanding *nafar, raḥṭ* through *iyy.*[21]

al-Kitāb, III, 489-91 (Text 3):

One makes the diminutive of each scheme of paucity [*adnà l-'adad*], without going beyond to another [of multitude] since one means only to assign paucity to a plural [*taqlīl al-gam'*]. [...] The plural of paucity has specific schemes that belong to it in principle [*fī l-aṣl*], but the [plural of multitude] [*al-akthar*] can share them. [...] They are four schemes: all other schemes in principle are for multitude, even if they can be shared by paucity. [...] This happens, for example, in the diminutive of *'aklub – 'ukaylib*[22] [...]. So we heard them from the Arabs. [...]

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[20] *fa-min-a l-ma'dūli lladhī huwa 'alà ghayri qiyāsin qawlu-hum fī hudhaylin hudhalī [...] wa-fī ḥayyin min banī 'adiyyin yuqālu la-hum banū 'abīdata 'ubadī fa-ḍammū l-'ayna wa-fataḥū l-bā'a fa-qālū 'ubadī.*

[21] *wa-taqūlu fī l-iḍāfati ilà nafarin nafariyyun wa-raḥṭin raḥṭī.*

[22] Space limitations prevent a full quotation of the passage in which Sībawayhi enumerates these circumfixal morphemes, namely *'a..u., 'a.ā., 'a.i.a, .i.a.* (cp. also Section 5 below). According to Ferrando (2006: 43), the latter morpheme is *.i.a.a* in Sībawayhi's description. It follows that the circumfixal morpheme *'a.u.* cited in this passage is representative of the remaining three circumfixal morphemes as well.

I asked al-Khalīl about the diminutive of *dūr* 'dwellings'[23] and he answered: I restore it to the scheme for paucity, since I want to diminish its number. [...] if you do not like this, the diminutive will be according to the singular, by adding the *t* of the plural to it.[24] [...]

This happens because it is restored to the nominal that is for paucity. In fact, you say for paucity *ẓabayāt* 'gazelles' [...]: here *.a.a.āt*, has the status of *ʾa..u.* in the masculine, of *ʾa..ā.* and similar forms [for paucity]. Analogously, forms whose plural is with *ūna* and *īna.* [...]

If you made the diminutive of *jafanāt* 'bowls' when their number is beyond ten, you would say *jufaynāt* without going beyond the number, because it is a scheme for paucity. [...]

In fact [the Arabs] say *darāhim* 'dirhams' – *durayhimāt* of *fityān* 'young men' or *futayya – futayyūna.*[25]

al-Kitāb, III, 494 (Text 4):

For instance, you say *qawm – quwaym* [...] Analogously *nafar, raht.*[26]

4.2. Ibn Yaʿīsh (d. 643/1245)

Sharḥ al-Mufaṣṣal, III, 323:

Had it been a broken plural, it would have been restored to the singular, with the plural *āt* added to it [scil. *tamarāt*], so as to make the diminutive, e.g., *tumayrāt.*[27]

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[23] This lexeme exemplifies a plural of multitude, as it displays none of the four circumfixal morphemes typical of the plural of paucity.

[24] I.e., the ending *āt,* as is exemplified by *durayhimāt* immediately below.

[25] *iʿlam anna kulla bināʾin kāna li-adnà l-ʿadadi fa-inna-ka tuḥaqqiru dhalika l-bināʾa lā tujāwizu-hu ilà ghayri-hi min qibali anna-ka inna-mā turīdu taqlīla l-jamʿ [...] wa- iʿlam anna li-adnà l-ʿadadi abniyatun hiya mukhtaṣṣatun bi-hi wa-hiya la-hu fī l-aṣli wa-rubbamā sharika-hu fī-hi l-akthar [...] fa-tilka arbaʿatu abniyatin fa-mā khalā hadhā fa-huwa fī l-aṣli li-l-akthari wa-in sharika-hu l-aqall [...] wa-dhalika qawlu-ka fī ʾaklubin ʾukaylib [...] wa-ka-dhalika samiʿnā-hā min-a l-ʿarab [...] wa saʾaltu l-khalīla ʿan taḥqīri l-dūr fa-qāla aruddu-hu ilà bināʾi aqalli l-ʿadadi li-annī innamā urīdu taqlīla l-ʿadadi [...] fa-in lam tafʿal fa-ḥaqqir-hā ʿalà l-wāḥidi wa-alḥiq tāʾ al-jamʿi wa-dhalika li-anna-ka taruddu-hu ilà l-ismi lladhī huwa li-aqalli l-ʿadad a-lā tarà anna-ka taqūlu li-l-aqalli ẓabayāt [...] fa-faʿalātun bi-manzilati ʾafʿulin fī l-mudhakkari wa-afʿālin wa-naḥwa-humā wa-ka-dhalika mā jumiʿa bi-l-wāwi wa-l-nūni wa-l-yāʾi wa-l-nūn. [...] wa-law ḥaqqarta l-jafanāt wa-qad jāwazna l-ʿashara la-qulta l-jufaynāt lā tujāwizu li-anna-hā bināʾu aqalli l-ʿadad [...] a-lā tarā-hum qālū fī darāhima durayhimāt wa-idha ḥaqqarta l-fityāna qulta futayya wa-in lam taqul dhā qulta futayyūna fa-l-wāwu wa-l-nūnu bi-manzilati l-tāʾi fī l-muʾannath.*

[26] *wa-dhalika qawlu-ka fī qawmin quwaymin [...] wa-kadhalika l-nafaru wa-l-raht.*

[27] *wa-law kāna mukassaran la-rudda fī l-taṣghīri ilà l-wāḥidi wa-jumiʿa bi-alifi wa-l-tāʾi naḥwa tumayrāt.*

4.3. Al-Khalīl (d. 175/791)

Kitāb al-ʿAyn, II, 188 (Text 1):

l-ʿashiyy is the end of the day, and when you say *l-ʿashiyya*, this is [referred] to the single day, as you say *I have met you today in the ʿashiyya of some day* or *in a ʿashiyya*. If they make the diminutive of l-ʿashiyy, they say *ʿushayshyān*. [They say so] in the *shafà*, that is the last hour of the day, at the *mughayribān* of the sun.[28]

Kitāb al-ʿAyn, IV, 19 (Text 2):

l-raht is a number [of people],[29] from three to ten, who are put together.[30] Someone says: from seven to ten, whereas from seven down to three is *nafar*.[31]

Kitāb al-ʿAyn, IV, 40 (Text 3):

The people of Hijaz say 'this.F is *dhahab*' [...] and [call] *dhahaba* a piece of it; whereas people who are not from Hijaz say 'this.M is *dhahab*.'[32]

Kitāb al-ʿAyn, IV, 104 (Text 4):

In the diminutive *muwayh* and in the plural *miyāh.* Among the Arabs someone says 'this.F is a *māʾa*,' like the Banū Tamīm, meaning a well with its water.[33]

Kitāb al-ʿAyn, VIII, 55 (Text 5):

l-dhawd is from three to ten [taken] out of a camel herd.[34]

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[28] *al-ʿashiyyu ākhiru l-nahār fa-idhā qulta ʿashiyya fa-hiya li-yawmin wāḥidin taqūlu laqītu-hu ʿashiyyata yawmin kadhā wa-ʿashiyyatan min-a l-ʿashiyyāt wa-idhā ṣaghgharū l-ʿashiyya qālū l-ʿushayshyān wa-dhalika ʿinda l-shafà wa-huwa ākhiru sāʿatin min-a l-nahāri ʿinda mughayribāni l-shams.*

[29] This integration is inferred from the following comparison between *raht* and *nafar.*

[30] A more uncertain interpretation, which considers *ʿadad* and *yujmaʿu* as technical terms, would be: '*l-raht* is a [low?] number [of people], which is employed as a plural [to refer to entities] from three to ten.'

[31] *al-rahṭu ʿadadun yujmaʿu min thalāthatin ilà ʿashratin wa-yuqālu min sabʿatin ilà ʿashratin wa-mā dūna l-sabʿati ilà l-thalāthati nafar.*

[32] *wa-ahlu l-ḥijāzi yaqūlūna hiya l-dhahab [...] wa-l-qiṭʿatu min-hā dhahaba wa-ghayru-hum yaqūlu huwa l-dhahab.*

[33] *fī l-taṣghīri muwayh wa-fī l-jamʿi miyāh wa-min-a l-ʿarabi man yaqūlu hadhihi māʾa ka-banī tamīmin yaʿnūna l-rakiyya.*

[34] *al-dhawdu min-a l-ibli min-a l-thalāthi ilà l-ʿashar.*

4.4. Abū ʿUbayda (d. 209/824)

Tahdhīb al-Lugha, VI, 118 (by al-Azharī, d. 370/981):

Ibn al-Sikkīt ascribes the following words to Abū ʿUbayda: if the bucket almost reached its maximum capacity, this [condition] is its *nahd*, so they say: *nahidat* the maximum capacity. He also said: if the bucket is below its maximum capacity, they say: *ʿarraḍtu* [...] He also said: *waḍakhtu* or *awḍakhtu*, if you put *muwayha* at its bottom.[35]

4.5. al-Sijistānī (d. 255/869)

al-Mudhakkar wa-l-Muʾannath, 145-146:

l-dhawd is a feminine [noun taken] out of a camel herd, is said only of she-camels, and its diminutive is *dhuwayd*. [...] They say irregularly: *he has three, four, ten dhawd* for three etc. [she-camels taken] out of a camel herd.[36]

4.6. Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 282/895)

Al-Nabāt, 162:

They are *tīnāni*, two high mountains far north in the land of the Ghaṭafān, at the feet of which is *muwayha*, called *al-tīna*.[37]

4.7. Al-Azharī (d. 370/981)

Tahdhīb al-Lugha, VI, 195 (by al-Azharī, d. 370/981) (Text 1):

suḥaybatun of water, that is some *muwayha*.[38]

Tāj al-ʿArūs, XIX, 312 (by al-Zabīdī, d. 1205/1791) (Text 2):

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[35] *rawā bnu l-sikkīti li-abī ʿubaydata anna-hu qāla idhā qārabat-i l-dalwu l-malʾa fa-huwa nahdu-hā yuqālu nahidat l-malʾ qāla fa-idhā kāna dūna malʾi-hā qīla ʿarraḍtu fī l-dalw [...] wa-qāla waḍakhtu wa-awḍakhtu idhā jaʿalta fī asfali-hā muwayha.*

[36] *wa-l-dhawdu min-a l-ibli muʾannatha wa-lā yuqālu illā min-a l-nūqi wa-l-taṣghīru dhuwaydun [...] wa-yuqālu ʿalà ghayri qiyās la-hu thalāthu dhawd li-thalāthin min-a l-ibli wa-arbaʿu dhawd wa-ʿasharu dhawd.*

[37] *humā tīnāni jabalāni ṭawīlāni fī mahabbi l-shimāli min dāri ghaṭafāna fī uṣūli-himā muwayhatun yuqālu la-hā l-tīna.*

[38] *suḥaybatun min māʾin, ay muwayhatun qalīla.*

Al-Azharī reported from Thaʻlab: the meaning of *raht* is plural, but no singular can be derived from its stem.[39]

4.8. Nashwān al-Ḥimyārī (d. 573/1178)

Shams al-ʻUlūm, VII, 466:

l-ʻuqrubān is masculine singular [?] with respect to *l-ʻaqārib*.[40]

4.9. Al-Zabīdī (d. 1205/1791)

Tāj al-ʻArūs, III, 424:

l-ʻaqrāb is a collective. So it is heard [among the Arabs]. [41]

4.10. Al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333)

Nihāyat al-Arab, II, 285:

The tenth layer [of tribal organization] is the *raht*, that is a man's *raht*, and his *usra*, having the status of the toes. The *raht* is below ten, while the *usra* is more.[42]

5. Form-oriented description

The attestations of *kalām al-ʻarab* collected in Section 4. bring to light a stock of plurals of paucity richer than that usually assumed for Classical Arabic (Section 2.): in Sībawayhi's description a plural of paucity is any stem that, to express nuances of [MORE], is morphologically expanded not only through the circumfixal morphemes *ʼa..u., ʼa..ā., ʼa..i.a, .i..a* (broken plural), but also through masculine and feminine sound plural endings (Section 4.1., Text 3).

Furthermore, the collected attestations of *kalām al-ʻarab* confirm for this primary source the basic distributional asymmetry, assumed in Section 2 for practical orientation, between the plural of paucity, which can occur without the diminutive; and the diminutive in noun plural marking, which cannot

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[39] *rawà l-azhariyyu ʻan abī l-ʻabbās al-rahtu maʻnā-hu l-jamʻu wa-lā wāḥida la-hu min lafẓi-h.*

[40] *al-ʻuqrubān dhakaru l-ʻaqārib.*

[41] *wa-qad sumiʻa l-ʻaqrābu fi-smi l-jins.*

[42] *al-ṭabaqatu l-ʻāshiratu l-rahtu wa-hum rahtu l-rajuli wa-usratu-hu bi-manzilati aṣābiʻi l-qadam wa-l-rahtu dūna l-ʻashrati wa-l-usratu aktharu min dhalika.*

occur without the plural of paucity and, generally speaking, without a nominal form denoting [MORE]. Specifically for *kalām al-ʿarab*, the nominal forms in question are, in addition to the aforesaid kinds of plural of paucity, also the plural of multitude and three kinds of collective, notably mono-stem, multi-stem, and optional collective. To the extent that in noun plural marking the diminutive must co-occur with these forms, they can be seen as *environments* of it (Harris 1951).

Plurals of paucity have been formally described immediately above. The plural of multitude is, following Sībawayhi (Section 4.1., Text 3), any stem that is morphologically expanded through any infixal or circumfixal morpheme other than *ʾa..u., ʾa..ā., ʾa..i.a, .i..a*, to express nuances of [MORE]. Interestingly, in Sībawayhi's description, this kind of plural is not an environment for the diminutive, i.e., *no diminutivized noun is directly derived from a plural of multitude*, which resorts to suppletion instead, as is exemplified, *inter alia*, by the lexical pair *fityān, futayyūna* (instead of the expected *futayyān).

Finally, a collective is a stem that undergoes no morphological expansion to express [MORE] or nuances of it: e.g., *ibl* 'camel herd,' *dhawd* 'herd of she-camels (from three to ten)' (Section 4.3., Text 5 and Section 4.5.).

However, the same stem can be morphologically expanded through the endings *at, iyy*, and perhaps *ān*, to express [ONE]. The latter ending is uncertainly attested in late sources, through the zoonym *ʿuqrubān* 'scorpion' (Section 4.8.), as opposed to the collective *ʿaqrāb* 'scorpions' (Section 4.9.). The morphological expansion through *at, iyy*, and perhaps *ān* defines a mono-stem collective.

In certain nouns, this kind of morphological expansion is subject to dialectal variation: al-Khalīl reports that *dhahaba* and *māʾa* are confined to the usage of a given speakers' community (*ahl al-Ḥijāz* and *Banū Tamīm*, respectively: Section 4.3., Texts 3, 4). Similarly, *raḥṭiyy* seems to be possible only for the (unknown) informants consulted by Sībawayhi (Section 4.1., Text 2 and Section 4.7., Text 2). A stem of this sort is an optional collective.

Finally, morphological expansion of the stem through *at, iyy*, and perhaps *ān* to express [ONE] may not be allowed at all, in which case a totally different (technically speaking, suppletive) stem is used instead. In this case a multi-stem collective obtains. This is exemplified by lexical sets such as *ibl* 'camel herd,' *jamal* 'camel,' and *nāqa* 'she-camel' (Section 4.3., Text 5 and Section 4.5.).[43]

In particular, in the collected attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* the mono-stem collective stands out as a unique environment for the diminutive. In Sībawayhi's description (Section 4.1., Text 1), for a mono-stem collective referring to a tribal unit, the morphological expansion through *iyy* may be not be

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[43] According to a more traditional terminology, *ism al-jins* and *ism al-jamʿ*, respectively. These terms, however, raise many interpretive issues (Dror 2016 for an up-to-date discussion and references).

sufficient to express [ONE]: it may also require the diminutive. The latter, however, in this specific environment changes its form from *.u.ay.* to *.u.a.*, undergoing *y*-deletion: e.g., *ʿabīda* "Abīda" – *ʿubadiyy* 'a man from ʿAbīda.'

Such a definition of the collective in terms of morphological expansion through *at, iyy*, and perhaps *ān* purposely avoids any allusion to its meaning, apart from the basic feature [ONE]. As is shown by traditional terms such as *ism al-waḥda* and *nomen unitatis*, reference grammars of Classical Arabic semantically characterize *at* and *iyy* as denoting a unitizer, i.e., as an item taken from a collection; yet, in the collected attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab*, the ending *at* does not necessarily qualify as a unitizer when co-occurring with an optional collective, as is shown by al-Khalīl's gloss of *māʾa* as 'water well,' which does not refer to an item taken from a collection but rather points to an unpredictable (lexicalized) meaning instead (Section 4.3., Text 4).

Overall, the collected attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* can be couched in a form-oriented description centered on the notions of stem and morphological expansion through a marker, along the lines of Tiersma's (1982) cross-linguistic description, discussed in Section 3.1. and schematized in 1. above. Such a description allows for a first practical classification of the two intermingled objects of study, the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking, regardless of their exact meaning. As schematized in the *white cells* of Table 2 below, this classification includes the diminutive in all of its environments, illustrating any environment both in isolation and in conjunction with the diminutive itself. The two forms of environment are referred to here as the basic and diminutivized collective or plural. This classification includes three kinds of plural of paucity, intended both as environments of the diminutive and as a separate object of study (Section 2):

Designation			Class	Item	Basic	Semantic structure	Diminutivized	Semantic structure	Remarks
Collective	Optional		I	(7)	*māʾ/(a)* 'water'	[MORE]	*muwayh(a)*	[SOME]	
				(8)	*ʿashiyy/(a)* 'evening'	[MORE]	*ʿushayshyān?*	[ONE]	*ān* is uncertain
				(9)	*raht/(iyy)* '3-to-10 people'	[SOME]?	*ruhayt*	?	
	Mono-stem		II	(10)	*ʿabīda* "Abida'	[MORE]	*ʿubadiyy*	[ONE]	Diminutive is *.u.a.*
				(11)	*ʿabīd/iyy* "Abīd'	[MORE]	-	-	
	Multi-stem		III	(12)	*dhawd~nāqa* '3-to-10 she-camels;' 'great herd'	[SOME] [MANY]	*dhuwayd*	[SOME]	'great herd' is later
Plural of paucity	Broken		IV	(13)	*ʾaklub* 'dogs'	[SOME] [MANY]	*ʾukaylib*	?	
	Sound	Fem.	V	(14)	*jafanāt* 'bowls'	[SOME] [MANY]	*jufaynāt*	[SOME]	ultimately from a coll.
		Masc.	VI	(15)	N-*ūna*	[SOME] [MANY]	*futayyūna*	?	
Plural of multitude			VII	(16)	*fityān* 'young men'	[SOME] [MANY]	**futayyān*	See *futayyūna*	
				(17)			~*futayyūna*		

Key of symbols	
/	morphological expansion of collectives
()	optional ending (in collectives)
~	suppletion
N	noun (literally, *mā* 'something')
*	ungrammatical form

Table 2. Classification of instances of the plural of paucity and the diminutive

6. Semantic description

In the collected attestations of *kalām al-'arab*, form and meaning are not on the same footing.

While the formal features of a basic/diminutivized collective or plural attested in *kalām al-'arab* are directly observable, at least with respect to the consonantal *ductus*, its semantic features are not. Rather, they must be inferred from two kinds of linguistic environments, namely the lexemes that surround such a noun within an utterance or a lexical field (Harris 1951: 190-191). Alternatively, its semantic features are indirectly observable within a metalinguistic description, usually labeled as a gloss in lexicographical work.

Because of their indirect nature, an utterance, a lexical field, or a metalinguistic description raise problems of authenticity, so they can serve as semantic evidence but must be treated with caution. In fact, such kinds of evidence might have been subject to selection bias, not to speak of interpolation: an early grammarian or lexicographer might have selected certain utterances, lexical fields, or metalinguistic descriptions from the universe of discourse of *kalām al-'arab* to the exclusion of others, or even modified them, for some theoretical or ideological reasons. To overcome these problems, for any basic/diminutivized collective or plural of *kalām al-'arab*, a parallel with modern living usage, i.e., with a modern Arabic dialect, will be provided here whenever available.

A semantic description of the collected attestations of *kalām al-'arab* arranges them into entries, each including:

- a basic collective or plural
- its diminutivized counterpart
- their meaning, derived from the semantic evidence available in early sources
- a dialectal parallel

The meaning derived from early sources is enclosed in apostrophes if recorded by them in the form of metalinguistic description, including glosses. If not enclosed in apostrophes, the meaning derived from early sources is a contextual meaning inferred from an utterance or a lexical field. Sometimes, further semantic evidence is adduced, especially for the meaning of a basic/diminutivized collective or plural derived from a late source. The resulting entries are illustrated in the following.

7.   *mā'*   –   *muwayh; muwayha*[44]   (Section 4.3., Text 3; Section 4.4.)

      'water'   'some water' (*muwayhatun qalīla*)

      'səl   –   *'sīla*   (Moroccan Arabic) [45]

      'miel'   'du miel'

The meaning 'some water' (*muwayhatun qalīla*) in 7. reflects a gloss drawn from a late source. However, further semantic evidence for this meaning from an early source is provided by the following *locus probans* (Section 4.4.):

> If the bucket almost reached its maximum capacity, this [condition] is its *nahd* [...]. If the bucket is below its maximum capacity, they say: *'arraḍtu* [...] He also said: *waḍakhtu* or *awḍakhtu*, if you put *muwayha* [some/*much water] at its bottom.

This evidence is a lexical field denoting decreasing capacity, forcing precisely the reading 'some water' for *muwayha*:

LEXICAL FIELD: [DECREASING CAPACITY]		
nahd	*'arraḍtu*	*ja'alta muwayha*
maximum capacity	below maximum capacity	some/*much water

Another contextual meaning is available for *muwayha* in early sources such as Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 282/895), in whose description this noun is modified by a proper noun: 'at the feet of which is *muwayha*, called *al-tīna*' (Section 4.6.). In this case, the proper noun itself rules out the mass reading 'some water,' forcing the reading 'little well' instead, i.e., a diminutivized form of *mā'a* 'water well' (Section 4.3., Text 4).

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[44] No dialectal parallel has been found for the form *muwayh* attested in Section 4.3., Text 4. *Muwayh* is also attested in a *ḥadīth*, but no contextual meaning can be inferred for it. The *ḥadīth* reads as follows: *kāna mūsà 'alay-hi l-salām yaghtasilu 'inda muwayh* 'Moses – peace be upon him – was washing himself at a little bath (?)' (*Tāj al-'Arūs*, XXXVI: 508). The conjectural English translation is based on Exodus XL, 30-31, which this *ḥadīth* probably echoes.

[45] Caubet *et al.* (1989: 51). Lane (1863, s. v. *'SL*) based on late lexicographers, also records the lexeme *'usayla*, formally and perhaps semantically akin to *'sīla*. In this Moroccan lexeme, the diminutive is phonologically realized as *ī* (diachronically deriving from *ay* of *.u.ay.*).

8.   *ʿashiyy/(a)*   –   *ʿushayshyān?*   (Section 4.3., Text 1)

      'end of the day'   'last hour of the day'

      məghrəb   –   *mghêrəb*   (Ḥassāniyya Arabic)[46]

      'sunset'   'immediate approach of sunset'

9.   *raḥṭ/(iyy)*   –   *ruhayṭ* (Sections 4.1., Texts 2, 4; 4.3., Text 2; 4.7.; 4.10.)

      'number [of people], from three to ten'   ?

      'toes'   ?

The meaning 'toes' (*aṣābiʿi l-qadam*) in 9. reflects a gloss drawn from al-Nuwayrī's work (Section 4.10.). Further semantic evidence for this meaning is a lexical field attested with slight variations in al-Nuwayrī's work itself and in the sources studied by Varisco (1995). Space limitations prevent a full illustration of the lexical field in question in these sources; it will suffice here to say that in this lexical field, any kind of tribal unit corresponds to a body part. The less populated the tribal unit, the lower the corresponding body part:

LEXICAL FIELD: [TRIBAL ORGANIZATION AS A BODY]							
shaʿb	*qabīla*	*ʿimāra*	*baṭn*	*fakhidh*	*ʿashīra*	*faṣīla*	*raḥṭ*
suture	skull bones	breast	belly	belly	-	lower leg	toes

10.   *hudhayl, ʿabīda*   –   *hudhaliyy, ʿubadiyy*   (Section 4.1., Text 1)

      H., ʿA. (ethnonym)   a man/*a little man from H., ʿA

      masāʿîd   –   *msêʿîdi*   (Southern Tunisian Arabic)[47]

      'Masāʿîd (ethnonym)'   'de la tribu des Masāʿîd'

The early lexicographer al-Shaybānī (d. 206/821) records a related lexical pair:

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[46] Taine-Cheikh (2018: 108). In the diminutivized noun *mghêrəb*, the diminutive is phonologically realized as *ê* (diachronically deriving from *ay* of *.u.ay.*). Cp. also the lexical pair *maghrib* 'sunset' – *mughayribān* 'last hour of the day' attested in the *locus probans* under scrutiny. See also the diminutivized plural *mughirbiyyāt* in Iksāli Arabic, a dialect spoken in Lower Galilee (Nevo 2006: 46).

[47] The data is drawn from the dialect of Marâzîg (Nefzaoua region) studied by Denizeau (1957: 68), who explicitly states that in *msêʿîdi* 'La fonction de la forme diminutive, doublant celle du suffixe *i*, paraît avoir là un rôle strictement singulatif.'

11.   *'abīd*   –   *'abīdiyy*   (*al-Jīm*, III, 189)

   'Abīd (ethnonym)   a man from 'Abīd

This pair minimally differs from the lexical pair *'abīda – 'ubadiyy* in 10., in that its first member does not display *at* and its second member does not display the diminutive.

12.   *dhawd*   –   *dhuwayd*   (Sections 4.3., Text 5; 4.5.)

   'three to ten [taken] out of a camel herd'   ?

   'said only of she-camels'

   'a number of camels from three to thirty'   (Lane 1863, s.v. *DHWD*)

   dhawd-ak, zowd   –   *dhweyd*

   'thy little herd (*dhawd-ak*)''   'a little herd'   (Rwala Arabic)[48]

   'a great herd of camel (*zowd*)'   (Rwala Arabic)[49]

To the extent that it is attested by Arabic lexicographers later than al-Khalīl (cited in Lane 1863, s.v. *DHWD*), the meaning of *dhawd* 'a number of camels from three to thirty' is more recent than its meaning 'three to ten [taken] out of a camel herd.'

13.   *'aklub*   –   *'ukaylib*   (Section 4.1., Text 3)

   'some, many dogs' (*adnà l-'adad, l-akthar*)[50]   'some dogs' (*taqlīl al-jam'*)[51]

   wlād   (Moroccan Arabic)[52]

   '(some, many) kids'

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[48] Data from Musil (1928: 336, 341). Shammari Arabic provides a further interesting parallel, attested in the following passage from an oral narrative: *'ind ibl-ihim dhōd-in gilīl-in* 'near a camel herd, a small herd' (Sowayan 2010: 74). This utterance is semantic evidence for assigning to *dhōd-in*, the Shammari Arabic cognate of *dhawd*, the contextual meaning 'small herd,' inferred from the adjective *gilīl-in* that modifies this collective (cp. Classical Arabic *qalīl*).

[49] Data from Musil (1928: 364).

[50] For convenience, the entire *locus probans* is reproduced here (Section 4.1., Text 3): 'The plural of paucity [*adnà l-'adad*] has specific schemes that belong to it in principle [*fī l-aṣl*], but the [plural of multitude] [*al-akthar*] can share them.'

[51] For convenience, the entire *locus probans* is reproduced here (Section 4.1., Text 3): 'One makes the diminutive of each scheme of paucity, [*adnà l-'adad*] [...] since one means only to assign paucity to a plural [*taqlīl al-jam'*].'

[52] Data from Moroccan Arabic: see 1. above. This example can be replicated in many other Arabic dialects.

14.   *jafanāt*   –   *jufaynāt*   (Section 4.1., Text 3)

        'some, many bowls' (*bi-manzilati 'af'ul*)[53]   'some bowls' (*l-'ashar [...] lā tujāwizu*)[54]

        tämrât   *tmērāt*   (Southern Tunisian Arabic)[55]

        'some, many) dates'   'quelques dattes, de rare dattes'

15.   N-*ūna*   (N = noun)   –   *futayyūna*   (Section 4.1., Text 3)

        'some, many' (*bi-manzilati 'af'ul*)[56]   'some young men' (*jufaynāt [...] futayyūna*

                                            fa-l-wāwu wa-l-nūnu bi-manzilati l-tā')

        fallaḥīn   (Egyptian Arabic)[57]

        '(some, many) peasants'

16.   *fityān*   –   **futayyān*   (Section 4.1., Text 3)

        'some, many young men'   No diminutivized plural of multitude.

        (*li-l-akthar wa-in sharika-hu l-aqall*)[58]   Suppletion instead: 17. below

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[53] For convenience, the entire *locus probans* is reproduced here (Section 4.1., Text 3): '.*a.a.āt*, has the status of *'a..u.* in the masculine, of *'a..ā.* and similar forms [for paucity]. Analogously, forms whose plural is with *ūna* and *īna*.'

[54] For convenience, the entire *locus probans* is reproduced here (Section 4.1., Text 3): 'If you made the diminutive of *jafanāt* 'bowls' when their number is beyond ten, you would say *jufaynāt* without going beyond the number, because it is a scheme for paucity.'

[55] The data is drawn from the dialect of Marâzîg (Nefzaoua region) studied by Denizeau (1957: 68), who explicitly states: 'Les conditions d'emploi du pluriel des diminutifs méritent aussi une observation : au lieu de porter sur les objects désignés eux-mêmes, la dégradation peut porter sur leur nombre ; il est courant que *tmērāt* désigne « quelques dattes, de rare dattes » , « moins nombreuses » et non pas « plus petites ou plus mauvaises » que ne le ferait le pluriel *tämrât* du positif.' The latter example can be replicated in many other Arabic dialects, where this kind of plural may denote either few or many entities; see 1. above and the related discussion.

[56] See the end of the *locus probans* cited in fn. 53. In that passage, Sībawayhi provides no example for the masculine plural of paucity, generically describing it as 'something' (*mā*), i.e., a noun, whose plural endings are *ūna* and *īna*.

[57] This example can be replicated in many other Arabic dialects, where this kind of plural may denote either few or many entities: 1. above and the related discussion.

[58] For convenience, the *locus probans* is reproduced here (Section 4.1., Text 3): 'They are four schemes: all other schemes in principle are for multitude, even if they can be shared by paucity.'

17. *fityān* – *futayyūna* (Section 4.1., Text 3)

  'some, many young men' Suppletion by a diminutivized plural of paucity

  (*li-l-akthar wa-in sharika-hu l-aqall*)[59] (*aruddu-hu ilà bināʾi l-aqalli li-taqlīl al-jamʿ*)

The whole semantic picture that emerges from the collected attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* with regard to the second object of study is that the diminutive in noun plural marking, in its historical reality, *possesses no meaning of its own: it rather doubles a meaning already observed in its environment.* In more traditional terms, in a diminutivized collective or plural, the diminutive appears to convey a meaning already observed in the corresponding basic collective or plural. For the time being, this semantic behavior of the diminutive can be labeled as the 'doubling function.' This is illustrated in the white and grey cells of Table 2, under 10., 12., 14.

Thus, in 14. *jufaynāt* conveys, through the co-occurrence of *.u.ay.* and the derivational ending *āt*, the same feature [SOME] already observed in the derivational ending *āt* alone in *jafanāt*, with the caveat that *jufaynāt* conveys [SOME] *to the exclusion of* [MANY] (paucal meaning: Section 3.1.), while *jafanāt* conveys [SOME] *in conjunction with* [MANY], as will be discussed in greater detail immediately below. Likewise in 12., based on dialectal parallels, *dhuwayd* conveys, through the co-occurrence of *.u.ay.* and the manipulated lexical stem *dhawd* (i.e., *dh.w.d*), the same feature [SOME] already observed in the lexical stem *dhawd* alone, again with the caveat that *dhuwayd* conveys [SOME] *to the exclusion of* [MANY], while *dhawd* conveys [SOME] *in conjunction with* [MANY]. This can be schematized as follows (with the doubling function in bold):

18.   *jafanāt* **[SOME]**, [MANY] > *.u.ay.* > *jufaynāt* **[SOME]**

   dhawd **[SOME]**, [MANY] > *.u.ay.* > *dhuwayd* **[SOME]**

Turning to the first object of study, it appears that the collected attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* add nothing new to the current knowledge of the *basic* plural of paucity. In fact, in reporting that the latter expresses both [SOME] and [MANY] in attestations such as *ʾaklub*, *jafanāt,* and N-*ūna* in 13., 14., 15., Sībawayhi's description offers no crucial semantic evidence, since this kind of 'oscillating' meaning, as it were, is already known for the basic plural of paucity in *kalām al-ʿarab* and, generally speaking, in Classical Arabic, from the textual statistical study of its agreement patterns (Section 3.1.).

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[59] See fn. 58.

By contrast, Sībawayhi's assertion (Section 4.1., Text 3) that 'in principle' (*fī l-aṣl*) the *basic* plural of paucity conveys [SOME] *to the exclusion of* [MANY] , i.e., in modern terms, it is genuinely paucal (Section 3.1.), cannot be proven nor disproven, for two reasons. First and foremost, no dialectal parallel seems to confirm his assertion. Second, it is not clear from the context which language level his expression 'in principle' (*fī l-aṣl*) refers to. If *aṣl* refers to synchrony, the basic plural of paucity would convey [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY] at some deeper semantic level, in the language stage described by Sībawayhi, i.e., in *kalām al-'arab*; if *aṣl* refers to diachrony, the plural of paucity would do so at some earlier stage of the language, prior to *kalām al-'arab*.[60]

However, the collected attestations of *kalām al-'arab* shed new light on the meaning of the *diminutivized* plural of paucity. It was pointed out immediately above that in 14. *jufaynāt* expresses [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY]. It was also pointed out that from the perspective of the second object of study, this phenomenon is the doubling function of the diminutive in noun plural marking.

Turning to the first object study, the same attestation shows that a diminutivized feminine sound plural of paucity like *jufaynāt* in its historical reality conveys *a genuinely paucal meaning*, rather than denoting smallness. This kind of meaning is inferred from the dialectal data in 14., namely *tmērāt*, which confirms Sībawayhi's description. Strictly speaking, however, dialectal data confirms the historical reality of Sībawayhi's description in terms of paucal meaning for the diminutivized feminine sound plural of paucity *if and only if it ultimately derives from an inanimate collective (*as in *tmērāt). In this sense, the example *tumayrāt* provided by Ibn Ya'īsh (Section 4.2.) seems more apt than *jufaynāt* as an illustration of the paucal meaning of this kind of diminutivized plural of paucity.

Semantically, the basic inanimate collective from which *tumayrāt/tmērāt* ultimately derives, i.e., *tamr*, denotes cohesive and interchangeable entities, which amounts to saying that it conveys collection-semantics (Section 3.1.).

To summarize, it appears from a semantic description of the collected attestations of *kalām al-'arab*, which also considers parallels from modern Arabic dialects, that the traditional term 'plural of paucity' can be intended literally only in the case of the diminutivized feminine sound plural of paucity. The two other kinds of the diminutivized plural of paucity remain semantically obscure, as schematized in 19. below:

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[60] On the synchronic and diachronic interpretations of the term *aṣl*, see Baalbaki (2006).

19.   The historical reality of plural of paucity

Feminine, sound:

tamr [COLLECTION] > *tamarāt* **[SOME]**, [MANY] > *.u.ay.* > *tumayrāt* **[SOME]**   (*tmērāt*)

Masculine, sound:

N-*ūna* [COLLECTION? MEMBERS?] [SOME], [MANY] > *.u.ay.* > *futayyūna* [X]

Broken:

'aklub [COLLECTION? MEMBERS?] [SOME], [MANY] > *.u.ay.* > *'ukaylib* [X]

Key:

[SEMANTIC FEATURE]   doubling function

[X]   unknown semantic feature

7. Revisiting the object of study

The collected attestations of *kalām al-'arab* bring to light two kinds of linguistic materials that share semantic properties with the twofold object of study.

On the one hand, the diminutivized collective *dhuwayd* in 12. shares a genuine paucal meaning with the diminutivized feminine sound plural of paucity *jufaynāt* (or *tumayrāt*) in 14. In this sense, *dhuwayd* is part of the first object of study - the plural of paucity. On the other hand, the diminutive in noun singular marking, as attested by *'ubadiyy* in 10., shares the doubling function with its counterpart in noun plural marking. In this sense, *'ubadiyy* is part of the second object of study - the diminutive. Both kinds of linguistic materials are discussed in what follows.

7.1. From plural of paucity to collective of paucity

Based on the collected attestations of *kalām al-'arab*, the kinds of plurals traditionally labeled 'plural of paucity' actually convey paucity (paucal meaning) only in the case of the diminutivized feminine sound plural, as schematized in 19. above.

However, in the same attestations a genuine paucal meaning is plausibly observed outside this traditional category, i.e., in several collectives, which can accordingly be subsumed into a new category of collective of paucity, where the term 'paucity' is to be taken literally. In fact, the collective of paucity genuinely conveys paucal meaning when *diminutivized*, as illustrated at the end of Section 6 and schematized in 18. above: the relevant attestation is *dhuwayd* 'little herd,' whose paucal meaning is inferred from the dialectal parallel *dhweyd* in 12.

Upon closer scrutiny, also the *basic* collective of paucity effectively conveys paucal meaning in the attestations of *kalām al-ʿarab* collected here. A case in point is *dhawd*, which is genuinely paucal in the earlier attestation reported by al-Khalīl, according to whom it effectively denotes from three to ten she-camels (Section 4.3., Text 5), thereby expressing [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY]. By contrast, *dhawd* is not paucal according to late lexicographers, who report that it expresses [SOME] in conjunction with [MANY]. Dialectal parallels are found for both the paucal and non-paucal meaning of *dhawd*, but the relative chronology of the lexicographical descriptions plausibly shows that its paucal meaning is older, as illustrated in Section 7 in connection with the data in 12. This amounts to saying that *dhawd* originally encodes a number value ranging from three to ten *in its stem*, i.e., that it expresses [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY] *lexically rather than derivationally* (see also the end of Section 3.3.).

It also appears that *raḥṭ* in 9. conveys a lexical paucal meaning like *dhawd*, though the semantic evidence is less direct in this case. Al-Bustānī (1870 [2009], IV, 197) reports for Lebanese Arabic the lexical pair *yərḥaṭ* and *yəlḥaṭ* 'he eats with vigor (*yaʾkulu shadīdan*), where the oscillation *r, l* is observed.[61] In this lexical pair, the identity of phonological environment in the root (_*ḤṬ* of *RḤṬ, LḤṬ*) and the identity of meaning (*yaʾkulu shadīdan*) lead al-Bustānī (1870 [2009]: IV, 197) to describe *yəlḥaṭ* as a dialectal variant of *yərḥaṭ* (*yərḥaṭ* [...] *wa-l-ʿāmmatu taqulu yəlḥaṭ bi-l-lām*). It is worth considering in this light a lexical pair of *kalām al-ʿarab* where the same oscillation *r, l* is observed. The pair consists of the collective *raḥṭ*, in the sense of 'toes' (9. above and Section 4.10.), and the abstract noun *laḥṭ* in the sense of 'beating with the outstretched palm of the hand,' as reported by Abū Zayd al-Anṣārī (d. 215/830).[62] In this case too, the identity of phonological environment in the root (_*ḤṬ* of *RḤṬ, LḤṬ*) and the identity of meaning (both *raḥṭ* and *laḥṭ* refer to digits) make it possible to describe *raḥṭ* 'toes' and *laḥṭ* 'palm of the hand' as dialectal variants in *kalām al-ʿarab*.[63]

This amounts to saying that *raḥṭ* encodes the number value of ten *in its stem*, i.e., that it expresses [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY] *lexically rather than derivationally* (see also the end of Section 3.3.). The alternative meaning of *raḥṭ*, namely '3-to-10 people,' which is attested as early as the Koran (XXVII, 48) in the number phrase *tisʿatu raḥṭin* 'nine people,' is likely to be the result of a semantic shift 'digits' >

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[61] Al-Bustānī's dictionary, in Arabic script, provides no vocalization for the prefix *y* of the prefix-conjugations *yərḥaṭ, yəlḥaṭ*. This does not affect the main point, namely, that this data attests to the oscillation *r, l*. The vocalization of both prefix-conjugations is inferred from similar data from Syrian Arabic, a dialect close to Lebanese Arabic: *lahaṭ yəlḥaṭ* 'manger tout (le plat)' in Barthélémy (1935: 767).

[62] Cited in *Tahdhīb al-Lugha*, VI, 104: *wa-qāla abū zayd l-lahṭu l-ḍarbu bi-l-kaffi l-manshūra.*

[63] From a purely phonological perspective, it is not relevant whether the triconsonantal skeleton *RḤṬ* shared by *yərḥaṭ* and *raḥṭ* is one and the same root (polysemy) or two different roots (homophony). The same holds for the triconsonantal skeleton *LḤṬ* shared by *yəlḥaṭ* and *laḥṭ*.

'number of people, from three to ten,' along a pattern of metaphorical extension from inanimate to animate. External linguistic evidence to this effect is Latin *manus* 'hand' > 'band, troop.'

Remarkably, in addition to paucal meaning, *raḥṭ* shares with *dhawd* countability. This is shown by the Koranic number phrase *tisʿatu rahṭin* mentioned immediately above, and by the number phrase *thalāthatu dhawdin* attested in *kalām al-ʿarab* (Section 4.5.). The property of countability clearly distinguishes the collective of paucity from the traditionally recognized collective, which is neither paucal nor countable.

To summarize, the collective of paucity is still attested in its original paucal meaning both when basic and diminutivized:

20.   The historical reality of the collective of paucity

Optional collective:

raḥṭ   [COUNTABLE] [SOME] > .u.ay. > *ruhayṭ* [X]   (cp. *yərhaṭ, yəlhaṭ*)

Multi-stem collective:

dhawd [COUNTABLE] **[SOME]** (older), [MANY] (later) > *.u.ay.* > *dhuwayd* **[SOME]**

(cp. *dhawd-ak, zowd, dhweyd*)

Key:

[SEMANTIC FEATURE]   doubling function

[X]   unknown semantic feature

7.2. The diminutive from noun plural marking to noun singular marking

The considerations offered in Section 6., concerning the doubling function of the diminutive in noun plural marking, also apply to its occurrence in singular noun marking, especially when the diminutive co-occurs with an ending that morphologically expands a collective.

As schematized in 10.-11. in Table 2, *ʿubadiyy* conveys, through the co-occurrence of *.u.ay.* and the derivational ending *iyy*, the same feature [ONE] already observed in the derivational ending *iyy* alone in *ʿabīdiyy*. This attestation, in conjunction with the attestations *dhuwayd*, *jufaynāt* (or *tumayrāt*) in 12., 14. allows drawing the following generalization for the diminutive in *kalām al-ʿarab* :

21.   *.u.a(y).* semantically performs a doubling function in both noun singular marking, for the feature [ONE], and noun plural marking, for the feature [SOME] (to the exclusion of [MANY]).

In this respect, the diminutive attested in *kalām al-'arab* performs the same semantic function that Denizeau (1957: 68) originally observed only for noun singular marking in the Southern Tunisian Arabic dialect of Marâzîg (cp. *msê'îdi* in 10. in Section 6.): 'La fonction de la forme diminutive, doublant celle du suffixe *i*, paraît avoir là un rôle strictement singulatif.' However, Denizeau does not explain *why* the diminutive performs such a semantic function.

The collected attestations of *kalām al-'arab* plausibly show that in both noun singular and plural marking, the diminutive occurs to remove a semantic ambiguity in its environment, i.e., a diminutivized noun arises to remove a semantic ambiguity found in its corresponding basic noun. Effectively, as schematized in 12., 14. in Table 2, in noun plural marking the basic nouns *jafanāt* and *dhawd* each ambiguously express [SOME] *in conjunction with* [MANY], while the corresponding diminutivized nouns *jufaynāt* and *dhuwayd* each unambiguously express *only* [SOME]. Likewise, as schematized in 10.-11. in Table 2, in noun singular marking the two basic ethnonyms *'abīd* and *'abīda* share a stem *'abīd* that ambiguously refers to two different tribal units (the 'Abīd and the 'Abīda); while the corresponding diminutivized noun *'ubadiyy* unambiguously refers to the 'Abīd only. This is schematized in 22. below:

22.   The historical reality of the diminutive
      Plural marking:
      jafanāt **[SOME]**, [MANY] > *.u.ay.* > *jufaynāt* **[SOME]** [MANY̶]
      dhawd **[SOME]**, [MANY] > *.u.ay.* > *dhuwayd* **[SOME]** [M̶A̶N̶Y̶]
      Singular marking:[64]
      'abīd- [ETHNONYM 1], [ETHNONYM 2] [MORE] > *'abīdiyy* [ETHNONYM 1], [E̶T̶H̶N̶O̶N̶Y̶M̶ ̶2̶] **[ONE]**
      'abīd- [ETHNO. 1], [ETHNO. 2] [MORE] > *.u.ay.* > *'ubadiyy* [E̶T̶H̶N̶O̶N̶Y̶M̶ ̶1̶], [ETHNONYM 2] **[ONE]**
      Key:
      [SEMANTIC FEATURE]   doubling function
      [S̶E̶M̶A̶N̶T̶I̶C̶ ̶F̶E̶A̶T̶U̶R̶E̶]   semantic ambiguity (removed)
      'abīd-   stem of *'abīd, 'abīda*

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[64] Notice that the input form *'abīda* displays an additional marker, notably *at*, when compared to the input form *'abīd*. Similarly, the output form *'ubadiyy* displays an additional marker, notably diminutive, when compared to the output form *'abīdiyy*. The distribution of the two additional markers *at* and diminutive is not accidental, since they both belong to the same derivational pair *'abīda* (input) – *'ubadiyy* (output). It follows that the morphological complexity of the output form matches that of the input form. Matching in morphological complexity is thus a criterion that explains why, to remove semantic ambiguity, the diminutivized form *'ubadiyy* is associated with *'abīda*, rather than with *'abīd*.

Notice that no doubling function is observed in the diminutivized noun *muwayha*, for the simple reason that its corresponding basic noun bears no semantic ambiguity, so no doubling function should be invoked to remove it.

In fact, when *muwayha* means 'some water' (7. above), it derives from an inanimate collective with collection-semantics, notably *mā'*, that cannot enter into two different agreement patterns to ambiguously express [SOME] or [MANY], as discussed at the end of Section 3.1. Rather, this semantic behavior is typical of plurals (1. above), while inanimate collectives like *mā'* convey unambiguously a different semantic feature, namely an undifferentiated [MORE]. Therefore, the diminutive, while occurring in the environment of *mā'*, conveys a meaning other than the doubling function, notably [SOME] (to the exclusion of [MANY]). Analogously, when *muwayha* means 'little well,' it derives from a singular *mā'a* that unambiguously refers to a 'water well' (see the discussion of 7. above). Therefore, the diminutive, while occurring in the environment of *mā'a*, conveys a meaning other than the doubling function, notably [SMALL].

Finally, the pervasiveness of the doubling function in 21. makes it plausible to describe it as a regular pattern that underlies the attestations of the diminutive (diminutivized nouns) in *kalām al-'arab*, and that contributes to characterize such attestations as a full-fledged system within this primary source. In turn, the systemic nature of the attestations of the diminutive in *kalām al-'arab* is internal evidence in favor of their authenticity, which can be coupled with the external evidence offered by the dialectal parallels.

8. Intermediate results

The description of the attestations collected from *kalām al-'arab* carried out here assesses the historical reality of the plural of paucity and the diminutive in noun plural marking only in part.

Regarding the first object of study, as schematized in Table 2 above, such a description elucidates the form of the *basic* plural of paucity, offering a tripartite classification into broken, masculine, and feminine sound plurals of paucity: e.g., *'aklub*, *jafanāt* (or *tamarāt*), N-*ūna* in 13., 14., 15. By contrast, this description does not contribute to a better understanding of the meaning of the *basic* plural of paucity. The latter is said by Sībawayhi (A) to express [SOME] in conjunction with [MANY] and (B), under certain conditions (*fī l-aṣl*), to express [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY], i.e., to be genuinely paucal. However, only Sībawayhi's assertion in (A) finds confirmation in dialectal data.

Turning to the *diminutivized* plural of paucity, the description of the attestations collected from *kalām al-'arab* carried out here partly clarifies its meaning, only in the case of the diminutivized

feminine sound plural of paucity, e.g., *jufaynāt* 'some bowls.' The latter is said by Sībawayhi to convey *a genuinely paucal meaning* (i.e., [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY]), rather than denoting smallness, and his assertion is confirmed by dialectal data, especially when this kind of diminutivized plural of paucity ultimately derives from a collective with collection-semantics, notably *tmērāt* in 14.

Regarding the second object of study, as schematized in 21., 22. above, the description of the attestations collected from *kalām al-'arab* carried out here clarifies that the *diminutive bears no intrinsic meaning*, performing instead a doubling function: it doubles a meaning already observed in its environment, i.e., in the basic collective or plural to which it is added. Specifically for noun plural marking, the diminutive doubles and hence 'indirectly' conveys a paucal meaning, i.e., [SOME] to the exclusion of [MANY]. The diminutive, along with its doubling function, removes semantic ambiguity: e.g., while *jafanāt* semantically oscillates between [SOME] and [MANY], *jufaynāt* unambiguously expresses [SOME].

Finally, the description of the attestations collected from *kalām al-'arab* carried out here brings to light two kinds of linguistic materials that are partly related to the two topics under study and have received little or no attention in Arab(ic) linguistics. The first kind of linguistic material is a diminutive performing a doubling function in noun singular marking, in ethnonyms such as *'ubadiyy* 'a man from 'Abīda.' In this data, *.u.a(y).* effectively doubles the feature [ONE] already conveyed by *iyy*. The second kind of linguistic material is a collective conveying a genuinely paucal meaning, such as *dhawd* '3-to-10 she-camels' and *rahṭ* '3-to-10 people' (Section 7.1.). Interestingly, it is precisely the paucal meaning of *dhawd* and *rahṭ* that allows for their countability, which is not possible in traditionally recognized non-paucal collectives.

In sum, the description of the attestations of *kalām al-'arab* collected here allows for a better understanding of the meaning of the diminutive in noun plural marking, but it is not particularly revealing regarding the meaning of the plural of paucity, except for the diminutivized feminine sound plural.

The remaining kinds of plural of paucity, namely the basic and diminutivized broken plural and the masculine sound plural, as well as the basic feminine sound plural, require further semantic investigation. In particular, dialectal data offers no semantic evidence to assess the historical reality of the paucal meaning that Sībawayhi ascribes to them under certain conditions: see his expression *fī l-aṣl* 'in principle.' In this regard, the question also remains *why* Sībawayhi assigned (under certain conditions) paucal meaning to the plural of paucity.

To assess the historical reality of the paucal meaning in the case of the plural of paucity, a different kind of semantic evidence should be adduced, deriving from a distributional study that also considers

poorly known features of the plural of paucity, such as its collection-semantics and the status of the inherent plural (Section 3.1.). To the extent that the diminutive is part of some kinds of plural of paucity whose meaning is unclear, namely the diminutivized broken and masculine sound plurals, it should be included in a distributional study of this sort.

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