Qashqadarya Arabic Dialect:
A Survey of Linguistic Features Based on Four Folktales[1]

Carolina Zucchi

In Central Asia live several communities of ethnic Arabs who have inhabited the region for centuries. Of these, the Arabs living in the Qashqadarya region, in the southeast of Uzbekistan, are among the few who have preserved the knowledge of an Arabic dialect. The dialect of Qashqadarya, as well as the few other varieties spoken in Central Asia, is relevant for the study of Semitic linguistics as it could potentially display archaic features of Arabic, having been separated from the mainstream Arabic-speaking world for centuries. This article offers an introduction to the main cultural traits of this community of Arabs, and an overview of their dialect's main linguistic features. The survey is based on four folktales from the monograph The Qashqadarya Arabic Dialect of Central Asia *(2008) narrated by two local informants. This study aims to contextualise Qashqadarya Arabic in the field of Arabic dialectology and to investigate the impact of the neighbouring languages on the dialect. The findings point to possible genetic connections between Qashqadarya Arabic and dialects spoken in Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula, and to the intermixture of Turkic, Iranian, and Semitic features in the speech of this community.*

Introduction[2]

Several communities of ethnic Arabs live in villages and rural areas scattered throughout Central Asia, among the Iranian and Turkic peoples who inhabit this area. They claim descent from Arabian tribes,[3] refer to themselves as "Arab," and are also called so by the rest of the local population in the region.[4] Based on historical evidence, they are likely the descendants of Arabs who first settled in Central Asia either at the time of

[1] I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Orhan Elmaz for his guidance and encouragement and the Laidlaw Scholarship Programme in Research and Leadership for the training and generous support, which allowed me to start investigating this field.

[2] The Library of Congress (ALA-LC) transliteration system will be employed for Russian words. Transliteration of Modern Standard Arabic and Tajik words follows the Deutsches Institut für Normung (DIN) standard, while the official Latin alphabet in use in Uzbekistan will be employed for Uzbek words. As for examples in Qashqadarya Arabic, the original transliteration system used by Guram Chikovani – essentially an expansion of the DIN standard – has been retained. A description of this transliteration method is provided in: Guram Chikovani, *Kashkadar'inskiĭ Arabskiĭ Dialekt T͡sentral'noĭ Azii* (Tbilisi: Institut Vostokovedeniĭa Imeni G.V. T͡sereteli: Tbilisskiĭ Institut Azii i Afriki, 2008), 12-15.

[3] Bernard Dupaigne, "Les Arabes Arabophones d'Afghanistan," in Jean Pierre Digard, ed., *Le Cuisinier et le Philosophe: Hommage à Maxime Rodinson* (Paris: G. P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1982), 89; Irina Anastas'evna Amir͡ianț͡s, "Ėtnicheskoe Razvitie Sredneaziatskikh Arabov," in Roza Shotaevna Dzharylgasinova and Lada Sergeevna Tolstova, eds., *Ėtnicheskie Pro͡tsessy u Na͡tsional'nykh Grupp Sredneĭ Azii i Kazakhstana* (Moskva: Nauka, 1980), 226.

[4] Chikovani, *Kashkadar'inskiĭ Arabskiĭ Dialekt*, 103; Amir͡ianț͡s, "Ėtnicheskoe Razvitie Sredneaziatskikh Arabov," 213.

the early Islamic conquests or at a later stage.[5] Within these communities, few groups have preserved the knowledge of an Arabic dialect, including the Arabs living in the Qashqadarya region, situated in the southeast of Uzbekistan. Qashqadarya Arabs are settled in some areas in the villages of Jeynau and Qamashi, both situated in the Qarshi district,[6] where they have been living in close contact with ethnic Tajiks, Uzbeks and, to a lesser extent, Turkmen.[7] The study of their dialect is especially relevant in the field of Semitic linguistics as, being a peripheral one which has survived in an area separated from the mainstream Arabic-speaking world for centuries, it could potentially display archaic features of Arabic lost in other modern dialects. The scope of the present article is to introduce the main cultural traits of this community and to offer an overview of the linguistic features of their Arabic dialect as displayed in four selected folktales. Through linguistic evidence, this study aims to investigate the interconnectedness of this community with other ethnic groups in the region – by commenting on the influence of the other languages spoken in Uzbekistan on the dialect – and possible genetic relationships between Qashqadarya Arabic and other Arabic dialects. The four texts selected for analysis, namely "hayāt dilmurōd" (henceforth referred to as T1), "farasīn zīnak u zoka saḫbak" (T2), "walt čüpōn u matala" (T3), and "walad vai bintin ḫušrūia" (T4),[8] are local folktales narrated orally by two different Arab informants living in this area. They were collected by the Georgian scholar Guram Chikovani between 1980 and 2000, and published in the collection *The Qashqadarya Arabic Dialect of Central Asia* (in the original Russian title: *Kashkadar'inskiĭ Arabskiĭ Dialekt t͡Sentral'noĭ Azii*).[9] They present a number of widespread Middle Eastern and Central Asian folkloric motifs. Jointly, they form a corpus of roughly 2500 words.

Much less scholarly attention has been paid to the study of the Qashqadarya dialect compared to the other variety of Arabic spoken in Uzbekistan – Bukhara Arabic – due to a somewhat unfortunate publishing history. Although the ethnographic study of the nomadic Arabs living in Uzbekistan was initiated in the nineteenth century by Russian

[5] Elena Georgievna t͡Ssareva, "Kovrodelie Arabov ĭuzhnykh Raĭonov Uzbekistana, Konet͡s XIX–Nachalo XXI Veka (po Kollekt͡siiam MAE i REM)," in Mikhail Anatol'evich Rodionov, ed., *Obrazy i Znaki v Tradit͡siiakh ĭuzhnoĭ i ĭugo-Zapadnoĭ Azii,* vol. 61 (Sankt-Peterburg: MAE RAN, 2015), 276.

[6] Chikovani, *Kashkadar'inskiĭ Arabskiĭ Dialekt*, 7.

[7] Balkis Khalilovna Karmysheva, "Sredneaziatskie Araby," in Sergeĭ Pavlovich Tolstov, ed., *Narody Sredneĭ Azii i Kazakhstana*, vol. 2, (Moskva: Akademiia Nauk SSSR, 1963), 583.

[8] Chikovani, *Kashkadar'inskiĭ Arabskiĭ Dialekt*, 56-87. The texts were selected based on the closeness of their folkloric motifs to tales appearing in the collection *One Thousand and One Nights*. The present article, indeed, forms part of a broader project studying both the folklore and the dialect of Qashqadarya Arabs. The project included evaluating previous claims that some of the folktales told by this community are versions of tales appearing in the *Nights*. The whole study, comprising an original translation of the four texts into English and a comparative analysis of folkloric motifs, formed part of the author's unpublished dissertation, "Dialect and Folklore of the Qashqa-Darya Arabs of Uzbekistan: An Analysis of Four Selected Folktales," (Undergraduate diss., University of St. Andrews, 2017).

[9] Guram Chikovani, *Kashkadar'inskiĭ Arabskiĭ Dialekt t͡Sentral'noĭ Azii* (Tbilisi: Institut Vostokovedeniia Imeni G.V. t͡Sereteli: Tbilisskiĭ Institut Azii i Afriki, 2008).

scholars,[10] the linguistic study of their Arabic dialects started much later. The first to remark that varieties of Arabic were spoken in the Qarshi district of Uzbekistan at this time was Afanasiĭ Grebenkin.[11] Nevertheless, it was only in 1929 that Natal'i͡a Burykina and Mari͡a Izmaĭlova, two students of the Soviet Arabist Ignatiĭ Krachkovskiĭ, by chance came across speakers of an Arabic dialect and recognised its potential relevance for Semitic linguistics.[12] This led to several Soviet expeditions to Uzbekistan during which ethnographer Isaak Vinnikov and linguist Georgiĭ T͡sereteli collected extensive speech samples, mainly in the form of folktales or anecdotes. It is at this stage that two linguistically different dialects were distinguished and defined as "Bukhara" and "Qashqadarya Arabic." Between 1935 and 1943, the expeditions mainly concentrated in the Bukhara region,[13] leading to several publications on Bukhara Arabic by both Vinnikov and T͡sereteli.[14] These works, which together provided a relatively large corpus, created the basis for the study of what came to be known as "Uzbekistan Arabic" (a category including both the Bukhara and the Qashqadarya dialects) for the following decades. As for the variety of Qashqadarya, Vinnikov's expeditions to Jeynau and Qamashi started only in 1943.[15] Of the extensive dialectological material collected by him, only a few short samples were published,[16] while the rest was meant to be included in an extensive monograph comprising of several recorded texts.[17] This work, unfortunately, is at present still unpublished and has only recently been discovered in the St. Petersburg branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences Archive.[18] T͡sereteli visited the Qashqadarya region too, but the speech samples he published are also extremely scarce.[19] Therefore, the possibility that additional archival material collected by him also exists and is still unpublished, cannot be ruled out. Due to the insight this material could offer into

[10] Mari͡a Aleksandrovna I͡anes, "Vklad I. N. Vinnikova v Istori͡u Izuceni͡a Arabskogo Naseleni͡a Uzbekistana," *Vestnik Sankt-Peterburgskogo Universiteta* 9, no. 3 (2008): 281.

[11] Amir'i͡ant͡s, "Ėtnicheskoe Razvitie Sredneaziatskikh Arabov," 214.

[12] I͡anes, "Vklad I. N. Vinnikova," 281.

[13] I͡anes, "Vklad I. N. Vinnikova," 285.

[14] Vinnikov and T͡sereteli published more than one hundred folktales told by Bukhara Arab informants and transcribed in their dialect. The most substantial publications are the following two monographs: Georgiĭ Vasil'evich T͡sereteli, *Arabskie Dialekty Sredneĭ Azii: Bukharskiĭ Arabskiĭ Dialekt* (Tbilisi: Akademii͡a Nauk Gruzinskoĭ SSR, 1956), and Isaak Natanovich Vinnikov, *I͡azyk i Fol'klor Bukharskikh Arabov* (Moskva: Nauka, 1969).

[15] I͡anes, "Vklad I. N. Vinnikova," 285.

[16] Only fifteen speech samples (mainly anecdotes of the Nasreddin type) were published in the following chapter: Isaak Natanovich Vinnikov, "Obraz͡tsy Govora Kashka-dar'inskikh Arabov," in Grigoriĭ Shamilevich Sharbatov, ed., *Semitskie I͡azyki, Sbornik Stateĭ* (Moskva: Akademii͡a Nauk SSSR: Izdatel'stvo Vostochnoĭ Literatury, 1963), 176-185.

[17] I͡anes, "Vklad I. N. Vinnikova," 288. With this material Vinnikov planned to publish and started to prepare a monograph titled "Arabs of Uzbekistan," containing seventy local folktales related by Arab informants and a glossary of the dialect.

[18] I͡anes, "Vklad I. N. Vinnikova," 290. Although according to I͡anes there were plans of publishing it around 2008, it does not appear to have seen the light of day yet.

[19] T͡sereteli only published nine short speech samples in the following article: Georgiĭ Vasil'evich T͡sereteli, "K Izuceni͡u I͡azyka Sredneaziatskikh Arabov: Obraz͡tsy Rechi Kashkadar'inskikh Arabov," in *Trudy Instituta I͡azykoznani͡a* (Tbilisi: Akademii͡a Nauk Gruzinskoĭ SSR [Seri͡a Vostochnykh I͡azykov], 1954), 251-271.

the traditional customs and dialect of this community at a stage preceding their full integration in Uzbek society, the value of obtaining access to such sources for the fields of both ethnography and linguistics could not be stressed enough.

The next expeditions to the Qashqadarya region for the collection of dialectological material were carried out by the Georgian scholar Guram Chikovani, the Rector of the Free University of Tbilisi until 2016. After completing his education at Tbilisi State University and at the Tsereteli Institute of Oriental Studies (Georgian Academy of Sciences) in Tbilisi with a specialisation in Philology, Chikovani pursued the study of both varieties of Arabic spoken in Uzbekistan. He produced a number of publications mainly on Qashqadarya Arabic, based on his expeditions to the region. He is the only scholar, at present, who has published a comprehensive grammar of this dialect,[20] contained in the monograph *The Qashqadarya Arabic Dialect of Central Asia,* from which the four texts for this study have also been selected. Besides this descriptive grammar section, the monograph comprises seventy annotated folkloristic texts transcribed in Qashqadarya Arabic – mainly folktales or anecdotes and a few autobiographical accounts – and their translations into Russian. Therefore, it constitutes the most extensive corpus presently available in this dialect and is a valuable source for the study of the folklore of this community. According to Chikovani, his expeditions to the Qashqadarya region took place in 1980, 1986, and 2000, to the villages of Jeynau and Qamashi, where he lived in close contact with his informants. The texts were recorded during gatherings organised specifically for the collection of dialectological material, during which a group of male Arabs would reunite and one informant would narrate some of their traditional tales or anecdotes in his dialect.[21] So far, most of the conclusions drawn on the linguistic features of Qashqadarya Arabic have been based on the few speech samples published by Vinnikov and T͡sereteli in the 1960s. The present article aims to provide a novel contribution by turning to a much less studied and more extensive corpus.

After Chikovani's visits to Central Asia, more recent expeditions to the village of Jeynau have been conducted between 2004 and 2007, by the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography of the Russian Academy of Sciences, aiming to collect ethnographic material and information regarding the Qurʾān of ʾUṯmān discovered in the village of Katta Langar.[22] This led to the creation of an online exposition on the customs of the Arabs of Jeynau,[23] but information regarding most of the material collected, regretfully, remains unpublished. Once again, this could offer valuable insight into the community's traditional culture.

[20] Chikovani, *Kashkadar'inskiĭ Arabskiĭ Dialekt*, 17-52.
[21] Guram Chikovani, personal interview, July 2017.
[22] I͡anes, "Vklad I. N. Vinnikova," 288.
[23] Efim Anatoľevich Rezvan, Tat'i͡ana Fedorova, Vi͡acheslav Makarov, Kristina Gert͡sovskai͡a, Sergeĭ Duzhnikov, and Andreĭ Mel'inkov, virtual exposition, "Jeynov – My prishli," in *Ėkspozit͡sii i Kollekt͡sii, Kunstkamera*, accessed 1 April 2018, <http://www.kunstkamera.ru/index/exposition/exhibitions1/arhiv_01/jeynov_we_arrived/>.

Qashqadarya Arabs: Main Cultural Traits

Research on the Arabs of Uzbekistan has not reached a unanimous conclusion on the circumstances of their migration to Central Asia; however, it seems most likely that they either came at the time of the early Arab conquests in the late seventh century or that they belonged to a group from Syria and Mesopotamia deported by Tamerlane in the fourteenth century.[24] After roaming the region between the south of Uzbekistan and the north of Afghanistan as a nomadic population for centuries, they gradually started becoming sedentary due to contact with neighbouring farming populations.[25] There is evidence that at the beginning of the twentieth century that some of them still led a nomadic way of life,[26] and that five families of Arabs from Qashqadarya moved to Afghanistan to escape the Soviet domination between 1929 and 1933.[27] Although Arabs were recognised as a distinct ethnic group by the central Soviet administration in official censuses, those of Central Asia belonged to one of the many minorities to which no extraterritorial cultural autonomy was recognised.[28] As a consequence, cultural activities and the usage of their traditional dialect were not endorsed by the local administration, which tried to accelerate the assimilation of minorities into the rest of the population,[29] encouraging identification with an Uzbek national identity.

On the other hand, thanks to the relative seclusion from the rest of the local population that they maintained before Uzbekistan fell under Soviet rule and the fact that intermarriage with other ethnic groups was rarely practiced, Qashqadarya Arabs preserved some of their characteristic customs.[30] Their traditional female costume, comprising of facial jewellery and elaborate headgear, their technique of carpet production,[31] and their wedding and burial rituals[32] distinguish them from the neighbouring Uzbek and Tajik populations. It has also been argued that their traditional clothing and jewellery might present elements of Bedouin culture.[33] By the time of the latest academic expeditions to the area in 2007, Qashqadarya Arabs still practiced some of their traditional occupations, namely karakul sheep breeding and carpet weaving, in addition to working in cotton fields.[34] Their folklore, however, based on the texts collected by Chikovani, mainly presents Uzbek or Persian motifs rather than traits which can be directly associated with an Arab heritage. The acquisition of such motifs might have been accelerated by the attested presence in the region of multilingual *baxshi*

[24] Vincent Fourniau, "Les Arabes d'Asie Centrale Soviétique: Maintenance et Mutation de l'Identité Ethnique," *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 59 (1991): 84.
[25] Amir͡ian͡ts, "Ėtnicheskoe Razvitie Sredneaziatskikh Arabov," 220.
[26] Fourniau, "Les Arabes d'Asie Centrale Soviétique," 87.
[27] Dupaigne, "Les Arabes Arabophones d'Afghanistan," 90.
[28] Fourniau, "Les Arabes d'Asie Centrale Soviétique," 87-88.
[29] Fourniau, "Les Arabes d'Asie Centrale Soviétique," 88 and 93.
[30] Amir͡ian͡ts, "Ėtnicheskoe Razvitie Sredneaziatskikh Arabov," 227.
[31] Mariia Aleksandrovna Ĭanes, "Materialy Muzeĭnykh, Bibliotechnykh i Arkhivnykh Sobranii Sankt-Peterburga kak Istochnik po Istorii i Ėtnografii Arabov Basseĭna Kashkadar'i (Uzbekistan)," (PhD diss., Sankt-Peterburgskiĭ Gosudarstvennyĭ Universitet, 2010): 8.
[32] Amir͡ian͡ts "Ėtnicheskoe Razvitie Sredneaziatskikh Arabov," 224.
[33] Amir͡ian͡ts, "Ėtnicheskoe Razvitie Sredneaziatskikh Arabov," 222-224.
[34] Rezvan et al., virtual exposition, "Jeynov – My prishli."

singer–storytellers, still active and performing *dostons* drawn from the Uzbek folkloristic heritage in private evening gatherings, in bazaars, and at weddings.[35]

For the purposes of this study, it is also worth mentioning that, according to Soviet ethnographers, in the first half of the twentieth century Qashqadarya Arabs were already all at least bi- or trilingual. Although, according to Vinnikov, in the 1940s Tajiks occupied some of the residential quarters of Jeynau,[36] T͡sereteli claimed that only a few Arabs in Qashqadarya could speak Tajik, while they were all fluent in Uzbek, which they used in their everyday life.[37] Chikovani confirms that, at the time of his expeditions, Qashqadarya Arabs were all fluent in Uzbek, the language used for education, everyday communication, and bureaucracy, and only knowledgeable to a lesser extent in Tajik.[38] No information regarding their possible knowledge of the Turkmeni language or their level of fluency in Russian is available. According to Chikovani, the only form of Arabic his informants knew was their dialect, and they could recite the Qur'ān by heart without being able to read it.[39] Nevertheless, the ethnographer Amir'i͡anț͡s claimed that in 1974, a few newspapers in Arabic were sold in Qarshi for an audience of elderly Arab locals.[40]

Already in the 1980s ethnographer Boris Gamburg found that only relics of the traditional culture of the Arabs of Jeynau were still surviving, and that their use of their Arabic dialect had become limited to the domestic sphere.[41] The disappearance of these traits was certainly accelerated in Soviet times, when the younger generation's close interactions with other ethnic groups increased drastically through their access to educational institutions and service in the Soviet army.[42] The gradual loss of their dialect is confirmed by some autobiographical accounts told by Chikovani's Arab informants claiming that, while the elder generation was fluent in their Arabic dialect, the youth were not able to speak it anymore.[43] Based on the same accounts collected between 1980 and 2000, the Arabs themselves did not seem, at the time, to be actively engaged in an effort to preserve their traditional language. Two informants, indeed, admit that their children were not able to speak the dialect,[44] implying a choice not to transmit the language to the younger generation. However, if these accounts, the precise date of collection of which is unknown, had been recorded before the fall of the Soviet Union,

[35] Sharustam Shamusarov, "Fol'klornye Svi͡azi Ti͡urkskikh Narodov T͡sentral'noĭ Azii i Sredneaziatskikh Arabov," *Vostok: Afro-Aziatskie Obshchestva: Istoriĭa i Sovremennost'* 1 (2009): 66.

[36] Vinnikov, "Obraz͡tsy," 176.

[37] Georgiĭ Vasil'evich T͡sereteli, *Arabskie Dialekty v Sredneĭ Azii, Doklady Sovetskoĭ Delegat͡sii na XXIII Mezhdunarodnom Kongresse Vostokovedov, a Semitologii* (Moskva: Akademiĭa Nauk SSSR, 1954), 25.

[38] Guram Chikovani, "Linguistic Contacts in Central Asia," in Éva Ágnes Csató, Bo Isaksson, and Carina Jahani, eds., *Linguistic Convergence and Areal Diffusion: Case Studies from Iranian, Semitic and Turkic* (London, New York: Routledge Curzon, 2005), 127.

[39] Chikovani, interview, July 2017.

[40] Amir'i͡anț͡s, "Ėtnicheskoe Razvitie Sredneaziatskikh Arabov," 217.

[41] Boris Zalmanovich Gamburg, "Ėtnicheskie Osobennosti Kashkadar'inskikh Arabov (Sel. Dzheinau)," T.G. Emel'i͡anenko, ed., *Nauchnyĭ Zhurnal, Rossiĭskiĭ Ėtnograficheskiĭ Muzeĭ: Ėtnicheskie Tradit͡sii v Kul'ture* 1, no. 3 (2013): 47.

[42] Amir'i͡anț͡s, "Ėtnicheskoe Razvitie Sredneaziatskikh Arabov," 227-228.

[43] These autobiographical accounts constitute some of the speech samples included in Chikovani, *Kashkadar'inskiĭ Arabskiĭ Dialekt*, 146 and 170-171.

[44] Chikovani, *Kashkadar'inskiĭ Arabskiĭ Dialekt,* 146 and 170-171.

the informants could have been trying to feign a higher level of identification with the Uzbek national group by emphasising their abandonment of their traditional customs. According to ethnographer Fourniau, indeed, it is likely that the Arabs of Uzbekistan tried to hide their knowledge of their Arabic mother tongue in official Soviet censuses because of pressure received from the local republican administration.[45] Due to these pressures for the assimilation of minorities into the Soviet Uzbek society, which possibly influenced both the Arabs' accounts and the ethnographers' work during this period, it is difficult to determine what role the knowledge of their Arabic dialect played in the community's self-identification as an Arab ethnic minority at that point in time.

Linguistic Analysis

Before proceeding to the linguistic analysis of the four chosen texts, we should briefly consider the classification of Qashqadarya Arabic. This dialect has often been grouped together with the one spoken in the Bukhara region under the label of "Uzbekistan Arabic."[46] As a consequence, conclusions reached based on a Bukhara Arabic corpus have often been applied to Qashqadarya Arabic, too, and dialect differences between them have occasionally been disregarded. In order to avoid confusion and in light of the recent discovery of two more Arabic varieties spoken in Balkh, Afghanistan, and Khorasan, Iran, which belong to the same dialect group, it is preferable to refer to each dialect either by its specific denomination or as part of the wider category of "Central Asian Arabic dialects." According to recent comparative research, Qashqadarya Arabic is likely to be a more modern dialect type compared to the varieties of Bukhara and Afghanistan, and to be closer to that of Khorasan.[47]

The following section will include a linguistic commentary on selected features of Qashqadarya Arabic as displayed in the four selected texts. Whenever providing examples in Qashqadarya Arabic from the texts, their reference number followed by a dot and the paragraph number will be given within parentheses. A translation into Modern Standard Arabic will be occasionally added whenever deemed helpful to facilitate comprehension and comparison of lexical items across different Arabic dialects, mainly in the discussion of the phonology. The analysis is limited to linguistic features the examples of which could be detected in the chosen texts and is divided into two sections. The first one aims to contextualise the dialect in the field of Arabic dialectology. Here, linguistic features characteristic of other Arabic dialects, and which therefore allowed a comparison of Qashqadarya Arabic with them, were selected for analysis. These features have been grouped into the categories of phonology, morphosyntax, and lexicon for purposes of

[45] Fourniau, "Les Arabes d'Asie Centrale Soviétique," 94.

[46] The label "Uzbekistan Arabic" applied to a Bukhara Arabic corpus only has been employed even in pivotal works treating Central Asian Arabic dialects, such as Kees Versteegh, "Word Order in Uzbekistan Arabic and Universal Grammar," *Orientalia Suecana* 33-35 (1986): 443-453, and Jonathan Owens, *A Linguistic History of Arabic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[47] Ulrich Seeger, "On the Relationship of the Central Asian Arabic Dialects with a Previously Unpublished Text from South Khorasan," in "Zum Verhältnis der zentralasiatischen arabischen Dialekte," trans. Sarah Dickins, *Academia* 6-7, accessed 18 April 2018, <https://www.academia.edu/10319772/On_the_Relationship_of_the_Central_Asian_Arabic_Dialects>.

clarity. The following section, aiming to investigate innovations derived from contacts with non-Semitic languages and the impact they had on the dialect, revolves around those linguistic features which seem likely to have been influenced by adstrate languages.

Comparison with Other Arabic Dialects: Phonology

The transcription method adopted by Chikovani poses some limits to the phonological analysis of the speech of Qashqadarya Arabs. With extreme frequency different realisations of a word appear in the speech of the same informant, as in: *siyyātənna* (T1.2), *šiyatánna* (T1.3) and *šiyātənna* (T1.3), "their (f.) clothes" (lit.: "their (f.) things," MSA *ʾašyāʾuhunna*) where sound /š/ shifts to /s/ and the length of the vowels varies. Occasionally, words appear to be arbitrarily split (as in: *tatūl hāgu* (T1.6) "you will reach it," which also figures as *tatilhagum* (T2.6) or joined together (as in: *abūy walada faras […] anta* (T2.1), "the father gave the horse to his son," which presumably should be: *abū i walada faras […] anta*, where *i* is the Qashqadarya equivalent of MSA *ʾilā*). The latter is probably an attempt to indicate that the words were pronounced as a unit by the informant, although the joining symbol "‿" and dashes are also employed in other cases. For these reasons, which raise doubts on the reliability of the method used, remarks on the phonetic aspects of the dialect will be limited to a few essential points.

In light of this premise, the occasional appearance of Arabic emphatic consonantal sounds such as /ṣ/ and /a/, which according to Chikovani are retained in a weakened form,[48] seems dubious. T͡sereteli, whose transcription method Chikovani adopted with minor changes, affirms that in his transcription emphatic symbols are used "mainly for etymological purposes."[49] Moreover, in the few recordings of Qashqadarya Arabic speech available on Chikovani's website, the informants do not seem to pronounce emphatic consonants even when they are transcribed.[50] These arguments, and the fact that these sounds do not exist in Uzbek or in Tajik, whose pronunciation has largely influenced the dialect, make the possibility of a retained emphatisation seem unlikely.

The Modern Standard Arabic emphatic sound /q/, the main distinguishing trait between Bedouin and sedentary dialects, appears with two different realisations in the analysed material. This sound is most frequently realised as a voiced velar stop /g/ as in: *gāl* (T4.1, MSA *qāla*) "he said" and *ingalabat* (T2.2, MSA *inqalabat*) "she returned," a trait associated with Bedouin dialects[51] and, in the Iraqi context, with the *gələt* ones.[52] However, in several instances the /q/ pronunciation is also preserved in Arabic words, as in: *i-foq* (T1.4, MSA *ʾilā fawq*) "to the top" and *qatalta* (T3.5, MSA *qataltahā*) "you (m. s.) killed her"). This clashes with Jastrow's finding, based on an analysis of Vinnikov's

[48] Chikovani, *Kashkadar'inskiĭ Arabskiĭ Dialekt*, 19.

[49] T͡sereteli, "K Izucheniĭu T͡sazyka," 254.

[50] Guram Chikovani, *Jeinau*, 2000 November 5-8, online audio recording and transcription, gchikovani, accessed 1 April 2018, <http://www.gchikovani.ge/index.php/audio-and-video-recording/kashkadarya-dialect/23-kad-audio>.

[51] Judith Rosenhouse, "Bedouin Arabic," in Lutz Edzard and Rudolf de Jong, eds., *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, accessed 15 March 2019, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1570-6699_eall_EALL_COM_0037>.

[52] Otto Jastrow, "Iraq," in Lutz Edzard and Rudolf de Jong, eds., *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, accessed 15 March 2019, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1570-6699_eall_EALL_COM_vol2_0056>.

corpus, that only the /g/ pronunciation appears in Qashqadarya Arabic, while both realisations are found in the dialect of Bukhara.[53] The realisation of this phoneme as voiceless (namely as /q/, /ʾ/ or /k/) is generally associated with sedentary dialects.[54] More specifically, its realisation as /q/ is particularly common in those of Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco.[55] However, considering that the voiceless uvular stop /q/ exists both in the Tajik variety of Persian and in Uzbek, the main adstrate languages Qashqadarya Arabs came in contact with, there is a possibility that the dialect presented only the /g/ pronunciation at the moment of their migration to Central Asia, and that the sound /q/ was only acquired due to contact with these languages.

Moreover, the tendency for diphthong /aw/ to be realised as /ō/, as in: *yōm* (T1.6, MSA *yawm*) "day," and the preservation of the /ǧ/ phoneme, as in: ǧīt (T1.5, MSA ǧi'tu) "I came," which in western Bedouin and sedentary dialects tends to be realised rather as /ž/ or /g/, are features typical of eastern Bedouin dialects.[56] Finally, interdental sounds are lost, which is a feature usually associated with sedentary Arabic dialects rather than with Bedouin ones, where they tend to be retained.[57] One example is the Arabic phoneme /ṯ/ which turns into /s/, as in: *salč* (T1.5, MSA *ṯalǧ*) "snow" and *kisīr* (T4.5, MSA *kaṯīr*) "much," in line with Jastrow's finding that Modern Standard Arabic interdentals are always realised as sibilants in Qashqadarya Arabic.[58] This feature, however, is once more likely to have been influenced by the Tajik pronunciation, in which interdentals appearing in Arabic loanwords are always realised as sibilants.

Comparison with Other Arabic Dialects: Morphosyntax

With regard to the main morphological characteristics, I will initially turn to the conjugation of the first person of the imperfective, considered to be the main distinguishing feature between eastern and western Arabic dialects. Examples from the texts show a closer similarity to the patterns *aktib* for the first person singular (*amid* (T1.5) "I leave"; *ma aḫōf* (T1.5) "I am not afraid of") and *niktib* for the first person plural (*nilʿab* (T1.1) "we play"; *nuzbaha* (T2.2) "we will kill him"; *nōḫusa* (T3.2) "we take her"), both characteristic of eastern Arabic dialects, than to respectively *nəktəb* and *nkətbu*, found more frequently in western ones.[59]

As for the distinction between Bedouin and sedentary dialects, several features appearing most commonly in the eastern Bedouin ones, following Vicente's classification,[60] could be detected. Among these are the -ūn/um ending for the second and third person

[53] Otto Jastrow, "Dialect Differences in Uzbekistan Arabic and Their Historical Implications," in Olivier Durand, Angela Daiana Langone, and Giuliano Mion, eds., *Alf Lahga wa Lahga: Proceedings of the 9th Aida Conference* (Wien: LIT Verlag, 2014), 207.

[54] Ángeles Vicente, "Génesis y Clasificación de los Dialectos Neoárabes," in Federico Corriente, Ángeles Vicente and Farida Abu Haidar, eds., *Manual de Dialectología Neoárabe* (Zaragoza: Instituto de Estudios Islámicos y del Oriente Próximo, 2008), 43.

[55] Vicente, "Génesis y Clasificación," 57.

[56] Vicente, "Génesis y Clasificación," 51.

[57] Rosenhouse, "Bedouin Arabic."

[58] Jastrow, "Dialect Differences," 207.

[59] Vicente, "Génesis y Clasificación," 41.

[60] Vicente, "Génesis y Clasificación," 50-53 and 57-58.

plural in the conjugation of the imperfect (*tatilhagum* (T2.6) "you (m. p.) will reach"; *ibkūn* (T1.5) "they (m.) remain") and the appearance of the -īn ending for the second person feminine singular in the imperfect (*tidrīn* (T1.2) "you (f. s.) know"). Moreover, the construct state is retained, as displayed by the feminine singular noun *mōra* (*il-mōra* (T3.6), "the wife"), in which the final sound /a/ turns into /t/ when followed by a personal pronoun, as in: *morta* (T3.6) "his wife". Another feature is the second person masculine singular pronoun, which takes the form of *-k*, (*abūk* (T1.5) "your (m. s.) father"). Finally, no instances of the use of *b-/bi-*, or any other prefixes carrying a present tense meaning (including prefix *m-*, in all likelihood of Persian influence, which appears in Bukhara Arabic)[61] were found in the conjugation of the imperfect, although the prefix *ta-* appears relatively often carrying what seems to be a future meaning (*hamzīk bint ta-ilgia* (T1.1) "he shall find that girl"). A possible connection could be with prefixes *tə-* and *də-* also expressing a future meaning in some Iraqi dialects, namely the Jewish one spoken in the areas of Arbīl and ʿAqrah and the varieties spoken in Mosul.[62]

Some additional features could be associated, not only with eastern Bedouin dialects, but more specifically with Iraqi *gələt* dialects. These include the third person singular masculine pronominal suffix *-a* (*isma* (T1.1) "his name"), as pointed out by Jastrow,[63] and the third person plural masculine ending in the conjugation of the perfect *-aw* (šāfaw (T1.5) "they saw"),[64] also appearing in Naǧdi Arabic.[65] Verb form IV was also identified in the verbs "to give" (*ma nṭaha* (T3.1) "he did not give her") and possibly "to show" (*wōraha* (T2.5) "he showed her"; *wōraha* (T1.2) "show (m. s.) it!"). Although it is unclear whether it is productive in Qashqadarya Arabic, retaining this verb form is a rare feature for Arabic dialects. In the Iraqi context, it is only productive in rural *gələt* dialects.[66] Finally, another feature typical of this dialect group is the gender distinction in the second and third person plural,[67] retained both in verbs (feminine plural ending *-anna: daḥalánna* (T1.3) "they (f.) entered"), and in pronominal suffixes (endings *-um* in *maġsadum* (T1.6) "their (m.) aim"; *-kum* in *maġsadukum* (T2.6) "your (m. p.) aim"), and -ənna in šiyātənna (T1.3) "their (f.) things").

The appearance of an *-in(n)-* particle acquiring several different functions throughout the analysed texts is particularly worth noting. In several cases, this *-in* (or, occasionally, *-en/-i*) suffix is used to connect a noun to its adjective (*bintin ḫušrūya* (T3.1) lit.: "the girl-*in* beautiful") or it appears between a noun and an adverb/verb to build relative clauses (*lumalatin itfur* (T1.4) "the rumal [which allows] to escape," lit.: "the rumal-*in* he escapes"; *bintin zēn tšūfa* (T1.2) "the girl whom he loves," lit.: "the girl-*in* he sees her favourably"). This suffix usually precedes the noun – although the word order can occasionally be subverted – and carries a definite meaning.[68] This is confirmed

[61] Georgiĭ Vasiĺevich T͡sereteli, "The Verbal Particle m/mi in Bukhara Arabic," *Folia Orientalia XII* (1970): 291.
[62] Jastrow, "Iraq."
[63] Jastrow, "Dialect Differences," 208.
[64] Jastrow, "Iraq."
[65] Bruce Ingham, *Najdi Arabic* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1994): 24.
[66] Jastrow, "Iraq."
[67] Jastrow, "Iraq."
[68] The definiteness of the nouns in all the previous examples is confirmed by the context of the folktales from which they have been taken, where all these characters and items have been previously mentioned.

by the addition of the indefinite article *fad* to convey indefiniteness, as, for instance, in *fad ġarabtin balanda* (T1.4) "a tall tree". The suffix *-in* tends to turn into *-an* whenever it is merged with the masculine singular pronominal suffix *-a*, as in: *wazīr sayal min bintan i‿ sġīra* (T3.8) "the minister asked his little daughter" (where *bintan* results from the merging of *bint+a+in* and *i* seems to be employed solely to break the consonant cluster, with no grammatical function).[69]

The second function of this morpheme in the analysed texts is to connect verbs to pronominal suffixes. It appears in a few cases following the pattern "active participle+-*in(n)*-+personal pronoun with subject function" and carrying a perfective meaning (as in: ğaybinni (T3.6) "I brought"; šayfinkūnāt (T1.6) "you (m. p.) have seen"; šayfinni (T1.2) "I have seen"). In a few more cases, the morpheme is attached to a perfect verb instead (as in: ğītínnak (T1.2) "you (m. s.) have come"; *inhazamtinnak* (T3.5) "you (m. s.) have fled"), or to an imperative (ğibinnak (T4.7) "bring over (m. s.)!"; *inṭinnak* (T4.5) "give (m. s.)!"). In both of these cases, the *-in(n)-* infix does not appear to alter the original meaning of the verb. Whenever a third person pronoun is attached to it, it appears to retain its object function rather than acquiring a subject one, as confirmed by the examples: *makēᵛnat šayfinna* (T2.1) "she was not seeing him" and šufinna (T3.5) "look (m. s.) at it!".

This morpheme occurs with similar functions – not only in all four Central Asian Arabic dialects[70] – but also in a number of others spoken throughout the Arab world. Miller, who surveyed this feature in depth based on the findings of several other dialectologists, distinguishes between three main types of *-in(n)-* morphemes occurring across Arabic dialects: a "noun-modifier linker," a "participle-suffix linker," and a "participle-modifier linker" where the *-in(n)-* particle is not followed by a suffix.[71] In Central Asian Arabic, as shown by the previous examples, the morpheme appears with the first two functions only, just as in Gulf Arabic, the Baḥārnah dialect of Bahrain, the Daṯīnah dialect in Yemen, that of the ʿAnizah Bedouins from the Syrian coastal region, the Šukriyyah dialect of eastern Sudan, the one spoken by the Banī Ḫarūṣ tribe in northern Oman and Zanzibar, and the one of the Arabs of Maiduguri in Nigeria.[72] In a few more dialects, the particle acquires slightly different functions. Miller found that in Judeo-Arabic and in Naǧdi it is a participle-modifier, meaning that whenever the linker is attached to a participle, it is not followed by a suffix.[73] Moreover, Holes noted that in all Omani dialects, excluding possibly those spoken in the areas of Masqaṭ and Ṣalālah, which were not included in his study, an *-in(n)-* particle is obligatorily added between an active participle and an object pronoun, while he does not mention the function of noun-modifier linker.[74] Finally, in a few other dialects, this feature only seems to appear with the noun-modifier function, as in Andalusian Arabic and in the dialects

[69] Once again, the meaning of bintan is confirmed by the context, as the minister's daughter has been previously mentioned in the folktale.

[70] Seeger, "On the Relationship," 3.

[71] Kerith Miller, "The Morpheme /-in(n)-/ in Central Asian Arabic: A Comparative Study," *Perspectives on Arabic Linguistics, XXIV–XXV*, Texas 2010 and Arizona 2011 (2014): 110-111.

[72] Miller, "The Morpheme /-in(n)-/," 113.

[73] Miller, "The Morpheme /-in(n)-/," 113.

[74] Clive Holes, "Towards a Dialect Geography of Oman," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 52 (1989): 448.

of Cyrenaica listed by Miller.[75] Owens mentions allomorphs of this morpheme, namely the *-an* nominal suffix also appearing in Spanish and Sudanic Arabic dialects and the *-u/-un* one of Tihāmah in Yemen.[76] The usage of the infix in Qashqadarya, Bukhara, and Afghanistan Arabic, however, presents a peculiarity so far not documented in any other dialect; namely that, in verbal constructions, the object pronouns acquire a subject function. Furthermore, in Qashqadarya Arabic the morpheme occasionally follows imperative or perfect verbs. Apart from Central Asian Arabic dialects, the appearance of a similar infix in conjunction with verbal forms other than participles is rare and – to my knowledge – it has only been noticed in Omani Arabic, where it sporadically appears and accompanies any verb type.[77]

The appearance of this feature in Central Asian Arabic dialects has been investigated by several scholars and a number of hypotheses have been put forward on its possible origin. According to different arguments, it has been associated with a Persian-type *ezāfe* construction,[78] an ergative-type language such as the Kurdish dialects of the Sulaymani type,[79] Uzbek influence[80] or derivation from *tanwīn* case markings.[81] The most convincing hypothesis, however, was advanced by Jonathan Owens and points to a pre-diasporic feature common to several varieties of spoken Arabic which could have coexisted with, and not derived from, case markings.[82] Indeed, the usage of this morpheme across Arabic dialects substantially differs from that of *tanwīn* in Modern Standard Arabic, as its primary function is not to mark indefiniteness. Its appearance in Central Asian Arabic therefore points to an early split of the speakers of the dialect from the main Arabic-speaking area. Clive Holes suggested that the modern dialects presenting this morpheme may have branched off from the varieties spoken by the Arabian tribes of ʾAzd and ʿAbd al-Qays. These tribes were originally respectively from western and eastern Arabia, but their migrations in various directions throughout the peninsula had already started before the coming of Islam.[83] Descendants from both tribes would have been recruited from their tribal quarters in Baṣrah to form the Arab troops which first invaded Central Asia in the seventh century.[84] If the ancestors of Qashqadarya Arabs had belonged to this group, they would have been likely to speak a language influenced by several varieties of Arabic, which provides a plausible explanation for the mixture of

[75] Miller, "The Morpheme /-in(n)-/," 113.
[76] Owens, *A Linguistic History of Arabic*, 102.
[77] Clive Holes, "A Participial Infix Construction of Eastern Arabia – An Ancient Pre-Conquest Feature?," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* (2011): 89.
[78] Robert R. Ratcliffe, "Bukhara Arabic: A Metatypized Dialect of Arabic in Central Asia," in *Linguistic Convergence and Areal Diffusion*, 145.
[79] Gernot Windfuhr, "Central Asian Arabic: The Irano-Arabic Dynamics of a New Perfect," in *Linguistic Convergence and Areal Diffusion*, 121.
[80] Guram Chikovani, "The Verb in the Arabic Dialects of Central Asia," in Youssi Abderrahim, et al., eds., *Aspects of the Dialects of Arabic Today, Proceedings of 4th Conference of the International Arabic Dialectology Association* (AIDA) (Rabat: Amapatril, 2002), 181.
[81] Vladimir Grigor'evich Akhvlediani, *Bukharskiĭ Arabskiĭ Dialekt* (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1985), 36-37, as cited by Andrzej Zaborski, "Árabe de Asia Central," *Manual de Dialectología Neoárabe*, 429.
[82] Owens, *A Linguistic History of Arabic*, 104-105.
[83] Holes, "A Participial Infix Construction of Eastern Arabia," 85-86.
[84] Holes, "A Participial Infix Construction of Eastern Arabia," 87.

linguistic features displayed in the dialect. It is hoped that further research in this field and an analysis of a larger corpus will reveal more on the open questions regarding the origin and usage of this morpheme. The association of the infix with a verb other than a participle and the subject function acquired by object suffixes, peculiar to Central Asian Arabic, so far remain unexplained.

Comparison with Other Arabic Dialects: Lexicon

In the analysed four texts, all verbs, some common adjectives (among others: *kul* (T1.1, MSA *kull*) "all"; *gilə* (T1.1, MSA *qalīl*) "little"; *kisīr* (T1.5, MSA *kaṯīr*) "much"), and only a few nouns have been clearly preserved from Arabic. Due to the overlap between the Arabic and Persian lexicons, in the case of nouns it is often impossible to determine whether they have been retained from an early stage or rather borrowed from Tajik, as in the case of *lūlū* (T2.3, MSA *lu'lu'*) "pearl."

A number of terms distributed across most Arabic dialects were also observed. *Zēn*, spread throughout most of the Arabic-speaking world with the meaning of "beautiful" or "good,"[85] and an isogloss of Bedouin dialects[86] appears frequently both as an adjective (*ḥōyiṭin zēn* (T1.6) "the good house"; *fad bintin zēna* (T3.2) "a beautiful girl") and as an adverb meaning "well, favourably" (*i‿ hama bint zēn šafaha* (T1.1) "he liked that girl," lit.: "he saw that girl favourably"). An additional term is the pan-dialectal verb šāf, meaning "to see,"[87] also illustrated by the previous example.

Moreover, verbs figuring in dialects spoken throughout the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, and Syria are particularly frequent. These also often appear in the Sudanese dialect area. ʿAyyan, which in the analysed texts carries the meaning of "to look around" (*ʿayyanat* (T1.4) "she looked around"), is found with the meaning of "to see" or "to look" in some dialects mainly spoken in Anatolia, the areas of Baghdad and ʿAqrah in Iraq, Syria, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. It also appears in the other varieties of Central Asian Arabic and in the Sudanese dialect area.[88] "To show" is expressed by the verb *wōr* (*wōraha i‿ bint* (T1.2) "show (m. s.) it to the girl!"), which most resembles the variants *waṛa/wera* only documented in Maltese, Anatolian, and Nigerian Arabic. The similar form of *warra*, however, is more commonly found throughout Arabic dialects. Its reflexes appear mainly in dialects spoken in North Africa, but also in the Levant, throughout the Arabian Peninsula excluding Oman, and in the Sudanese area. The same form also appears in Bukhara Arabic.[89] *Sawa*, used with the meaning of "to do" (ʿirs sawa (T2.6) "he celebrated his wedding," lit.: "he did the wedding"), resembles reflexes of *sawwa*, which are mainly spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, Khuzistan, the Levant, the Syrian northeastern region, and the Turkish region close to the Syrian border. They have also been documented in Sinai, the Sudanese area, and other Central Asian

[85] Peter Behnstedt and Manfred Woidich, *Wortatlas der arabischen Dialekte: Verben, Adjektive, Zeit und Zahlen* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), vol. 3, 530.
[86] Peter Behnstedt, "Árabe Beduino," *Manual de Dialectología Neoárabe*, 91.
[87] Behnstedt and Woidich, *Wortatlas*, vol. 3, 330.
[88] Behnstedt and Woidich, *Wortatlas*, vol. 3, 334-344.
[89] Behnstedt and Woidich, *Wortatlas*, vol. 3, 357-358.

dialects.[90] It is worth adding that, in the context of the Arabian Peninsula, all the lexical items mentioned so far appear, among others, in the central Arabian Nağd Šammari and Dōsiri dialects. *Dawwar*, the most common word for "to search for" in dialects spoken mainly in the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, and the East Mediterranean, is found with the same meaning in the analysed material (*tuffoh dawwarān boġdōd ġada* (T3.6) "he went to Baghdad to look for an apple"). It also appears in other Central Asian varieties and in Sudanese Arabic.[91] The verb for "to call, summon," *sayah* or *sayaḥ* (*walad il-čumčuga sayaḥaha* (T2.5) "The boy called the sparrow"), also found in Bukhara Arabic, resembles reflexes of *ṣāḥ* or *ṣayyaḥ*, used with the same meaning in dialects spoken in the eastern Mediterranean, but also in Oman, Yemen, Bahrain, Kuwait, in the Dōsiri dialect in Saudi Arabia, and mainly in Iraq.[92] The terms for "to give," namely *anṭa* or *anta* (*bintkum i‿ fahadna tintūna* (T3.2) "marry off (lit.: "give") your daughter to one of us"), most resemble variants of *'anṭa* which are characteristic of Bedouin dialects[93] and found in Saudi Arabia (including in northern Nağdi), in the *'Ahl* al-Šimāl dialect of Kuwait, in several varieties spoken in Iraq, the Khuzestan province, Syria, Jordan, and Palestine. It also appears in varieties spoken by a few tribes in the Sudanese and Turkish dialect areas, and in all other Central Asian dialects.[94] In the Iraqi context, this form is typical of *gələt* dialects.[95]

Some verbs of motion correspond to forms found relatively rarely throughout the Arabic-speaking world. *Madd* is the most frequent verb used with the meaning of "to leave" (*i‿ samā farrat, maddat* (T1.3) "she fled to the sky, she left"). Similar forms have been documented carrying the meaning of "to leave, to set off" in the Nağd Šammari, Dōsiri, and Šarārāt dialects of Saudi Arabia, in the region of Ǧazīrah in Syria, in al-Balqā' in Jordan, in some Bedouin dialects in Oman, in Sudan, and in Chad.[96] Another example is ġad, which carries the general meaning of "to go" (*i‿ madīna i‿ buḫōra ġadaw* (T1.5) "they went to the city of Bukhara"). Variants of ġad or ġda figure in other Central Asian varieties and sporadically in North Africa, the southwest of the Arabian Peninsula, and Gulf dialects,[97] including the Baḥārnah ones of Bahrain.[98]

As for the nouns, the term ğufūr, which in Qashqadarya Arabic is used meaning "well, waterhole" (*taḥat ğabala fad ğufūr hast* (T4.7) "beneath the mountain there is a well"), most closely resembles reflexes of ğafar attested only in Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, Oman, the Dōsiri and al-Ḥasā' dialects of Saudi Arabia, the dialect of the Ruwālah tribe, Iraqi, the Suḫneh and Ḫawētnah dialects in Syria, and Bukhara Arabic. It could also be related to *ḥafar*, appearing in Jordanian, South Sudanese, and Chadian Arabic.[99] Turning

[90] Behnstedt and Woidich, *Wortatlas*, vol. 3, 238 and 240-241.
[91] Behnstedt and Woidich, *Wortatlas*, vol. 3, 214-216.
[92] Behnstedt and Woidich, *Wortatlas*, vol. 3, 392-394.
[93] Behnstedt and Woidich, *Wortatlas*, vol. 3, 409; Behnstedt, "Árabe Beduino," 91.
[94] Behnstedt and Woidich, *Wortatlas*, vol. 3, 406 and 409.
[95] Behnstedt, "Árabe Beduino," 91.
[96] Behnstedt and Woidich, *Wortatlas*, vol. 3, 29 and 35-37.
[97] Behnstedt and Woidich, *Wortatlas*, vol. 3, 14 and 18-19.
[98] Holes, "A Participial Infix Construction of Eastern Arabia," 89.
[99] Peter Behnstedt and Manfred Woidich, *Wortatlas der Arabischen Dialekte: Materielle Kultur* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), vol. 2, 345-347.

to question words, "who" is expressed by *min* (*uzuka il-min?* (T3.5) "whose ring is it?"), a form similar to those appearing in a number of Bedouin dialects, namely in Gulf varieties, those of the southern and southeastern parts of Saudi Arabia including the Dōsīri one, several Omani dialects, and those of eastern Yemen.[100] It also appears in Levantine[101] and Egyptian Arabic.[102] The word for "what" is *eš* or *ieš* (*eš sōr i hāza?* (T1.1) "What happened to him?"; *inta ieš ǧibtinnak iehāna?* (T3.3) "What have you brought here?"), which most resembles ēš, appearing in Levantine varieties[103] and in central-eastern Yemen,[104] but is also comparable to the suffix š- found in Bedouin Gulf dialects and in the šāwi dialects spoken in Iraq,[105] in certain parts of Jordan, and in Syria.[106]

Innovations due to Contacts with Adstrate Languages

Due to the interaction of its speakers with neighbouring Uzbeks, Tajiks, and possibly Turkmen and Afghans, the dialect of Qashqadarya Arabs is characterised by an intermixture of Semitic, Turkic, and Iranian features. The impact of non-Semitic languages is visible mainly in the frequent lexical borrowings, but it has also caused phonetic changes and syntactic innovations. This section will discuss some of the main linguistic innovations which could be detected in the four analysed texts.

A few consonants figuring in both Uzbek and Tajik that are non-existent in Modern Standard Arabic, namely /č/ and /p/, appear in the dialect of Qashqadarya Arabs. These phonemes do not only figure in loanwords from adstrate languages, but occasionally in Arabic words too, as in the case of *wač* (MSA *waǧh*) appearing in the example *wačin ḥōyit* (T1.6) "the side of the wall," where /ǧ/ has shifted to /č/. Moreover, the Arabic long vowel /ā/ is occasionally pronounced as IPA /ɔ/ – indicated with symbol "ō" in Chikovani's transcription – as, for instance, in the verb *sōr* (T2.3, MSA *ṣāra*) "it occurred".

The almost complete loss of the Arabic definite article *il-* (still, however, retained in a few instances, such as *il-bint* (T1.5) "the girl") and the development of an indefinite article *fard/fad/fat*, as in: *fad yōm* (T3.1) "one day," is another feature which could have been influenced by Tajik and Uzbek. Indeed, both of these languages share the use of an indefinite article, the omission of a definite one, and the use of the numeral for "one" to express indefiniteness (*yak* in the case of Tajik and *bir* in the case of Uzbek). In Qashqadarya Arabic too, the indefinite article is related to the numeral for "one," namely *fadhat/fadhate*.[107] However, the indefinite article *fad* – related to the Modern Standard Arabic word *fard*, "single" – is also used in both the *gələt* and the *qəltu* varieties of Arabic spoken in Iraq;[108] therefore, this may point to a potential connection with Iraqi. This

[100] Behnstedt, "Árabe Beduino," 82.
[101] Peter Behnstedt, "Árabe Levantino," *Manual de Dialectología Neoárabe*, 164.
[102] Federico Corriente, "Árabe Egipcio," *Manual de Dialectología Neoárabe*, 241.
[103] Behnstedt, "Árabe Levantino," 164.
[104] Peter Behnstedt, "Árabe Yemení," *Manual de Dialectología Neoárabe*, 116.
[105] Farida Abu-Haidar, "Árabe Iraquí," *Manual de Dialectología Neoárabe*, 198.
[106] Behnstedt, "Árabe Beduino," 70 and 82.
[107] Chikovani, *Kashkadar'inskiĭ Arabskiĭ Dialekt*, 29.
[108] Jastrow, "Iraq."

feature also appears in other Central Asian Arabic dialects and similar considerations on the possible influence of Turkic and Iranian languages have thus been advanced by Jastrow in the context of Bukhara Arabic.[109]

Compound verbal constructions which, despite being composed of Arabic words, reproduce the syntax of Tajik or Uzbek expressions, are also common. An example is the verb *zēn šaf* (*i‿ hama bint zēn šafaha* (T1.1) "he loved that girl" (lit.: "he saw that girl favourably")), a calque of the Uzbek *yaxshi ko'rmoq* meaning "to love, be fond of," but literally "to see favourably". Furthermore, the verb *sawa*, "to do," acquires a function similar to that of *kardan* in Persian and *qilmoq* or *etmoq* in Uzbek in being associated with a noun for the construction of compound verbs. One example is *amr sawa* (T3.8) "he gave an order," which reflects the Persian *amr kard* "he ordered". It might have been the influence of compound verbs from these languages, which also led to the frequent use of a "coupling" narrative strategy, namely of two verbs used jointly to convey one core meaning, as in: ġadaw-*madaw* (T4.1) "they set off" (lit.: "they went-left").

Word order is flexible, but, in most cases, it follows the pattern "subject-object-verb" (as in: *walad i‿ fad balad mad* (T2.3) "the boy left for a country"), typical of both Tajik and Uzbek. Another common pattern is "noun-adjective," which is characteristic of both Arabic and Tajik, although, "adjective–noun," typical of Uzbek,[110] can occasionally be found, too (*fad nāb mōra* (T1.2) "an old woman"). This flexibility in word order is reflected in the number of possible genitive constructions: the most common seems to be the one following the pattern of an Arabic *ʾiḍāfa*, namely "possessed+possessor" (*abu dilmurād* (T1.1) "Dilmurad's father"). However, the one following the pattern "possessor+possessed" with a pronominal suffix referring back to the possessor, of Turkic influence and used in Uzbek,[111] is not infrequent (*dilmurōd morta* (T1.6) "Dilmurad's wife," lit.: "Dilmurad wife-his").

Other features of clear Persian influence include the use in the present and past tense of the word *hast*, meaning "he/she/it/there is" in Persian. In Qashqadarya Arabic, this word is employed as an invariable copula carrying the meaning of "there is/there was" (*hannaka fad* ǧufūr hast (T2.3) "there is a well over there"). However, in the past tense, the active participle of the Arabic "to be" verb is also used with the same function, as in: *fad nāb mōra kẹ̄yna* (T1.2) "There was an old woman." Another feature is particle *ki*, used occasionally to introduce indirect speech (*walad gāl-ki (…)* (T4.4) "the boy said that (…)") or as a connective carrying the meaning of "when" (*dilmurād hama bint ki‿ šāfaha kul yōm kōr ma sawa* (T1.1) "When he saw that girl, Dilmurad would not do any work all day"; *dilmurād walada ḫams ki‿ daḫal, umma abu ḫazuwāt* (T1.5) "When Dilmurad's son was five years old, his mother [and] his father took him"). The particle *ke*, is indeed used in Tajik with these same functions, in addition to creating relative clauses.

A few Turkic suffixes also appear in Qashqadarya Arabic. The Turkic particle *-ak*, used in Uzbek to create nouns based on other nouns or adjectives,[112] appears in a couple of instances; although its exact function is unclear as it does not seem to modify the

[109] Otto Jastrow, "Uzbekistan Arabic: A Language Created by Semitic-Iranian-Turkic Linguistic Convergence," in *Linguistic Convergence and Areal Diffusion*, 135.

[110] Ratcliffe, "Bukhara Arabic," 143.

[111] T̄sereteli, *Arabskie Dialekty v Sredneĭ Azii*, 35.

[112] Chikovani, *Kashkadar'inskiĭ Arabskiĭ Dialekt*, 201.

core meaning of the phrase (*farasīn zīnak u zoka saḥbak* (T2.1) "The good horse and he, the owner"). In addition to this, the Turkic interrogative particle *-mi* (*inti ma tidrīn-mi hama bint išqoʿa?* (T1.2) "Don't you know where that girl is?") is frequently used in questions. This feature was also identified by Jastrow in Bukhara Arabic.[113]

Turning to the lexicon, several nouns and a few adjectives from both Tajik and Uzbek have been borrowed by Qashqadarya Arabic. It was not possible to determine which one of these two languages had the strongest impact due to the overlap of lexical items between them, namely the many Persian words borrowed by Uzbek. An example is the word čüpōn (T3.1) "shepherd," which may have been acquired either from the Uzbek *choʻpon* or Tajik *chūpon*. Loanwords seem to either be very specific terms or words of everyday use, as, for example, čumčūga (T2.3) "sparrow" from Uzbek *chumchuq*, or *sawdagār* (T4.2) "merchant" from Tajik/Uzbek *savdogar*. In no instance was an influence of Russian or of any other language noticed.

Conclusion

This article has introduced the core cultural traits of Qashqadarya Arabs. Drawing from four folktales, it has provided a linguistic survey of the dialect of this community, the study of which has been much neglected, especially compared to that of the Arabs living in the Bukhara region. Through comparative linguistic analysis, some of the Arabic elements retained in this language variety have first been pointed out in an attempt to identify connections with other Arabic dialects. Next, this survey has outlined some of the elements likely to have been acquired through contact with adstrate languages, commenting on the convergence of Turkic, Persian, and Semitic features which characterise the dialect.

The analysis demonstrated that Qashqadarya Arabic, despite the speakers' bi- or trilingualism, has retained most of its morphological features from Arabic. Of the phonological and morphosyntactic features which could be associated with other Arabic dialects, most of them seem to be shared with eastern Bedouin dialects. More specifically, there are often possible connections with Iraqi *gələt* dialects – a similarity first pointed out by Jastrow based on the few speech samples published by Vinnikov –[114] and with Arabian dialects. This clashes with previous claims that Uzbekistan Arabic belongs to the *qəltu* group and displays several features of sedentary dialects.[115] This conclusion might, nevertheless, have been based on an analysis of a Bukhara Arabic corpus only, despite the use of the label "Uzbekistan Arabic". The analysis of the lexicon also confirmed possible connections of Qashqadarya Arabic with dialects spoken throughout the Arabian Peninsula (the Nağd Šammari and Dōsiri dialects being the ones which appeared most frequently), and to a lesser extent Iraq and Syria. Therefore, this study supports the likelihood of an original migration of the ancestors of Qashqadarya Arabs from Mesopotamia or the Arabian Peninsula to Central Asia, a hypothesis initially advanced by T͡sereteli in 1956.[116] More specifically, the mixture of Iraqi and Arabian

[113] Jastrow, "Uzbekistan Arabic," 136.
[114] Jastrow, "Dialect Differences," 211.
[115] Kees Versteegh, *The Arabic Language*, second ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 286.
[116] Amir͡ianț͡s, "Ėtnicheskoe Razvitie Sredneaziatskikh Arabov," 215.

features, besides the appearance of the *-in(n)-* morpheme, could also support Holes' hypothesis that at least some of the Arabs settled in Central Asia may have moved there in the seventh century as part of troops stationed in Baṣrah, but whose tribes originally came from Arabia, therefore having been exposed to different linguistic varieties.[117] More comparative studies of this dialect with the other Central Asian varieties, in particular with the most recently discovered ones of Balkh and Khorasan, might help to shed more light on such genetic connections with other Arabic dialects.

Indeed, as the debate on the possible origins of the *-in(n)-* morpheme shows, Qashqadarya Arabic, as well as the other Central Asian Arabic dialects, can prove pivotal not only for the study of Arabic linguistics, but also for the field of historical Afro Asiatic studies. This feature's geographical distribution across very distant dialect areas and its fundamental difference with Classical Arabic case markings are central to Owens's hypothesis that, at an early stage, two varieties of proto-Semitic might have coexisted, namely one with case markings – from which Classical Arabic could have branched off – and one without.[118] This morpheme in particular, therefore, certainly deserves further comparative study.

As for the adstrate languages that Qashqadarya Arabs have come into contact with, only the influence of Uzbek and Tajik was visible in their dialect. Somehow surprisingly, the informants' possible knowledge of the Russian language, at least based on the four analysed texts, does not seem to have impacted their speech in any substantial way. While the morphology is where most Arabic elements have been retained, the phonology, lexicon, and syntax of the dialect have been heavily influenced by both Turkic and Persian elements, due to the Arabs' fluency in Uzbek and Tajik. Moreover, considering that they led a nomadic way of life until relatively recent times, and that earlier migrations from Afghanistan to this region cannot be ruled out,[119] Qashqadarya Arabs are also likely to have been exposed to the Dari variety of Persian at an earlier stage. Owing to the overlap of features between Uzbek and Tajik, it was not possible to determine which of these languages had a stronger impact on the speech of this community.

Due to the quick disappearance of Qashqadarya Arabs' rich cultural traits and to the endangered status of their dialect, new ethnographic and linguistic material in this field will soon not be available anymore, although the urge to preserve their traditional culture might not necessarily be perceived by the community itself. Therefore, in an effort to preserve and document the dialect, the collection of new speech samples in the region is urgent. It is also particularly important to gain access to the wealth of unpublished material available on this community and on their language. The extensive material collected by Vinnikov (and possibly T͡sereteli) in the 1930s, could potentially reveal more on its linguistic features as their informants might have had a proficiency in the dialect that current speakers have already lost.

[117] Holes, "A Participial Infix Construction of Eastern Arabia," 87.
[118] Owens, *A Linguistic History of Arabic*, 106, 111, and 267.
[119] Zaborski, "Árabe de Asia Central," 411.