6. SYNTAX OF THE ORAL NARRATIVE

It has already been pointed out in the previous chapter that in Arabian dialect studies the focus of research has been mainly on phonology and morphology, and, up to now, very little attention has been paid to syntax. In this respect, however, the Šammari dialect is in fact better off than most of the other Peninsular dialects thanks to the work of Peter Abboud on the dialect of Ḥāyil entitled *The Syntax of Najdi Arabic*. This work stands out as the most important single contribution to the syntactic study of Arabian dialects. One only regrets that for the last twenty-five years no comparable work has appeared in English on the subject of Najdi syntax.

Obviously, the text we are publishing here is meant to broaden the data base of research on the dialects and oral literature of Arabia, particularly that of the Šammari tribe. From this perspective, this narrative text provides a supplement to the recently published texts in the Šammari dialect (40) and to the texts published by R.M. Montagne (41) half a century ago. This would broaden the basis for comparative research and the study of the changes and variations in the Šammari dialect along temporal and social (e.g. settled vs nomadic) axes.

More importantly, the syntactic analysis given in this chapter complements and compares with Abboud's work on several significant points. Abboud explains how he obtained his data saying that:

> the study is based on the speech of four students from Ḥāyil who are at present studying at the Saudi Arabian Training Project at the University of Texas. The students, whose ages range between 19 and 23, lived all their lives in Ḥāyil before coming to the United States, except for short trips to the adjoining areas and to neighbouring Arabic countries. Their idiolects reflect the educated speech of the town. The corpus consists of extensive high-fidelity tape-recordings covering a variety of topics, mainly stories, personal narratives, and dialogues, and of many hours of additional material elicited at regular sessions with the four informants individually throughout the academic year 1963-64 (p.1).

Abboud's informants were educated, young city people whereas mine were, in most cases, old, illiterate nomads, not to mention the fact that he recorded his material during 1963-64 while I recorded mine during 1983-84, an interval of twenty years. Furthermore, the literary nature of this text, the artistic competence of the informants, and the true authentic setting under which the material was recorded would lead one to suppose a difference, if not in grammar, at least in diction and style. As a matter of fact, with regard to grammar, it is of interest to note here that the published material on the Šammari dialect shows a noticeable uniformity and stability through time and across the settled-nomadic continuum.

Despite the sociolinguistic considerations just alluded to, the results of my syntactic analysis, which I shall outline shortly, do not in any way contradict Abboud's analysis but rather support it. Nevertheless, it remains to be said that due to the comprehensiveness of *The Syntax of Najdi Arabic* which attempts to give a panoramic, grammatical sketch of the dialect as a whole, Abboud was able to treat only very briefly some syntactic aspects leaving much room for further, more elaborate analysis. My method is different from his in that instead of aiming to expound the syntactic system in its totality, I chose to dwell on the most salient syntactic patterns exhibited by the text at hand, leaving other aspects of the syntax, as well as the phonology and morphology, for future consideration.

Subordination Using the Particle *yōm*

As a noun, the word *yōm* means "a day" as in the adage *hāḏi ḥāl ad-dinya, yōmin lak w-yōmin ˤalēk* "C'est la vie, one day fortune comes your way and one day it goes against you." As an adverb, *al-yōm* means "today, now, at this time, in this age" as in *min haka-l-yōm ila al-yōm* "from then till now;" the adverb "since" is *min yōm*. As a particle, *yōm* could serve as a linker as in the sentence *tālīh tigaṣṣidōh yōm yaḏbiḥūn faras al-Lḥāwi* ⟨161⟩ "the last (of their water) they had apportioned among themselves after they killed the horse of al-Lḥāwi."

As a conjunction, *yōm* fulfills syntactic functions similar to the classical Arabic particle *ḥīnamā* "when, at the time of" or *baʕdamā* "after." As a subordinate conjunction, *yōm* is used very frequently in our text (42). It is usually followed in the subordinate clause by one, and not infrequently by more than one verb in the perfect. The main clause could be a verbal clause with the verb either in the perfect or the imperfect. The main clause could also have more than one verb. When the verb of the main clause is in the perfect, the result is an asyndetic structure (∗1–∗19 below). Notice that a part of the subordinate clause could be focused and moved to the front of the sentence (∗16–∗18). Also, between *yōm* and the following verb the particle *ʕād* (∗10) or the particle *inn* with a pronominal suffix agreeing with the subject of the verb (∗11–∗15) can be inserted. In our text, there is only one other example of an asyndetic subordinate structure in which the clause has a participle instead of a verb in the perfect (∗20). In case the verb of the main clause is in the imperative (∗21) or the imperfect (∗22–∗44), the result is a syndetic subordinate construction using the particle *w* to introduce the verb of the main clause. An independent subject pronoun is sometimes inserted between the syndetic particle and the imperfect verb of the main clause (∗37–∗44). The independent subject pronoun can be followed directly by a pseudo-dative (∗43–∗44).

∗1.   *yōm jāuh, gāl* ⟨409⟩

∗2.   *yōm jāhum, gāl* ⟨436⟩

∗3.   *yōm jābōh la-l-ʕWāji, gāl* ⟨326⟩

∗4.   *yōm aṣbaḥaw, mišaw* ⟨434⟩

∗5.   *yōm rkiḏaw ʕalēhum, gāl Hiḏlūl* ⟨172⟩

∗6.   *yōm šāfaw hāḏi ma wixḏah, raćbaw miʕuh* ⟨46⟩

∗7.   *yōm wiṣl w-ḥawwal w-sallam, gāl luh* ⟨382⟩

∗8.   *yōm ja haluh w-radd ad-dibaš, ʕammad luh rāʕi ḏilūl* ⟨125⟩

∗9.   *yōm gayyalaw, xubrat Ḥsēn xanṣaraw w-akalaw aḏ-ḏabiy* ⟨78⟩

∗10. *yōm ʕād agfaw ba-z-zamil . . . iltifat Ḥsēn ʕala Hiḏlūl* ⟨113–4⟩

∗11. *yōm innhu agbal ʕalēhum . . . wgaʕat al-fitīlih* ⟨107⟩

*12. *yōm innuh rijaʕ ant ya-ʕAwaḏ, . . . gāl* ⟨177⟩

*13. *yōm innihum tiḏayyifaw, gālaw* ⟨394⟩

*14. *yōm innihum . . . garribaw l-Kiḥlih, gāl* ⟨74⟩

*15. *yōm innihum jaw, arsal ibin Gdūr la-š-Šwēhri* ⟨50⟩

*16. *ʕGāb yōm jāuh an-niḏīr, fazzaʕ myat xayyāl* ⟨446⟩

*17. *gōm Hiḏlūl yōm anṣaf sagyihum, gāl rāʕ as-sānyih* ⟨268⟩

*18. *b-ġarbi Zibār Wrēć yōm ōjahan lak // rāḥat tidahda jiṯṯitak
      ma baha rās* ⟨588⟩

*19. *yōm nawwaxaw, ma faṭnaw illa yōm tgaṣōhum* ⟨138⟩

*20. *wallah ana yōm ʕamaltu bi hāć, m antum mtijammlīnin bi
      baʕad* ⟨218⟩

*21. *yōm ġarriguh, w-laḥḥġuh ar-rimḥ* ⟨540⟩

*22. *yōm agbal ʕalēh, w-yigūm yarkiḏ* ⟨538⟩

*23. *yōm ḏbiḥuh . . . w-yijy al-xabar Šammar* ⟨361⟩

*24. *yōm iltifat Hāyis ʕala ēsiruh, wi-y-ʕariḏ luh Sirḥān* ⟨500⟩

*25. *yōm jaw an-nifūd . . . w-yanhaj wāḥdin* ⟨79⟩

*26. *yōm šāfōh gōmuh, w-yarfaʕ allah yiduh ʕanhum* ⟨197⟩

*27. *yōm jat xēl ʕNizih, wi-ydalli Siʕdūn . . . ynaššid* ⟨547⟩

*28. *yōm ja tāl al-lēl, w-yijiy wāḥdin ismuh Mašʕān* ⟨555⟩

*29. *yōm diry Ḏbēb in aš-šyūx mḏabbiḥīn, w-yamši ʕala z-zimāmīl*
      ⟨561⟩

*30. *yōm xaḏāhum, w-yijīk minćif* ⟨42⟩

*31. *yōm ja waṣṭ al-lēl, w-tiʕṭīn ṣirrat jarād* ⟨568⟩

*32. *yōm innhu agbal, wi-ytišaṭṭar luh Ḥsēn* ⟨103⟩

*33. *yōm innuh ja haluh, wi-yʕazl arbaʕ* ⟨43⟩

*34. *yōm innuh naxa Hāyis, w-yanxa Šammar* ⟨356⟩

*35. *yōm innuh ʕašša, wi-ytaʕānag hu w-iyya Ṭwērib* ⟨273⟩

*36. *yōm innh aġribat aš-šams, wi-yšūfuhm ar-rigībih* ⟨166⟩

*37. *yōm innihm nhaḏōh w-abʕado buh šwēn, wi-hi talḥaghm al-xēl*
      ⟨458⟩

*38. *yōm innuh wiṣl Xbēbt al-Ġazuw . . . wu-hu yanzil* ⟨406⟩

*39. *yōm jaw al-abrag, wu-hu yalḥaguh* ⟨491⟩

*40. *yōm zhabat, wu-hu yiṣibb haka-l-finjāl* ⟨151⟩

*41. *yōm ijtmaʕaw, wu-hu yilizz haka-l-wāḥid* ⟨316⟩

*42. *yōm ṭawwar buh, wu-hu yaḏirbuh al-midaćć* ⟨196⟩

*43. *yōm wardawah w-asgaw mnah, wu-hum lak yṣaddrūn* ⟨76⟩

*44. *yōm šāfōh b-iṭarhum, wu-hum lak yaʕagbūnuh* ⟨296⟩

Also, the main clause could be a nominal clause (*45-*70) or a prepositional clause (*71-*72). In either case, it is introduced by the syndetic particle *ya/lya*. This particle could also introduce a verbal (*73-*76) or a participial (*76) main clause. Later, we shall have more to say regarding the subordinate function of *ya/lya*.

*45. *yōm wardaw, ya xwayāhum ma humb buh* ⟨169⟩

*46. *yōm massuh, ya mjalmduh* ⟨192⟩

*47. *yōm ja aḏ-ḏihir, ya mbaruwḥīnuh w-jāmm* ⟨263⟩

*48. *yōm jōh, wardaw Ṣalēh, ya mindifin* ⟨260⟩

*49. *yōm iltifat Hiḏlūl, ya l-mġīrat hi hāḏíč* ⟨298⟩

*50. *yōm fiṭn ibin Nōbān . . ., ya jāyyuh al-mirsāl* ⟨323⟩

*51. *yōm xḏuwah, ya hu, aš-Šwēhri, haka-l-wagt Ṣaġīd* ⟨38⟩

*52. *yōm aġribat aš-šams, ya hum mirwīn* ⟨270⟩

*53. *yōm ja al-Ṣaṣir ma ja min xwayāhm aḥad, ya hum Ṣaṭṣa* ⟨159-160⟩

*54. *yōm aṣbaḥaw . . ., ya hāḏa ṭ-ṭarš* ⟨448⟩

*55. *yōm xḏuwah, ya hāḏa š-Šwēhri* ⟨327⟩

*56. *yōm jābōh, ya hāḏa miḏrāb aš-šalfa b-ġārbuh* ⟨578⟩

*57. *yōm innihum . . . aḏḥaw w-garribat al-gāylat, ya hāḏi yōm ṭlaṢat al-jrūd* ⟨451⟩

*58. *yōm wardaw Ṣalyah, ya wallah hāḏa ṭarhum šārbīnah* ⟨131⟩

*59. *yōm ṭlaṢaw mn al-Ṣarab, ya wallah ṭalāṭ haka-l-xayyālih* ⟨395⟩

*60. *yōm ṣāḥ Ṣalēhum, ya wallh as-sṢadēn ma ytarākabin* ⟨485⟩

*61. *yōm rāṢa Hāyis . . . ya wallah rāṢi haka-l-miṭiyyih* ⟨380⟩

*62. *yōm rāṢa, ya wallah Rīmat, ḏilūluh, tṢatib b-iṭarhum* ⟨179⟩

*63. *yōm agbalaw Ṣala l-ġaltih, ya wallah ma yšūfūnuhum* ⟨169⟩

*64. *yōm rāṢaw rabiṢ Hiḏlūl, lya l-Ṣarab čiṭīr . . . lya wallah ma yimčinhum yirūġūn* ⟨90⟩

*65. *yōm argibaw haka-n-nōbih, lya hāḏíč al-wiḏḥ* ⟨287⟩

*66. *yōm ja aṣ-ṣibḥ, lya hāḏa ṭar ar-rajjāl* ⟨444⟩

*67. *yōm ja šanag al-abrag, lya hāḏa ṢGāb . . . lya mēr mitnazzḥin* ⟨558⟩

*68. *yōm waṣlaw Mōgag . . . ya mēr ibin ṢAwwād, mn al-Bšayyir, Ṣašīrin li-ṢGāb* ⟨572⟩

*69. *yōm wardaw Ṣala t-Tayyim . . . ya mēr bass sabiṢ w-arbiṢīn xayyāl* ⟨392⟩

*70. *yōm rāʕa, ya mar ar-rajil wārdin ʕala Hiḏlūl* ⟨192⟩

*71. *yōm jaw al-Ḥayyāniyyih, ya ʕalyah lah ʕarab* ⟨404⟩

*72. *yōm iltifat Hāyis, ya ʕala ēminuh Mfīz* ⟨503⟩

*73. *yōm ṭlaʕaw, ya mēr yšūfūn al-bill* ⟨264⟩

*74. *wallah yōm imtarrat al-xēl, ya mēr ḏōnibat baʕaḏ xēl ʕNizih* ⟨465⟩

*75. *yōm šāf Fhēd wigaʕ, ya mar ma yimčin ibin Siʕdūn yiṭilʕ al-midačč* ⟨194-5⟩

*76. *yōm ṭārat, ya mar yarčab rāsuh, ya mar mnajjẓuh* ⟨191⟩

In the examples *68-*70 and *73-*76 above, notice the insertion of the particle *mēr/mār/mar* after the syndetic particle *ya/lya*. By itself, *mēr/mār/mar* usually serves to link clauses and has approximately the meaning of "but, however, anyway, in that case" ⟨see also 94,95,111,116,174,284,445,455,552,604⟩ (43).

The above examples (*1-*76) represent the majority of cases and most common patterns of subordination using the particle *yōm*. However, there are minor variations on these basic patterns. In three examples below (*77-*79) the syndetic *w* is prefixed to *ya/lya*. On rare occasions, the main clause is introduced by *yōm* (*80), *ayōm* (*81) or *ya mēr yōm* (*82). There are cases in which the main clause and the subordinate clause switch positions (*83-*84). Some subordinate structures are quite complex (*85-*86). In one rare exception (*87) the verb of the subordinate clause is not in the perfect but in the imperfect.

*77. *yōm xaḏaw, w-ya hāḏōla rabʕahum* ⟨206⟩

*78. *yōm innihm ṭlaʕaw maʕ aṭ-ṭiʕs . . . w-ya mēr ar-rjāl ʕala l-ma* ⟨86⟩

*79. *yōm innihm aṣbaḥaw w-jōhum, wi-lya hāḏa Fhēd* ⟨211⟩

*80. *yōm faṭnaw, yōm gāmat ṭhamal al-gōm ʕalēhum* ⟨461⟩

*81. *yōm innihum jo lihm abragn . . . ayōm innihm ṭlaʕaw aš-šyūx* ⟨481⟩

*82. *yōm ḏharaw maʕ Mtērdih . . . ya mēr yōm tibayyanaw* ⟨474⟩

*83. *ya mēr ma luh ḥīlitin yōm innh wgaʕat al-faras* ⟨105⟩

*84. *giṣad baʕad ʕigib ḏabḥat Hiḏlūl yōm diri innuh naxa Hāyis* ⟨372⟩

*85. *yōm ṭawwar buh, wu-hu yaḏirbuh al-midačč maʕ ad-dēd, ya mar šāʕtin janbuh, ya mar ṭālʕin maʕ ibṭuh* ⟨196⟩

*86. yōm ġarriguh, w-laḥḥġuh ar-rimḥ, ya ḏārbuh b-jarbūʕt
      as-sāg, ya ṭālʕin ar-rimḥ mgābal ⟨540⟩
*87. yōm tiṣbiḥ, ya mēr ant āxḏin baʕārīnah ⟨346⟩

There are examples of subordination similar in form to the
examples above except for the deletion of the subordinator yōm.
In the examples *88-*94 below, we could prepose yōm without
changing the meaning. We have seen that in all the above
examples, the verb of the subordinate clause is in the imperfect,
except for example *87 in which the verb is in the perfect. It
seems that once the subordinator yōm is not used, the verb of the
subordinate clause can be in any mood. In the examples *88-*95
the verb of the subordinate clause is in the perfect, but it could
also be in the imperfect (*96-*105) or imperative (*106-*107) or
even in the participle (*108). In the examples *96-*108, one would
get the same meaning by introducing the subordinate particle yōm
and changing the mode of the verb in the subordinate clause to
the perfect.

*88. intiluh ya mṭabbġin buh ⟨518⟩
*89. gimaz ar-ridīf ya hu bi-šdādah ⟨307⟩
*90. faṭnaw hal al-jaw ya hāḏōla r-riʕyān jāyyīnin yiṣīḥūn ⟨256⟩
*91. ḥaṭṭah ba-l-faras ʕnuh ya mjalmdin ʕḏūdah ⟨104⟩
*92. ḏarab hu Sāyir ya ḥāṭṭin buh ṣuwābin jayyid ⟨541⟩
*93. iltifat yaby aḏ-ḏilūl ya xawiyyuh fāḏḏin bah ⟨305⟩
*94. jāk yarkiḏ yaby aḏ-ḏilūl ya wallah rāyḥatn aḏ-ḏilūl ⟨306⟩
*95. min ḥawwal b-wāḥdin intaxa . . . lya ṭūl rsanah ⟨524-5⟩
*96. w-yaḏirb al-faras ya rāćbitin rāsah ⟨103⟩
*97. w-yanzi min ʕala l-faras ya ṭūl rsanah ⟨513⟩
*98. wi-yrawwḥūn ʕalēhum ya mēr Mbērić at-Tbēnāwi . . . ʕindihm
      ylaggiṣ ⟨573⟩
*99. yigiṣṣūnh al-ʕdāyh w-ila mēr wāṭyin luh ḥayyih ⟨435⟩
*100. yijīk Hiḏlūl wu-hu yaharf aḏ-ḏilūl b-wajhahum ya ḏilūluh,
      Rīmih, ma tiṭrad ⟨300⟩
*101. wu-hu yidiḥḥuh ya mṣawwbuh ⟨496⟩
*102. wu-hu yalsbuh ya gāṭʕin ʕirgūbuh ⟨579⟩
*103. wu-hu yarjiʕ yabiy bintah ya mnaṭṭḥīnhu iyyāh ⟨105⟩
*104. wu-hu yamṣtuh ya mar wāġʕin ʕala baṭnuh, w-ya mar haḏāk
      mfaḥḥjin ʕala ġārbuh ⟨199⟩

*105. *wi-hi tigūm tʕarḏ al-xēl ʕinduh, ya ʕālamin ma tiḥṣa* ⟨452⟩

*106. *šikkuh b-haka-l-ʕrēniyyat lya mēr ćʕabēnn alli hāffin buh* ⟨512⟩

*107. *ṭawwar buh wi-ḏribuh maʕ ad-dēd ya fājjitin lak dēduh* ⟨213⟩

*108. *wāṭyah ba-l-lēl ma šāfah ila mēr mūdʕah giṭʕatēn* ⟨435⟩

Subordination Using the Particle *ila/la/lya/ya*

The four allomorphs *ila/la/lya/ya* mean the same thing and they distribute rather freely in performing various syntactic functions. One of these functions is similar to that of Classical Arabic *ʔiḏā al-fujāʔiyyah* which indicates surprise and unexpectedness, especially when followed by a demonstrative or the oath *wallah*, eg. *ya wallh aš-Šararāt* ⟨89⟩ *w-ya hāḏi hi minkasrih* ⟨205⟩ ⟨see also 120,152,306,407,461,531⟩. The compound *ya mēr/la mēr* sometimes also indicates surprise and unexpectedness; e.g. *ya mar jizūr* ⟨80⟩, *la mēr yšūf ad-damm b-ibṭuh* ⟨497⟩ ⟨see also 59,153,190,191,194,195,198,300⟩. The particle *ya* could also serve as a linker, meaning "when," as in *Mṭērdat b-ha-š-šrift alli ya taʕaddēt Rīʕ al-Mġanni* ⟨471⟩ ⟨see also 83,92,114,366,591⟩.

Subordination is one of the most important syntactic functions fulfilled by *ila/la/lya/ya*. But, before we discuss this point let us examine very briefly the development of this morpheme which has almost the same meaning as the Classical Arabic *ʔiḏā* "if, when." It is reasonable to assume that of the four allomorphs *ila* is the oldest form since it is the closest in pronunciation to *ʔiḏā*. But usually an initial *hamzah* is avoided in the Arabian dialects as much as possible; hence, *ila* → *la*. Also, the loss of the initial *hamzah* is usually compensated for by adding a final long vowel to the word as in *axaḏ* → *xaḏa*, *ahad* → *ḥada*, etc. By analogy, we can pose *ila* → *la* → *lya* → *ya*. Although this could reflect a historical development, the older forms are never discarded but used concurrently with the new ones.

In *45-*79 above, we have seen *ya/lya* functions as a syndetic in a subordinate structure, sometimes with the sense of "lo and behold." But the article could also serve as a subordinator. In this

capacity, it introduces a subordinate clause with a verb in the
perfect, as is the case with *yōm*, Also, the particle *min* could be
inserted between the subordinator and the verb. However, unlike
the case with *yōm*, in the following examples, whether the main
clause is verbal (∗109-∗129), nominal (∗130) or prepositional
(∗131-∗132), and regardless of whether the verb is in the perfect
(∗109-∗114), imperfect (∗115-∗127), or imperative (∗128-∗129) the
subordinate construction is always asyndetic in all cases.

∗109. *ya nišb ar-rimḥ b-ṭōbuh, mṣiʕtuh Falḥa* ⟨491⟩
∗110. *ya xtaffan al-ʕērāt, ćaṭraw nxāti* ⟨122⟩
∗111. *lya gaṭṭibaw al-ʕarab ala l-jiyyān, lya gṭanaw al-ʕarab ʕala
l-ma, ġaẓa* ⟨68⟩
∗112. *šēxin lya šāf al-misāyīr, gāmi* ⟨616⟩
∗113. *lya minnah nawwaxat, ma ṭārat* ⟨269⟩
∗114. *tarhin lya rājan ʕala š-šēx, ma šīf* ⟨377⟩
∗115. *ya wardaw, yḥaṣil lak xwaya* ⟨413⟩
∗116. *ya xḏuwah Sinjārih, yiriddha bin Gdūr b-xāwih* ⟨11⟩
∗117. *ya agfēna ba-d-dibaš, yabūn yalḥagūn* ⟨456⟩
∗118. *ya šawwišat, tašda ʕanūd al-idāmi* ⟨606⟩
∗119. *ḥitta ya ballēto kbūdukum, tagwōn tihūšūn* ⟨165⟩
∗120. *ya jaw an-nās yabġōn yisʛūn mnah, yāxḏūn bi-dliyy* ⟨72⟩
∗121. *lya stadrikaw ar-rjāl, ytikassibōn al-manʕ* ⟨311⟩
∗122. *lya jīt mn al-mġaẓa hāḏa, amši lu al-ḥagg* ⟨45⟩
∗123. *lya minni istiḏamt, ajīk* ⟨301⟩
∗124. *ya minnah taraddidat al-ʕlūm, yigūlūn* ⟨417⟩
∗125. *ya ṣāḥ ixu Siʕda ala l-xēl ća-ẓ-Zīr // tarćab mišāwīl
al-mhār al-ḥazāmi* ⟨603⟩
∗126. *ya mṭalat ba-r-ribīʕ ma tagḏi illa tišrab širb* ⟨70⟩
∗127. *aṭ-ṭalag ya ṣār grayyib, ma yimdīk ʕalēh* ⟨102⟩
∗128. *ya jīna gāʕt at-talʕih, ḥawwlu* ⟨165⟩
∗129. *ila minnikum taḥarrētūhum . . . indbu li* ⟨134⟩
∗130. *ana ya sallamtu ʕimri, al-bāġīn b-kēf allah bihum* ⟨150⟩
∗131. *ya maddētu min maḥallikum hāḏa, ba-l-Ḥfēr mʕaššākum*
⟨421⟩
∗132. *ya abrad al-barād, ʕalēk allah w-imān allah inna laʕan
nāṣiluh* ⟨387⟩

The meaning and function of the subordinator in the above examples (∗109-∗132) are somewhat similar to the meaning and function of *yōm* in the previous examples (∗1-∗87). But in a different syntactic context *ila/la/lya/ya* could serve a different subordinate function similar to the English until/till. In the following examples, when the subordinate clause is verbal, the verb is ushered in by the nominalizer *ma* which fuses with *la* and *ya* to form *lama/yama*.

∗133. *halli ʕād twannaṭ lya ha-l-ḥīn* ⟨356⟩
∗134. *ʕād raćbithu an-Niḏīr ya ha-l-ḥīn, lya ha-s-sāʕt alli ant bah* ⟨432⟩
∗135. *tamši lya ma taćwi al-milḥ w-yiṭūr* ⟨102⟩
∗136. *tanaw lya ma ja al-ʕaṣir* ⟨159⟩
∗137. *sām rūḥuh lya ma ʕadda rūḥuh myat waḏha* ⟨350⟩
∗138. *wiš alli yṣabbran lya ma yijy aṣ-ṣfiri* ⟨389⟩
∗139. *wallah lo taṭilban lama tʕajaz* ⟨32⟩
∗140. *axallīk tarkiḏ b-iṭarah lama talhag ʕala ʕimrak* ⟨35⟩
∗141. *wu-hu ʕād Hāyis ytisallam lak ʕGāb, ytiwallāuh, lama jaw al-abrag* ⟨490⟩
∗142. *ajlid yama yibird al-barād* ⟨387⟩
∗143. *rōćiʕ yama yḫabar xašmak w-ṣawwit yama ytigaṭṭaʕ fwēhak* ⟨353⟩
∗144. *imskan ʕindak yama yijinnak* ⟨344⟩
⟨see also 471,498,599,601,607⟩.

There is only one example in our text in which the synonymous subordinator *laḥatta* is used instead of *lama/yama*.
∗145. *ajildu laḥatta niḏhi* ⟨450⟩

Subordination Using the Particle *ʕala*

The particle *ʕala* introduces a nominal clause directly but when it introduces a verbal clause, the verb is preceded by the nominalizer *ma*. This particle does not always serve as a subordinator, e.g. *ʕala ma ḏikart lak* "as I told you," *ʕala ma gāl al-gāyil* "as the saying goes." As a subordinator *ʕala* functions very much like *yōm* and *ila/la/lya/ya* but it means "as, as soon as." In the following examples, the subordinate structure is

asyndetic when the verb of the main clause is in the imperative
(∗146). But if the verb is in the imperfect, the main clause is
ushered in by the syndetic *w* (∗147-∗148). The syndetic particle *ya*
(*mār*) introduces a nominal (∗149-∗150) or a prepositional (∗151)
main clause.

∗146. *Ɛala ma tiṭiggūn rūs ar-rćāb, gibalkm išribu b-argābikum*
       ⟨165⟩
∗147. *Ɛala tašrīƐathum ba-l-ma, wi-hi tarkiḏ Ɛalēhm al-Ɛarab* ⟨171⟩
∗148. *Ɛala ma ṭabban rkabhn al-arḏ, wu-hum gibalhum ytiṭābigōn*
       ⟨170⟩
∗149. *Ɛala gōlituh buh ha-l-lōn, ya Ḥsēn miḏihrin al-midaćć* ⟨192⟩
∗150. *Ɛala ma wigaɛ, ya mar Hiḏlūl Ɛinduh* ⟨191⟩
∗151. *Ɛala ma wigaɛ Fhēd, ya b-haṭṭat ɛAbdallah ibin Siɛdūn*
       al-migṭ ba-z-znād ⟨193⟩

But when *ila* instead of *ya* introduces the main clause, the
syndetic *w* is used.

∗152. *Ɛala ma gmizan haka-l-Ɛadāmih, w-ila lāḥǵuh ba-l-hawa*
       ⟨510⟩

There are other particles like *Ɛala* which alternate between a
preposition and a subordinator, always using the nominalizer *ma* to
mark a verbal subordinate clause. Of these particles, the most
common is *gabil* and *Ɛigib* as in:

∗153. *Ɛigib ma hūb aḏ-Ḏabiy, ṣār ismuh Ṭiwīl ar-Rimḥ* ⟨564⟩

The Conditional Construction.

The Classical Arabic particle *ʔiḏā* has been replaced in Peninsular
Arabic by *ila* (and its variants) which has lost its conditional
function and has become an equivalent of the subordinate
conjunction "until/till" or the temporal particle "when," which
could also serve as a subordinate conjunction. The two conditional
particles *in* and *law* remain, in Peninsular Arabic as in Classical
Arabic, the two most important conditional particles. The indefinite
pronouns *alli*, *min*, and *ma* also serve as conditionals. The
conditional structure of these indefinite pronouns is much more
uniform and simplified than the two particles *in* and *law*.
Therefore, we shall start with them first.

In a conditional sentence, in which the conditional particle is one of the three indefinite pronouns, the main clause, which could be verbal, nominal, or prepositional, is simply tagged asyndetically to the subordinate clause. With *alli* the verb of the protasis is imperfect while the verb of the apodosis could be imperfect (∗154-∗159), imperative (∗160), or future (∗161). With *min* and *ma*, both the protasis and apodosis take their verb in the perfect.

∗154. *alli yab al-bill ytawakkal Sala llah* ⟨45⟩

∗155. *alli yagiḏbuh . . . bass ySallman buh* ⟨67⟩

∗156. *alli yadra bin Gdūr . . . la yatbaSan* ⟨39⟩

∗157. *alli yanzil Salēk ma tiSṭīh aḥad* ⟨59⟩

∗158. *alli yabiy Rīmih ma yxallīha gafwuh* ⟨186⟩

∗159. *alli yabiy yiSidd at-tārīx . . . ma ymayyil l-hāḏāk willa hāḏāk* ⟨1⟩

∗160. *alli tabiy min nyāgi xḏuh* ⟨29⟩

∗161. *alli yixiṣṣikum nabiy nsallmuh* ⟨144⟩

∗162. *alli yindirna . . . luh Sala kill mrāḥin ṭiniyyih* ⟨430-1⟩

∗163. *min jāna minkum gāl ana ḏibaḥt SGāb al-SWāji* ⟨575⟩

∗164. *ma ja min xayyāln ankisōh. ma ja min xayyāln umma ḏbaḥo frisuh willa ṣawwibōh w-rijaS* ⟨479⟩

∗165. *ma jāhum min xayyāln umma jdaSōh hu willa jdaSaw frisuh* ⟨480⟩

∗166. *ma lḥaghu mn al-xēl zgirhu w-ṣaffaḥ* ⟨493⟩

∗167. *ma liḥig min farasin adārawah Sala SGāb wi-ḏribtuh* ⟨516⟩

It is not clear whether the semantic distinctions which separate the two conditional particles *in* and *law* in Classical Arabic hold for the Šammari dialect. The examples we have culled from our narrative text seem to indicate that there is a degree of overlap between *in* and *law* not only in their respective semantic fields, but also in the way each effects the syntax of the conditional sentence. For one thing, the oath *wallah* is used quite profusely with both articles, especially in the protasis. This, however, is clearly a stylistic, rather than a syntactic feature. Regarding formal syntax, the protasis of *in* is verbal and the verb is in the perfect in all our examples. But, with *law* while the verb of the protasis could be in the perfect (∗185-∗187), it could also be in the

imperfect (∗188–∗191) or the protasis could even be a nominal clause (∗192–∗196).

The subordinate structure of the conditional sentence formed by the use of *in* or *law* is asyndetic in most cases. The only exception to this is when the apodosis of the *in* conditional sentence is a positive, nominal clause; in which case the apodosis is linked syndetically to its protasis by using the particle *f* (∗168) or the substitute particle *w* (∗169).

To change a protasis from the nominal to the verbal, the verb *ćān* is introduced after *in* (∗176). This verb does not only change the protasis from nominal to verbal, but it also adds temporal significance to an otherwise nontemporal verbal clause. Not infrequently, *in* is omitted and only *ćān* remains to mark the conditional construction. The verb *ćān* in the examples ∗177–∗184 below remains the same and does not conjugate, which testifies to the fact that it has become transformed into a *bona fide* conditional particle.

In addition to *alli*, *min*, *ma*, *in*, *law*, *ćān*, there remains one more conditional, namely *lōla*, represented by only one example (∗197) in our text.

Since the negative particles *lan* and *laysa* used in Classical Arabic have disappeared completely from Peninsular Arabic, the particle *ma* is used instead to negate an apodosis, regardless of the conditional particle and regardless whether the apodosis is nominal or verbal and whether the verb is perfect or imperfect. This use of the negative *ma* instead of *lan* and *laysa*, the only one example we have of using *f* to introduce an apodosis (∗168), and the other two examples of using what seems to be an atrophied remnant of the emphatic *l* (used in CA) to introduce the apodosis of *in* (∗170) and *law* (∗195) – all this shows how the conditional structure in Peninsular Arabic has become radically different and, in fact, more complex syntactically than in CA, especially in regard to introducing the apodosis and linking it to the protasis.

Compared to the subordinate construction we have dealt with in the previous sections, the examples we have of conditional constructions are more complex than can be stated in simple rules.

It is important to point out that the examples we have of
conditional subordination are rather limited in comparison with
other subordinate constructions using such particles as *yōm* and
ya. Because of the limited examples we have, and because of the
variety of ways in which these examples are constructed, it is best
at this stage of our research to list the examples and refrain from
making any general statements till the time we have more data to
shed more light on this point.

*168. *in ligētwah mʕaṭūnih . . . fa-l-bayānt innikm tʕānġūnina* ⟨136⟩
*169. *in ṭawwalat ḥayātuh wu-hu bāćir yabiy yxallīna našrab al-ma*
         ⟨66⟩
*170. *wallah in wixḏat min bēti, inni l-axallīk tarkiḏ b-iṭarah lama*
         talḥag ʕala ʕimrak ⟨35⟩
*171. *in ʕaṭēto hazīmih . . . wallah laʕan yšallʕūnukum* ⟨466-7⟩
*172. *wallah in misakna ma yxalli bina raṭb al-ḥalg* ⟨172⟩
*173. *tarāk in jawwadt al-masra bāćir ma yijy al-gāylih illa ant*
         wāṣilhum ⟨570⟩
*174. *wallah yan raddaw miʕuh rabʕuh . . . wallah ma yiridd*
         minna raṭb al-ḥalg ⟨508⟩ (44).
*175. *in ḏibaḥtan m ana nāgṣin Šammar w-in xallētan m ana*
         mzīdin Šammar ⟨347⟩
*176. *in ćān Hēfa l-ʕām zajjat lah aṣwāt // Nūtin yirūʕ al-yōm*
         lajjat giṭīnah ⟨665⟩
*177. *ćān bak ʕizzn aḏihruh* ⟨482⟩
*178. *ćān tabiy twaṣṣi b-šayy waṣṣ* ⟨342⟩
*179. *ćān buh ahadin mn as-Swēd ytijammal bi-ʕGāb* ⟨530⟩
*180. *la billah abaššrak . . . ćān hu ʕašīrin lak innuh ma ʕād yilūṭ*
         ṣhanak ġēr ma lāṭuh ⟨576⟩
*181. *ćān taby aḏ-ḏilūl?* ⟨320⟩
*182. *irjaḥ l-Zōbaʕ wa-s-Sanāʕīs ya-ṭēr // ćān ant ʕēmānin tdūr*
         al-lġāmi ⟨610⟩
*183. *allah yaʕʕali ma ankis ʕalyah ćān ma liḥiġt alli b-xāṭri* ⟨401⟩
*184. *wallh inni šaḥḥēt bak, willa ćān awwal ṭalag b-rāsak* ⟨111⟩
*185. *law agfēna yabūn yafziʕūn ʕalēna* ⟨92⟩
*186. *amma wallah lo jitak b-ġēr ha-ṭ-ṭirīgih hāḏi wallah inni*
         maʕak ⟨53⟩

*187. *ḥinna lo kān ḥinna ma liḥiǵna ʕala haka-d-dōr . . . lākin liḥiǵna lina rjālin w-ittiṣalna bahum* ⟨5⟩

*188. *wallah lo taṭilban lama tʕajaz, illa tjāb an-nāgat* ⟨32⟩

*189. *wallah lo tijīb kill ḥalāl Šammar wallah inni ma aʕitǵak* ⟨351⟩

*190. *wallah inni ma xabar lo iḏbaḥ ar-rajl alli yaṭrid bi* ⟨150⟩

*191. *wallah ya-Ḏbēb lo yāṣal ad-damm ila ar-rikbih, mnaʕāy ma sallimhum* ⟨563⟩

*192 *wallah lo fitīlatha fīha innikum ma tiǵfūn w-Šiʕlān maʕkum* ⟨109⟩

*193. *wallah lo hm as-Swēd in ćān tīzīna l-bill* ⟨277⟩

*194. *wallah lo ant b-wajh kill ʕNizih illa alūṭak al-yōm* ⟨338⟩

*195. *wallah ya-Ṯwērib amma lo ha-r-rabʕ alli miʕi killihm as-Swēd . . . wallah inni l-axāširkum b-ha-l-bill* ⟨275⟩

*196. *amma law inn al-ġazuw min Sinjārih . . . ćān lak al-gōmat ʕalēh* ⟨28⟩

*197. *lōla innik gilt li innik ibin Nōbān . . . ćān ma ḥaṭṭēt rūḥi b-wajhak* ⟨318⟩

Notice that in the examples *186 and *196, the conditional particle is preceded by another particle *amma*. This particle can stand by itself as a subordinate without the help of the conditional particle.

*198. *amma yōm aš-šabkih wallah ma aʕlam yōm kill ha-ṣ-ṣti mni* ⟨330⟩

*199. *amma yōm jīnāuh aṣ-ṣibḥ wallah ma limistuh* ⟨330⟩

*200. *amma aš-Šimāmrit alli ġēruh la billh illa b-wajhak* ⟨328⟩