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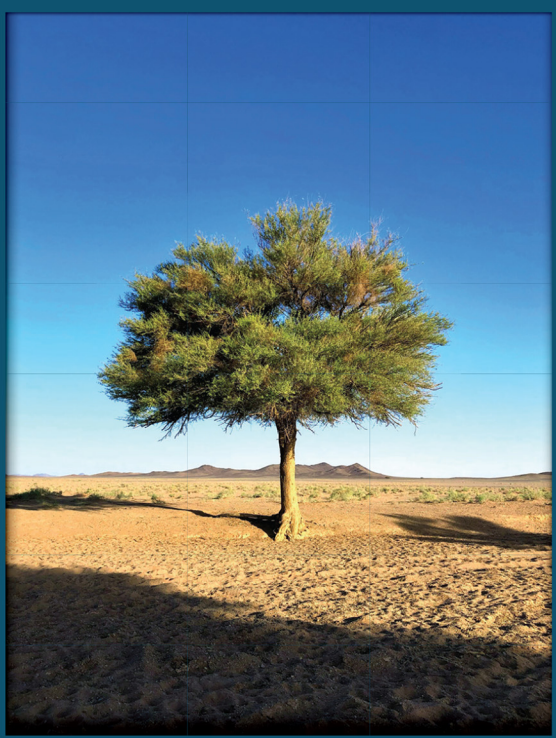

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THREE SHEHRET TEXTS: BUILDING WITH FLORA*

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1.0. Introduction

Traditionally the people of Dhofar enjoyed a close relationship with the natural world (Watson and Boom, in press). Local flora was used for food, fodder, building, medicines, and beautification. Several factors have impacted the use of local materials for traditional activities. Urbanisation has increased by over 70 percent since the 1970s: with many no longer living and working in the natural environment, MSAL community members have

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become alienated from a once intimate knowledge of the local ecology; the development of towns has involved building with new materials, including cement, breeze blocks and plastic; and the natural environment has itself changed as a result of overgrazing, changes in the monsoon rains patterns, and climate change. Recent research has shown a 33 percent decrease in vegetation cover in Dhofar between 1978 and 2018, caused to a significant degree by increased livestock herd sizes (Ball and Tzanopoulos 2020): between 1982 and 2012, populations of cattle, camels, and goats increased by at least 275 percent, 170 percent, and 96 percent, respectively (Ball et al. 2020). The texts presented in this chapter speak of a world that was once the norm in Dhofar and show a depth of local knowledge that younger generations of MSAL speakers no longer possess. Our aim in this paper is to present these unrehearsed texts as evidence of such local expertise and of the collaborative ways in which people worked in the hope that future research in linguistic anthropology and social geography will investigate the extent to which legacy linguistic material can assist in re-establishing close links between humans and the local ecology.

1.1. The Texts and the Speakers

For this chapter, we selected three texts describing the construction and materials involved in building shelters that had been collected during the Leverhulme-funded *Documentation and Ethnolinguistic Analysis of Modern South Arabian* (DEAMSA) (RPG-2012-599). The Shehret archive is hosted, along with archives of Mehri, Ḥarsūsi, Hobyōt, and Baṭḥari, by ELAR and the audio of

the texts can be accessed by typing the file name, provided here at the beginning of each text, into the search box at the link: www.elararchive.org. It is hoped that further work will be conducted both by us and by others on the audio and audio-visual texts collected during the DEAMSA project. The texts examined here were recorded on Olympus LS-11 digital audio recorders in Dhofar in lossless wav. format 44.1 kHz. The speakers, noted by code names, are members of three different tribes: Shahri (J004), al-Kathiri (J019), and Hakli (J020). J004 was in his late 30s, J019 in his 50s, and J020 in his early 40s at the time of recording. J004 lives in the central mountains in Halkot; J019 lives in, and was raised around, Jufa, in Eastern Dhofar; J020 was raised in Gabgabt in the central mountains, but during his adult life has spent significant periods around Dhalkut towards the Yemeni border with Oman. J020's speech patterns, however, are closer to those of Central Shehret than Western Shehret; thus, he has /b/ rather than /w/ as cognate of historical *w. None of the speakers reported speaking or hearing difficulties and the speech of all was considered by other Shehret speakers, including the third author, to be representative of the language.

Transcription was conducted using the free-download annotation tools *ELAN* and *Praat* (Boersma and Weenink 2017). The texts were transcribed from the audio in broad phonemic transcription in *ELAN* and then vowel qualities and stress were checked in *Praat*. This means that words are not transcribed in their lexeme form, but in their contextual form, resulting in occasional differing vowels and stress marks across different tokens of the same lexeme. Stress marks are given as acute accents on

stressed vowels where words have more than one vowel. A forward slash (/) indicates a pause in the text.

The first and fourth authors conducted the transcription and translation in consultation with the third author. The second author was responsible for §2.0. Descriptions of the flora mentioned in the texts were taken from Miller and Morris (1988) and from our consultants during fieldwork conducted as part of the second author's PhD study. The Latin botanical terms were taken predominantly from Miller and Morris (1988) and checked against *Plants of the World Online* (2022). Where particular flora had traditional uses beyond building, these are mentioned in §2.0.

1.2. Shehret Phonemic Inventory

The consonantal inventory for the Central and Eastern varieties of Shehret we examine is given in Table 1 (overleaf). There are three particularly interesting points regarding the consonant system of Shehret within Modern South Arabian: the alveolo-palatal fricatives, /s̃, ṣ̃, z̃/, which are produced with salient lip protrusion (Bellem and Watson 2017) and are the cognates of the post-alveolar fricatives, /š, ṣ̌, ž/, in the other Modern South Arabian languages; the voiced lateral /ź/, which most frequently occurs as an allophone of /l/, but may also function as a separate phoneme, as in *nuź* 'indigo'; and the pre-aspirated sonorants, /^{h}l, ^{h}m, ^{h}n, ^{h}r/, which occur in the offset to word-final stressed syllables in a

Table 1: Shehret consonantal phoneme table

	labial	dental	alveolar	post-alveolar	alveolo-palatal	palatal	velar	uvular	pharyngeal	glottal
plosive	*b*		*t* *d* *ṭ*				*k* *g*[1] *ḳ*			
fricative	*f*	*t̲* *d̲* *ṭ̲*	*s* *z* *ṣ*	*š*	*s̃* *z̃* *ṣ̃*			*x* *ġ*	*ḥ* *ʿ*	*h* *ʾ*
lateral fricative			*ś* *ź* *ṣ́*							
lateral sonorant			*ʰl* *l*							
nasal	*ʰm* *m*		*ʰn* *n*							
rhotic			*ʰr* *r*							
glide	**w*[2]					*y*				

closed set of function words and a few content words (Watson et al. 2023). Restricted to Central and Eastern varieties of Shehret (Al-Maʿšani 2014), the pre-aspirated sonorants lose their breathiness in utterance-medial position, particularly but not exclusively, before vowels or before 'unbreathed' (emphatic or voiced) consonants (Watson et al. 2023). The sonorant portion of both pre-aspirated and non-pre-aspirated sonorants is typically silent in utterance-final position (Watson et al., in press). The sets of

[1] Among some speakers in East and Central Dhofar, /g/ has the reflex /ʤ/, transcribed in the texts below as /j/.

[2] *w* is a historical phoneme in Central and Eastern Shehret, hence *w in this table.

function and content words with breathy sonorants are given below in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2: Shehret function words with final pre-aspirated sonorants

Words	**Gloss**
aġáʰl	‘below’
būʰn	‘here’
d̲aʰn~*d̲oʰn*~*d̲ohúʰn*	‘this (M)’
d̲iʰn~*d̲ihúʰn*	‘this (F)’
d̲okúʰn	‘that (M)’
huʰn	‘there’
iźáʰn ~ *iźóʰn* ~ *iźohúʰn*	‘these’
iźokúʰn	‘those’
lḥokúʰn	‘there’
mənhúʰm	‘of them (M)’
mənkúʰm	‘of you (MPL)’
mənsɛ́ʰn	‘of them (F)’
muʰn	‘who’
nḥaʰn	‘we’
olohúʰn	‘over there’
sɛʰn	‘they (F)’
šuʰm	‘they (M)’
tɛʰn	‘you (FPL)’
tuʰm	‘you (MPL)’
ṯaʰn	‘like this’

Table 3: Shehret content words with final pre-aspirated sonorants

Words	**Gloss**
ʿiʰn	‘eye; source’
dʿiʰn	‘areas of rocky plain’
d̲oʰr	‘blood’
egmíʰl	‘the camels’
ɛʰr	‘land (as opposed to sea)’
ḥaʰl	‘time; pressed oil’
ḳuʰn	‘horn; mountain peak’
mġeʰr	‘frankincense trees’
riʰm	‘tall; long’
sɛʰm	‘poison’
ṣoʰr	‘Sur [place name]’
śḥɛʰr	‘green mountains’
t̲iʰm	‘garlic’
yuʰm	‘day; sun’

Shehret has a large number of vowels in comparison to Mehri, Ḥarsūsi, Baṭḥari, and Hobyōt; however, several of the surface vowels are allophones of other vowels. The short vowels are *i*, *e*, *ɛ*, *ə*, *a*, *o*, and *u*, of which [ə] is generally restricted to unstressed syllables, [i] and [u] are frequently allophones of /e/ and /o/, respectively, in the environment of nasals, and [a] is frequently an allophone of /ɛ/ (Rubin 2014; Dufour 2016) in the environment of back consonants. The long vowels *ī*, *ē*, *ɛ̄*, *ā*, *ō*, *ɔ̄*, and *ū* occur phonemically in loan words and a few native words, and may result from sibilant–V(–guttural) or liquid–vowel metathesis, or from elision of intervocalic /b, m, y, *w/. Where intervocalic /m/ is elided, the resulting long vowel is nasalised. This is represented in the texts below with a superscript tilde, as in *ĩ̃*. Non-phonemic utterance-final post-consonantal vowels (usually [ɛ]~[e]) are noted in the text when they occur. Notes are provided in the first text in particular for interesting phonetic features: utterance-final post-consonantal vowels, possibly to ensure the consonant is sounded in the case of final sonorants; the realisation of utterance-medial words with final pre-aspirated sonorants; the glottalisation of final non-pre-aspirated sonorants in utterance-final position; silent utterance-final sonorants; and preglottalisation of 'unbreathed' obstruents.

2.0. Traditional Use of Flora for Building in Dhofar

This section describes the vegetation used in building two types of shelters: those for humans (*stɔ́rta*) and those for livestock (*díʃáf*). It begins with a brief explanation of the data followed by

a description of the process of building the shelters and goes on to describe the plants and trees used for building. Numbers in round brackets refer to line numbers in the texts in §3.0.

The recordings describe the process of constructing buildings and which plants were used. The Shehret plant names were cross-checked with one of our older female Shehret language consultants and some of the information about how they are used also comes from her. The Latin names and descriptions of uses of the plants are from Miller and Morris (1988) and *Plants of the World Online* (*POWO*) (2022). Classification was again cross-referenced through a public international image database; while this is not scientific validation, it does indicate broad acceptance of the botanical nomenclature.

Traditional houses were called *strit*, plural *stɔ́rta* in Shehret. They were circular buildings with walls made of stones, about the height of a man (J020 1.17). A hole was dug for the support pillar, *nṣəbét*, plural *nṣɛb* (1.19), made from tree trunks (1.20). This was stabilised using stones (1.23) and plastered with clay (1.48). For larger *strit* buildings there were more than one of these pillars (1.21). The roof was made from crossbeams, *mšábḳəf* (1.8; J019 2.5), interwoven and layered with a variety of other plants and materials (1.36–37) to keep out rain during the monsoon period, *xorf,* and to provide shade the rest of the year (1.38). There were variations in how the houses were built (1.40)—some plants used are more readily available in some regions than in others. However, the general pattern of a circular building with a thatched roof supported by one or more roof-bearing pillars was universal across Dhofar except at the east end of the coastal

plain. The ruins of buildings for people and livestock byres can still be found in Dhofar today. Our consultant told us that the way these were built meant they could last a lifetime, were very well insulated, and were well-suited to the needs of the people.

The plants used depended somewhat on whether the *strit* was to be built on the sea-facing slopes, the coastal plain, or on the plateau above the fog forests. The following is a description of the plants mentioned in the texts, their Shehret name, their botanical name in Latin, where they grow in Dhofar, how they were used in the construction of buildings and finally, some other notable uses the plants had.

> ***muṭín***—wild olive; *Olea europaea* (Miller and Morris 1988, 216; also for further uses)

Wild olive was once plentiful on the sea-facing slopes of the escarpment mountains, but over-harvesting has led to a steep decline in numbers. The tree was regularly harvested to produce the support beam, *nṣɛb* (2.3), and the roof beams, *mšábḳəf* (2.5), of shelters (cf. also Tabook 1997, 36–37). It was considered the best wood available for this type of work, but grows only on the southern slopes of the escarpment, so would have been substituted for other wood in regions to the north. The wood was dried by tempering it in embers to remove the bark (2.14), which made it more resistant to insects.

In addition to being used for *strit* building, wild olive was used to make herding staffs (*xóṭróḳ*, plural *xaṭɛ́́rəḳ*) (Tabook 1997, 38), and the ashes from burning the wood were used as fertiliser. Bees love the tree's flowers, and the resulting honey was highly prized. Cultivated varieties of this tree produce olives,

but the trees in Dhofar do not produce edible olives; only goats eat their fruit.

> ***soġót***—*Anogeissus dhofarica* syn. *Terminalia dhofarica*[3] (Miller and Morris 1988, 102)

Anogeissus dhofarica is endemic to Dhofar. Historically it has been the dominant species in the escarpment forests and is still prolific today. In the past, the wood of this tree would be prepared by drying for two to three months then soaking through the monsoon season and drying again. After this, the bark would be removed and it would be ready for use as support pillars, *nṣɛb* (2.5), for a *strit* building or as crossbeams, *mšábḳəf* (2.11), for the roof. Tabook (1997, 62) describes the green branches of *soġót* being used for building the roofs of shelters as well.

One of our consultants describes this tree as the 'miracle tree' because it has so many medicinal and practical uses. It is still used today as medicine and as a cleansing wash, particularly for women. This tree has traditionally also been a very important livestock fodder, especially leading into the monsoon season, when grazing is scarce. It was also used for making tools.

> ***xɛ̃ĩr***—*Ormocarpum dhofarense* (Miller and Morris 1988, 172)

This shrub is endemic to Dhofar and can be found both on the sea-facing slopes of the escarpment and in some north-flowing wadis. It was traditionally used in *strit* construction for the curved doors and as the slim, whippy branches, *sɛ́rín*, woven into the roof (3.10). It was also used in construction of summer shelters of

[3] This tree is categorised as *Terminalia* by POWO (2022), but according to Said Baquir (p.c.), the people of Dhofar still regularly refer to it as *Anogeissus*.

bowed branches covered with cloth (1.52) because the branches are long and supple. This shrub has also been an important fodder in the past.

ġárád*—*Grewia bicolor (Miller and Morris 1988, 284)

This shrub grows throughout the escarpment mountains and around permanent water sources in the drier areas. Similar to *xr̃̄*, *Ormocarpum dhofarense*, this shrub has long, supple branches used for making doors and weaving into the roofs of *strit* buildings.

The branches were also traditionally used for hand-tools and weapons, as well as for constructing baby cradles. It also produces edible fruit and leaves, which were an important food source.

ʿr̃̄ṭét*[4]*—Cordia perrottettii (Miller and Morris 1988, 72)

This tree/shrub grows where there is water, whether that is a permanent water source or rainfall. It has wood that is similar in quality to that of the *muṭín*, *Olea europaea*, but will grow in places the *muṭín* trees will not—i.e., where there is little or no rainfall. The wood is resilient and close-grained, making it good for support pillars, *nṣɛb*, in *strit* and *dáḳəf* buildings (2.15, 2.4). It has also been used for tool-making in the past.

sábxíḏ—Cordia ovalis (Miller and Morris 1988, 70)

This shrub grows across the southwestern region of the Arabian Peninsula with Dhofar as its eastern-most reaches. It is smaller than *ʿr̃̄tét*, and produces edible fruit. Because of the fruit, its wood

[4] Given as *ʿáyṭít* in Miller and Morris (1988) and by some of our consultants. The third author, based on his own consultants, gives it as *ʿr̃̄tét*.

was less often exploited. Its wood is also not of as good a quality as that of *ʿĩṭét*.

> ***ʿĩśót*—**possibly *Indigofera oblongifolia* (Miller and Morris 1988, 170)

This shrub grows in drier areas of the coastal plains east of Mirbat. It grows to the height of a man and the branches can be used to make a herding staff, *xóṭróḳ*, carried by herdsmen traditionally from the age of twelve (Tabook 1997, 38). Before the introduction of metal fish traps, it also served for the construction of fish traps for the people living on the plains.

> ***šoʾ*—**unknown

According to our consultants, this plant rarely grows in Dhofar today because it is too dry. Due to lack of an image, we were unable to identify it. It is said to be a plant similar to *ʿĩṭét*, but the wood was not as useful. This is likely to be another species of *Cordia,* possibly the one described in Miller and Morris (1988, 70) as follows: "Another unnamed and possibly new species of *Cordia* is found on Jebel Samhan and may occur in other similarly dry areas of Dhofar."

> ***ḥárśűt*—*Grewia tenax*** (Miller and Morris 1988, 284)

This shrub grows in the drier areas of Dhofar on the north side of the escarpment mountains. Similar to *ġárád*, *Grewia bicolor*, and *xĩr*, *Ormocarpum dhofarense*, this shrub would be used for the door and the small, whippy branches, *sűrín* (3.10), woven into the roof. This shrub was also an important food source in the drier areas where it grows.

> ***ʿaṭréʾ*—*Cissus quadrangularis*** (Miller and Morris 1988, 289)

This is a climber that grows throughout Dhofar and indeed much of the tropical world. It is characterised by rectangular-shaped stems that are bare for much of the year. According to our consultant, it was used for keeping grass on top of *strit* roofs even in the wind. The stems are not eaten by livestock, so by encouraging the plant to grow up the walls and over the roof of a *strit* building, the other, more edible layers of the roof were protected from livestock as well. It was also prized as a shade-enhancer in trees that on which it climbed.

The new leaves during the monsoon period were eaten by livestock. The sap is very irritating to human skin, but could be used to clean out infected wounds on pack animals and to treat mastitis in livestock.

xfot*—*Blepharispermum hirtum (Miller and Morris 1988, 106)

This shrub is endemic to Dhofar and grows in the lower altitudes of the escarpment. It was one of the dominant species in monsoon forests in the past. Our consultant says it was used in the roofs of *strit* buildings, but the wood is not as strong as the *Olea europaea*, so it was less desirable for long-term buildings. It was also valued as firewood, because it would burn even when damp.

3.0. The Texts

3.1. Text 1

20131212_ShehretCJ_J020_buildingstret

(1.1) *tóḳhob lókum ʿā́fɛ́t ḏa^{h}n he aḥmɛd ɛr shɛl*
Good day. This is me, Ahmad ber Shayl

(1.2) *ɛr mḥād ɛr ʿaysɛ ɛr ḥardān / ḥalʊ̋ṭel lókumɛ*[5] */ išḥáyr*
ber Mhad ber Ayse ber Hardan. I am going to tell you today

(1.3) *b-éstrít / estɔ́rta ʿáyun ź́ók ź́ ɪxódəmsən yɔ̄*
about *strit* construction, the buildings that people used to make,

(1.4) *istɔ́rta yixódəmsən yɔ̄ / énfɛ́̋tɛ*[6] */ yibġíd yɔ̄ yilɔ́d ʿɑ́̋dɔ́t*
the buildings that people make; first people go and cut down suitable timber.

(1.5) *yibġíd eṣ́órəḥ*
They go to the shrubbed slopes,

(1.6) *ɛ-šɛh de-ḥótərf ʿar ʊ̋ś́ɛ́̋t ḏ-o tīlójš ʊ̋ś́ɛ́̋t lo her ol-ʿod yixórb hérúˀ(m)*[7]
that they keep the livestock out of so that they don't destroy the trees.

(1.7) *eṣ́órḥ de-ḥótərf ʿar ʊ̋ś́ɛ́̋t ḏ-o tīlojš lo / yilɔ̄d mɛ̃́š*
The shrubbed foothill area that they keep livestock out of—they cut from it

(1.8) *nṣɛb / b-īlɔ́̋d mɛ̃́š mšábḳəf*
supporting pillars, and they cut roof beams from it

(1.9) *b-īlɔ́̋d mɛ̃́š sírˀ(n)*[8]
and they cut long slim branches from it.

(1.10) *bə-her ber aġeyj flo ġāj lɔ̄d u-ber / id-ūlm her ʿɑ́̋dɔ́t káləs*
And when the man or men have cut, they prepare all the timber.

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[5] Non-phonemic, utterance-final, post-consonantal vowel.

[6] See footnote above.

[7] Non-pre-aspirated sonorants are typically pre-glottalised and articulated silently in utterance-final position (Watson et al., in press).

[8] See footnote above.

(1.11) *yihótf ʿaḳ īźók iź šóhum bə-yɔ̄ iź ḥóṣór yiʿ̃ūr nḥáʰn ḥa-nḥáḏ̣ár / strít / bə-ʿájan tókum tiḳrɛ́̃ tu(n)*

They fetch wood from there that they have, and people come along. They say, we are building a *strit* and we want you to help us.

(1.12) *bə-yɔ̄ yiḳírəb ṭáṭóhu(m)*

And people help each other.

(1.13) *bə-ġāj mənhúm*[9] *iź ber máġrób yʿũ̄r yɔ̄ ḏan*[10] *ḏ̄ílín yiśbír yiḥáḏ̣ər / eḏ̄ílín yijódor / yiġórb / ḏahún*

And some men are well known [for being able to build]. They will say so-and-so knows how to build. So-and-so knows how to build walls, that one.

(1.14) *yízḥúm yiśún eyɔ̄ b-īxódəm yɔ̄ kal / fáxra*

They come and see the people and people all work together.

(1.15) *yixódəm énfɛ́̄t jídórɛ*[11] */ ḏe-fɛ́dnîˀ(n)*[12] */ yiśírekš hes ḥūḳát*

First, they make the walls from stones. They make it circular.

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[9] Pre-aspirated sonorants lose their breathiness in utterance-medial position, particularly before vowels or 'unbreathed' (voiced or emphatic) consonants (Watson et al. 2023; in press).

[10] See footnote above.

[11] Non-phonemic, utterance-final, post-consonantal vowel.

[12] Non-pre-aspirated sonorants are typically pre-glottalised and articulated silently in utterance-final position (Watson et al., in press).

(1.16) *šɛh de stɔ́rta íti mənsɛ́ʰn / mənsɛ́ʰ(n)*[13] */ stɔ́rta / ʿámḳúti / mənsén*[14] *nṣíníti*

Some *strit* buildings are large, some are medium, and some are small.

(1.17) *yixódəm ejódere*[15] */ ɛd ber hes miṣír ḏe-ġeyˀj*[16]

They build the wall until it is the height of a man

(1.18) *flo ġaṣ xɛ́ríˀ(n)*[17] */ mit er ejódórɛ*[18]

or a little lower. When they have built the walls,

(1.19) *yizḥím bə-ʿɑ́dɔ̄t / yizḥím bə-nṣəbétʰ / ʿámḳɛ́t*

they bring suitable timber, they bring the central pillar,

(1.20) *baʿlét éršúnta*

the one with side branches.

(1.21) *b-estɔ́rta mənsén íti yikín bísən zēd mən nṣəbét ṭit mən nṣəbét ṭrut bə-zɛ́ˀd*

And the large *strit* buildings have more than one supporting pillar and sometimes more than two,

(1.22) *li-ḳídárɛ*[19] */ éstrít*

according to the size of the *strit* building.

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[13] Assimilation of /n/ to /s/.

[14] Pre-aspirated sonorants lose their breathiness in utterance-medial position.

[15] Non-phonemic, utterance-final, post-consonantal vowel.

[16] Pre-pausal glottalisation of 'unbreathed' (voiced or emphatic) consonant here and below.

[17] Non-pre-aspirated sonorants are typically pre-glottalised and articulated silently in utterance-final position.

[18] Non-phonemic, utterance-final, post-consonantal vowel.

[19] Non-phonemic, utterance-final, post-consonantal vowel.

(1.23) *ḥaṣ ṭɛr ɛd-ḥofór hes ʿaḳ ʿamḳ b-érṣún lis rḥim fédnín ber riṣ lis m-boh bə-m-boh inʿót tənhézhéʾz*
When they have dug out (a hole) for it in the middle and secured it well by piling stones around it here so that it doesn't wobble,

(1.24) *yizḥím b-ĩšábḳəf / yɔ̃ḳaʿhum ʿaḳ ersũntɛ̃́s aʿálíta*
they bring the roof beams. They put them in its upper branches.

(1.25) *b-ĩxódəm b-ĩsójən ḥof / ɛ-ũ̃́šḳáf / yisójənš ɛṭɛr jídór*
and they work, they interweave the tip(s) into the roof beams and criss-cross them over the walls.

(1.26) *hes / ɛd yiḳólbs l-ɛṭánə hes ḳɛ̃́dər / mənṭ́íh*
They make it like this, [in the shape of] a pot, on top.

(1.27) *mit ɛr sójún iźahún ɛ-ber / u-bə-ṭɛr ɛ̃šábḳəf b-áḥtóʾ(l)*
when they have interwoven those and laid them over the roof beams, they tie them in place.

(1.28) *yiḥótəl / ɛd yóbḏorhum rḥim mən o yinhézhéʾz*
They bind them. They know how to do it so that it doesn't wobble.

(1.29) *yizḥím / bə-ssírʾ(n) / yiḥóṭī bóhum*
Then they fetch long slim branches. They tie them in place.

(1.30) *yiḥóṭī bóhum l-ĩšábḳəf ĩźahún ɛd ĩḳəlóbəs*
They tie them to those roof beams so that they make it

(1.31) *his táʿmɛr / ḏa-bɛk śśon ḥánít iź*
as you would say, so that you have such-and-such

(1.32) *iź ínɛh šũ̃́əš / iź sok*
that, what's its name? So, they are closely enmeshed

(1.33) *ḥaṭɛ berót hes táʿmɛr d-ĩsíks rḥiʾ(m)*
above, so that as you would say, it is well locked down.

(1.34) *mit éttəmím ḏahúne*[20]
When they have finished that

(1.35) *ḥaṭɛ ḏahún bə-sɔ̄r ḏahún bə-ssḯrín iźahú^{h}(n)*[21]
above with this long slim branch, with those long slim branches

(1.36) *izḥím bə-śaʿr*
they bring hay.

(1.37) *b-īzḥím / b-īróṣáf lis b-īrṣíṣ lis mənṭíh*
They bring [it] and press it down and place it in layers above

(1.38) *ino / ino l-xlel / o-mən xorf*
so that it won't leak during the monsoon period.

(1.39) *b-īróṣaf ṭḯrəs*
And they tie that (i.e., the whole roof) down with rocks.

(1.40) *bə-yɔ̄ kō dē bə-xadmášš*[22]
And people all have their own way of working.

(1.41) *de mənhúm*[23] */ yiʿ̃ūr niróṣáf / her ber aṣólḥan o šóhum jíźéd iź elhóti b-ejíźéź*[24] *źahún*
Some people say we weigh the roof down with rocks and when we have done it well and they have hides of cows and those hides

(1.42) *yifíḳí bóhum / her o-ʿod ol-áxxaʾ(l)*
they cover it with them so that it [the roof] won't leak.

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[20] Non-phonemic, utterance-final, post-consonantal vowel.

[21] Sonorant element of pre-aspirated sonorant silent in utterance-final position (Watson et al. 2023; Watson et al., in press).

[22] Assimilation of /t/ to /š/.

[23] Lacks pre-aspiration, perhaps because speaker does not feel he has completed the utterance.

[24] Assimilation of /d/ to /ź/.

(1.43) *bə-de yifóḳa bə-hérmíti ź*
And some people cover with vegetation that

(1.44) *yikín ber d-ű́ləm eśáʿr bə-hérmíti ź*
they have got ready, dried grass and vegetation that,

(1.45) *iź də-reṣṣóhum kal rḥiʾ(m)*
that they lay down neatly in layers

(1.46) *ɛd ĩšórks / yóṣlaḥs káləs / mit éttəmím mən xúnáṭ*
until they finish it, they make it all good. When they have finished from outside,

(1.47) *yɔ̃́jaḥ ʿámḳəs mən ḥɑ́ḳál yinḥíśəs*
they go into it [the building] and inside they do the plastering.

(1.48) *de yinḥóś bə-ṭʿór*
Some plaster with clay.

(1.49) *bə-de yikín də-xódəm ṭɛr ṣárfét / də-wáḍaʿ / b-ĩróśad olohún yɔ̃́ḳaʿ / yínśóf śaʿr*
And some work on an area of flat bedrock and [...] and weigh it with rocks there and then put, spread out hay.

(1.50) *yinśíf / śaʿr ḏahún u-mġor yɔ̃́ḳaʿ ṭĩ́rəs ḥaṣírt*
They spread out that hay and then they put fibre matting on top,

(1.51) *o tforḥ ʿar / ʿar tsɛ̃̄f*
and all you want to do is lie down and sleep.

(1.52) *b-ĩxódər ʿámḳis mən ġál*[25] *mən ʿámḳəs / mən ḥɑ́ḳáʾ(l)*
They use [it] to make shade inside from below and from above.

[25] The pre-aspirated sonorant loses breathiness, particularly before 'unbreathed' (voiced or emphatic) consonants and vowels.

(1.53) *yiš́ireke*[26] */ flo / hes táʿmɛr śóṭrór / flo xóṭóḳ šúmɛ*[27]
They make it or, as you could say cloths or clothes, they,

(1.54) *iźan ɛ-ksbɛ́ʰt*[28]
those that were clothes

(1.55) *min ʿámḳəs ʿad iḳolóbəs / o ʿok hɛt śśun o síŕín b-o śśun źahún / tiḳtəlób lɛ-ṭaʰn / ṭ́ílɛ́lɛ*[29]
from inside so that they make it such that you don't see the long, slim branches or those (other) things; it becomes just a place of shade

(1.56) *b-īkín əd-šk̃əlíl ʿaḳ eṭ́órób o-yíhbi ʿaḳ aʿā́ntɛ́́k b-o śe mənṭ́íh*
so that you can protect yourself among the sticks and nothing will fall into your eyes from above.

(1.57) *b-īxódəm / yišérek múššəd / ɛ-ɔ̄ʾb*
And they work, they make something to block the gap for the door.

(1.58) *be-dɛ́́tmím éstrít yixódəm də-ʿod díṣ́áf / bə-ḥáḏ̣rʾ(n)*[30]
When they have finished the *strit* building, they go on to build byres and pens

(1.59) *her ū̃śɛ́́t*
for the livestock.

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[26] Non-phonemic, utterance-final, post-consonantal vowel.

[27] Non-phonemic, utterance-final, post-consonantal vowel.

[28] Heavily pre-aspirated final /t/.

[29] Non-phonemic, utterance-final, post-consonantal vowel.

[30] Utterance-final /n/ pre-glottalised and articulated silently (Watson et al., in press).

(1.60) *yiġólḳ akṯer*[31] */ edḯṣ̃áf ɛxádím ṭɛr ṣárfét / ḏe-her ḏ-īǰórf mġóra mənsér ṻśɛ̃́t*

They look more ... the byres are built on an area of flat bedrock so that they can (i.e., more easily) muck out after the livestock.

(1.61) *yiġólḳ her ṣárfét*

They look for an area of flat bedrock.

(1.62) *bə-yixódəm edáḳəf hes yiḥótf ṭahún b-īlɔ̃́d ʿɑ̃́dɔ̃́thum her díṣ̃áf b-edáḳəf o ykin / yiʿdól ḥaṭḯh hes estrít lo / ɛ-yɔ̃́ lo*

And they build the byre. When they have smoothed [that area], they cut down suitable timber for the byres and a byre won't be as high as a *strit* building for people.

(1.63) *yikín də-ġóttaṣ́ xɛ̃́rín lɛ́kən / yɔ̃́saʿanš*

It will be a bit smaller, but they make sure it is wide enough

(1.64) *her / her ṻśɛ̃́t / bə-ḏaʰn šɛh yikín beš enṣɛ́b mɛ́kən*

for the livestock and it will have lots of supporting pillars;

(1.65) *o ṭit b-o ṯrut yikín nṣɛb*

not one or two, there will be [lots of] pillars.

(1.66) *iź her təślɛ́lən ḏihún ʿɑ̃́dɔ̃́t ḏihún bə-tšérkənš*

When those poles have been carried, they make it.

(1.67) *u-mit ɛ́tmím edáḳəf her elhóti ḯti / īšírek / ḥáḏór*[32]

And when they have finished the byre for the big cows, they make smaller pens

(1.68) *her šiṭár eníṣúʾn / ź-īhulɔ̃́hum élhúʰ(n)*

for the small female calves into which they put them for the night.

[31] Arabic.

[32] Tabook (1997, 62).

(1.69) *b-īšírek ġódɛˀ ṭa^{h}n her*
And they will make a depression like that for,

(1.70) *b-eġódɛˀ hóhum kal her éstrít bə-her eyɔ̃ bə-her edáḳəf*
they have a depressed area for all of them, for the *strit* building and for the byre.

(1.71) *b-īźd^{h}n sɛn istɔ̃rta ź īxódəm yixódəmsən ʿayún źók bū^{h}(n)*
And that is about the *strit* buildings that people used to build here.

(1.72) *bə-ḥayyākum allāh*[33]
May God keep you well.

3.2. Text 2

20131027_ShehretEJ_J019_buildingshelters

(2.1) *edíʃ̃éf / b-estɔ̃rta*
Livestock byres and *strit* buildings

(2.2) *tkinən bə-śḥér*[34] *o ykin śe bə-ṣolót lo*
are in the mountains. They are not found in the eastern area [east from Mirbat to Hadbin].

(2.3) *edíʃ̃éf yilɔ̃d hóhəm ġɛ̄j ʿɑ̃dɔ̃t mən ɔ̃ṭtˀ(n) / bə-sġót / bə-xt̃ˀ(r)*
For byres, men cut suitable timber from *Olea europaea* (wild olive) and *Anogeissus dhofarica* and *Ormocarpum dhofarense.*

(2.4) *bə-her ber šóhum ʿɑ̃dɔ̃t bə-nṣɛ́ˀb / yiš̃érek ɛnfɛ́t nṣɛˀb*
And when they have timber and pillars. First, they make the supporting pillars,

(2.5) *u-mġórɛ ɛ̃šábḳəf*
and then they do the roof beams,

[33] Arabic.

[34] Pre-aspirated sonorant loses breathiness utterance-medially.

(2.6) *u-mġórɛ juśĺ*

and then they collect whippy, green branches to interleave between the larger ones to make roofing.

(2.7) *jóśɛ jóśɛ jóśó / ṭórób ḳíṭinúˀ(n)*

They collect whippy, green branches, slender pieces of timber.

(2.8) *u-mġor íné(ṭ)*[35] *śśəʿóroˀ(n)*

Then the women collect dried grass.

(2.9) *b-efoḳɛ̃́n bə-śaʿr manṭíh / ṭer éstrít*

They cover it [the roof] with dried grass from above on the *strit* building

(2.10) *bə-ṭer edáḳəf / b-ikín dáḳəf b-ikín strít / bə-xaṭɛ̃́rəḳ*

and on the byre. It could either be a byre or a *strit* building. And… and (as for) herding staffs.

(2.11) *yɔ̄ yilɔ̃́d xaṭɛ̃́rḳ / šímti ź-hérmít*

People cut herding staffs. The names of the trees?

(2.12) *ɔ̃́ṭˀ(n) / yilɔ̃́d mɛ̃s yɔ̄ xóṭróḳ*

[are] *Olea europaea*. People cut from them to make a herding staff,

(2.13) *b-her ber lɔ̃́dəš yiḳbíš ʿaḳ śɔ̄ˀṭ*

and when they have cut it, they fire-harden it in the embers of a fire,

(2.14) *bə-her ber kēš yiḳóśər ʿɑ̃š eḳéśrót bə-ykin xóṭróḳ*

and when they have fire-hardened it in the embers, they remove the bark, and it becomes a herding staff.

(2.15) *ɔ̃́ṭˀ(n) / bə-ġárˀd / bə-ʿɪ̃́ṭét / bə-śábxˀḏ / bə-ʿɪ̃́šót / bə-šoˀ*

The wild olive, *Olea europaea* and *Grewia bicolor* and *Cordia perrottettii* and *Cordia ovalis* and *Blepharis dhofarensis* and *šoˀ*

[35] Partial assimilation to /ś/.

(2.16) *bə-ḥárśə̃̄t*
and *Grewia tenax*.

(2.17) *ḏanúh ykin mɛnhúm xaṭɛ́rəḳ lɛ́kən o lɛ́br īźók rḥã̄t lo / rḥã̄t bass ɔ̃ṭíˀ(n)*
Those are the ones they make herding staffs from but those aren't as good as those other ones. The best is the wild olive,

(2.18) *b-eġárád b-eʿĩ̃ṭét / źan*[36] *rḥã̄t*
then *Grewia bicolor* and *Cordia perrottettii*. Those are good,

(2.19) *bə-sérohəm ḥárśə̃̄t*
followed by *Grewia tenax*.

3.3. Text 3

20131008_ShehretCJ_J004_makingcowshelters

(3.1) *mḥə̃̄d ber ʿáyrún / ʿáyun źok / ʿáyun źok yɔ̄ o šóhum o śe ḥanít tɛ́búḳ b-o śe smĩ̃t*[37] *b-o śe smĩ̃t məndún ašjār*[38]
Muhammad ber Ayrun. In the past, in the past, people didn't have-whatsit-breeze blocks. They had no cement, only trees

(3.2) *b-ašjār iźohún yilɔ́d ašjār iźokún b-īsírek edíṣáf*
and those trees, they cut down trees and made the byres.

(3.3) *b-īsírek diṣáf b-īsírek stɔ́rta*
They made byres and *strit* buildings for people.

(3.4) *estɔ́rta her yɔ̄ / yɔ́jaḥ ʿámḳísən yɔ̄*
The *strit* buildings for people, people went into them

(3.5) *b-īsíf ʿámḳísən / b-ediṣáf her ə̃̄śɛ́t her élhótī*
and slept in them and the byres were for livestock, for cows.

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[36] /n/ assimilates to /r/.

[37] English 'cement'. Repeated below.

[38] Arabic. Repeated several times below.

(3.6) *b-ediʂáf ykin beš ɛd kun dáḳəf eb ykin beš nṣɛb mɛ́kən*
And the byres, if it was a big byre—it would have lots of pillars.

(3.7) *b-ɛd kun dáḳəf nɪ́ʂán ykin beš nṣɛb mɛ́kən lo*
And if it was a small byre there wouldn't be many pillars

(3.8) *bə-her ḥa-yxódum yɔ̄ dáḳəf yibġíd yɔ̄ her ʿaśīrét ġɛ̄j bə-flo ʿɑ́śəri ġɛ̄j b-īlɔ́̄d ʿɑ́dɔ́̄t*
and when people were going to build a shelter, ten or twenty men would go and chop suitable timber

(3.9) *ʿɑ́dɔ́̄t yilɔ́̄d enṣɛ́b*
suitable timber, they would chop for pillars

(3.10) *ʿɑ́dɔ́̄t yilɔ́̄d enṣɛ́b / b-īlɔ́̄d ɛ̃́šábḳəf b-īlɔ́̄d sɪ́rín*
suitable timber, they would chop down timber and roof beams and whippy, green branches for thatching

(3.11) *b-īḏɔ́̄lhəm bə-her ber ʿaḳ ɛ̃́nzíl yiḥófər her enṣɛ́b*
and they would carry them and when they were back home, they would dig holes for the posts.

(3.12) *yiḥófər her enṣɛ́b ʿaḳ ʿamḳ ɛ-dáḳəf*
They would dig holes for the pillars in the middle of the byre.

(3.13) *ykin ber jódór edáḳəf ber jódórš múfri*
They would have built the walls of the byre; they would have built double walling.

(3.14) *ber jódór dáḳəf də-kun eb b-ɛd-kun nɪ́ʂán b-ɛd kun dáḳəf eb / yḥófər her enṣɛ́b mɛ́kən ʿaḳ ʿamḳ ɛ-dáḳəf*
And the walls of the byre would be big or small. If the byre was big, they would dig holes for lots of pillars in the middle of the byre,

(3.15) *b-īśólɑ́ʿ ṭ́ríš b-ɛ̃́šábḳəf*
and they would place the beams on top.

(3.16) *bə-min ṭɛr ɛ̃̃šábkəf yišórək eríḱrékɛ*[39]
On top of the beams, they would put soft soil.

(3.17) *u-mġor yšérek síŕín*
And then they would put small, whippy, green branches [on top].

(3.18) *bə-her ber šérek síŕín ber šérek erkərék*
After they had put the whippy, green branches on top and placed soft soil,

(3.19) *yifíḳe liš bə-śaʿr ʿayún źok / nə́ṣa ol-ʿad śe śaʿr lo yifíḳe liš bə-ṭorú́ʾ(l)*[40]
they would cover it with dried grass. That was in the past. Now people don't have dried grass, so they roof it with tarpaulin.

(3.20) *bə-nə́ṣənu ol ʿad de d-īšérok de dišáf iź ʿayún źok lo məndún ṭad ṭaʾd / ṭad ṭaʾ(d)*
Now no one makes byres like in the past, apart from the odd one.

(3.21) *nə́ṣan yišírek ṭɛ́búḳ*
Now they use breeze blocks.

(3.22) *b-īšírek smɛ̃̄t / b-īšírek albóḥ bə-šíńkó / bə-blɛ́wət*[41]
They use cement and [commercial] planking and corrugated iron and plywood.

(3.23) *lɛ́kən ʿayún źok yšérek edáḳəf ār ašjār*
But in the past, they made byres just from trees.

(3.24) *b-edáḳəf ɛšjār tkoss ṣ́ɛ̄ʾ(l)*
A byre made from wood you would find cool.

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[39] Non-phonemic, utterance-final, post-consonantal vowel.

[40] From English 'tarpaulin'.

[41] From English 'plywood'.

(3.25) *tkosš ɛ̃ḳət ɛ-ḥarr*[42] *ṣ̌ɛ̄ʾ(l)*
In the hot period, you would find it cool.

(3.26) *b-ɛ̃ḳət ɛ-ḥɔ̄r júnú*
and in the cold period you would find it to be shelter.

(3.27) *līnáh ykin*
because it would be

(3.28) *l-iṭabīʿah*[43] *l-iṭabīʿah / ɛd kun ṣ̌ɛ̄l [sic] ɛd kun ḥɔ̄r*
adapted to the environment, the environment. If it was cold, if it was cold weather,

(3.29) *ykin júnɛ́ b-ɛd kun ɛdək*[44] *ykin ḥánít*
it would be sheltered and if it was stifling and close, it would be such-and-such.

(3.30) *ykin ṣ̌ɛ̄ʾ(l) / bə-līnah ḥanít iź ašjār*
It would be cool because of that whatsit—natural wood.

(3.31) *bə-ḏin eṭabīʿat*[45] *ɛ-yɔ̄ ɛ-sɛh bə-ṣ̌ḥɛʰr*
And that was the way people lived in the mountains.

(3.32) *ɛ-sɛh bə-ṣ̌ḥɛr ʿayún źok / éstrít*
That was the way in the mountains at that time, making a building for people

(3.33) *éstrít tkin mən stɔ̃́rta yiš̃́f ʿámḳísən yɔ̄*
A *strit* was of…. Buildings people would sleep in,

(3.34) *b-īṣúnf bísən bə-śaʿr*
and they would cover them with thatch

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[42] Arabic.

[43] Arabic. Repeated twice below.

[44] Good example of lenited /k/, realised as velar fricative.

[45] Arabic.

(3.35) *b-īkin ʿámḳísən ʿɔ̄rś b-īs̃íf ʿámḳísən yɔ̄*

they would have a raised area in them, and people would sleep in them.

(3.36) *b-edáḳəf her ṻśɛ̃́t*

And the byre was for livestock.

(3.37) *bə-ḏan ɛ-šɛh ḥal / nā̃́ṣan ol ʿod īs̃éreksən yɔ̄ lo / edíṣ̃áf ī́źanúh ʿad īs̃érekhəm yɔ̄ lo / nā̃́ṣan ṭad ṭaʾ(d)*

And that was how it was. But now, no one makes them anymore. Those byres aren't built anymore, just the odd one,

(3.38) *ġeyj ġeyʾj / ġeyj ġeyj bə-śḥɛ́ʰr*

the odd man, the odd man in the mountains

(3.39) *tkosš ed-īs̃érek dáḳəf ɛ-ʿā̃́dɔ̄̃́t*

you would find making byres from timber.

(3.40) *ʿā̃́dɔ̄̃́t yiśtūm yiśtūm ʿā̃́dɔ̄̃́t ṻṭíʾ(n)*

They would buy suitable timber of olive wood

(3.41) *her kúnút ʿā̃́dɔ̄̃́t muṭín hā̃́rdét ṻṭín hā̃́rdét*

and if the timber were of olivewood, they would be strong. Olivewood is hard wood.

(3.42) *yíśtūm ʿā̃́dɔ̄̃́t d-ī́rót mən zəbɛ̄n*

They would buy well-seasoned wood,

(3.43) *b-īxédəm beš dáḳəf / b-īkín ḏahún dáḳəf ṣ̃ɛ̄l bə-tərtāḥ*[46] *beš ṻśɛ̃́t*

and build a byre from it. The byre would be cool and the livestock would feel happy in it.

(3.44) *nā̃́ṣan edíṣ̃áf iź-səmī̃t / muśɛ̃́t ol ərtɔ̄̃́ḥót bóhum lo*

Now byres are made from cement and animals don't like them.

(3.45) *tkin smī̃t jíśfśíf*

The cement would be rough,

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[46] Arabic.

(3.46) *b-ol ərtʃ̊ḥót bóhum lo b-īkín ɛdək*[47]
and they wouldn't be happy. It is stifling.

(3.47) *šĭ́nkó / bə-blɛ́́wət / yikín ɛdk*
Corrugated iron and plywood are stifling.

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[47] Lenited /k/, realised as velar fricative.

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