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Preface

The Arabic language has been a source of interest for myself ever since I strove to learn more about the history and linguistic development of my own mother tongue, Maltese. As I concluded the Bachelor studies at the University of Malta and commenced the Master studies at the University of Vienna, I was introduced to the wonderful world of dialectology, thanks to Assoc.-Prof.Dr. Veronika Ritt-Benmimoun and Prof.Dr. Stephan Procházka. Halfway throughout my studies I joined the ERC funded project WIBARAB (What is Bedouin-type Arabic), in which I was in charge of collecting linguistic information on the Maghrebi dialects from already published sources, and it was clear from the very beginning that I had a certain affinity towards the Tunisian dialects, perhaps stemming from a sense of familiarity and neighbourly sympathy. As the Covid pandemic made it hard to pursue studies, and impossible to carry out fieldwork especially outside of Europe, I was overjoyed when Assoc.-Prof.Dr. Ritt-Benmimoun offered to share the data that her team has collected for her ongoing TUNOCENT project, which aims at documenting the dialects in the northwestern and central parts of Tunisia.

From all the dialects within the TUNOCENT project, Testour's dialect seemed like the natural choice for my thesis. In reading about its history, I realized that this town and my own nation share a lot in common. As Malta lies on a linguistic border which divides the Arab tongue from the European ones, so does Testour lie on the border which traditionally is thought to divide between the Sulaymī and Hilālī dialects within Tunisia. Perhaps the one factor that most inclined me to familiarize myself with this dialect is the identity of its inhabitants, the descendants of people who were forcibly removed from their motherland, Spain, due to their ethnicity, and who relocated to North Africa to start life anew. What does not cease to amaze me with regards to the people of Testour, is that after all the hardship which they encountered, they still look back to that part of their heritage with great pride and fondness. In the analysis of their dialect, I hope to not only contribute more data for the linguistic mapping of Tunisian Arabic, but to also capture the history and identity of the community, as expressed through the language. If I am able to preserve and expose a minuscule fraction of the character of this marvellous town, I am thankful.

I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to my advisor Assoc.-Prof.Dr. Ritt-Benmimoun, who has not only aided me by allowing me access to the data, but also by providing any additional information and guiding me every step of the way, all whilst being empathetic and

understanding of the extraordinary situation in which this thesis has been written. I was introduced to Maghrebi dialectology through Assoc.-Prof.Dr. Ritt-Benmimoun's classes, and I shall always be indebted to her for sparking this interest in me.

In addition to this, I would also like to thank Prof.Dr. Procházka for his support throughout the Master course, and for providing me with opportunities to extend my knowledge on Arabic dialectology in general, my colleagues in the WIBARAB project for patiently listening to and commenting on any presentations which I had to give in the course of the thesis preparation, as well as Aleksandra Naddari for collecting the data in Testour. Another heartfelt thanks is extended to Bayrem Salhi for patiently spending hours helping me with the transcriptions and translations in Malta. Last but not least, I would like to thank my family for encouraging me to pursue a degree abroad, and for giving me all the support that I needed and more. This thesis is dedicated to them.

List of Abbreviations

dim.	diminutive
fem.	feminine
masc.	masculine
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
p.	person
pl.	plural
sg.	singular

1. Introduction

The town of Testour (Tastūr) lies about 80km southwest of Tunis, it currently has around 14,000 inhabitants and falls under the Béja governorate. It is situated on the hilltops of the Medjerda Valley, and acts a geographic partition for the Medjerda river's lower end. Testour is to a degree a new town, as it was built or mass populated to the point of achieving the status of a town in the beginning of the 17th century C.E., after the expulsion of the Moriscan community in Spain by the Catholic monarchy, who in turn settled in Tunisia. Nevertheless, the deserted or sparsely populated land that the Moriscos encountered¹ was once the Roman town of Tichilla, meaning "green grass" and was inhabited by Berbers. Its position on the road which connected Carthage, then the third largest city in the Mediterranean following Rome and Alexandria, with Tebessa, a region in the northeastern part of Algeria, was of such a strategic importance for the economy of Tunisia and its mercantile connection to Algeria, that its affluence in the time of Emperor Probus granted the town the title of a municipality in its own right.² Tichilla was brought to its demise with the invasion of the Vandals, who migrated south from Spain in the first half of the 5th century C.E. guided by Geiseric, their king, who seized and destroyed Carthage in the year 439 C.E., and presumably the neighbouring regions shortly before and/or after. The subsequent wars between the Berbers and the Byzantine armies, the latter of which ceased to exist in Tunisia with the arrival of the first Muslim tribes that penetrated into North Africa in the 7th century C.E., continued to disintegrate the urban regions of Tunisia. Later on, the Muslim dynasty of the Aghlabids, followed by that of the Zirids, tried to restore the once prosperous town, but their efforts proved to be unsuccessful due to the ceaseless warfare between pre-Hilālī Muslim armies, known as *ḡund*, and the Berbers³, who were perceived as their principal enemy in Ifrīqiya⁴, and whose antagonism towards the Muslim rule in North Africa extended beyond the arrival of Hilālī tribes.⁵

¹ There is no information on the population of the area at the time of the Moriscans' arrival, or if there was any inhabitants at all.

² Sayari & Rejeb, "Origine du paysage andalou dans le nord-ouest tunisien."

³ Anderson, Fenwick, & Rosser-Owen, "The Aghlabids and Their Neighbors: An Introduction," 2.

⁴ Whilst there are various ways to transcribe Ifrīqiya. I have chosen to make use of this version as I believe it is the most loyal to the Arabic variant, as well as being the chosen variant in the above cited chapter. Cilliers, *Roman North Africa: Environment, Society and Medical Contribution*, 23.

⁵ Sayari & Rejeb, "Origine du paysage andalou dans le nord-ouest tunisien."

As far as current sources can tell, it was the Moriscos who revived this once great town, who prior to their expulsion were still residing in what was formerly known as al-Andalus before the end of the Reconquista in 1492, when the last Spanish Muslim kingdom of Naṣrid fell under the rule of Isabel of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon, whose kingdoms were united through their marriage. The Moriscos, their journey to North Africa and their subsequent influence on Tunisia upon their arrival will be discussed in further detail. The importation of the Moriscan culture to Tunisia, especially to towns which were built by Moriscan communities, which besides Testour one finds the towns of Tebourba (Ṭbūrba), Ras Jebel/Ras al-Jebel (Raʿs al-Ġabal) and Kalaat al-Andalus (Qalʿat al-ʿAndalus) amongst many others, seemed to have been of great success, as it is not only reflected in the architecture of the towns, but also the identity of the locals, and up to 2 centuries ago, in the language used.

2. History of the Moriscos: From Spain to Tunisia

2.1. The Formation of al-Andalus and the Reconquista

The geographical area of al-Andalus was spread over most of the Iberian peninsula, save for a thin strip extending along the coast in the north. The Islamic conquest of Iberia started with the arrival of the Umayyad military leader Ṭāriq Bin Ziyād in 711 C.E., who was of Berber descent, and his *ġund* who were acting on behalf of the Umayyad caliph of Ifrīqiya, Mūsa bin Nuṣayr. The weakened state of the Visigoth kingdom that ruled Spain at the time meant that the victory for the Umayyad *ġund* was achieved efficiently and rapidly, especially after additional aid was sent by the Caliph himself. The newly established state of al-Andalus was considered to be under Umayyad rule, despite the Abbasid's triumph in overthrowing and assassinating most of the Umayyad leaders in the east. This conservation of the former eastern dynasty in the western Mediterranean transpired owing to the rulership of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān I, a member of the Umayyad caliphate who escaped the Abbasid persecution of his bloodline and took over the rulership of Iberia in 756 C.E.

Despite the fact that Islamic rulers managed to rule al-Andalus for over 700 years, their administration and power were constantly challenged, either by the northern regions which they did not manage to consolidate with the Islamic area, revolts by minorities, such as the Christians of Cordova, Norman presence on the Iberian waters and squabbles between Muslims lords which would escalate into civil wars. Later on, threats would come from the Fatimid dynasties in North

Africa in the 10th century C.E. Nevertheless, such tumultuous occurrences did not dissuade the Muslim leaders from adorning the Iberian peninsula with an artistic culture through the development of architecture, some of which was inspired by the Byzantines. The Umayyad reign of al-Andalus was shattered after a civil war in the early 11th century, after which independent Muslim kingdoms arose, which are known as the Taifa (ṭāʾifa) kingdoms. Their sovereignty was preyed upon by Christian kingdoms, who exploited the new Muslim division in order to recover some of the land. One such successful venture was that of Toledo by King Alfonso VI, aptly nicknamed ‘the Valiant’, who was already king of Leon and Castile. This incident is regarded to be the chief initiation of the Reconquista, although a reconquest movement began immediately in the 8th century with the resistance of the northern Christian kingdoms.⁶ Such Christian expansion was halted by the interference of the Moroccan Almoravids, who entered al-Andalus at the request of the Taifa kingdoms of Seville, Badajoz and Granada. The North African dynasty managed to invade the Iberian peninsula and claim it for their own in 1090 C.E., uniting most of al-Andalus once again. The Almoravid kingdom was soon replaced by the Almohads, also of North African origin, who made Seville their capital in 1147 C.E. The Almohads sought to restore piety and Islamic zeal in al-Andalus, which the Almoravids were accused of neglecting. Christian revolts and attacks from the new North African movement of the Marinids meant that the Almohad rule in Spain was short lived, just like that of its predecessor, as in the 13th century C.E. Christian kingdoms sprouted all over Iberia, such as that of Cordoba, which was a former seat of power for the Umayyads, Valencia and Seville.⁷

Eventually, only the Naṣrid kingdom of Granada remained under Islamic rule, named after the ruler Muḥammad b. Yusuf b. Naṣr, Muḥammad I, who not only managed to retain power through the establishment of a diplomatic relationship with the kings of Castile, but also to increase the size of his kingdom, albeit technically serving as a liege to Castile, thereby not having full sovereignty. The succeeding emirs seemed to follow suit, and by maintaining a politically tactful relationship with the Christian kingdoms and paying *parias*⁸, the Naṣrid kingdom managed to endure for 260 years. Notwithstanding this, diplomacy did not always guarantee the retention of power, as Christian

⁶ Verskin, *Islamic Law and the Crisis of the Reconquista*, 3.

⁷ Javier Albarrán, “Al-Andalus,” in *War In The Iberian Peninsula, 700-1600*, ed. Francisco García Fitz & João Gouveia Monteiro (London: Routledge, 2018), 1-6.

⁸ *Parias* were protection money, acting in a similar manner to the money that the *mawālī* would pay to larger tribes for protection, or in this case as taxes.

Iberians clashed with Muslim North African movements such as the Marinids, who were previously a threat to the Almohads. The Granadan rulers supported the Islamic cause, for which they had to pay heavily in monetary sums to Castile. The gradual decline of the Marinids' power between the 14th and 15th century C.E. meant that Granada was becoming increasingly segregated from its Muslim allies. The emir Muḥammad V managed to bring about a relatively long period of armistice between Granada and Christian Iberia, owing to his personal friendship with the King of Castile. He even managed to extend some of the emirate's former lands, as well as embellish it artistically, which can be attested by the remarkable progress carried under his rule on the Alhambra palace. Upon the death of Muḥammad V at the end of the 14th century, the Christian kingdoms were politically and militarily ready to annex Granada. Granada was also facing interior problems, such as a constant shuffle of leaders. It was only through certain limitations from the external kingdoms that the emirate managed to survive for almost another another 100 years.

With the marriage of Isabel I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon in 1479, both powers were consolidated into one. Assaults on the emirate's towns started successfully in 1482, and over a period of 10 years the monarchy managed to break off chunks of land from Granada and annex them with its own lands. Finally, King Boabdil of Granada (Muḥammad XII) agreed to surrender peacefully, against an agreement that would prohibit the monarchs from launching attacks against the Muslim faith once the region was consolidated with Christian districts, thereby bringing the end to the Islamic al-Andalus.⁹

2.2. The Mudéjars and the Moriscos in Spain

Upon the success of the Christian Reconquista of various kingdoms, Muslim inhabitants were initially faced with two options: flee the conquered land, or remain and live under the Christian rulers who imposed regulations and/or limitations especially targeted towards the Muslim communities, but being able to practise their religion freely (to an extent). Those who chose to remain were called the Mudéjars, the Arabic equivalent of which is *mudayyanūn* or *ahl al-dayn*¹⁰, and although their religion did not reflect that of their rulers, their community was not depreciated in the kingdoms, as their numbers were significantly large and the loss of a Mudéjar community

⁹ Albarrán, "Granada," 36-39.

¹⁰ Harvey, "The Mudejars," 178; Transcription has been slightly altered from *mudajjanūn* to *mudayyanūn* and from *dajn* to *dayn*.

would mean a serious depletion of population for a kingdom, thereby affecting the work force and subsequently the tax revenue.¹¹ The first instances of Mudéjarism was after the reconquering of the kingdom of Toledo by the Castilian king in the 11th century C.E., and the biggest community was that of Valencia, which was the only one that managed to keep on using the Arabic language until the abolishment of Mudéjarism, unlike the communities in other kingdoms whose tongues soon absorbed the Romance language of their Christian leaders. Naturally, their coexistence and collaboration with Christian rulers was deliberated by Muslim jurists both inside and outside of the peninsula, who were either sympathetic to their situation or rebuked them for their willing subordination¹², the latter of which includes Ibn Khaldūn, who pejoratively addresses this Spanish sort of Muslim he encountered in Seville.¹³ This is because of the Islamic concept of the *dār al-islām* vs the *dār al-ḥarb*; the terms under which the Mudéjars were living was treading the line between the two concepts, and this was a foreign and unorthodox idea to those who followed Quranic teachings fervently.¹⁴ Upon the complete fall of al-Andalus in 1492, a population deficit amongst the Christian communities was a problem of the past, and the Christian zeal inspired by the downfall of the last Islamic kingdom was a bad omen for the Mudéjars, who were now the target of political abuse and in 1498 C.E. forced to convert to Christianity. The sudden onslaught against the Mudéjar communities came about not because the Muslim subjects had done anything special to fall from the grace of the Christian population, but because most of the respect and protection that they were previously given was due to the fact that any attack on a Muslim community was interpreted as an insult or attack against the kingdom of Granada, which had Christian communities residing within it. Once all the Spanish land was annexed to Christian land, this no longer remained a problem for the Christian kings.¹⁵ Despite mass protests by Mudéjar communities all over Spain, they were overpowered by the now strengthened Christian armies and their cause was lost, as in the early 16th century the practice of Islam was legally outlawed, and such Mudéjars were forced to either convert or flee. It should also be mentioned that the Muslims were not alone in bearing the brunt of the Christian annexation; the Jewish community of Spain were more swiftly and brutally dealt with as they had to flee from Spain before the end of July 1492 C.E. or else be persecuted by

¹¹ Verskin, *Islamic Law and the Crisis of the Reconquista*, 5.

¹² Verskin, *Islamic Law and the Crisis of the Reconquista*, 6-8.

¹³ Harvey, "The Mudejars," 177.

¹⁴ Harvey, "The Mudejars," 179.

¹⁵ Harvey, "The Political, Social and Cultural History of the Moriscos," 203.

the state.¹⁶ The Muslims who stayed in Spain now came to be known as Moriscos, and were legally recognized as Christian, although many continued to practise Islam in secret.

Harvey quotes the words of an Inquisition indictment which describes the Moriscos as “*tan moros como los de Argel*”-“just as much Muslims as the people in Algiers” and refers to their relation with their religion as being that of Crypto-Islam¹⁷, by that meaning that any practice of the religion was now concealed. The term ‘Morisco’ was not fashioned to the new converts by chance; the refusal to use the already in-use word of ‘moors’, which referred to the Muslims, or to refer to them simply as Christians, which they legally were, means that their integration within the general Christian society was halted. Nevertheless, their new religious status meant that their activities would be liable to review from the Inquisition, which surely must have made the practice of Islam even harder to carry out.¹⁸ It is assumed that there were some who genuinely embraced Christianity, but for the majority, their conversion was coerced. For a limited time they were offered the option to go into exile in a Muslim country, but when the consequences of this option on the population were being felt, this opportunity was waived. Their new oppression, which now extended to limits beyond those of the Mudéjars, saw a new found sympathy from Islamic jurists, such as ʿUbaydallāh Aḥmad b. Bū Ğumʿa al-Maġrāwī, a *muftī* from Oran who issued a *fatwā* stating that despite the fact that a true Muslim should openly practice his religion, the life threatening situation in which the Moriscos were, which was a new concept for the Muslims who had never encountered such oppression against their religion yet, excused the Moriscos from living their religion publicly and ensured them that they were still true Muslims. This act of practicing religion secretly was called *taqiyya*. Needless to say, the Christian facade that the Morisco community was putting on daily, and the true Catholic religious community which they were encountering and mingling with, exerted its pressure on the Moriscos, who could only see the extent of its influence on their lives later on in their history, when the towns that they developed upon their arrival in Muslim regions were perceived to be foreign to Islam and positively European.¹⁹

On the other hand, their seemingly Christian piety did not appear to fool the rest of the Spaniards, as Christian writings against the Moriscan community and in favour of their expulsion did circulate by

¹⁶ Dominguez Diaz, “Once Upon a Time Our Home Was in Spain,” 206.

¹⁷ Harvey, “The Political, Social and Cultural History of the Moriscos,” 202.

¹⁸ Harvey, “The Political, Social and Cultural History of the Moriscos,” 203.

¹⁹ Harvey, “The Political, Social and Cultural History of the Moriscos,” 212.

those, especially scholarly men of the cloth, who could see through the Moriscos' charading behaviour. All the while, Moriscos were actually developing manners by which they could keep in contact with their faith without attracting the unwanted attention of the authorities, such as through the invention of the *literatura aljamiada*, also known as *aljamía*. This was Sunni literature written in an amalgamation of Spanish dialects and Arabic, but portrayed in Arabic characters, therefore if the Inquisition ever got a hold of such literature it could immediately be disposed of as a Quran without divulging the message therein. The ingenuity of this system came around the time when any usage of the Arabic language, whether in written or oral form, was officially banned (in 1567), thereby any Arabic literature was instantly considered as heresy.²⁰

2.3. The Expulsion of the Moriscos and their journey to Tunisia

The expulsion of the Moriscos essentially happened because of two main reasons which are amongst themselves connected: The Mediterranean sea was becoming a cesspool of corsair activity which was threatening Spanish imports and exports, and the Papacy was fervently advocating for the subduction of Islam in the same waters. How do the Moriscos figure in the first reason? Their inability to acclimatize within the Catholic Spanish majority and the fact that it was widely known that Moriscos were still practising Muslims cast a huge shadow of doubt over their loyalty to Spain and its economic wealth. As such, they were considered to be spies for the enemies of Spain, which at the time were plentiful, including not only the Ottomans who were considered to be bound with the Moriscos through their affiliation with Islam, but also other European powers such as the English, the Dutch and the French, whose squabble with the Spanish lied on the border of the Pyrenees, and the Florentine Medici family. The accuracy of their espionage involvements is in the modern period contested, as it seems intelligence sharing was a common trait of all sea farers, regardless of ethnicity or religion, and made use of by all superpowers who had stakes in the Mediterranean sea, including the Spanish king Philip III himself.

To a certain extent, Philip III's decree of Moriscan exile was a personal redemption of his reputation amongst the Spanish people, who might have perceived his peace treaties, such as that with the Netherlands which brought about the Twelve Year's Truce (but whose people were considered as

²⁰ García-Arenal, "Moriscos," 707-710.

“heretical insurgents”)²¹, as a loss of leadership competency. The assertion of Christian dominance managed to relieve doubts of Philip III’s reign, as the protector of Spain’s *limpieza de sangre* ‘cleanliness of blood’ philosophy, as well as put him in good favour with the Papacy.²² This was also complemented by his capture of the Moroccan garrisons of Larache in 1610 and La Mamora in 1614, which many interpreted as a sign of goodwill from God for the expulsion of the infidels.²³ Since the Moriscos were, for the sake of legality, recognized as Christians, and because the Vatican never issued a clear confirmation of its wish to have them expelled from Spain, their expulsion could not rest on the pretences that they were of a heretic nature and were acting against Christianity. The innovation of Philip III over this conundrum was to issue a mass accusation of treason against Spain, thereby keeping this issue localized and separate from the church, since he had no power to act on behalf of the church if no decree was issued from their end.²⁴

Thus, the expulsion of the Moriscos came to pass between 1609 and 1614, and the five year period was due to the amount of people totalling over 300,000, whose emigration was to be supervised by the authorities. The Valencian Moriscos were the first to leave, on the rationalization that they were geographically closest to the Barbary and thereby espionage activities were seething in that area. Next followed the south of Spain, who provided an advantage point of access to Moroccan Muslims, and the expulsion was officially declared as being over with the egress of those in Ricote Valley, Cartagena and the surrounding areas.

The North African countries which received the most Moriscan refugees were those which share proximity with Spain, namely Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, the latter of which hosted about 80,000. Moriscos who made their way to Tunisia were mostly of Aragonese, Castilian and Valencian origin, who were joined by a considerable number of Andalusians coming from Morocco, and although they arrived during a politically unstable time for Tunisia, they were most welcomed for two main reasons: Firstly, they were Muslims whose plight captured the empathy of fellow Muslims all over the world, and secondly the Moriscos had the support of the Turks, which in turn meant that the Beys of Tunisia who welcomed the Moriscos with open arms now had the support of

²¹ Wiegers, “Moriscos in North Africa after the Expulsion from Spain in 1609 and their Discourse about Exile and Diaspora,” 177.

²² Pastore, “Rome and the Expulsion,” 175-176.

²³ De Bunes Ibarra, “The Expulsion of the Moriscos in the Context of Philip III’s Mediterranean Policy,” 37-39, 43-48, 57-59.

²⁴ Pastore, “Rome and the Expulsion,” 153.

the Turks against insurgent tribes within the country and against the hostile Deys of Algiers. In addition to this, the Moriscos transported to Tunisia their trades and scholarship which they poured into the urbanization of small cities and the development of new villages and towns from the ground up. As mentioned before, their habitation was mostly limited to the north of the country, mainly in region of the Medjerda valley, the most famous Moriscan village of which is Testour, the Cap Bon peninsula and the Sahel region, as well as in and around the capital city. This is because of the soil's fertility in this region, by which the Moriscos continued to earn their living just as they had in Spain.²⁵

Initially, their perception of Tunisia was mixed, with some claiming it to be the most secure place for Moriscos, such as the famed writer Ahmed Bejarano, also known as Aḥmad al-Ḥaḡarī, whilst others claimed that the political unrest, such as the bedouin insurgencies, would exasperate the Moriscos. By time, it was unanimously decided that Tunisia was indeed the ideal place where the community in exile could prosper. Due to the large number of Andalusians within the community, they were all referred to by the locals as *Andaluces*, in which case we see the word becoming a hypernym for all the Moriscos. It is interesting to note that these Moriscos were not the first of their kind to set foot on Tunisia; indeed the respected men of their community who as it seems kept their ears to the ground and were aware of the expulsion prior to 1609 C.E., had already moved to Tunisia discreetly along with all their possessions. Villanueva Zubizarreta gives credit to these gentlemen and the wealth which they brought to Tunisia for the way the rest of the Moriscos were treated.²⁶ It should be noted that when the Reconquista was officially announced, the Moriscos were not allowed to take valuables with them, such as money and jewellery, on the pretence that these could serve as monetary aid to Spain's enemies, which technically included all the regions that were dominated by Islam.²⁷ A lot of the aid came personally from the Dey ṢUṭmān and Sīdī Abū l-Ġayt al-Qaššāš, who was considered to be a holy man, especially in the matter of housing. Nonetheless, the Moriscos made haste in restructuring their society on this new terrain, and their feats can be seen by how quickly they were able to appoint their own sheikh, Luis Zapata, who was one of those few that settled in Tunisia before the expulsion. In this period, we also see a re-embrace of Arabic

²⁵ Sayari & Rejeb, "Origine du paysage andalou dans le nord-ouest tunisien."

²⁶ Villanueva Zubizarreta, "The Moriscos in Tunisia," 365.

²⁷ Bernabé Pons, "Notes on the Cohesion of the Morisco Community Beyond the Expulsion from Spain," 311.

names against the Romance ones, such as the second sheikh Mustafa de Cardenas, who was soon referred to as Mostafa bin Abtolacic, meaning Muṣṭafā ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz.²⁸

However, their newly found adoption of Arabic names, usually being an arabized version of the Spanish original, which must have been not only an attempt to make themselves appear more familiar with the natives and try to adapt to their new location, but also an expression of their newly found freedom after a century of repressing their true identity, was not enough to assimilate them with the Tunisian people and their culture.²⁹ The Moriscan identity was betrayed by many aspects, including, but not limited to, the colour and shape of their bodies, the pompous clothing and accessories which were thought to have brought the elite known to the Tunisians to shame, their mannerisms and most of all, their Spanish mother tongue.³⁰

Try as they might to retain Arabic in the face of adversity during their time in Iberia, Spanish was indeed their native language, and its usage in Moriscan-built towns was reported even over a hundred years after their initial settlement in the new land, albeit mainly by the elder generation. Spanish also served as the vehicle to learning the Quran and practising Islam, with translations carried out by the minority who were versed in Arabic, although some felt that by doing so they were disrespecting the religion and its most exalted language, such as ʿAbd al-Karīm b. ʿAlī Pérez who issued an apology to Islam for this necessary act of blasphemy.³¹ Much of the literature produced in the early period of the Moriscos' settlement was both Arabic and Spanish in nature, instructing the community on how to embrace their new life without strictly eliminating all that they were familiar with. This owes to the idea that being Spanish or having the former motherland's qualities was not seen as sacrilegious, and there was no need to shame those who were not as familiar with Arabic and an Islamic lifestyle due to their Moriscan background, but efforts to introduce Arabic was made by the authorities who made the learning of the language compulsory. Spanish, in turn, infiltrated some aspects of the Tunisian language, especially in those places founded or populated by Moriscos.³²

²⁸ Villanueva Zubizarreta, "The Moriscos in Tunisia," 365-369.

²⁹ De Epalza, "Moriscos y Andalusíes En Túnez Durante El Siglo XVII," 249.

³⁰ Villanueva Zubizarreta, "The Moriscos in Tunisia," 369-372.

³¹ Villanueva Zubizarreta, "The Moriscos in Tunisia," 371-372.

³² Villanueva Zubizarreta, "The Moriscos in Tunisia," 371.

2.4. Moriscan Heritage in Tunisia

Besides agriculture, in the new land the Moriscos took up new trades, mostly related with that of textile, as can be seen by the chéchia industry and the leather-tanning, which were not only popular in Tunisia itself, but also a massive hit in the international market. With regards to the former, the Moriscos had the ultimate advantage on its production in the Maghreb, in that they had likely witnessed the production of the Spanish version of the chéchia, which in Iberia was called the *bonetes*, and thus were hasty in capitalizing on this new trend. This success was subsequently followed by the formation of guilds especially for chéchia tradesmen, and their dominating presence in a market exclusive for this cylindrical hat still exists to this day. The lexicon surrounding the production of the chéchia is almost exclusively Spanish, e.g. ‘*abarcar*’, ‘*afinar*’, ‘*banku*’, ‘*batitur*’, ‘*kabisa*’, ‘*kushnilla*’.³³ In Singer’s article “Das arabische und das romanische Element in der Fachsprache der tunesischen Fesmacher,” one can specifically see how Spanish loanwords dominate certain aspects of the chéchia-making process, such as in the pressing of the chéchia with words like *brinša* from *prensa* ‘the press’, whereas Arabic is more present in other sections (albeit the sections were defined by the author and so keywords in each section may overlap), e.g. in the handling of the dried chéchia with words like *xidmat l-abyaḍ* and *xidmat l-aḥmar*³⁴, to refer to the processing of the uncoloured and dyed chéchia, respectively.³⁵ Phonetically, most of the words acquired from Spanish underwent vowel changes, e.g. from /e/ to /ī/ like in *brīnša* and from /o/ to /u/ like in *kubbīta* from *copete* ‘tip of the hat’, as well as the consonantal change from /p/ to /b/ as exhibited in the same examples, besides other changes.³⁶ Through the monopoly of the chéchia business, Moriscan towns were kept connected and kept each other economically stable, as there was not one place where the chéchia making process began and ended, rather different towns were specializing in different parts of this clothing article, e.g. in Gabès the Moriscos would spin the wool that came from Spain, whereas the hats were felted in the Moriscan area of the Medjerda, possibly even including Testour.³⁷ The other craft that was imported from Spain and by which the Moriscos managed to economically excel is that of ceramic making, where an array of both tiles

³³ Bahri, “Aportes Culturales de Los Moriscos En Túnez,” 271.

³⁴ Transcription does not reflect that of Singer’s article.

³⁵ Singer, “Das arabische und das romanische Element in der Fachsprache der tunesischen Fesmacher,” 36-37, 40-41.

³⁶ Labidi, “L’artisanat traditionnel à Tunis: Sa terminologie et son lexique,” 152-153.

³⁷ Muchnik, “Judeoconversos and Moriscos in the Diaspora,” 417.

and crockery were displayed daily in the many markets that sprung up around the north of Tunisia, and the quality and uniqueness of which could easily rival that of the European tiles.

Moriscos in Tunisia founded or populated no less than 20 towns, and some like Bizerte (Binzart) and Ghar el-Melh (Ġār al-Milḥ) were attractive for their access to the sea and the careers that were created in such areas when the Ottomans sought to fortify them using the Moriscos' knowledge and talent in the industry. Others like Grombalia (Grumbālya), offered agricultural opportunities, which was the speciality of the Moriscos in Iberia as mentioned before, mainly due to the limitations in what kind of work they were allowed to do by the Crown. Architecturally, the Moriscos brought about a revolution, with bright colours adorning the rooftops of houses, an array of tiles and marbles, stuccos and inner courtyards as well as frescos embellishing the Tunisian neighbourhoods that are believed to have been rather washed-out and minimalistic in comparison. Examples of villages that are attributed the Moriscan identity today are Bizerte, Ariana (?Aryāna), El Alia (al-ʿĀlya), Sidi Bouzid (Sīdī Bū Zīd) and Soliman (Sulaymān), amongst others. With regards to the latter, we know that in the 18th century Moriscan families made up half of its population, with their own distinct food e.g. the Echbabek dessert³⁸, and the mosque in the centre of the town, the grandeur of which is second only to that of Testour.³⁹ Indeed, the centrality of the mosque with a plaza in front for the purpose of markets and entertainment in the urban areas was quite typical of Moriscan town planning, as this is also the way by which El Alia was constructed, and in this town the Moriscos specialized in the growing of thistle which was a key product in the chéchia making process.⁴⁰ According to descriptions of the Moriscos in the 18th century by Francisco Ximenez, there was not one town which hosted Moriscos who hailed from just one city in Spain (save for Grish el-Oued whose Moriscan population was solely from Cataluña), therefore it cannot presently be determined if the construction of a place was done in a such a way that it was a reproduction of one's native city in Spain.⁴¹

Agriculturally, the Moriscos exploited the bare land that they encountered, which would have been fruitful and high-yielding in the Roman times, but due to consistent warfare following this golden

³⁸ Online pictures of this dessert lead me to believe that it is closely related to the churro but with a much more playful design.

³⁹ Iran Spanish Radio, "Soliman a Moorish town in Tunisia."

⁴⁰ Villanueva Zubizarreta, "The Moriscos in Tunisia," 383.

⁴¹ Villanueva Zubizarreta, "The Moriscos in Tunisia," 385-387.

age for Tunisia, the land might as well have been barren. The Moriscos introduced the vegetation with which they were acquainted, and due to the amicable conditions of the lands in the Maghreb and Iberia, citrus and olive trees soon found their new home in Tunisia. Besides this, they established irrigation systems that could reach even the furthest plantations, thereby assuring sustainability and success in their harvests. The fruit of the Moriscos' horticulture that was prospering in Tunisia meant that they could now also introduce Spanish cuisine, such as empanadas, seasoning of exotic peppers and sweets, which have since been appropriated by the general Tunisian cuisine as its own. The base ingredients of Tunisia's national dish, the couscous, were introduced by Moriscos after Spain was in turn introduced to the potato and the tomato from the Indies, which the Crown had colonized just a few years before the expulsion.⁴² Effectively, the Moriscos developed in Tunisia what would now be referred to as a 'Little Spain', a home away from the homeland that rejected them. For the native Tunisians, in turn, it may be argued that the Moriscos created the act of sedentarism, with witty sustainability in the creation of food, water accessibility and a newly found appreciation for the arts.⁴³

2.4.1. Testour

This subsection of Moriscan imprint in Tunisia is dedicated to Testour, not only because its dialect is the main research question of this thesis, but also because Testour happens to be the town which managed to conserve its Andalusí heritage the best. The rectilinear design of the town, similar to the Renaissance planning, led to the development of three main districts, in which Moriscos and later on other ethnic groups could live within their communities; these were the Andalusí, the Tagarino (Moriscos from the area of Tarragona, a term also used to refer to Aragonese) and the Jewish quarters which were named the Ḥāra, to which the Jewish community came shortly after the town began to thrive from the Moriscan presence (around 1620).⁴⁴ Interestingly, the Jewish settlers were not immigrants, but were natives of Tunisia and their surnames allude to the possibility that they might have come from the rural regions or were of bedouin origin.⁴⁵ Due to the mass migration to Israel in 1960 there is no longer a Jewish community in Testour. The first mosque that was built upon their arrival around 1610, the name of which was al-Xuṭba and later on Raḥbat al-Andalus, is

⁴² Rivers, "Exiles from Andalusia."

⁴³ Sayari & Rejeb, "Origine du paysage andalou dans le nord-ouest tunisien."

⁴⁴ Villanueva Zubizarreta, "The Moriscos in Tunisia," 380, 386.

⁴⁵ Taïeb, "Testour".

no longer in existence. The mosque which was build by the Tagarino community shortly after the aforementioned one, referred to as the Grand Mosque, has served as the major physical marker of the Moriscos' Spanish past. Its minaret is fashioned on a classic manner, and is built on the pattern of horizontal and vertical bricks, and this Roman inspiration was also used on the *mihrāb* of the same mosque.⁴⁶ Colourful and patterned tiles adorn the facets of the minaret, which is 22.5m in height, a clear reproduction of Mudéjar art, and 'cone-crowned cylindrical lanterns' mimicking the belfries of Iberian churches.⁴⁷ The contribution of the Jewish community in the building of the town and their peaceful coexistence with the Moriscos is noted by the Star of David on two sides of the same minaret, and this is also why Testour is often considered to be a symbol of peace and tolerance.⁴⁸ The central focus of the Grand Mosque is indubitably a big clock that runs counterclockwise because its numbers are placed backwards. Three other clocks exist like it in the world, in Germany, Florence and Prague, but the one of Testour is the only one on a mosque, and it is believed that its unconventional form was deliberately done by the Moriscos as a symbolic way of wishing to turn back time and go back to their lives in Iberia, during the glory days of al-Andalus.⁴⁹ An additional curious aspect of the Moriscan houses is that their front doors usually featured a set of nails stuck in the shape of the cross.⁵⁰

As mentioned above, the Moriscos were soon joined by a Jewish (those of the Ḥāra) and a Turkish community, the former of which built its own synagogue and the latter another mosque, albeit not nearly as majestic as the Grand Mosque. The main square was soon complimented by the development of a bath house, schools and prayer rooms, a market as well as a bull fighting arena, surely a remnant of Toledan days, which has recently been restored but is no longer engaging in the sport. Several notable historians throughout the century have noted Testour's likeness to a Spanish city. Nonetheless, it should be taken into consideration that it was not only nostalgia that drove the Moriscos to reenact the Iberian homeland architecturally, for it must have also boiled down to the fact that this is what they were exposed to and what they knew, and it was not as much an innovation in their eyes as it was making use of the skills that they learned back home.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Villanueva Zubizarreta, "The Moriscos in Tunisia," 380-381, 385.

⁴⁷ Latham, "Towns and Cities of Barbary: The Andalusian Influence," 203.

⁴⁸ Ben Zineb, "Sur les traces des sites et monuments à Testour, Ain Tounga et Dougga..."

⁴⁹ Khlifi, "Testour, Tunisia's symbol of religious coexistence."

⁵⁰ Yassine Bahri, "Aportes Culturales de Los Moriscos En Túnez," 275.

⁵¹ Sayari & Rejeb, "Origine du paysage andalou dans le nord-ouest tunisien."

With regards to the agriculture in Testour, which is actually the reason why many settled along the Medjerda river in the first place⁵², the Moriscos managed to manipulate the uneven topography of the village and thus they could grow an array of plants, from cereals to fruit orchards and olives. As mentioned earlier, plants from the newly conquered South America were transported to Testour, including the prickly pear and the tobacco plant. Another industry, the creation of which is associated with Testour and which has served as a seasonal source of income for the locals, is the tailoring of the *qaššābīya*, a winter man's overcoat that is usually commissioned by wealthy men in Tunis or Testour itself, and the tailors of Testour are preferred for the production of this coat, despite its production in other villages, because it is believed that it was a Testouri who perfected the art of making a *qaššābīya* in Tunis and then shared his knowledge with all back in the village.⁵³

The people of Testour in the present are well aware and proud of their Andalusian heritage, and celebrate it accordingly around June and July with the festival of the Maʔlūf, a type of Spanish-brought music with fourteen modes.⁵⁴ Until 1956, before the Tunisian independence, its performance was split in two, one being confined to private events, and the other was publicly performed by Sufis and Jews, and originally it was restricted to the northern and coastal areas.⁵⁵ After the independence, Maʔlūf was embraced by the government as the music of all Tunisians, not just particular communities, and efforts were made to broaden its popularity⁵⁶, especially with the establishment of the Rašīdiyya institute in 1934 whose goal was the conservation of classical Tunisian music especially in the time when Egyptian music was dominating in the Arab world and was threatening the prosperity of local music. Since 1961, Maʔlūf has been considered the national music of Tunisia.⁵⁷

Similarly to the rest of North Africa, including Tunisia, the locals of Testour are very fond of the shrines of saints, and the sizeable amount of reliquaries dedicated to different saints has led some to believe that Testour has an aura of holiness. The veneration of a favourable saint is passed on from one generation to the next, especially if it can be proven that that particular saint has provided the

⁵² Yassine Bahri, "Aportes Culturales de Los Moriscos En Túnez," 272.

⁵³ Hopkins, "The Articulation of the Modes of Production: Tailoring in Tunisia," 472.

⁵⁴ Salloum, "Tunisia's Andalusian Heritage," 20-21.

⁵⁵ Stapley, "Linguistic Aspects of the Tunisian Mālūf," 86.

⁵⁶ Davis, "Arab-Andalusian Music in Tunisia," 3-7, 10-12.

⁵⁷ Stapley, "Linguistic Aspects of the Tunisian Mālūf," 87.

family with goodwill and fortune. Some of the more adored saints include Sīdī Nājī and Sīdī ʿAlī b. Sālim, the latter of which is thought to have accompanied the Prophet himself.⁵⁸ The visiting of a shrine often invites a feast over a couple of days and a sacrifice, and as such it is taken by the utmost seriousness with a specific code of conduct.

The air of superiority and identity pride passed down within the Moriscan community is still as alive in the present times as it was in the 17th century⁵⁹, as certain low-prestige positions of employment are associated with the bedouins who settled in Testour in the 20th century, who are not considered to be Testouris. This includes the role of the sharecropper in the fields, in which a man would work the lands for a Testouri owner in exchange for a percentage of his crop, whereas the sharecropper of the gardens would often be a local, as their job was considered to be more prestigious and their earnings higher, and these were known as *ḡannān*. Indeed, a Testouri man who had to resort to sharecropping would be ashamed.⁶⁰ In agriculture, until the 70s at least, Testouris also tended to have more skilled jobs with a higher chance of job security, e.g. doing pruning, unlike the ‘foreign’ unskilled workers who were usually employed on a day to day basis. In any industry, locals relied on the concept of *ṭiqa* meaning ‘trust’ with other locals, whereas external communities who also reside in Testour, such as the bedouin Berber Wseltia community whose population in Testour was as big as that of the locals (by locals meaning those who consider themselves to be descendants of the Moriscos, and not the later communities), were not treated with this *ṭiqa*, in fact they were often blamed for the level of insecurity and rivalry between businessmen that recently emerged in Testour, where according to the locals, farmers before used to collaborate like brothers.⁶¹

2.5. Moriscan Social Identity in Tunisia

Naturally, the Moriscos were aware of their precedence in the introduction of the modern world to the local Tunisians of that period, who as mentioned before were too occupied by tribal wars, and to whom sedentarism was not much of an issue as it was to the Moriscos who settled immediately. As

⁵⁸ Hopkins, “Family rites in Testour, Tunisia, in the 1970s,” 698-699, 703.

⁵⁹ This is based on a study that took place in the 1970s and as such I cannot account for the situation of class in the most recent Testouri society of the 2020s.

⁶⁰ Hopkins, “The Emergence of Class in a Tunisian Town,” 463.

⁶¹ Hopkins, “The Emergence of Class in a Tunisian Town,” 463-465.

such, the Moriscos were unwilling to marry anyone other their own. The intra-marriages within the community must have abetted in the preservation of the culture and the language, and definitely helped with the retention of Spanish surnames up to this day, such as Blanco and Pasquale.⁶² Clothing, jewellery and any other article like the Chnachen bracelet that set the Morisco community apart from the natives are still treasured and worn to this day by those, especially women, who can proudly claim that they are the descendants of this ingenious community that managed to elevate Tunisia's exposure to art, horticulture and architecture to a position that could easily rival that of the Europeans.⁶³

One would be inclined to ask about why the Moriscos were unreceptive to the host community, especially when its leaders were so forthcoming and willing to offer aid over a long period of time. There may be many answers to this question, by which I do not in any way imply that the Moriscos completely refused to mingle with the natives. One answer could be that the Moriscos never ceased to think of Spain as their homeland and the place where they really belong, thereby thinking of Tunisia as a fleeting period of exile before they are ultimately allowed to return. In fact, it is believed that many families kept the keys of the houses in Spain, passing them on from one generation to the next in the hopes that their bloodline would soon return to the homeland.⁶⁴ This idea is in stark contrast to some Muslim and even Moriscan writers of the time, who saw the expulsion as an act of liberation for the Moriscos, as now they can live in the *dār al-islām*. Indeed, some Moriscos were longing for Spain so much so that they managed to re-enter the country. On the other hand, it just might be that it was the locals who were not as keen to consider the Moriscos as part of them, because, whilst they admired their beauty and their way of dress, they saw them to be too lax in their Islamic zeal, and as such were not considered to be as good a Muslim as they were.⁶⁵ This was certainly the case for the community in Rabat in Morocco, and it is very plausible that the same scenario happened in Tunisia, and this was reflected in Moriscan literature.⁶⁶

⁶² Rivers, "Exiles from Andalusia."

⁶³ Yassine Bahri, "Aportes Culturales de Los Moriscos En Túnez," 271-272.

⁶⁴ Muchnik, "Judeoconvertos and Moriscos in the Diaspora," 432.

⁶⁵ Wieggers, "Moriscos in North Africa after the Expulsion from Spain in 1609 and their Discourse about Exile and Diaspora," 181-186.

⁶⁶ Figueroa, "Theatre Reminiscences: The Politics of Memory after the Expulsion of the Moriscos," 287.

As we have seen, the Testouris of the present have gone to great lengths to conserve their history not only through the restoration and conservation of Moriscan architecture, but also through the culinary arts, the dress and the retention of Spanish surnames. However, the affiliation with Morisco-ism or the identity-appropriation of being a Morisco does not only act as a means of connecting oneself with a communal history and providing oneself with sense of belonging; a substantial size of Moriscan communities all over North Africa, specifically in Tunisia and Morocco, and descendants of Sephardic Jews⁶⁷ all over the world have been putting pressure on the Spanish government to provide those who can trace their ancestry to Moriscos or Hispanic Jews with citizenships. Therefore, they are aiming to develop this symbolic connection into a concrete one that could provide them with a physical link to Spain. For successors of Sephardic Jews, whose community is not particularly micro-localized unlike that of the Moriscos, their right to apply for citizenship was granted in 2015, albeit with many hurdles until the citizenship was actually granted, such as a Spanish language test, and a four year deadline that the country imposed (which begs the question as to why there should be a deadline at all if the reason behind this offer was to atone for the country's mistake in its former treatment of the Jewish community).⁶⁸ For members of the Moriscan community however, a similar offer does not seem to be happening anything soon. Whether the reasons for the delay in addressing the Moriscan citizenship issue are fuelled by pressures from the European Union, or from the country itself as it might foresee its incapability in dealing with a predictively massive flow of Moriscan immigrants into the country (especially in the face of the great recession that Spain has just emerged from), or by other publicly unknown justifications or concerns, Morisco communities have seen the dismissal of their request and the favouritism of the Sephardic Jews as an act of Islamophobia. This was strongly communicated by the Moroccan Moriscan association L'Association pour la Mémoire des Andalous, who formally asked the king of Spain to provide an equal opportunity to their community, arguing that the current limitation was "racist".⁶⁹ In relation to this, Moriscos justify their right to accessibility to Spain not only through the Spanish influences in their lives, such as in cuisine, architecture and surnames, but also contrariwise through the heritage that the Muslim communities left in Spain, which are now

⁶⁷ The title given to the Jewish community residing in Spain before their expulsion in 1492. The word Sepharad translates to the 'Iberian Peninsula' in Hebrew.
Adatto, "Spain's Attempt to Atone for a 500-Year-Old Sin."

⁶⁸ Adatto, "Spain's Attempt to Atone for a 500-Year-Old Sin."

⁶⁹ Kassam, "If Spain welcomes back its Jews, will its Muslims be next?"

beloved by Spaniards and appropriated as their own. This includes the Alhambra, the Mezquita and the Alcazar, as well as the Arabic lexicon which infiltrated Spanish.⁷⁰

3. Languages of Tunisia

Generally in the Arab world, MSA has been given prominence as the language of the Quran and as a vehicle of Pan-Arabism among other factors, and as such it is recognized as the official language of all the Arab countries, albeit being no one's mother tongue.⁷¹ In Tunisia this linguistic phenomenon is no exception, and consequently we see that the rich volume of dialects found within the relatively small country are, at least on an official level, neglected. The mono-linguistic situation that is being communicated by the country's portrayal of MSA as being the only language in use, exists simultaneously with the reality that a multitude of languages and dialects have been serving as the native tongues to over 12 million people. These include French, Berber and the Arabic dialects, many of which are undocumented to this day.

Depreciation towards the Tunisian Arabic varieties is also exhibited from their own native speakers, who refer to the Tunisian dialect⁷² as being inferior to MSA in a study conducted by Sayahi (2016), and that Tunisian students should focus more on learning the standard rather than integrating the dialect in their linguistic repertoire.⁷³ Interestingly, such a hierarchy is not based on the diglossic situation of MSA vs dialects only, as within the dialects such a superiority-inferiority complex also exists, with some dialects, specifically that of Tunis, being seen as more respectable, and rural varieties bearing the brunt of dialectal inferiority. As such, people whose mother tongue is not Tunis Arabic have become conversant in it for the sake of prestige, and Tunis Arabic is thus considered to be the standard dialect for Tunisia. Nevertheless, the fast urbanization that Tunisia experienced following its independence in 1956 meant that the clearcut difference between urban and rural dialects is not as evident as before, as dialect contact has led to levelling and the infiltration of sedentary features into bedouin dialects and vice versa. Tunis, however, proved to be an exception

⁷⁰ Rabinder James, "Spanish citizenship and responsibility for the past," 4.

⁷¹ Sayahi, "Language and identity in post-Revolution Tunisia," 111-112.

⁷² The dialects are accumulated and treated as one in the face of MSA in the cited study.

⁷³ Sayahi, "A Moving Target: Literacy Development in Situations of Diglossia and Bilingualism," 10-12.

as the immigrants who brought with them their bedouin tongue seemed to drop the rural features in the following generations.⁷⁴

Linguistic prestige is also marked by one's fluency in French, the language which dominated in Tunisia between the later part of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, when Tunisia was colonized by France from 1881 to 1956, although its presence in North Africa was recorded much before that.⁷⁵ Despite the independence, French retained its superior status as part of an agenda that was pushed by the colonizers, including the dialectologists of Arabic of the time⁷⁶, and as such mastering the language was associated with market opportunities and academic excellence, whereas the lack of knowledge of French was associated with lack of qualifications, leading to a higher level of scrutiny of one's capabilities, even if one's work was not linguistically dependant.⁷⁷ The issue of French also raises the idea of gendered language in Tunisia. In fact, the usage of French is very much associated with the female gender, and this has its roots in the historical fact that the first education available to Tunisian women was only through the schools created by colonizing academic centres. Furthermore, the benefits that were offered to a woman who knew French far outweighed the opportunities of a Tunisian woman who knew only Arabic, as the former would be considered a marker of status for her family which would in turn allow her to marry someone whose social class was higher than hers. The hegemony of the French language was aptly repudiated by the colonized who were against the French rule, who saw the Arabic language as a means of combating foreign power (as was noted by Bourgiba in one of his speeches)⁷⁸, as well as an identifier of their culture and religion. Despite losing its official status, the influence of French in Tunisia has persisted and its knowledge as a second language is necessary for those looking for academic and social success, beside the fact that it has also infiltrated everyday life and public communication such as road signs and street names. Nevertheless, some Tunisians still feel that by allowing French to dominate and flourish next to MSA, they are adhering to the inferiority that Tunisia had as a colonized country even after its independence, and are therefore relishing in the subordinate position that the West had imbedded North Africa in.⁷⁹ On the other hand, the

⁷⁴ Sayahi, *Diglossia and Language Contact*, 31-32.

⁷⁵ Walters, "Gendering French in Tunisia," 87.

⁷⁶ Benkato, "From Medieval Tribes to Modern Dialects," 8.

⁷⁷ Daoud, "The sociolinguistic situation in Tunisia: language rivalry or accommodation?," 18.

⁷⁸ Jerad, "La politique linguistique dans la Tunisie postcoloniale."

⁷⁹ Jerad, "La politique linguistique dans la Tunisie postcoloniale."

Francophone elite in Tunisia expressed opposite views via public media such as newspapers, in which they shared their beliefs that the rising popularity of Arabic since the Jasmine Revolution is linked with radical ideologies and terrorism, thereby giving Tunisia a bad image, besides the fact that since MSA has no real native speakers, it cannot be considered a prestigious language, and it is also deficit from new terminology such as those related to science and technology, and as such it cannot be considered to be an intellectual language.⁸⁰ French loanwords have infiltrated many lexical fields, not only modern ones such as those related to automobiles, in which one would hear *mécanique* ‘mechanic’, *carburateur* ‘carburetor’, and *embrayage* ‘clutch’, but also in other fields where the Arabic equivalent is considered to be existent and therefore the Arabic and the loanword variant exist side by side, such as in the colour field, e.g. *beige* and *aṣfir fātiḥ*, *kaki* and *xarrūbi*.⁸¹

Despite French’s obvious significance in Tunisia, in recent years the learning of English has been on the rise especially after the independence, when American and British organizations sought to establish English language schools in Tunisia as a way to strengthen relations with the newly independent North African country. The newfound interest in science and technology and the centres and programmes which were opening up in Tunisia for the local students, such as the Tunisian Sixth Development Plan which connected developing countries to industrialized ones, meant that English was soon recognized to be the bridge that would connect Tunisia to the rest of the modern world.⁸² English loanwords, like the French ones, dominated and will continue to do so in fields where Arabic has not come up with the necessary innovatory terms, which are mainly the technology and sciences fields.

In addition to this, Tunisia was famed for hosting southern Italian immigrants in the 19th century prior to becoming a French colony, and well into the mid 20th century. This period is accredited as being the reason for the hundreds of Italian loanwords in Tunisian Arabic, such as *bagno* - *bānu* ‘bath’, *buono* - *būnu* ‘good’, *cambiale* - *kimbyāl* ‘bill of exchange’, *cantina* - *kantīna* ‘basement, cellar’, *cucina* - *kuḡīna* ‘kitchen’, *dozzina* - *tuzzīna* ‘dozen’, although not to the extent of French.⁸³ An even minor influence is that of Turkish, which was the language of administration for the

⁸⁰ Helal, “The case of the Francophiles,” 186-189.

⁸¹ Sayahi, *Diglossia and Language Contact*, 140-141.

⁸² Battenburg, “English versus French,” 282-284.

⁸³ Baccouche, “Tunisia.”

Ottoman empire which ruled Tunisia from the 16th to the 18th century, and such words are generally related to the military, with some exceptions such as *burgil* ‘burgol wheat’, *gumrig* ‘tobacco store’, and *tārzi* “tailor”.⁸⁴

Following the 2011 Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia which ignited the Arab Spring protests all over the Arab world, the linguistic situation has somewhat changed in this Maghrebi country, as Tunisia explores a more individualistic identity and shifts away from the staunch notion of Pan-Arabism that places MSA at the front. Sayahi (2014) notes for example the increased usage of /g/ as a reflex of /q/ in social media writings, on talk-show televisions and even by a particular minister who was using her regional non-prestigious vernacular publicly to advocate for governmental decentralization. Tunisian Arabic was also used in the creation of slogans against governmental corruption and scandals, and as such the dialectal variety was serving as the language of the people, just as it has always done, but this time on a national and publicized level. Tunisian Arabic slowly but steadily made its way also in the orthography of official papers, such as the translation of the constitution into the vernacular, as well as the national budget of 2018.⁸⁵

With regards to Berber, a minority language in Tunisia, the Amazigh community has advocated for the conservation and teaching of their language, as well as the promotion of their culture which had been suppressed under the Ben Ali regime.⁸⁶ However, their plight in the decade succeeding the revolution does not seem to have led to fruition, as the safeguarding of the Berber language has been ignored by the government and the Arab (Tunisians who do not have a Berber ethnicity) majority alike. The Berber language has been in decline in the whole of North Africa not only due to Arab dictatorships which outlawed the learning of the Amazigh language, restricting it only to oral transmission as had happened in Libya under the Qaddafi regime, but also because for the bilingual Amazigh community, the Berber language is seen as the least prestigious of the two languages, and as such parents are urging the younger generation to adopt Arabic as their mother tongue.⁸⁷ In Tunisia, knowledge of the Berber language, or Shilha for Tunisia, has decreased throughout the 20th century. Shilha can be divided in two within Tunisia: the southern Continental

⁸⁴ Sayahi, *Diglossia and Language Contact*, 137-138.

⁸⁵ Sayahi, “Diglossia and the normalization of the vernacular,” 227.

⁸⁶ Shanak, “An uphill struggle for Tunisia’s Amazigh.”

⁸⁷ Sayahi, *Diglossia and Language Contact*, 18.

branch heard in Chninni, Tamazret and Taoujout amongst other places, and the Insular branch with its home in Djerba and communities including the Ouirighen and the Guellala. Gabsi reports that there were less than 100,000 speakers of Shilha in Tunisia in the beginning of the 21st century.⁸⁸ Loanwords from Shilha generally refer to flora and fauna, such as *karmūs* ‘fig’, *fakrūn* ‘turtle’, and *ferzazzu* ‘wasp’, as well as cultural jargon such as *kusksi* ‘couscous’. Since the contact between Arabic and Berber goes back to the pre-Hilālī invasion of North Africa, and since Berber was restricted to the rural areas, Berber loanwords are generally more frequent in a rural setting, and not in the urban vernaculars in which Berber is considered to be antiquated and its usage shunned.⁸⁹

4. The Dialects of the Maghreb

The geographical position of Tunisia between Libya and Algeria means that its varieties are all of the Maghrebi classification, the hallmark of which is the /n-/ prefix for the imperfect of the 1. p.sg., and the /n-/ prefix coupled with the /-u/ suffix for the 1. p.pl. This is clearly exhibited in Singer’s comprehensive grammar of Tunis Arabic, 1. p.sg. *ni-ktib* ‘I write’, 1. p.pl. *ni-ktb-u* ‘we write’.⁹⁰ They are occasionally referred to as ‘colonial Arabic’, which means that they show less variation for one word or stem, e.g. Aguadé claims that for the 1. p.sg. stem of the verb ‘I wrote’ there is only one basic variant which is *ktabt/ktabt*⁹¹, whereas in the Mashriq one would find *katabt*, *ktabt*, *katabtu* and even *katabk* amongst many others.⁹² In relation to this, general features associated with the Maghreb (but which do not necessarily apply to every dialect within the region) include the elision of the short vowel in open syllables, e.g. *ḡbəl* for ‘mountain’ and *ḡḡam* for ‘he understood’ (one theory for this phenomenon is that it was inherited from Berber, although this was never concretely proven), and the *ḡimāla* of the first degree (from /a/ to /æ/ or /e/ in the middle or final position of a word). In addition to this, the definite article is reflected as /l-/ , /əl-/ and /lə-/ or /il-/ , and /li-/ specifically for the Tunisian dialects, e.g. *li-ktāb* ‘the book’. With regard to the numerals, the Maghreb has two interesting innovations, the first of which is *ḡūḡ* /*zūz* for ‘two’, which in Moroccan is the sole representative of the numeral ‘2’, with *tnayn* and its reflexes

⁸⁸ Gabsi, “An Outline of the Shilha (Berber) Vernacular of Douiret (Southern Tunisia),” 21.

⁸⁹ Sayahi, *Diglossia and Language Contact*, 135-136

⁹⁰ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 325.

⁹¹ /ə/ is used here to represent all possible short vowels.

⁹² Aguadé, “The Maghrebi dialects of Arabic,” 33.

appearing only in compound numbers, whereas in other dialects like Maltese and the dialect of Tunis, *zūz/zūz* and their reflexes are generally used as ‘adjectival numbers’, e.g. *zūz sāqīn* for ‘two legs’, whereas *tnīn* is more reserved for the numeral ‘2’. Nevertheless, *zūz* and its reflexes can also be employed for the numeral. The second numeral phenomenon attributed to the western Maghreb, specifically Morocco and Algeria is the reflex of *tasfūd/tasfud* for ‘nine’. This is due to the fact that *tasfa*, which is the reflex that appears in compound numerals in both dialects, also happens to be the reflex of the 2. p.sg. masc. of the verb *sfa*, meaning ‘to beg’. To avoid the inappropriateness that arises with *tasfa* outside of the compound numerals, *tasfūd/tasfud* have replaced the former.⁹³

The most common genitive exponent in the Maghreb is *ntāf* or *mtāf*.⁹⁴ Additionally, most Maghrebi dialects, with the exception of some bedouin dialects, have lost the plural distinction in both the verb forms and the pronouns. Regarding the tense markers, there are some of the durative and of the future-tense kinds that are frequently employed in the Maghreb. Amongst the former, we find *ka/ku-*, derived from *kān*, especially concentrated in Morocco and Algeria, e.g. *ka-tabki* ‘she is crying’, and *taw / tawwa* present in Tunisia and Libya, e.g. *taw nḡi* ‘I will come right now’.⁹⁵ Additionally, we find the participle of *qṣad*, one reflex of which is *qāṣad*, to mark an action’s continuation.⁹⁶ As for the future markers, one finds the marker *bāš* (and its various reflexes), as exemplified in Singer’s description of Tunis Arabic *ḡudwa baš nāmši* ‘tomorrow I will go’.⁹⁷

One feature which identifies with the western dialects of the Maghreb, namely Morocco and western Algeria, is the indefinite article derived from the numeral *wāḥad/waḥd*, which is always followed by a definite noun (made definite either through the definite article or through a possessive pronominal suffix, e.g. *waḥd aṭ-ṭbīb* ‘a doctor’, and *wāḥad sāḥbi* ‘a friend of mine’, both attested in Casablanca). This phenomenon of the indefinite is thought to be a hallmark of the western Maghrebi dialects (thereby excluding eastern Algeria, Tunisia and Libya), and rarely attested in the eastern part.⁹⁸

⁹³ Aguadé, “The Maghrebi dialects of Arabic,” 46-47, 49, 53.

⁹⁴ Aguadé, “The Maghrebi dialects of Arabic,” 47, 49, 52-54.

⁹⁵ Marçais, *Esquisse Grammaticale de l’Arabe Maghrébin*, 72-73.

⁹⁶ Marçais, *Esquisse Grammaticale de l’Arabe Maghrébin*, 76; Aguadé, “The Maghrebi dialects of Arabic,” 58.

⁹⁷ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 311.

⁹⁸ Versteegh, *The Arabic Language*, 211-212; Aguadé, “The Maghrebi dialects of Arabic,” 50.

Other features are considered to be Maghrebi but more specifically either pre-Hilālī or Hilālī, the meaning of which will be explained further below. To the Hilālī dialects belongs the preservation of the interdentals and the retention of the diphthongs, whereas in turn the pre-Hilālī urban vernaculars generally lose the interdentals and opt for monophthongization. Nevertheless, there are so many dialects which overall conform to one typological category but exhibit reflexes typical to the other category, that it is impossible to say what is the rule and what is the exception, especially regarding the diphthongs and the interdentals. One sees how in Tunisia, of the dialects which are known to us, most have chosen to retain their interdentals, including the urban sedentary dialect of Tunis. In such cases, differences between communal dialects within the same area are also very interesting to study, as for example within Tunis, the dialect of the Jewish community did not retain the interdentals, as exemplified in *tlāta* ‘three’.

5. The Arabic Dialects of Tunisia

5.1. The Sedentary Dialects

One of the classifications of Arabic dialectology is that of the bedouin-sedentary divide, which naturally also applies to the Maghreb and proves to be quite interesting when considering the socio-historical nature of the region, as the divide within North Africa is also documented by Ibn Khaldūn.⁹⁹ The sedentary dialects, also known as pre-Hilālī, are spoken in places that were Arabized in the first wave of the Arab conquest of North Africa, dating back to around 670 C.E., with the foundation of Kairouan and later Tunis. As such, this first wave encapsulated the regions within the Maghreb which were strategically important, and with an army of around 10,000, the Arabization of North Africa in its entirety would have been difficult, although Berber soldiers were soon admitted into this army.¹⁰⁰ All Jewish dialects within North Africa are thought to be pre-Hilālī dialects.¹⁰¹ Within Tunisia, Marçais (1950) divides the pre-Hilālī or sedentary varieties into two, the urban dialects and the rural/village dialects, a divide which is mutual for all Arab countries. The urban dialects, which are described by Singer to be the dialects of cities which were Arabized prior

⁹⁹ Marçais, “Les Parlers Arabes et Berbères,” 205.

¹⁰⁰ Sayahi, *Diglossia and Language Contact*, 25-26.

¹⁰¹ Aguadé, “The Maghrebi dialects of Arabic,” 33.

to the 10th century C.E and which also happen to be the ones which have had the most contact with foreign influences and languages¹⁰², are the dialects generally considered to be more prestigious, although the differences between the urban and the village dialects are minor. Marçais attributes the voiceless pharyngeal-velar pronunciation of /q/ to the urban dialects, except for loanwords from the bedouin dialects (at least in Ibn Khaldūn's era), e.g. *bgar* 'cattle'.¹⁰³ The diphthongs /aw/ and /ay/ are realized as /ū/ and /ī/, although some exceptions within the urban areas did retain the diphthongs, such as the dialect of the women and Jews in Tunis, and that of the Muslims in Sfax.¹⁰⁴ The active and passive participles are expressed by the same form, as such *msəmmi* would convey the meaning of both 'naming' and 'named'. The gender distinction in the pronouns has been lost with the exception of the 3. p.sg., and therefore *inti* represents both the 2. p.sg. masc. and fem., and *intum* or *intūma* the 2. p.pl. masc. and fem. The seventh form is replaced by a prefix /t-/ that serves to convey the passive, e.g. *ḥarqət* 'she burned', *ṭharqət* 'she was burned'.¹⁰⁵ In terms of lexicon, there are many words which can distinguish a sedentary dialect from a bedouin one, such as *ʕmal* for 'to do' and *ilbāriḥ* for 'yesterday', preferred by the urban dialects. According to Singer, the village dialects are the ones which have been populated for centuries by sedentary folk whose ancestors inherited the dialects of the cities preceding the bedouin invasion, and their dialect is thus a continuation of the sedentary forms.¹⁰⁶ The village dialects are thought to incorporate all the villages in the Sahel region, in the Cape Bon peninsula and in the area of Bizerte, market towns and small cities like Monastir, yet little to nothing is known about any of these varieties. Singer also places Testour as a village dialect, but the lack of information regarding the variety of this town means that dialects might classify as village dialects because they fit the pattern geographically, and not because their linguistic varieties have been analyzed and found to conform to the features typical to the rural dialects.¹⁰⁷ The minor varieties in the village dialects include the reflex of the diphthong /ay/ as an /ē/ and /aw/ as an /ō/, as well as a tendency to resort to an *ʔimāla* for a final /a/, e.g. *nsē* 'women'. Lexically, the village dialects incorporate within them both the words of the urban centres and that of their bedouin neighbours, although the bedouin influence seems to be

¹⁰² Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 17.

¹⁰³ Marçais, "Les Parlers Arabes et Berbères," 207.

¹⁰⁴ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 19.

¹⁰⁵ Marçais, "Les Parlers Arabes et Berbères," 206-211.

¹⁰⁶ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 24.

¹⁰⁷ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 25.

disappearing in favour of the more prestigious urban loanwords, e.g. the bedouin relative conjunction *ella* which has been replaced by the urban variant *elli* in many Sahel villages.¹⁰⁸

5.2. The Bedouin Dialects

The next major conquest of North Africa occurred in the 11th century by multiple tribes united by Islam, the number of people in which reached 200,000 and who were thought to have been native to the Arabian Peninsula, but used Egypt as their gateway into the central and western Mediterranean countries. The three major tribes which dominated the second conquest were the Hilālī, the Sulaymī and the somewhat less significant Maṣqilī. The Sulaym tribe is thought to have settled in Libya and southern Tunisia, whereas the Hilāl dominated Algeria and central Tunisia. The last tribe, the Maṣqil, was constricted to the western-most countries of the Maghreb, Morocco and Mauritania, as well as a part of western Algeria, and one of its clans, the Banū Ḥassān, gave its name to the dialect of Mauritania, the Ḥassānīya.¹⁰⁹

The Hilālī dialects in Tunisia include those in the central area of the country, from the north of Chotts to the Medjerda area, and encompass the tribes of the Hammāma, the Fṛāšīš, the Māğir, Zlāš, Ūlād ʔAyyār, Ūlād Bū-Ġānim and the Drīd. The Sulaymī dialects comprise the southern, northern and easternmost dialects, such as that of the Maṛāzīg and the Nefzāwa, the Mhāḍba and of il-Ḥamma near Gābis, Beni Zīd and Ūlād Saṣīd amongst many others. From the south of Tunisia, the Sulaymī dialects connect with Tripolitania on the eastern side, whereas in the north they extend to eastern Algeria, after which the Hilālī dialects dominate the neighbouring country.¹¹⁰ As such, the Medjerda river, near which Testour is situated, can be considered a transitional area between the two bedouin dialects.

There are mutual features within the two sorts of bedouin dialects, such as the reflex of /q/ as /g/, the retention of the gender distinction in verbs and independent pronouns for the 2. p.sg., *inta* for the masc. and *inti* for the fem., and the suffix /-it/ for verbs ending with a weak consonant in the past tense of the 3. p.sg. fem., and /-u/ for the 3. p.pl. In addition to this, there is also the long /ā/ for

¹⁰⁸ Marçais, “Les Parlers Arabes et Berbères,” 211.

¹⁰⁹ Versteegh, *The Arabic Language*, 211-212.

¹¹⁰ Marçais, “Les Parlers Arabes et Berbères,” 214; Ritt-Benmimoun, “The Tunisian Hilāl and Sulaym Dialects,” 351-352.

the perfect tense in the 3. p.sg. fem. and the fem. active participle, when these are followed by an attached pronoun which starts with a vowel, e.g. *gatlāt-u* ‘she killed him’, instead of the final /t/ being doubled.¹¹¹ Another feature is the conservation of a long /ī/ in the final syllable of quadrilateral nouns, e.g. *ḥwānīt* and *dkākīn* ‘shops’, for which the sedentary counterpart would be *ḥwānit* and *dkākin*. Lexically, bedouin dialects would employ *dār* or *danna* for ‘to do’ and *amās* for ‘yesterday’.¹¹²

According to Marçais (1950) and confirmed much later by Ritt-Benmimoun (2014), there are some distinctive features that can highlight the differences between the Hilālī and the Sulaymī dialects linguistically, for which Ritt-Benmimoun uses the dialect of Kasserine as a representative of Hilālī dialects, and that of the Maṛāzīg as an archetype for the Sulaymī dialects.¹¹³ Typical of the same Hilālī dialects is the reflex of /ǧ/ as /ǧ/, for which the Sulaymī use /ǯ/. /aw/ and /ay/ are monophthongized as /ū/ and /ī/ in the Hilālī, whereas in the Sulaymī they are generally reflected as /ō/ and /ē/ respectively, though the situation is very complex. In addition to this, the long /ā/ is reflected with an *ṣimāla* following the velar consonants /x/ and /ǧ/ in Hilālī dialects, the same does not apply for Sulaymī dialects. Nevertheless, the Sulaymī dialects do insist on an *ṣimāla* when a word ends with a long stressed /ā/, e.g. *mē* ‘water’, for which the Hilālī dialects retain the original sound of the /ā/, choosing instead to employ the *ṣimāla* inside of a word, e.g. *ǧmēl* ‘camels’. The Sulaymī dialects are also more prone to have vowel harmony in the present tense of verbs in the first form, which is not the case for the Hilālī dialects, and in relation to this, the latter dialects favour the vowel /u/ in vowel distribution, as such, words such as *gaddāš* in Sulaymī dialects would be heard as *guddāš* in Hilālī. For the 3. p.sg. fem., the ending of the perfect tense in the Hilālī dialects is /-it/, with that of the other being /-at/, e.g. *zargit* ‘(the sun) rose’ in Kasserine, and *zurḡat* in the dialect of the Maṛāzīg.¹¹⁴ The Sulaymī dialects betray what was previously dubbed a classic Maghrebi feature by retaining the short unstressed vowel /a/ in open syllables, e.g. *hʔrab* ‘he fled’, for which the Hilālī equivalent is *hrab*, which is more reflective of Maghrebi trends. In a similar vein, Sulaymī dialects do not seem to tolerate consonant clusters, and as such inserts epenthetic vowels to avoid such clusters, something which does not seem to be an issue for the Hilālī dialect of

¹¹¹ Marçais, “Les Parlers Arabes et Berbères,” 212.

¹¹² Marçais, “Les Parlers Arabes et Berbères,” 213.

¹¹³ Ritt-Benmimoun, “The Tunisian Hilāl and Sulaym Dialects,” 352.

¹¹⁴ Ritt-Benmimoun, “The Tunisian Hilāl and Sulaym Dialects,” 354.

Kasserine, e.g. *galb* ‘heart’ for Kasserine and *galʕb* for the Maṛāzīg.¹¹⁵ The Sulaymī dialects are described by Marçais to have a less clear articulation of the emphatics than the Hilālī.¹¹⁶

The variation between the two bedouin dialects is not only embedded in phonology, there is also morphological divergency, such as the pronominal variation for the 1. p.sg. in Kasserine, which are *nā*, *nāya* and *nāy*, with *naḥna* for the 1. p.pl., for which the Maṛāzīg variation is *anē* (sg.) and *ʔhnē* (pl.) with the *ʔimāla*.¹¹⁷ The gender distinction in the suffix of the 2. p.sg. attached pronoun which seems to be common for Sulaymī, is not realized in the Hilālī dialects which instead chooses the sedentary variant of one suffix for both genders, e.g. in the Sulaymī varieties one would find *bētak* ‘your (masc.) tent’ and *bētik* ‘your (fem.) tent’.¹¹⁸ Another pronominal distinction is the attached pronoun of the 3. p.sg. masc. which is /-a/ for the Sulaymī, e.g. Maṛāzīg *waḡha* ‘his face’, thereby reflecting a bedouin trait, and /-u/ for the Hilālī.¹¹⁹ In addition to this, the Sulaymī dialects have retained the gender distinction throughout, including in the 2. and 3. p.pl., e.g. *bētken* ‘your (pl.f.) tent’.¹²⁰ Kasserine also features a peculiar insertion of /-il/ between a word and indirect pronominal suffixes, when said word either ends either with a consonant cluster or a long vowel before a consonant, e.g. *gālt-illi* ‘she told me’, for which the Maṛāzīg show no such augmentation, and in this case their reflex for the aforementioned example would be *gāt-li*. Minor lexical differences also serve to distinguish between the two, as for example Kasserine speakers would rather make use of *ydanni* and not *ydīr* for ‘to do’, the latter of which is employed by the Maṛāzīg. Hilālī dialects show a tendency to attach the /-īya/ suffix with adverbs, e.g. *tammīkīya* ‘there’.¹²¹

Notwithstanding the importance of the bedouin- sedentary divide as a shibboleth of classification for Arabic dialectology, modern dialectologists have criticized this divide as being built on false pretences that benefitted the colonial powers within North Africa in the 20th century, by which many of the original European dialectologists were employed. As such, contemporary dialectologists like Benkato (2019) argue that for example the threefold divide of Sulaymī, Hilālī

¹¹⁵ Ritt-Benmimoun, “The Tunisian Hilāl and Sulaym Dialects,” 353-355.

¹¹⁶ Marçais, “Les Parlers Arabes et Berbères,” 214.

¹¹⁷ Ritt-Benmimoun, “The Tunisian Hilāl and Sulaym Dialects,” 355.

¹¹⁸ Marçais, “Les Parlers Arabes et Berbères,” 215.

¹¹⁹ Ritt-Benmimoun, “The Tunisian Hilāl and Sulaym Dialects,” 355.

¹²⁰ Marçais, “Les Parlers Arabes et Berbères,” 215.

¹²¹ Ritt-Benmimoun, “The Tunisian Hilāl and Sulaym Dialects,” 356.

and Maṣqilī within the bedouin dialects of the Maghreb is not really embedded linguistically, rather only historically and as such it is not fit to be used for contemporary linguistic divides.¹²² In addition to this, French orientalist were often keen to describe the tribal conquest of North Africa in an extremely deprecatory manner, often citing but misinterpreting Ibn Khaldūn's witness of Berber and Bedouin relations in his *Kitāb al-ʿibar* to justify their classifications. Indeed, this pejorative attitude towards the bedouin conquest has infiltrated the local community, as someone who misbehaves is called a 'descendant of the Banu Hilāl tribes'.¹²³ Any conclusions made by such dialectologists were always in the shadow of the belief that French was ultimately the superior language for any colonized community. Benkato argues that there is no empirical evidence that could portray the historic Arabization of North Africa in a linguistic light, however the proclamations of the Marçais family were taken as a fact due to their prominence in the field. As such, the bedouin classification remains uncontested to this day, thereby ignoring any other influences over the millennium which followed regarding the Arabization of North Africa, which may have linguistically impacted the bedouin dialects to become what they are today. Benkato cites Errington on his perception of colonial dialectologists as them having come up with a system of classification through the language which would ultimately help the colonizing country make sense of the communities under its rule, even if this system is historically, linguistically or socially faulty.¹²⁴ Therefore, since colonialization invites with it the ideology that one race is superior to another at least through its rulership abilities, the colonialists were all too eager to interpret the races of North Africa, most prominently the Berbers and the Arabs, in a sense of racial hierarchy through the translation of Ibn Khaldūn's work on the social conditions of his time, despite the fact that he never pits one race against the other, rather describes their relationship in North Africa through a non-politicized recital of history.¹²⁵

6. Literature Review

The study of Arabic dialects in the general Maghreb area has been a subject of interest for centuries, stemming from Ibn Khaldun's notes on the different realisations of the /q/ and intensely accentuated

¹²² Benkato, "From Medieval Tribes to Modern Dialects", 11-13.

¹²³ Sayahi, *Diglossia and Language Contact*, 27.

¹²⁴ Benkato, "From Medieval Tribes to Modern Dialects", 15.

¹²⁵ Hannoum, "Translation and the Colonial Imaginary", 80-81.

in the last two centuries by western dialectologists. With regards to Tunisia, we find in the 19th century literature on the dialect of Tunis by Hans Stumme (1893), who produced a grammar of the urban dialect as well multiple collections of fairytales and stories¹²⁶, followed by William Marçais' contribution on the dialects of Takrouna (1925)¹²⁷ and his excerpt on the dialectal classifications of Tunisia in general in the edited volume *Initiation à la Tunisie* (1950)¹²⁸, which is as of yet one of the only sources that explores the divergencies between the Sulaymī and the Hilālī varieties as can be seen in the sections above, as well as Jean Cantineau's analysis of the phonology of the dialect of El-Hamma in the governorate of Gabès (1951).¹²⁹ Linguistic interest on the dialects of Tunisia was retained in the second half of the 20th century, with Hans Rudolph Singer's comprehensive study of the dialect of Tunis (1984)¹³⁰, thereby providing access to the epitome of Tunisia's sedentary and urban dialects. A more contemporary study on the dialect of the capital city today was the one undertaken by the TUNICO project from 2013 to 2016, which allows us to study the changes that the dialect has undergone over the past couple of decades, as is expected from such an urban vernacular. The embrace of the digital humanities by the TUNICO project provides access to a corpus with many annotated texts and an online dictionary.¹³¹ Fathi Talmoudi publishes in the same period as Singer a study on the dialect of Sousse (1980)¹³², whereas with the turn of the 21st century dialectologists aimed to discover the dialects of more peripheral areas of the country, such as the island of Djerba studied by Peter Behnstedt (1998)¹³³, but due to the communal diversity on the small island he explores the dialects of multiple communities, namely the Jewish, the Ibadite and the Malikite varieties. Veronika Ritt-Benmimoun provides an in depth analysis of the Maṛāzīg (2014)¹³⁴, a tribe in the southern part of Tunisia in the Douz region, whose bedouin dialect is that of the Sulaymī variety, and on which little was known save for some texts and a glossary documented around half a century before by Gilbert Boris (1958).¹³⁵ In the last decade, more and more regions

¹²⁶ Stumme, *Grammatik des Tunisischen Arabisch*; Stumme, *Tunisische Märchen und Gedichte*.

¹²⁷ Marçais, *Textes arabes de Takroûna*.

¹²⁸ Marçais, "Les Parlers Arabes et Berbères."

¹²⁹ Cantineau, *Analyse phonologique du parler arabe d'El-Hâmma de Gabès*.

¹³⁰ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*.

¹³¹ TUNICO, "Corpus."

¹³² Talmoudi, *The Arabic Dialect of Sūsa (Tunisia)*.

¹³³ Behnstedt, "Zum Arabischen von Djerba (Tunesien)."

¹³⁴ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*.

¹³⁵ Boris, *Lexique du parler arabe des Marazig*.

within Tunisia have attracted the attention of dialectologists, such as Cristina La Rosa's study of the region of Mahdia (2021)¹³⁶, a Sahel variety, whereas the dialects of the Kerkennah islands were briefly discussed by Zammit and Herin (2017).¹³⁷ An interesting innovation in the study of Tunisian dialectology is that of the dialects outside of the country, by which one namely refers to D'Anna's investigation of the dialect of the Tunisian community in Mazara del Vallo in Sicily (2020),¹³⁸ a community of Chebban emigrants who managed to defy the idea that the mother language erodes completely by the third generation of migrants in a diaspora, as their rural dialect was retained as a mother tongue even in the third generation, with obvious heavy interferences of Italian loanwords (2020).¹³⁹ With regards to communal Arabic dialects, in Tunisia's repertoire we find an extensive description of the Jewish dialect of Tunis by Cohen (1975)¹⁴⁰, as well as a phonological contribution by Yoda on the *sifflant* and *chuintant* in the dialect of the Jews in Gabes (2006).¹⁴¹

In comparison with the rest of the Arab world, Tunisia's dialects are severely understudied, however, in recent years interest has been peaking to bring to academic light the many dialects within the relatively small country. Besides the aforementioned TUNICO project, the University of Vienna along with the Austrian Academy of Sciences is currently hosting the TUNOCENT project, which aims at documenting the linguistic varieties in the northwestern and central parts of the country such as Beja, Gafsa and Siliana.¹⁴² Nevertheless, the majority of the country's dialects is still in need of investigation, not only in the context of the *Hilālī* and *Sulaymī* classifications, the differences between which is quite vague and perhaps outdated (with Marçais' contribution in 1955 still being held as an authority on the subject for lack of a more modern alternative), but also to study and understand the emergence of mixed dialects, the phenomena of which must be on the rise due to Tunisia's steadily increasing urbanization.

¹³⁶ La Rosa, "Mahdia Dialect: An Urban Vernacular in the Tunisian Sahel Context."

¹³⁷ Herin & Zammit, "Three for the Price of One."

¹³⁸ D'Anna, "Extraterritorial Varieties of Tunisian Arabic."

¹³⁹ D'Anna & Amoruso, "Complex Identities."

¹⁴⁰ Cohen, *Le Parler Arabe des Juifs de Tunis*.

¹⁴¹ Yoda, " "*Sifflant* " and " *chuintant* " in the Arabic dialect of the Jews of Gabes (south Tunisia). "

¹⁴² TUNOCENT, "Reference Places."

7. Phonology

7.1. Consonants

7.1.1. Consonantal System

/b/	Voiced bilabial plosive
/b̥/	Voiced velarized bilabial plosive
/p/	Voiceless bilabial plosive
/t/	Voiceless dental-alveolar plosive
/t̪/	Voiceless interdental fricative
/ʒ/	Voiced pre-palatal fricative
/ħ/	Voiceless pharyngeal fricative
/h/	Voiceless laryngeal fricative
/x/	Voiceless velar fricative
/d/	Voiced dental-alveolar plosive
/d̪/	Voiced interdental fricative
/r/	Voiced dental-alveolar trill
/r̥/	Voiced velarized dental-alveolar trill
/z/	Voiced dental-alveolar plosive
/s/	Voiceless dental-alveolar sibilant
/š/	Voiceless pre-palatal fricative
/ʂ/	Voiceless velarized dental-alveolar sibilant
/ɖ̪/	Voiced velarized interdental fricative
/t̪̥/	Voiceless velarized dental-alveolar plosive
/ʕ/	Voiced pharyngeal fricative
/ğ/	Voiced velar fricative
/f/	Voiceless labiodental fricative
/v/	Voiced labiodental fricative
/q/	Voiceless uvular plosive
/g/	Voiced postpalatal plosive

/k/	Voiceless postpalatal plosive
/l/	Voiced dental-alveolar lateral
/ɭ/	Voiced velarized dental-alveolar lateral
/m/	Voiced bilabial nasal
/n/	Voiced dental-alveolar nasal
/w/	Voiced bilabial fricative
/y/	Voiced mediopalatal fricative
/ʔ/	Voiceless laryngeal plosive

7.1.2. Reflex of /q/

MSA /q/ has two reflexes in Testour, either as a /q/ or as a /g/. The /q/-/g/ divide is one if not the only major criteria on which Arabic dialects are classified as bedouin or sedentary. In fact, in his description of Tunisian Arabic, Marçais refers back to Ibn Khaldūn, who is thought to be one of the first persons to consider the reflex /g/ for /q/ as a marker of bedouin Arabic.¹⁴³ Whilst the /g/ reflex is quite common in Testour, perhaps even more so than /q/, it is difficult to say whether we can rely on its frequency alone to classify Testour as a bedouin dialect. Indeed, in her article about Mahdia, La Rosa cites Saada (1984), on her claim that the usage of /g/ is not a valid criteria to brand someone as a bedouin speaker in Tunisia, since this phoneme as one of the reflexes of /q/ has spread to every town and village in the country, to one degree or another.¹⁴⁴ Unfortunately, little is known about the social backgrounds of the Arabs living in the geographical area of Testour before the Moriscos settled there, and what we know about the demography of the place from the 17th century onwards revolves around Moriscos, the Jewish community and to a minor degree around the Berber Wseltia tribes, as explored in the introductory chapter of this thesis. It may be that the /g/ reflex is an influence of neighbouring towns in Tunisia, as we find the /g/ along /q/ in Sidi Bouzid¹⁴⁵, in Chebba¹⁴⁶, Sousse¹⁴⁷ (albeit in this one, the voiceless realization is still by and large the more dominant reflex of /q/), all of which are in the northern or central part of Tunisia. Nevertheless, in

¹⁴³ Marçais, “Les Parlers Arabes et Berbères,” 207.

¹⁴⁴ La Rosa, “Mahdia Dialect: An Urban Vernacular in the Tunisian Sahel Context,” 9-10.

¹⁴⁵ Prinoth, “Der Dialekt von Sidi Bouzid (Zentraltunesien),” 43-47.

¹⁴⁶ D’Anna, “Extraterritorial Varieties of Tunisian Arabic,” 87-88.

¹⁴⁷ Talmoudi, *The Arabic Dialect of Sūsa (Tunisia)*, 22.

Tunis, which is about 2 hours away from Testour and which has been quite heavily involved with Testour in terms of business for the last couple of centuries, the /q/ is reflected as is, as the /g/ is found in very few lexical items, e.g. in loanwords such as *gāz* and words of Bedouin origin, such as *bagra*. Examples of Arabic lexicon with /q/ or /g/ are found below:

/q/

<i>sūq</i> il-žumla	‘market’	<i>taqālīd</i>	‘traditions’
<i>manṭqa</i>	‘area’	<i>waqt</i>	‘time’ / ‘period’
<i>qdaṛ</i>	‘respect’	<i>qbal</i>	‘before’
<i>sāqīhum</i>	‘their feet’		

/g/

<i>ngūlu</i>	‘we say’	<i>yurgdu</i>	‘they sleep’
<i>gaṭṭaʕ</i>	‘he tore’	<i>ngūmu</i>	‘we get up’
<i>gdīma</i>	‘old’ (fem.)	<i>l-igbāyil</i>	‘the tribes’
<i>sūg</i>	‘market’	<i>gasʕa</i>	‘large wooden bowl’

It is very common that the same speaker would employ the /q/ for one word and the /g/ for another, or that multiple speakers would employ different reflexes, as can be seen in the aforementioned example *sūq/sūg*, for which it seems that the latter variation is the most dominant one as it was the one attested by multiple informants, or the word *qbal*, which was attested as is but also as *gbal* from another speaker. Nevertheless, the usage of /q/ vs. /g/ for the same word can lead to semantic differences, as for example *qrībi* refers to ‘my relative’, but *grība* means ‘close to someone/ something fem.’; *yfarriq* means ‘he distinguishes’ whereas the meaning of *yfarrig* is ‘he distributes.’ As such, we see that the simultaneous employment of /q/ and /g/ leads to minimal pairs. These minimal pairs based on the usage of /q/ vs /g/ is also attested in other dialects, such as that of the Maṛāzīg, for which Ritt-Benmimoun attests the aforementioned examples and more.¹⁴⁸ The /q/ is retained in loanwords from MSA, as is attested in *taqālīd* and *manṭqa*. As we have seen in the dialect of Tunis, and as is typical of all dialects, the /g/ is retained whenever it is within a foreign loanword, e.g. in *langue* ‘language’ and *gāʕs* ‘gas’.

¹⁴⁸ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 12.

7.1.3. Reflex of /ǧ/

In the dialect of Testour, /ǧ/ is reflected as the voiced pre-palatal fricative /ž/, e.g.:

<i>xaržu</i>	‘they got out of’ / ‘they left’	<i>židd</i>	‘grandfather’
<i>iž-žbal</i>	‘the mountain’	<i>ḥāža</i>	‘thing’

With the word *zawǧ* ‘two’, the /ǧ/ is reflected as a /z/, with the diphthong /aw/ turning into the monophthongs /ō/ or /ū/ (less frequent), and as such in Testour it would become either *zōz* or *zūz*. The same change occurs within the word *ṣaǧūza*, which in Testouri Arabic becomes *ṣazūza*. Nevertheless, this phonological alteration is not endemic to Testour, since almost all the dialects in Tunisia feature the same change in *zawǧ* and *ṣaǧūza*, for example in the dialect of the Maṛāzīg.¹⁴⁹

7.1.4. Reflexes of /p/ and /v/

The plosive /p/ and the fricative /v/ are only attested in loanwords, which have been transcribed only if they are partially inflected with Arabic morphemes. Otherwise, if the loanword remains unchanged from the original language, it has been written in accordance with the original language, e.g.:

<i>l-parfanāt</i>	‘the perfumes’	<i>duvoire</i>	‘duty’
<i>specifique</i>	‘specific’	<i>université</i>	‘university’
<i>l-ispitār</i>	‘the hospital’	<i>video</i>	‘video’
<i>paspōr</i>	‘passport’		

In Ritt-Benmimoun’s analysis of the Maṛāzīg, she notes that the generation and education of the informants affected the reflex of /p/ and /v/, as those of a younger generation and those who were educated in French-speaking schools would make use of these two phonemes, otherwise they would replace the /p/ and /v/ with /b/ and /f/, respectively.¹⁵⁰ This did not seem to be such an issue with the Testouri informants, as informants from all ages were able to correctly pronounce both phonemes, even if they were of an older generation and uneducated.

¹⁴⁹ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 54.

¹⁵⁰ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 9.

7.1.5. Reflex of /b/

In Testour, the emphatic /b/ does not manifest as frequently as other dialectal emphatics, as can be seen with the /r/ below. In free speech, it was only attested in *yṣuḥḥ* ‘to pour’, whereas in the questionnaires it was attested in lexicon like *ḥāḥa* ‘dad’, in the diminutive *ḥḥayyib* and in *ḥāy* ‘part’. Most probably, it cannot be considered to be fully phonemic, however, it is more frequent than /l/, /m/ and /f/.

7.1.6. Reflex of /l/

Much like /b/ before it, /l/ is not a frequently used phoneme in Testour. Its only clear attestation is in lexicon such as *wallāh* ‘by God’, which stands as a minimal pair to the conjunction *walla* ‘or’.

7.1.7. Reflex of /m/

In a similar vein to the preceding two emphatics, /m/ makes a very rare appearance in *umḥās* ‘knives’. /m/ is not considered to achieve full phonemic status for the dialect of Douz¹⁵¹, but it does in Tunis due to the minimal pairs.¹⁵²

7.1.8. Reflex of /f/

/f/ only appeared in one word, *ffayyim* ‘mouth’ (dim.), and its occurrence is because the labial /w/ of the diminutive undergoes gemination with the labial /f/. It is not considered by Ritt-Benmimoun to be a phoneme for the dialect of the Maṣāzīg¹⁵³, nor by Singer for the dialect of Tunis, although it appears in both dialects in the same case as in the dialect of Testour.¹⁵⁴

7.1.9. Reflex of /r/

¹⁵¹ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 17.

¹⁵² Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 37, 40.

¹⁵³ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 17.

¹⁵⁴ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 482.

Once again drawing comparison to the dialect of the Maṛāzīg, it can be seen how the /r/ and /ṛ/ in the dialect of Testour are affected by the same kinds of environment as those of the dialect of the southern bedouins. As such, the /r/ is most often seen in the proximity of /i/ and /ī/, whereas the /ṛ/ manifests frequently in the environment of /a/, /ā/, /u/ and /ū/.¹⁵⁵ Naturally, as is the case with much of phonology in general, the rule is not absolute, and exceptions do occur. The following are examples from both phonemes:

/r/

<i>t-tastūrīya</i>	‘the Testouri’	<i>kbīr</i>	‘big’
<i>ʕašra</i>	‘ten’	<i>r-rasmīya</i>	‘the official’

/ṛ/

<i>zaʕṣṣrān</i>	‘saffron’	<i>ṛ-ṛummān</i>	‘pomegranates’
<i>aṛbʕa</i>	‘four’	<i>baṛk</i>	‘enough’

7.1.10. Interdentals

The interdental consonants in the dialect of Testour have been retained. This should come as no surprise, since the majority of dialects in Tunisia, including that of the capital city, have held on to the interdentals. An interesting feature that is also typical of Tunisian dialects in general, and to a certain extent to all Arabic dialects, is the merging of the emphatic /ḏ/ with /ḏ̣/, as such both phonemes are represented with /ḏ̣/.

Examples of the interdental /ṭ/:

<i>l-akṭarīya</i>	‘the most’	<i>ṭilīž</i>	‘snow’
<i>aṭnāš</i>	‘twelve’	<i>ṭmānya</i>	‘eight’
<i>maḥrāṭ</i>	‘plough’	<i>iṭ-tūr</i>	‘the bull’

Examples of the interdental /ḏ̣/:

<i>dyūba</i>	‘jackals’	<i>ḏ̣hab</i>	‘gold’
<i>naxḏ̣ūha</i>	‘we take it’	<i>wiḏ̣nik</i>	‘your ear’

Examples of the interdental /ḏ̣/ (where the reflex of MSA would also have a /ḏ̣/):

¹⁵⁵ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 15.

il-ʔislāmīya ‘the Muslim’

l-ʔumawīya ‘the Umayyad’

In the final position, the *hamza* might occur as a pausal form, e.g. in *lāʔ* ‘no’, although this attestation was the exception and not the rule.

7.2. Vowels

7.2.1. Vowel System

In the dialect of Testour, there are 3 main short vowels and 6 long ones.

Short vowels: /a/, /i/, /u/.¹⁵⁹

Long vowels: /ā/, /ē/, /ī/, /ō/, /ū/, /ǣ/

The /ǣ/ can be considered to be an allophone of the /ā/, but since its phonemic status is unclear it is best to classify it as an independent vowel. As attested in ‘fifteen’ in the following examples, the same word can have an /ā/ or an /ǣ/ according to the speaker.

/ā/

<i>ṛāžil</i>	‘man’	<i>ir-ṛābaʕ</i>	‘the fourth’
<i>ʕāmīn</i>	‘two years’	<i>xumṣṭāš</i>	‘fifteen’
<i>iž-žāṛ</i>	‘the neighbour’	<i>hāža</i>	‘a thing’

/ǣ/

<i>il-aʕyād</i>	‘the feasts’	<i>baqlāwa</i>	‘baklava’
<i>bināʔ</i>	‘construction’	<i>xumṣṭāš</i>	‘fifteen’
<i>xāli</i>	‘my uncle’	<i>mnāžil</i>	‘sickles’

Besides in the diphthongs (explored down below), the /ō/ has mostly been attested in loanwords such as *talifōn* ‘telephone’, *paspōr* ‘passport’ and *makarōna* ‘pasta’, as well as in words such as *xōha* ‘her brother’, in which we find a vowel shift from /ū/ to /ō/, and *hāḍōkum* ‘those’. The /ē/ was sparsely attested, as the more productive long vowels in Testour seem to be the basic vowels /ā/, /ī/ and /ū/, along with /ǣ/. Its seldom appearance is also justified by the fact that /ē/ is not the preferred

¹⁵⁹ For the purpose of this thesis, the short vowels also represent any allophones that each of them might have.

vowel in the occurrence of monophthongization. Examples of /ē/ include *ʕēb* ‘shame’ and *ʕlēha* ‘on her/ it’.

7.2.2. The *ʔImāla* (for the Long Vowel)

The presence of the *ʔimāla* of the first degree is quite heavy in Testour, as is typical for most Tunisian dialects. *ʔImāla* of the second degree, which is prevalent in the neighbouring country of Malta (e.g. *bāb* > *bīb* ‘door’, *kilāb* > *klīb* ‘dogs’)¹⁶⁰, has not been attested in Testour. The *ʔimāla* is represented mostly by an /ā/, and very rarely by an /ē/, depending on its degree.

In the initial position, the *ʔimāla* was quite rare. This is of course because words which begin with a long /ā/ are not plentiful. The initial *ʔimāla* is attested in words such as:

<i>āxir</i>	‘last’	<i>āna</i> ¹⁶¹	‘I’
<i>āš min ʕgīr?</i>	‘what kind of child?’		

If we adopt Sibawayhi’s prerequisites described in Levin for the occurrence of an *ʔimāla*, then we should expect to find the medial *ʔimāla* whenever a long /ī/ or a short /i/ is in the environment of a long /ā/, either preceding or succeeding the vowel in question.¹⁶² In Testour, this was attested as exemplified in the following:

Long vowel /ī/ preceding the /ā/:

<i>is-slīmān</i>	‘Soliman’	<i>kīfāš</i>	‘how’
<i>wlīdātha</i>	‘her children’		

Long vowel /ī/ succeeding the /ā/:

<i>bāhīn</i>	‘good’	<i>wāldīn</i>	‘parents’
<i>l-amāzīg</i>	‘the Amazighs’	<i>mhāzrīn</i>	‘migrants’

Short vowel /i/ preceding the /ā/:

<i>gilāl</i>	‘fruit’	<i>mā-fihā-š</i>	‘it doesn’t have’
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¹⁶⁰ Mifsud, “Maltese.”

¹⁶¹ This is a rare reflex of ‘I’, as the most dominant reflex is *nāya*.

¹⁶² Levin, “Imāla.”

<i>iṣ-ṣiyā̃m</i>	‘fasting’	<i>ḍifā̃f</i>	‘shores’
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Short vowel /i/ succeeding the /ā/:

<i>rudd bālik</i>	‘take care of’	<i>wāḥid</i>	‘one’
<i>l-xwā̃tim</i>	‘the rings’		

Nevertheless, *ḥimāla* also occurred when the vowel in the anterior or posterior syllable is not an /i/ or an /ī/, e.g.

<i>il-fallāḥ</i>	‘the farmer’	<i>waqtā̃š</i>	‘when’
<i>iš-šabā̃b</i>	‘the youth’		

When it comes to the gutturals, we have an interesting situation in which the *ḥimāla* would have no difficulties in succeeding a guttural, as long as it was not the /ʕ/ or in particular lexicon such as the word *ṣḡār* (however for the latter the lack of the *ḥimāla* is because of the emphatic /ṣ/ (explored below) and also because in most if not all the dialects within Tunisia *ṣḡār* never allows for the effect of the *ḥimāla*). Examples of the *ḥimāla* occurring in the environment of a guttural are:

<i>ḡādi</i>	‘there is’	<i>xā̃msa</i>	‘fifth (f)’
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However, not in:

<i>mā-ṣād-š</i>	‘not anymore’	<i>mṣāk</i>	‘with you’
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According to Sibawayhi as mentioned in Levin, *ḥimāla* could possibly occur if the consonant preceding the /ā/ is a /y/. This was also noted in Testouri Arabic:

<i>banyāt</i>	‘buildings’	<i>aṣyād</i>	‘feasts’
<i>bnayyā̃tha</i>	‘her young daughters’		

Nevertheless, /ā/ in direct succession of a /y/ was also noted, as in *yāklū* ‘they eat’, and *yāsmīn* ‘jasmine’.

Medial *ḥimāla* is generally productive in nouns which have a weak second radical, e.g.:

<i>wād</i>	‘valley’	<i>bāb</i>	‘door’
<i>nās</i>	‘people’		

Yet, not in words such as:

<i>ṣāmīn</i>	‘two years’	<i>ḏār</i>	‘neighbour’
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According to Levin, Sibawayhi considers that the *ḥimāla* can fit almost anywhere, as long as one of the consonants existing in the environment of the /ā/ is not a consonant belonging to *al-ḥurūf al-mustaḥliya*, which are the emphatic consonants and the gutturals /q/, /ğ/, /x/. In his collections of grammar, Sibawayhi notes that when *ḥimāla* occurs in the vicinity of such letters, this is generally in dialectal varieties, which cannot be considered to be proper Arabic.¹⁶³ It has already been seen that the gutturals occasionally support the fronting of the /ā/, but when it comes to the emphatics, we find that they do not allow for the occurrence of an *ḥimāla* as easily as the former, albeit sometimes they do, e.g.:

<i>it-ṭāwla</i>	‘the table’	<i>ittayyib</i>	‘she cooks’
<i>ramaḍān</i>	‘Ramadan’	<i>xaḍḍār</i>	‘greengrocer’
<i>ṣārit</i>	‘she/it became’	<i>ṣāḥīn</i>	‘pure’ (pl.)
<i>ṣābūn</i>	‘laundry’	<i>xumṣāš</i> (but also <i>xumṣāšīn</i>)	‘fifteen’

For *ṣārit* and *ṣāḥīn*, it can be noted that although there is an /i/ and /ī/ respectively following the syllable with the long vowel, the emphatic overrules the inclination of the *ḥimāla*.

In the final position, *ḥimāla* was attested both in pausal form and without, e.g.:

In pausal form:

<i>mšāʔ</i>	‘he went’	<i>hnāʔ</i>	‘here’
<i>bināʔ</i>	‘buildings’	<i>lāʔ</i>	‘no’

In context form:

<i>lā</i>	‘no’	<i>myā</i>	‘one hundred’
<i>hnā</i>	‘here’	<i>mā</i>	‘water’
<i>l-iḡnā</i>	‘the songs’		

As such, it can be seen that albeit the usage of the pausal form can differ from one speak to another (*lā* vs *lāʔ*, *hnā* vs *hnāʔ*), this never really affects the *ḥimāla*.

¹⁶³Levin, “‘Imāla.”

<i>ṣasā?</i> ‘stick’	<i>imrā</i> ‘woman’
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l-awlēd ‘the children’

7.2.3. Diphthongs

/aw/ - /ō/

il-yōm ‘daily’ (but the diphthongized was attested in the adverb *yawmīya*, other times *yōmīya*)

<i>zōz</i>	‘two’	<i>ḥōš</i>	‘traditional Arabic house’
<i>lōn</i>	‘colour’	<i>šōk</i>	‘thorns’

¹⁶⁴ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 31.

¹⁶⁵ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 179-181.

/ay/ - /ī/

<i>ṣīf</i>	‘summer’	<i>zīt</i>	‘oil’
<i>nsīt</i>	‘I forgot’	<i>līl</i>	‘night’
<i>bīt</i>	‘room’	<i>ġīrik</i>	‘another one than you’

However, in rare occurrences the /ay/ could also be reflected as a /ē/, e.g. *zēt* ‘oil’, *lēl* ‘night’. In the diminutives the diphthongs have been retained, e.g. *bnayyi* ‘my little girl’, *bḥayyib* ‘little door’, *dwayyib* ‘little jackal’, in which perhaps the duplication of /y/ does not allow for monophthongization to occur. Words such as *mawżūd* ‘present’, *mawlūd* ‘born’, *ḥalawiyāt* ‘sweets’ also retain their diphthong, perhaps due to their status as classicisms. In the majority of the regular nouns in the dual, the /ay/ is monophthongised, e.g. *nhārīn* ‘two days’, *rižlīn* ‘(two) legs’. However, when a word in the dual has the suffix of the possessive pronoun of the 1.p.sg. /-ya/, the preceding diphthong /ay/ is retained, e.g. *rižlayya* ‘my feet’, *wiḡnayya* ‘my ears’.

7.2.4. Vowel Elision

According to Aguadé, the elision of short vowels in an open syllable resulting in a consonantal cluster is one of the markers of Maghrebi Arabic.¹⁶⁶ As a Tunisian dialect, it was no surprise to find this elision in the dialect of Testour, e.g.:

<i>iž-žbal</i>	‘the mountain’	<i>tlāta</i>	‘three’
<i>gdīma</i>	‘old’ (fem.)	<i>ykallim</i>	‘he speaks to’
<i>zġīr</i>	‘small’		

Whilst all of the above examples show the elision of the initial unstressed vowel, this could also happen to vowel in the non-initial positions, e.g.:

<i>arbʕa</i>	‘four’	(as opposed to <i>arbaʕa</i>)
<i>andlus</i>	‘al-Andalus’	(as opposed to <i>al-Andalus</i>)

¹⁶⁶ Aguadé, “The Maghrebi dialects of Arabic,” 33.

Nevertheless, we find cases in which a word that has a short vowel within an open syllable retains the short vowel, and this is very much typical when the word in question is a loanword from MSA, e.g.:

<i>muḏāwharāt</i>	‘jewellery’ (MSA influence)	<i>ḡilāl</i>	‘fruit’
<i>ḡurūb</i>	‘sunset’		

Certain words may feature a vowel elision or retain the vowel, depending on the speaker, as is the case with *ʕazūza* ‘old woman’, which may also be *ʕzūza*.

7.3. Minimal Pairs

In terms of the vowels, minimal pairs in Arabic could be formed not only through the change of one vowel to the other, but also through the elongation or shortening of the same vowel, or through the vowel undergoing *ʔimāla*, where the word with the original long vowel /ā/ co-exists alongside the same word with a long vowel /ā̄/, but does not share the same lexical meaning. Nevertheless, the examples of the latter are rare, and as such it is doubtful whether one could consider /ā̄/ to have achieved full phonemic status on the basis of these minimal pairs alone. As can be noted from the following examples, most minimal pairs are semantically related, with one being for example the imperative form of a verb, whereas the other would be the same verb in its perfect form.

Examples for minimal pairs with a different vowel are the following:

ṣadd ‘he grabbed’

ṣidd ‘grab!’

ḥabb ‘he loved’

ḥibb ‘love!’

ḥubb ‘love’

mōt ‘death’

mūt ‘die!’

žāb ‘he brought’
žīb ‘bring!’

ḥaṭṭ ‘he put’
*ḥuṭṭ*¹⁶⁷ ‘put!’

*willa*¹⁶⁸ ‘or’
waḷḷah ‘By God’

Examples of minimal pairs for /ā̄/: /ā/:

žāri ‘he ran’
žāri ‘my neighbour’

lām ‘he reprimanded’
lām ‘razor-blade’

Examples of minimal pairs based on the elongation of the same vowel:

kbir ‘he grows old’
kbīr ‘old’ / ‘big’

xamsa ‘five’
xāmsa ‘fifth’

7.4. Epenthesis

As a dialect, the Arabic of Testour does not exhibit the strict tendencies of MSA in the avoidance of consonantal clusters.¹⁶⁹ It has already been discussed that it exhibits one of the typical Maghrebi shibboleths which is the elision of the first unstressed vowel, as such, consonantal clusters of two

¹⁶⁷ *ḥaṭṭ* was also realized as the imperative of ‘he put’, thereby replacing *ḥuṭṭ* and becoming homophones. Another such example of homophones is *kammil* ‘he finished’, and *kammil* ‘finish!’

¹⁶⁸ *willa* was attested in the questionnaires, but in free speech the dominant reflex for ‘or’ was *walla*.

¹⁶⁹ Farwane, “Epenthesis.”

(where previously there would have been a vowel breaking the cluster up) are commonplace, e.g. *šhūr* instead of *šuhūr* ‘months’. Consonantal clusters of three are also fairly ordinary, e.g. *yaġslu* ‘they wash’. Consonantal clusters of four are rare, whereas clusters of five and over have not been attested. Such clusters are broken down by the insertion of an epenthetic vowel. In Testour Arabic, this vowel is generally the short vowel /i/, however, it depends on the consonantal environment, as the /a/ was also attested as an epenthetic vowel. Generally, it immediately succeeds the article and is in the initial position of a word. Examples of the epenthetic vowel are found below:

<i>l-imrā</i>	‘the woman’	(epenthetic vowel breaks the cluster of /l/, /m/, /r/)
<i>zōz iktub</i>	‘two books’	(epenthetic vowel breaks the cluster of /z/, /k/, /t/)
<i>l-iflūs</i>	‘the money’	(epenthetic vowel breaks the cluster of /l/, /f/, /l/)
<i>l-iġnā</i>	‘singing’	(epenthetic vowel breaks the cluster of /l/, /ġ/, /n/)
<i>l-ḥīd l-ikbīr</i>	‘the big Eid’	(epenthetic vowel breaks the cluster of /d/, /l/, /k/)

In rare cases, the epenthetic vowel is a short /a/:

<i>l-aḥšā</i>	‘the dinner’	(epenthetic vowel breaks the cluster of /l/, /ḥ/, /š/)
<i>l-aḥšīda</i>	‘the ḥšīda’ (type of mush)	(epenthetic vowel breaks the cluster of /l/, /ḥ/, /š/)

7.5. Assimilation

In his article about assimilation in Arabic, Petr Zemánek notes many types of assimilation, two of which are the total and the partial assimilation.¹⁷⁰ Total assimilation occurs when the least dominant phoneme assimilates completely to the more dominant one. In Testour, this was attested in the following examples:

<i>mā-txruš-ši</i>	‘she does not go out’	(the final /ž/ assimilates with the /-š/ suffix of the negation)
<i>taḥkī-ḥna</i>	‘she tells us’	(the /l/ assimilates to the /n/ in <i>ḥna</i>)

The letter which seems to allow itself to be frequently assimilated is the /ž/, especially when in the presence of a /z/, regardless of the latter’s position in the word. This is also apparent in many Tunisian dialects, such as that of the Maṛāzīg¹⁷¹ and Tunis. Singer claims that this type of

¹⁷⁰ Zemánek, “Assimilation.”

¹⁷¹ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 54.

assimilation occurred as an effect of the change from /ğ/ to /ž/, which he describes to be an almost Pan-Maghrebi phenomenon.¹⁷² Examples of this assimilation in Testour are the following:

<i>ʕazūza</i>	‘old woman’	<i>zōz</i>	‘two’
<i>yzizz</i>	‘to shear’	<i>zīz</i>	‘tiles’

Partial assimilation generally occurs when emphasis or voice affects a consonantal cluster. An example of this was attested in *iz-zğīr* ‘the small’, although *iṣ-ṣğīr* is the dominant reflex. This same example (*iz-zğīr*) was also attested in Tunis Arabic.¹⁷³

7.6. Metathesis

Singer describes two main types of metathesis: the one that occurs momentarily during speech, that is individual and does not reflect the situation of the whole dialect, and the one which is historically embedded in the whole dialect and uttered by all speakers.¹⁷⁴ Although metathesis is a phenomenon which was attested in Tunis, which to a certain extent can be considered to be a neighbouring city to Testour, the questionnaires and the free speech provided very little cases of metathesis in Testour. In fact, the only clear example is that of *karīhba* ‘car’, which is also attested in the region of Douz¹⁷⁵ and Tunis¹⁷⁶, which leads one to believe that this is a nation-wide phenomenon belonging to the second type of metathesis described by Singer, and not explicitly a characteristic of the Testouri dialect.

7.7. Pausal Form

A word can be considered to be in a pausal form when its form at the end of a sentence (clause, phrase etc.) or prior to a stop is somewhat different than how the same word would be in the beginning or middle of the sentence. According to Hoberman, in the Arabic dialect of the bedouins

¹⁷² Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 123.

¹⁷³ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 189.

¹⁷⁴ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 205-206.

¹⁷⁵ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 55.

¹⁷⁶ Gibson, “Tunis Arabic.”

in the Negev, a final stressed /a/ may be followed by a glottal stop which indicates pause.¹⁷⁷ This was also sometimes the case in Testouri Arabic, as exemplified below:

<i>lāʔ</i>	‘no’	<i>haḍāyʔ</i>	‘this’
<i>hnāʔ</i>	‘here’	<i>mšāʔ</i>	‘he went’
<i>nsāʔ</i>	‘he forgot’		

Another example of a final pausal form is *šgāʔr* ‘children’, which in Testour coexists with *šgār*. For *lāʔ*, it should be noted that this is not the dominant reflex of ‘no’, rather *lā* is.

8. Morphology

8.1. The Pronouns

8.1.1. Independent Personal Pronouns

The independent personal pronouns in the dialect of Testour are the following:

1. p.sg.	<i>nāya / āna</i>
2. p.sg. masc.	<i>inti / inta</i>
2. p.sg. fem.	<i>inti / intīya</i>
3. p.sg. masc.	<i>hūwa</i>
3. p.sg. fem.	<i>hīya</i>
1. p.pl.	<i>naḥna / aḥna</i>
2. p.pl.	<i>intūma / intu</i>
3. p.pl.	<i>hūma / hum</i>

The reflex *nāya* is the most dominant reflex for the 1.p.sg., however, *āna* was also sparsely attested in free speech. *nāya* shares similarities with other attested reflexes also constrained to the Maghreb,

¹⁷⁷ Hoberman, “Pausal Forms.”

such as *nā* in Sidi Bouzid¹⁷⁸ and Benghazi¹⁷⁹, Tozeur¹⁸⁰, which among its various attestations one finds *nā* and *nāya*, Oran¹⁸¹, and Zentan in Libya with *ānāya*.¹⁸² The same can be said for *naḥna*, which is the most frequently occurring reflex for the 1.p.pl., with *aḥna* being the only other reflex occasionally attested. *hūwa* and *hīya* seem to be the only two reflexes for the 3. p.sg. masc. and fem. respectively, with a short form of *hī* for the 3. p.sg. fem. being attested only once. The 2. and 3. p.pl. do not share the same gender distinction as the sg. counterparts but have only one communis form with reflex variations, although *intūma* and *hūma* for the 2. and 3.p.pl. respectively seem to be the dominant reflexes. *intu* (2. p.pl.), and *hum* (3. p.pl.) were only attested in the questionnaires and not in free speech. These pl. communis forms are unlike some of the other Tunisian dialects, such as that of the bedouin dialect of the Maṛāzīg, which retain the gender distinction through *intin* for the 2. p.pl. fem and *hin* / *hun* for the 3.p.pl. fem.¹⁸³ However, such dialects can be considered to be in the minority, as many Tunisian dialects have retained only the communis form of the 2. and 3. p.pl., such as that of Sidi Bouzid, which shares the same reflexes of *intūma* and *hūma*, respectively¹⁸⁴ or that of Tunis, with the forms *(e)ntūma* and *hūma*.¹⁸⁵

The reflexes of the 2.p.sg. are the ones which show most variation. Firstly, there is a distinction between the masc. and the fem., as is common with many Arabic dialects, as well as with MSA. However, this is not a shared feature in the dialect of the capital city, which is only approximately 1 to 2 hours away from Testour. Nevertheless, the lack of gender distinction in Tunis is a rare phenomenon which the capital shares with very few other varieties, such as that of the neighbouring island of Malta and other urban Tunisian dialects, and as such the lack of distinction of the 2. p.sg. would have been a strange occurrence, and not its retention.¹⁸⁶ For the masc., there are two forms in Testour, which are *inta* and *inti*. *inti* and *intīya* are used for the fem., as well as *int^si*, but the latter was only employed by one speaker in the questionnaire. The reflex *intīya* seems to be a defining

¹⁷⁸ Prinoth, “Der Dialekt von Sidi Bouzid (Zentraltunesien),” 58.

¹⁷⁹ Benkato, “The Arabic Dialect of Benghazi, Libya,” 84.

¹⁸⁰ Saada, *Éléments de Description du Parler Arabe de Tozeur (Tunisie)*, 48.

¹⁸¹ Guerrero, “Preliminary Notes on the Current Arabic Dialect of Oran,” 224.

¹⁸² Caubet, “Les Parlers Arabes Nomades et Sédentaires du Fezzân,” 83.

¹⁸³ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 66.

¹⁸⁴ Prinoth, “Der Dialekt von Sidi Bouzid (Zentraltunesien),” 59.

¹⁸⁵ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 250.

¹⁸⁶ Gibson, “Tunis Arabic.”

marker of the Testouri dialect as alluded to by informants, however similar reflexes can be found in the dialect of Oran, in which the reflex is *ntīyya*, as well as some other Algerian dialects.¹⁸⁷ One female speaker said that she uses the reflex *inti* as a communis form, however acknowledges that on the whole ‘they’, referring to Testour in general, use *intīya* for the fem., and that they are famous for using it, referring to the phrase often said to women, “*intīya tastūrīya*.” In the questionnaires the men were more adamant in stressing the gender difference in the personal pronouns, especially through allocating the reflex of *intīya* for the 2. p.sg. fem., whereas the women employed *inti* for both genders, albeit acknowledging the form *intīya*. The speakers confirm that there is no phonological variation of *intīya* like *entīya* in Testour. In direct relation to this, it must be admitted that the gender distinction in the free speech was very fluid, with many informants using the reflex *inti* both when referring to a male and to a female, whereas *intīya* was surprisingly never attested. Such an example is *tkallim inti aḥki* ‘speak!/ talk!’ in which the person speaking is a woman, and the *inti* refers to her husband. Those who strove to make a gender distinction in their speech used *inta* for the masc. and *inti* for the fem.

The most common phrase for ‘me and you’ is *nāya wa-yāk*, with another attestation being *nāya w-inti*. For the pronominal phrase ‘you (f) and him’, only one reflex was attested which was *inti wa-yāh*.

8.1.2. Negated Personal Pronouns

1. p.sg.	<i>mānīš / mišni</i>
2. p.sg.	<i>mākš / miššik</i>
3. p.sg. masc.	<i>muššu</i>
3. p.sg. fem.	<i>māhīš / mišši</i>
1. p. pl.	<i>mānāš, mašna</i>
2. p. pl.	<i>mākumš / mūkumš / muškum</i>
3. p. pl.	<i>māhumš / mušhum / mišhum</i>

As is with the regular personal pronouns, there is no gender distinction in the 2. and 3.p.pl. This time we also find that there is no distinction in the 2. p.sg., as *mākš* or *miššik* can represent both the

¹⁸⁷ Guerrero, “Preliminary Notes on the Current Arabic Dialect of Oran,” 224.

male and the female. There are two ways in which the negated personal pronouns are formed; either by having the prefix /mā-/ + attached pronouns + the suffix /-š/, e.g. *mānīš*, or by having the nominal negation particle *miš* + the attached direct object pronoun, e.g. *mišni*. The system of the negated personal pronouns is not uniform even for the same speakers, as one speaker in the questionnaire used the *miš* + suffix form for all the p.sg., as well as for the 1. and 3. p.pl., but for the 2. p.pl. she used *mākumš*. The /mā-/ + pronoun + /-š/ form seems to be favoured by the younger generation, whereas the older generation alternated between the two forms. The two men of the questionnaires were also in favour of the /mā-/ + pronoun + /-š/ form, as such we can say that at least for the informants on which this thesis is based, the dominant form for negating the personal pronouns is /mā-/ + pronoun + /-š/. Nevertheless, the blend of the two types of negated pronouns is very interesting, as other dialects show a larger degree of uniformity, such as in that of the Maṛāzīg¹⁸⁸ and Tunis¹⁸⁹, where the /mā-/ + pronoun + /-š/ form is the only form attested. Examples of the negated personal pronouns include:

<i>mā-zālit mišši žīfāna</i>	‘she is not hungry yet’
<i>mānāš tāfībīn</i>	‘we are not tired’
<i>mušhum šrab šāfīn</i>	‘they are not pure Arabs’

8.1.3. Pronominal Suffixes

8.1.3.1. Possessive Pronouns: After a Consonant

1. p.sg.	-i	e.g. <i>dār-i</i>	My house
2. p.sg.	-ik	e.g. <i>dār-ik</i>	Your house
3. p.sg.masc.	-u	e.g. <i>dār-u</i>	His house
3. p.sg.fem.	-ha	e.g. <i>dār-ha</i>	Her house
1. p.pl.	-na	e.g. <i>dār-na</i>	Our house
2. p.pl.	-kum	e.g. <i>dār-kum</i>	Your (pl.) house
3. p.pl.	-hum	e.g. <i>dār-hum</i>	Their house

¹⁸⁸ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 67.

¹⁸⁹ Gibson, “Tunis.”

8.1.3.2. Possessive Pronouns: After a Vowel

1. p.sg.	-ya	e.g. <i>xū-ya</i>	My brother
2. p.sg.	-k	e.g. <i>xū-k</i>	Your brother
3. p.sg.masc.	-h	e.g. <i>xū-h</i>	His brother
3. p.sg.fem.	-ha	e.g. <i>xū-ha/ xō-ha</i>	Her brother
1. p.pl.	-na	e.g. <i>xū-na</i>	Our brother
2. p.pl.	-kum	e.g. <i>xū-kum</i>	Your (pl.) brother
3. p.pl.	-hum	e.g. <i>xū-hum</i>	Their brother

Unlike in the independent pronouns, the 2. p.sg. does not feature any gender distinction, and is reflected through /-k/ or /-ik/ as a communis form. The suffixes here reflect the suffixes of the sedentary variety of Tunis, as well as dialects which are termed Hilālī (H) by Marçais, whereas the Sulaymī (S) varieties would have reflected the suffix of the 3. person masc. as /-a/ or /-ah/ rather than /-u/, e.g. *kalbu* (H) vs *kalba(h)* (S) - ‘his dog.’ This is the case for the Maṛāzīg, which have the latter form of suffix for the 3. p.sg. masc., but as an /-a/ instead of an /-ah/ due to reduction.¹⁹⁰ According to Marçais, some Sulaymī varieties would have also featured gender distinction in the 2. p.sg., e.g. *bētak* ‘your (masc.) tent’ vs. *bētek* ‘your (fem.) tent’, which is not something that is attested in the dialect of Testour.¹⁹¹ As such, in this matter, Testour has the typicalities of a Hilālī variety.

Whenever the word to which the pronominal suffix is attached ends with the vowel /-a/, this vowel transforms either into an /-it/, e.g. *mākla* - *māklithum* ‘their food’, *līla* - *līlitha* ‘her night’ or else the /-a/ changes into a /-t/, in which case re-syllabification can occur and an epenthetic vowel /i/ is placed between the second and third radical of the word to avoid a cluster of three consonants¹⁹², e.g. *xidma* - *xidimti* ‘my work’, but *xidmitha* - ‘her work’; *mākla* - *māklitna* ‘our food’, but *mākilti* ‘my food.’

¹⁹⁰ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 69.

¹⁹¹ Marçais, “Les Parlers Arabes et Berbères,” 215.

¹⁹² Teeple, “Resyllabification.”

8.1.3.3. Direct Object Pronouns (Verbs)

1. p.sg.	-ni	e.g. <i>fhim-ni</i>	He understood me
2. p.sg.	-ik	e.g. <i>fihm-ik</i>	He understood you
3. p.sg. masc.	-u	e.g. <i>fihm-u</i>	He understood him
3. p.sg. fem.	-ha	e.g. <i>fhim-ha</i>	He understood her
1. p.pl.	-na	e.g. <i>fhim-na</i>	He understood us
2. p.pl.	-kum	e.g. <i>fhim-kum</i>	He understood you (pl.)
3. p.pl.	-hum	e.g. <i>fhim-hum</i>	He understood them

8.1.3.4. Indirect Object Pronouns

1. p.sg.	-li	e.g. <i>gutt-li</i>	You (masc.) said to me
2. p.sg.	-lik	e.g. <i>gutt-lik</i>	I said to you (masc./fem.)
3. p.sg. masc.	-lu	e.g. <i>gutt-lu</i>	I said to him
3. p.sg. fem.	-ilha	e.g. <i>gult-ilha</i>	I said to her
1. p.pl.	-ilna/-inna	e.g. <i>gult-ilna</i>	You (masc.) said to us
		e.g. <i>gultī-nna</i>	You (fem.) said to us
2. p.pl.	-ilkum	e.g. <i>gult-ilkum</i>	I said to you (pl.)
3. p.pl.	-ilhum	e.g. <i>gult-ilhum</i>	I said to them

For the verbally bound object pronouns, we see that once again there is only a communis form just as in the pronominal suffixes of nouns for the 2. p.sg., which is /-ik/ for the direct object and /-lik/ for the indirect object.

For the elicitation of the indirect object pronouns, the dummy verb *gāl* was used, conjugated in this case in the form of the 1. and 2. p.sg. masc. *gult*. It is noticed that whenever the bound suffix began with a consonant, the last two radicals of *gult* undergo gemination and are thus reflected as *gutt* + suffix. With a pronominal suffix, the suffix /-i/ of the verb for the 2. p.sg. fem. is lengthened into /-ī/, e.g. *inti gultī-li* ‘you (fem.) said to me’, and *gultī-nna* ‘you (fem.) said to us’. The reflex /-inna/

instead of /-ilna/ for the 1.person pl. is only attested by one informant, exemplified again in *gāl-inna* ‘he said to us’.

8.1.4. Demonstrative Pronouns

	Near Deixis	Far Deixis
Sg. Masc.	<i>hāḍa/haḍāya</i>	<i>haḍāka</i>
Sg. Fem.	<i>hāḍi/haḍīya</i>	<i>haḍīka</i>
Pl. communis	<i>haḍūma</i>	<i>haḍōkum</i>

In the above table, there are included the most common attestations for the demonstrative pronouns given in the questionnaires. With regards to the /ā/ following the second radical, this was sometimes attested as /ā̄/, as such *haḍāka* has the variant of *haḍā̄ka*. Other interesting elicitations from the questionnaires were the reflexes of the dominant *haḍūma* and *haḍōkum* for the near and far deixis of the pl. as *haḍunna* and *haḍōkun* respectively, which were only recorded for one speaker. With regards to agreement, one sees that the rules of MSA in which the sg. fem. form of the deixis is attributed to non-human or inanimate beings in the pl., does not hold to be true in Testouri Arabic, as both *haḍūma* and *haḍōkum* and their variations addressed above were elicited as a reference to *l-iklāb* ‘the dogs’ and *l-igtāṭis* ‘the cats’.

With regards to its position in a sentence, the demonstrative pronoun usually is placed before the head noun (the noun it is referring to), when it is being used as a substantive. However, it succeeds the noun if its usage is that of an attribute.

Demonstrative pronoun preceding the noun:

<i>haḍāya ismu sūq il-žumla</i>	‘This is the wholesale market’
<i>haḍāka ʕīd l-aḍḥa</i>	‘That is Eid al-Adha’

Demonstrative pronoun succeeding the noun (attributive function):

<i>taʕrafha l-qīṣṣa hāḍi walla lā?</i>	‘Do you know this story or not?’
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wīn il-qurā hāḍi l-kullha? ‘Where are all these villages?’
l-iklāb haḍūma hnā ‘These dogs here’

8.1.5. Relative Pronoun

The only attested relative pronoun is that of *illi*, which is not inflected for gender or number. According to Vicente¹⁹³, *illi* is the most dominant form of the relative pronoun throughout all of the Arabic dialects, and this can also be seen within Tunisia, as *illi* is found in the dialect of Sidi Bouzid and the dialects of ʔAwlād Bū ʕAlī and ʔAwlād Qāsim in the Kerkennah islands¹⁹⁴, as well as being one of the forms in the dialect of the Maṛāzīg. Many other dialects in Tunisia also have *elli* as the dominant form, with phonological variations such as *illi* being the secondary, less frequent attestation. Such dialects include Tunis with *elli* and other minor attestations such as *-lli*, the dialect of Mahdia¹⁹⁵ with *elli*, and *illi* as a variant, and that of Sousse with *el:i*.¹⁹⁶ According to Marçais, *elli* is a marker of urban speech, whereas *ella* is a marker of the ‘villageous’ dialects which are influenced by bedouin speech.¹⁹⁷ As such, the Testouri *illi* with its ending /-i/ would reflect urban tendencies by Marçais’ standards. Examples of *illi* as the relative pronoun in the dialect of Testour are:

iṛ-ṛāzil illi šuftu xūya ‘the man who I saw is my brother’
aḥamm il-mudun illi ʕāšu ʕlēha ‘the most important cities in which they lived’

The short form of *illi*, *li*, is also heavily employed especially in free speech, e.g.:

yāklū li yẓī ‘they eat whatever is available’
hīya li ʕandha ṛāzil yẓī ṛāzilha ‘she who has a husband her husband comes.’

8.1.6. Interrogative Pronouns

The interrogative pronouns in the dialect of Testour are as follows:

¹⁹³ Vicente, “Relative Pronoun (Arabic Dialects).”

¹⁹⁴ Herin & Zammit, “Three for the Price of One,” 139, 141.

¹⁹⁵ La Rosa, “Mahdia Dialect: An Urban Vernacular in the Tunisian Sahel Context,” 14.

¹⁹⁶ Talmoudi, *The Arabic Dialect of Sūsa (Tunisia)*, 146.

¹⁹⁷ Marçais, “Les Parlers Arabes et Berbères,” 211.

<i>škūn</i>	‘who’, ‘whom’, ‘whose
e.g. <i>škūnu ɾ-ɾāzil haḍāya?</i>	‘who is this man?’
e.g. <i>ḥbīb škūn?</i>	‘whose friend?’
e.g. <i>ʕand škūn tbūt?</i>	‘at whose place do you stay (overnight)?’
e.g. <i>karhābt iškūn hāḍi?</i>	‘whose car is this?’

<i>šnuwwa / šinū / šnū</i>	‘what’ (+ nominal phrase) sg. masc.
e.g. <i>šnū maʕna l-iḡnā</i>	‘what is ‘songs’?’
e.g. <i>šnuwwa illi tḥibb?</i>	‘what is it that she wants?’

<i>šniyya</i>	‘what’ (+ nominal phrase) sg. fem.
e.g. <i>šniyya illi ʕanna?</i>	‘what is it (fem.) that we have?’

<i>āš / āš</i>	‘what’ (+ nominal phrase)
e.g. <i>āš min šḡīr?</i>	‘what kind of child?’

<i>š-</i>	‘what’ (+ verbal phrase)
e.g. <i>w-š-tḥibb naḥkī-lik āxar</i>	‘what else would you like me to tell you about
<i>ʕala tastūr?</i>	Testour?’
e.g. <i>š-aʕmal-lik</i>	‘what did he do to you?’
e.g. <i>š-ysammūhum?</i>	‘what do they call them?’

8.1.7. Reflexive Pronouns

The reflexive pronouns attested for Testour are:

<i>layya</i> (1.p.sg.)	
e.g. <i>nišri ḥāža layya</i>	‘I buy something for myself’

*rūhi*¹⁹⁸ (1.p.sg.)

¹⁹⁸ Oueslati, “‘Išc in light of her idiolect,” 49, 58.

e.g. <i>ʕallimtha li-r-rūḥi</i> ¹⁹⁹	‘I taught it to myself’
e.g. <i>ʕayyaštum li-r-rūḥi,</i>	‘I took care of them myself,
<i>kabbarthom li-r-rūḥi</i>	I brought them up myself’

8.1.8. Indefinite Pronouns

The indefinite pronouns attested in the dialect of Testour are the following:

<i>kull</i>	‘all’/‘every’/‘each’
<i>āxuṛ</i> (masc.) / <i>āxir</i> (masc.) /	‘another’
<i>uxṛa</i> (fem.) / <i>uxrīn</i> (pl.)	
<i>šayy</i>	‘something’
<i>wāḥid</i>	‘one’
<i>baṛša</i>	‘many’
<i>šwayy</i>	‘few’

8.2. Nouns

8.2.1. Diminutives

The dim. form is quite productive in the dialect of Testour, nevertheless, in free speech this was only employed by the older generation, especially when referring to children and as a term of endearment to the female listener, who was often referred to as *bnayyi*, ‘my little girl’. Singer states that in the dialect of Tunis, the dim. forms of nouns, adjectives and certain particles are only used with people that are close to the speaker, and is rarely used in formal occasions. When it is used, it is generally the women who chose to employ the dim. The most common pattern for words of a tri-radical root is C1C2ayyiC3, and this is one of the most common form of the diminutives according to Singer²⁰⁰, e.g.:

<i>klayyib</i>	‘dog’ (dim.)
<i>ffayyim</i>	‘mouth’ (dim.) (the /w/ of the dim. causes gemination and velarization of the preceding labial f)

¹⁹⁹ All examples in this entry are taken from the aforementioned source.

²⁰⁰ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 480-482.

<i>ḥḥayyib</i>	‘door’ (dim.)
<i>zwayyiz</i>	‘two’ (dim.)
<i>kbayyir</i>	‘big’ (dim.)

The next form, (v)C1C2īC3a is reserved for certain tri-radical roots which are fem. in gender, e.g.:

<i>ummīma</i>	‘mum’ (dim.)
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For quadrilateral words, the sg. of which is based on the form of C1vC2C3v̄C4, e.g. *fallūs* ‘chick’ and *fakrūn* ‘turtle’, the dim. is built on the form C1C2īC3iC4, which is considered to be typical for sedentary dialects, eg.:

<i>flīlis</i>	‘chick’ (dim.)
<i>srīwil</i>	‘trousers’ (dim.) (alternatively: <i>srīwul</i>)
<i>bkīkiš</i>	‘deaf and dumb’ (dim.)
<i>fkīrin</i>	‘turtle’ (dim.)

bkīkiš and *flīlis* also have the Bedouin-type alternatives of *bkīkīš* and *fkīrīn*, respectively, the form of which is C1C2īC3īC4. As such we see that the dim. of quadrilateral words are very much reflective of the urban forms of the dim., whereas the bedouin forms would have been *flīlīs*, so the second vowel would also have been elongated, and only *bkīkīš* and *fkīrīn* reflect bedouin tendencies (and even so, this form was not uniformly employed by all the informants).

Other forms of the dim. attested sparsely include the following:

<i>ummāha</i> / <i>ummāya</i>	‘water’ (dim.)
<i>bnayya</i>	‘girl’ (dim.)
<i>bannūta</i>	‘girl’ / ‘daughter’ (dim.)

8.2.2. Dual

The dual form of nouns has mostly been attested for body parts which occur in a pair, e.g. eyes, hands, etc., or for nouns connoting temporality. The MSA nominative suffix for the dual is not

attested in the dialect of Testour, since the dialect does not concern itself with cases, and any case-endings adopted are those which in MSA would be considered as accusative or genitive. This is a typical behaviour of all Arabic dialects, regardless of any other criteria which may define them (Mashriq- Maghreb, communal dialects etc.).

The MSA suffix /-ayni/ for duals in the genitive/ accusative is altered, as the diphthong /-ay/ becomes the monophthong /-ī/, which is a common occurrence in Testour, as established before. Examples of the dual form attested in the questionnaires and free speech are the following:

<i>nhārīn</i>	‘two days’
<i>ṣāmīn</i>	‘two years’
<i>b-īdīna</i>	‘with our hands’
<i>riḡlīn</i>	‘legs’
<i>wāldīn</i>	‘parents’

The latter three examples, *b-īdīna*, *riḡlīn* and *wāldīn*, are what Blanc terms as pseudo-duals, because although the grammatical structure mimics that of the dual, their semantic meaning points to the regular pl., and not to an actual dual meaning.²⁰¹ Another example of a pseudo-dual attested in this particular dialect is *widnayya* ‘my ears’.

The most common way to show duality is by using *zōz* or its less productive phonological counterpart *zūz* (both of which are monophthongal reflexes of MSA *zawġ* ‘pair’, which in this dialect and many others has not only lost the diphthong, but also the /ġ/ assimilates into a /z/). This would then be followed by the pl. form of the noun, and when the noun starts with a consonant, sometimes an epenthetic vowel would break the consonantal cluster. Examples of *zōz* / *zūz* + noun in the pl. are the following:

<i>zōz abyār</i>	‘two wells’
<i>zōz dyār</i> / <i>zūz idyār</i>	‘two houses’
<i>zōz axwāt</i>	‘two sisters’
<i>zōz iktub</i>	‘two books’

²⁰¹ Blanc, “Dual and Pseudo-Dual in the Arabic Dialects,” 46.

However, with regards to the dual of the nouns ‘meter’ and ‘kilo’, it is noted how these retain their singularity when preceded by *zōz* / *zūz*:

<i>zōz kīlu</i>	‘two kilos’
<i>zōz mītru</i>	‘two meters’

For the dual of ‘litre’, the informants provided both variants: *ītirtīn* or *zūz ītṛāʔt*, but the former seems to be the dominant form.

8.2.3. Plurality

The formation of the pl. in Testour can be either done through a number of suffixes for which the sg. word remains unchanged, and we refer to this as the sound pl., or the internal structure of the sg. word is rearranged with consonantal or vocalic additions or omissions to form what we call the broken pl. These two types are the most productive way of showing plurality not only in Testour, but in any other Arabic varieties, including MSA.

8.2.3.1. Sound Plural

For the sound pl., one should keep in mind that the dialects have disregarded the notion of cases, and as such the only sound suffixes indicating plurality would correspond to the MSA plural suffixes of the accusative and genitive cases, which would be /-īn/ for the masc., with the last short vowel /a/ dropping from the /n/ as is typical of pausal forms both in the dialects and in MSA.²⁰² Examples of the masc. sound pl. are the following:

<i>muriskīyīn</i>	‘Moriscos’	<i>musilmīn</i>	‘Muslims’
<i>mxallṭīn</i>	‘mixed’ (pl.)	<i>mhāžrīn</i>	‘migrants’
<i>aṣlīyīn</i>	‘original’ (pl.)	<i>ṣāfīn</i>	‘pure’ (pl.)

²⁰² Hoberman, “Pausal Forms.”

The regular sound pl. suffix for the fem. would be /-āt/ or /-āṭ/. This type of suffix loses the short vowel following the /t/ which in MSA is used to indicate the case, since, as noted above, cases are obsolete in dialects. Examples of the sound fem. pl. are the following:

<i>ʿādāt</i>	‘customs’	<i>banyāt</i>	‘buildings’
<i>muḏawharāt</i>	‘jewellery’	<i>ummāt</i>	‘mothers’ (also <i>ummahāt</i>)

8.2.3.2. Broken Plural

If we look into some broken pl. patterns of the Arabic dialect attested in Testour, then we can mention the following forms:

C1C2ā/āC3

<i>byār</i>	‘wells’	<i>myāh</i>	‘waters’
<i>rżāl</i>	‘men’	<i>bnāt</i>	‘girls / daughters’
<i>dyāb</i>	‘jackals’	<i>klāb</i>	‘dogs’
<i>xwāl</i>	‘maternal uncles’	<i>ṣḡār</i>	‘small’ (pl.)
<i>kbār</i>	‘big’ (pl.)	<i>l-aṣbād</i>	‘the people’
<i>(a)lwān</i>	‘colours’		

In a similar vein to the above pattern, there is also C1C2ṽC3, in which the long vowel is any other vowel besides /ā/ or /ā/:

<i>wżūh</i>	‘faces’
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A related broken pl. form is that of C1C2ṽC3a:

<i>dyūba</i>	‘jackals’	<i>ḥfāya</i>	‘barefoot’ (pl.)
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C1ṽC2ā/āC3

<i>bībān</i>	‘doors’	<i>fīrān</i>	‘rats’
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C1C2uC3:

<i>ṣfur</i>	‘yellow’ (pl.)	<i>ṭruṣ</i>	‘deaf’ (pl.)
<i>byuḏ</i>	‘white’ (pl.)		

C1C2ā/āC3vC4

<i>skākin</i>	‘knives’	<i>fkārin</i>	‘turtles’
<i>flālis</i>	‘chicks’	<i>srāwil / srāwul</i>	‘pants’ (pl.)
<i>bkākiš</i>	‘deaf and dumb’ (pl.)	<i>xwātim</i>	‘rings’
<i>igbāyil</i>	‘tribes’	<i>msākin</i>	‘poor’ / ‘miserable’ (pl.)

C1vC2ā/āC3vC4 - This type of broken pl. has only been attested for MSA loanwords, and as such mimics the MSA broken pl. perfectly:

<i>maʔākil</i>	‘food’	<i>mašākil</i>	‘problems’
<i>ḍarāʔib</i>	‘taxes’		

C1vC2ā/āC3 (MSA)

<i>gilāl</i>	‘fruit’	<i>ḍifāf</i>	‘shores’
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The following MSA broken pl. forms have also been attested in the dialect of Testour:

<i>futuḥāt</i>	‘conquests’	<i>anwāf</i>	‘types’
<i>aʕyād</i>	‘feasts’	<i>awlēd</i>	‘children’
<i>sukkān</i>	‘inhabitants’	<i>mudun</i>	‘cities’
<i>ḥalawīyāt</i>	‘sweets’		

The following broken pl. forms were used in isolative cases:

<i>tubba</i>	‘doctors’	C1vC2C3v
<i>awlyā / wlyā</i>	‘saints’	(a)C1C2C3ā

8.2.3.3. Agreement of Plural Nouns

Although the fascinating subject of dialectological concord requires its own dedicated syntactical section which is beyond the scope of this thesis (as the focus of this work is phonology and morphology), there have been uncovered some instances of agreement with regards to pl. nouns which can be rendered quite interesting. For example the noun *l-aʕbād* ‘the people’, is sometimes treated as a sg. fem. noun or as a pl. noun, depending on the speaker, e.g.:²⁰³

²⁰³ In the transcription and translation of this section, the words which show the gender and/or singularity/plurality are bold.

kānt l-aʕbād txāf w-tiḥšim w-mā-titkallim-š

The people (pl.) **used to** (sg.f.) **be fearful** (sg.f.) **and timid** (sg.f.) and **they would not speak** (sg.f.)

lgū l-aʕbād maʕnāha illi nažžmu yitʔaqalmu mʕāhum

They met the people (pl.) and they managed to adapt **to them** (pl.)

wlīdātha titqāra ‘her children **study**’ (sg.f.)

For more ambiguous nouns like *nās* ‘the people’, we see the agreement is not regular, informants alternated between the sg. fem and the pl. agreement:

baṛša nās žū ‘many people **came**’ (pl.)

baṛša nās žāt ‘many people **came**’ (sg.f.)

Works on agreement patterns in Arabic dialectology are unfortunately quite sparse and the few that exist are relatively recent, such as that of D’Anna and Bettega (2022), which treats the concept of agreement in Arabic dialectology in detail as well as provide a comprehensive compilation of all other research on this topic.²⁰⁴ Of the works that exist, it is easily arguable that the least amount of studies exist on the dialects of Tunisia, save for a chapter from Ritt-Benmimoun on the plural agreement patterns in the Douz region.²⁰⁵ Much like what occurs in Testour (although the few examples provided in this section are by no means trying to hint at a pattern), in this southern region there is not one absolute agreement pattern for words such as *nās* and *l-aʕbād*, which Ritt-Benmimoun places under ‘mixed groups of people’, and the only definite rule for such words is that they cannot support the pl. fem. agreement. As such, in this area these nouns may also allow for both pl. agreement or sg. fem. agreement, although the latter seems to be the favoured type of agreement in such cases.

As for non-human nouns, in Testour the norm seems to be to treat them in the sg. fem, thereby remaining somewhat faithful to MSA when it comes to concord, e.g.:

w-žābu mʕāhum il-ʕādāt w-t-taqālīd mtāḥḥum illi hīya baṛša gīlāl taww baṛša gīlāl hīya min, žāya min isbānya

‘And they brought with them their customs and traditions, which **were** (sg.f.) many fruits, now many fruits **are** (sg.f.), **they come** (sg.f.) from Spain.’

²⁰⁴ Bettega & D’Anna. *Gender and Number Agreement in Arabic*.

²⁰⁵ Ritt-Benmimoun, “Agreement with Plural Heads in Tunisian Arabic: The Bedouin South,” 268-272.

aḥamm il-mudun illi ṣāṣu ʕlēha

‘The most important cities **in** (sg.f.) (lit. on) which they lived’

ayyām bāḥya

‘**nice** (sg.f.) days’

However, in the questionnaires, complete agreement has also been attested for non-human nouns, e.g.:

zōz byūt ikbār

‘two **big** houses’

ṣrādik ismān

‘**fat** roosters’

8.2.3.4. Collective Nouns

The majority of the collective nouns which were gathered mostly through free speech, was lexicon which semantically reflected flora and fauna. The following are some examples:

ward ‘flowers’

rummān ‘pomegranates’

mišmāš ‘apricots’

kaṣk ‘biscuit-like pastry’

fill ‘Arabian jasmine’

tuffāḥ ‘apples’

gažar ‘gypsies’

filfil ‘pepper’

baṭāṭa ‘potatoes’

fūl ‘beans’

šabāb ‘youth’

ṣṣrab ‘Arabs’

8.2.4. Elative

The elative is formed on the same basis of MSA, with a short /a/ preceding the first consonant of the word, and any long vowels in the medial position omitted. The most common pattern for the attested comparative words in the dialect of Testour is aC1C2vC3, followed by aC1aC2C3 for the geminated roots.

8.2.4.1. Comparative

aC1C2vC3

agdim

‘older’

e.g. *dāri agdim min dāru* ‘my house is older than his house’

aktar ‘more’

e.g. *lūgithum makhbūsa aktar* ‘their dialect is tighter / stricter’

8.2.4.2. Superlative

article + aC1C2vC3

l-aktar ‘the most’

e.g. *šamāl l-ġarbi li hūwa ymattil* ‘the northwest is the area which includes Beja,
bēža w-žandūba w-il-kēf l-aktar Jandouba and Kef mostly’

aC1C2vC3

akbar / akbir ‘biggest’

e.g. *akbar blād fi-tūnis* ‘the biggest city in Tunisia’

e.g. *akbar žāmiʿ fi-tastūr* ‘the biggest mosque in Testour’

aktar ‘the most’

fi-šamāl ifrīqya ʕanna aktar ‘in North Africa we have the most important thing which is
ḥāža hīya wād mažrda Medjerda river’

aC1aC2C3

ahamm ‘the most important’

e.g. *ahamm il-mudun* ‘the most important cities’

e.g. *ahamm maʕlim* ‘the most important monument’

ažadd ‘the newest’

e.g. *ažadd karīhba* ‘the newest car’

8.3. Numerals

8.3.1. Cardinal Numbers

The cardinal numbers attested in the speech of the informants are the following:

<i>wāḥid / wāḥid</i>	‘one’
<i>ṭnīn</i>	‘two’
<i>tlāṭa</i>	‘three’
<i>arḃa</i>	‘four’
<i>xamsa</i>	‘five’
<i>sitta</i>	‘six’
<i>sabʿa</i>	‘seven’
<i>ṭmānya</i>	‘eight’
<i>tisʿa</i>	‘nine’
<i>ʿašra</i>	‘ten’
<i>aṭnāš</i>	‘twelve’
<i>xumiṣṭāš / xumṣṭāš</i>	‘fifteen’
<i>siṭṭāš/ suṭṭāš</i>	‘sixteen’
<i>ʿašrīn</i>	‘twenty’
<i>tlāṭīn</i>	‘thirty’
<i>tisʿīn</i>	‘ninety’
<i>alf</i>	‘one thousand’

8.3.2. Ordinal Numbers

The attested ordinal numbers are the following:

<i>l-ūl / l-uwwil</i> (masc.)	‘the first’ (masc.)
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<i>l-ūla</i> (fem.)	‘the first’ (fem.)
<i>l-ūlīn / l-wāla</i> (pl.)	‘the first’ (pl.)
<i>iṛ-ṛābaʿ</i> (masc.)	‘the fourth’ (masc.)
<i>il-xumṣṭāš</i>	‘the fifteenth’

8.3.3. Numeral Adjective: The Last

The numeral adjective ‘the first’ has already been discussed under the section of the Ordinal Numbers. The adjective ‘the last’ works in a similar manner, in which there are variants of the sg. masc., the sg. fem. and one pl. communis form. However, variety was attested especially for the sg. forms:

<i>l-ixxir / l-ixrāni</i> (masc.)	‘the last’ (masc.)
<i>l-ixxra / l-ixrānīya</i> (fem.)	‘the last’ (fem.)
<i>l-ixrānīn</i> (pl.)	‘the last’ (pl.)

8.4. The Article

As stated in Aguadé, the definite article in Tunisian dialects is /il-/ from the north to the south, e.g. from Tunis to the dialect of the Maṛāzīg in the far south of Tunisia. As such, the vowel /i/ replaces the vowel /a/ or any of its allophones, which are found in other dialects.²⁰⁶ In Testour this was no exception:

<i>il-ḥarka</i>	‘the work’
<i>il-futuḥāt il-ʔislāmīya</i>	‘the Islamic conquest’
<i>il-ḥižra</i>	‘the migration’
<i>il-qarn il-xumṣṭāš</i>	‘the fifteenth century’

The article can assimilate to the first consonant of the word if this happens to be a sun letter:

<i>id-dawla</i>	‘the state’
<i>iš-šams</i>	‘the sun’
<i>is-sukkān</i>	‘the inhabitants’

²⁰⁶ Aguadé, “The Maghrebi dialects of Arabic,” 49.

A peculiar assimilation for the definite article was attested in *iž-židd* ‘the grandfather’, which in Testour exists alongside *il-židd*, and its assimilation is interesting because the /ž/ is not a sun letter in MSA, but it acts as one in various Tunisian dialects, including the city dialect and the bedouin Sulaymī dialect of Douz, for which Ritt-Benmimoun gives the following example: *iž-žmal* ‘the camel’.²⁰⁷ Gibson claims that its qualities as a sun letter are inconsistent and depend on the vocabulary.²⁰⁸

Should the word preceding the definite article end with a vowel, then the /i-/ of the article is elided:

<i>žābu l-ḥill</i>	‘they brought the Arabian jasmine’
<i>il-lahža t-tastūrīya</i>	‘the Testouri dialect’
<i>s-silḥa</i>	‘the merchandise’

Whenever the word succeeding the article begins with a vowel, the /i-/ is omitted once again, even if the preceding word ends with a consonant:

<i>aḡlabīya mtāḥ l-andalus</i>	‘the majority are of al-Andalus’
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This rule applies especially when the word succeeding the article starts with an epenthetic vowel:

<i>kānt l-imṛā</i>	‘the woman was’
<i>l-igbāyil</i>	‘the tribes’
<i>naḥmlu fīh l-aḥṣīda</i>	‘in it we cook the ḥṣīda’

8.5. Prepositions

The majority of the prepositions support the suffixed pronouns, as seen in some of the examples below:

<i>min</i>	‘from’
e.g. <i>yāxiḍ minhum l-iflūs</i>	‘he takes the money from them’

²⁰⁷ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 150.

²⁰⁸ Gibson, “Tunis Arabic.”

Whenever *min* is followed by an article, it drops the /-in/, e.g.

haḍika m-il-aṣyād mtāṣna ‘these are (from) some of our feasts’

b- ‘with’ / ‘through’

e.g. *sāṣa timši b-iš-šams* ‘a clock which works through (with) sunlight’

fi- ‘in’

e.g. *aḥamm maṣlim fi-madīnt tastūr* ‘the most important monument in the town of Testour’

mṣā ‘with’

e.g. *ummu tabda titkallam mṣa žāritha* ‘his mother starts talking to her neighbour’

guddām ‘in front of’

kīf ‘like’

e.g. *miš kīfna* ‘not like us’

ḥḍāya / baḥḍāya ‘next to me’

bīn ‘between’

e.g. *ummu tabda ṣāmla ḥīt mā bīnha* ‘his mother is building a wall between her
w-bīn wildha and her son’

ṣla ‘on’

e.g. *ṣāšu ṣla ḍifāf wād mažarda* ‘they lived at/on the shores of the Medjerda river’

ṣand ‘at’

e.g. *ṣand škūn tbūt?* ‘by (at) whom do you stay overnight?’

baṣd ‘after’

e.g. *nhār baṣd nhār l-ḥanna* ‘the day after is the day of the Henna’

<i>fuṣṭ</i>	‘within’
e.g. <i>xabbu fuṣṭha l-xwētim</i>	‘they hid the rings within it’
<i>li / l-</i>	‘until’ / ‘to’
e.g. <i>li-ḡurūb iš-šams</i>	‘until sunset’
e.g. <i>waṣṣalha l-iblāṣitha</i>	‘accompany her to her place’ (imperative)
<i>fūg</i>	‘over’ / ‘on’
e.g. <i>fūg rāsna</i> ²⁰⁹	‘over our heads’

8.6. Adverbs

8.6.1. Interrogative Adverbs

The interrogative pronouns were already mentioned in section 8.1.6. The interrogative adverbs are mentioned below:

<i>wīn</i>	‘where?’
e.g. <i>wīn il-mudun?</i>	‘where are the cities?’
e.g. <i>wīn māšya?</i>	‘where are you (fem.) going?’
<i>mnīn</i>	‘from where?’
e.g. <i>mnīn ṣarfūh iz-zlīz?</i>	‘from where did they get to know about the tiles?’
<i>flāš</i>	‘why?’
e.g. <i>flāš ṣuḥt?</i>	‘why did you scream?’
<i>waqtāš</i>	‘when?’
e.g. <i>yā Fāṭma, waqtāš rītīh Muḥammad?</i>	‘Fatima, when did you see Muhammad?’
<i>kīfāš</i>	‘how?’

²⁰⁹ Oueslati, “‘Iṣe in light of her idiolect,” 56.

e.g. *kīfāš il-mākla hādīy?*

‘how is this food?’

giddāš

‘how much?’ / ‘how many?’

e.g. *b-giddāš řtal il-gāraš?*

‘how much is a half kilo of lemons?’

e.g. *giddāš řandik min wlayyid?*

‘how many children do you have?’

8.6.2. Temporal Adverbs

il-yōm

‘today’

e.g. *il-yōm mā-nixdim-š*

‘I don’t work today’

ğudwa

‘tomorrow’

e.g. *nišri ğudwa hađika*

‘tomorrow I buy that’

yawmīya

‘daily’

e.g. *il-ħarka yawmīya*

‘work is daily’

tawwa / taww / tawwīka

‘now’ / ‘nowadays’

e.g. *tawwa mā-řād-š hakkāka*

‘now it’s no longer like this’

qbal / gbal

‘before’

e.g. *il-ħayā kānt bāhya qbal*

‘life was good before’

8.6.3. Adverbs of Quantity

bařša

‘a lot / very / many’

e.g. *klīna bařša*

‘we ate a lot’

yāsir

‘a lot / very / many’

e.g. *řbād yāsir řāt*

‘many people came’

šwayya

e.g. *kān ṭhibb taḥkī-nna ʕla tarīxha šwayya?*

‘a little / few’

‘if you want you could tell us a bit about Testour’s history?’

baṛka / baṛk

e.g. *taww yžību tnīn baṛk*

‘only’

‘nowadays, they have two (children) only’

8.6.4. Locative Adverbs

hnā

e.g. *žābu li-hnā ʕādāthum*

‘here’

‘they brought their traditions here’

gādi

‘there’

ʕla baṛra

e.g. *yuxruž ʕla baṛra*

‘outside’

‘he goes outside’

8.7. Conjunctions

The following is a list of conjunctions attested in the dialect of Testour:

w⁻²¹⁰

‘and’ / ‘whilst’

bāš

‘so that’

kīma (kīf + ma)

‘like’ / ‘such as’

walla

‘or’

ḥatta

‘until’

āma

‘but’

kīf

‘when’ / ‘as’

ki

‘if’ / ‘whenever’

kān

‘if’

lākin

‘but’

²¹⁰ *w⁻* is the default transcription of the conjunction ‘and’ in the free speech transcriptions, even though variations of it have been attested, such as *ū* and *wa*.

8.8. Possession

It has already been established that the dialect of Testour has a set of attached possessive pronouns for nouns ending with a consonant and another for nouns ending with a vowel, as is typical for most if not all Arabic dialects. Nevertheless, there are other ways of showing possession, namely through the construct state and the genitive exponent, the latter of which is a feature reserved solely for the dialects.

8.8.1. Construct State

The construct state in Testouri Arabic works the same as that of MSA, in which the first noun (or the possessed noun) is considered to be definite but without an article. In accordance with MSA, the second noun (the possessor) may or may not have an article e.g.:

<i>sūq il-žumla</i>	‘the wholesale market’ (lit. the market of the wholesale)
<i>šamāl ifrīqya</i>	‘North Africa’ (lit. the north of Africa)
<i>bāb id-dār</i>	‘the door of the house’
<i>ḍiḡāf wād mažarda</i>	‘the shores of Medjerda River’ (In this case, we find two construct states)

Whenever the first noun ends with the vowel /a/, this becomes /-it/ or /-t/, e.g.:

<i>šaxšīyt id-dzīrīya</i>	‘the nature of Algerians’
<i>kaḡhibit Aḡmid bīḡa</i>	‘Ahmed’s car is white’
<i>madīnt tastūr</i>	‘the town of Testour’

8.8.2. Genitive Exponent

The genitive exponent in Testouri Arabic is *mtāḡ*, which can also be followed by pronominal suffixes. During the questionnaires, the informants were asked whether they use any other variation, such as *ntāḡ*, which is found in the dialect of the Maḡāzīg (alongside *mtāḡ*)²¹¹, or any of its variants, however they refuted doing so. In addition to this, gender and plurality do not govern the genitive exponent, as it only exists in one singular form. Examples of the genitive exponent particle:

²¹¹ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 151.

<i>il-kaṛihba</i> mtāš <i>Aḥmid bīḍa</i>	‘Ahmed’s car is white’
<i>it-tisʕa</i> mtāš <i>il-līl</i>	‘nine o’clock in the evening’
<i>anwāš</i> mtāš <i>ʕšīda</i>	‘the types of ʕšīda’

The genitive exponent can also support the attached pronouns. e.g.:

<i>s-silʕa</i> mtāʕu	‘his merchandise’
<i>il-aʕyād id-dīnīya</i> mtāʕna	‘our religious feasts’
<i>il-ʕādāt</i> mtāḥḥum	‘their customs’
<i>w-t-taqālīd</i> mtāḥḥum	‘and their traditions’

As noted in the last two examples, the /ʕ/ of the genitive marker and the /h/ of the attached pronoun might assimilate to form a double /ḥ/.

The genitive exponent particle and the construct state could also follow each other immediately, as exhibited in the following example:

<i>is-sukkān l-aʕlīyīn</i> mtāš <i>madīnt tastūr</i>	‘the original inhabitants of the town of Testour’
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In this case, the noun *madīna* is both a possessor (of *is-sukkān l-aʕlīyīn*) and the noun possessed (of *tastūr*).

8.9. Negation

8.9.1. Nominal Negation

The particle indicating nominal negation in the dialect of Testour is *miš* or less frequently *muš*. In the Pronoun section, it was seen how *miš* can negate the personal pronouns through the suffixed attached pronouns. According to Ritt-Benmimoun, *miš* is the shortened form of *māhīš*, whereas *muš* is the shortened form of *māhūš*, however, in their short form they each lose the gender aspect of the reflex.²¹² The independent particle always precedes the negated word, e.g.:

<i>muš baṛša</i>	‘not a lot’
<i>miš kīfna</i>	‘not like us’

²¹² Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 155.

miš lāzim tidxul l-dāxil

‘it is not necessary to enter inside’

miš tawwīka

‘not now’

8.9.2. Neither...Nor

To negate two things (nouns, adjectives, adverbs etc.) at once, the Testouri dialect, much like MSA, makes use of *lā ... (w-)lā...*, in which the ellipses represents the words that are meant to be negated, e.g.:

lā šāla w-lā kīma tawwīka

‘neither a hall nor anything like now’

taww lā šād yxāfu lā m-il-mudīr lā m-il-muṣallim

‘nowadays, they are not scared neither of the headmaster nor of the teacher’

8.9.3. Verbal Negation

8.9.3.1. Circumfixial Negation

The most common way to negate verbs in the dialect of Testour is through the circumfixial negation, in which /mā-/ precedes the verb, and /-š/ is suffixed to the end. This sort of negation applies to verbs in any tense, whereas in MSA the /mā-/ is reserved for the perfect tense. Whenever the verb ends with a vowel, this undergoes elongation before it is succeeded by the /-š/ suffix.

Examples of negated verbs in the past tense (verb ends with a consonant):

mā-ḥabb-š yġūm

‘he did not want to get up’

mā-kān-š

‘he was not’

Examples of negated verbs in the past tense (verb ends with a vowel):

mā-kunnā-š nṭayybu

‘we did not cook’

mā-ismhā-š

‘she was not called’

mā-nažžmū-š

‘they did not manage to do sth.’

Examples of negated verbs in the present tense (verb ends with a consonant):

mā-tṣūm-š?

‘you don’t fast?’

mā-yaqdar-š

‘he cannot (afford)’

Examples of negated verbs in the present tense (verb ends with a vowel):

<i>hūwa mā-yxallī-š l-imṛā tuxruž</i>	‘he does not allow the woman to go out’
<i>mā-tgul-lū-š</i>	‘she does not tell him’

8.9.3.2. /mā-/ + Verb

Rarely, verbal negation can also be formed through the prefix /mā-/ alone, without the suffix /-š/. In the dialect of the Maṛāzīg, this is more frequently attested, albeit restricted to certain constructions, e.g. *mā- ... ḥatta ḥadd* ‘absolutely no one.’²¹³ In the two attestations of the /mā-/ + verb for the dialect of Testour, both verbs had attached pronouns:

<i>waḷḷa mā-ngūlha</i>	‘By God, I do not say this’
<i>mā-yṣānidni fīha ḥatta wāḥid</i>	‘no one can tell me otherwise (lit. no one at all can rival me on this matter)’

8.9.3.3. Negation of the Imperative

The negation of the imperative does not diverge from the normal circumfixial negation. As such, in most cases the verb would be preceded by the /mā-/ and succeeded by the /-š/ suffix, e.g.:

<i>mā-tkallim-š</i>	‘don’t speak’ (sg. masc.)
<i>mā-taṣmil-š hakkāka</i>	‘don’t do like this’ (sg. masc.)
<i>mā-tkallmū-š</i>	‘don’t speak!’ (pl.)

²¹³ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 152.

8.10. Verbs

8.10.1. Strong Verbs

The regular verb chosen as a representative for the 1st form ‘to work’ is conjugated below:

‘To work’

Perfect

1. p.sg.	<i>xdimt</i>	-t	‘I worked’
2. p.sg. masc.	<i>xdimt</i>	-t	‘you (masc.) worked’
2. p.sg. fem.	<i>xdimti</i>	-ti	‘you (fem.) worked’
3. p.sg. masc.	<i>xdim</i>		‘he worked’
3. p.sg. fem.	<i>xidmit</i>	-it	‘she worked’
1. p.pl.	<i>xdimna</i>	-na	‘we worked’
2. p.pl.	<i>xdimtu</i>	-tu	‘you (pl.) worked’
3. p.pl.	<i>xidmu</i>	-u	‘they worked’

Imperfect

1. p.sg.	<i>nixdim</i>	n-	‘I work’
2. p.sg. masc.	<i>tixdim</i>	t-	‘you (masc.) work’
2. p.sg. fem.	<i>tixdmi</i>	t-_-i	‘you (fem.) work’
3. p.sg. masc.	<i>yixdim</i>	y-	‘he works’
3. p.sg. fem.	<i>tixdim</i>	t-	‘she works’
1. p.pl.	<i>nixdmu</i>	n-_-u	‘we work’
2. p.pl.	<i>tixdmu</i>	t-_-u	‘you (pl.) work’
3. p.pl.	<i>yixdmu</i>	y-_-u	‘they work’

Imperative

sg. masc.	<i>ixdim</i>		‘work!’ (masc.)
sg. fem.	<i>ixdmi</i>	-i	‘work!’ (fem.)
pl.	<i>ixdmu</i>	-u	‘work!’

Gender distinction is retained in the 2. p.sg., but not in the 2. and 3. p.pl., mirroring the situation of the independent pronouns as well as the situation of verbal conjugations in other dialects, such as

that of Sidi Bouzid²¹⁴, whereas dialects such as that of Tunis²¹⁵ and Sousse²¹⁶ have lost the gender distinction in the 2. p.sg. completely, and others such as that of the Maṛāzīg have retained the distinction even in the 2. and 3. p.pl.²¹⁷ As such, dialects like that of Testour can be considered as intermediary dialects in this regard.

The 1. p.sg. verb in the imperfect is prefixed with /n-/, and this reflects one of the most basic shibboleths which describe the Maghrebi varieties and sets them apart from the Mashriqi ones.²¹⁸ In the imperfect as well, the 2. p.sg. fem. drops the /n/ in the suffix /-īn/, in favour of the suffix /-i/, whereas in the 2. and 3. p.pl. the /n/ is also dropped from the suffix, leaving an exposed /-u/. This is also typical in other dialects, such as that of Sidi Bouzid²¹⁹, the Maṛāzīg²²⁰ and Tunis (only the plural endings, since as explored above, Tunis does not have a reflex for the 2. p.sg. fem.).²²¹

With regards to the imperative, we see once again the emergence of the gender distinction in the 2. p.sg., with a suffix /-i/ indicating the fem., whereas naturally the 2. p.pl. has only one communis variety. For this particular verb, the imperative prefix is an /i-/, however, for other verbs, it may be an /a-/, e.g. *aḡslu* ‘wash!’ (pl.), or an /ū-/, e.g. *ūṣlu* ‘arrive!’ (pl.) .

8.10.2. Verbs with *hamza*

‘To take’

In the verbs with a *hamza* as one of their radicals, such as the verb ‘to take’, the *hamza* is often dismissed or along with the short vowel it transforms into a long vowel (although this is not the case with *xḍit*). We see both of these occurrences manifesting in the aforementioned verb, whose first radical is the hamza. In the perfect, the hamza is omitted and the verb begins with the second

²¹⁴ Prinoth, “Der Dialekt von Sidi Bouzid (Zentraltunesien),” 76.

²¹⁵ Gibson, “Tunis Arabic.”

²¹⁶ Talmoudi, *The Arabic Dialect of Sūsa (Tunisia)*, 78.

²¹⁷ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 286.

²¹⁸ Behnstedt, “Dialect Geography.”

²¹⁹ Prinoth, “Der Dialekt von Sidi Bouzid (Zentraltunesien),” 76-77.

²²⁰ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 288.

²²¹ Gibson, “Tunis Arabic.”

radical, whereas in the imperfect, one sees the transformation of the *hamza* with the short vowel of the imperfect prefixes into a long vowel. This behaviour is by no means exclusive to Testour, as we see it manifest as well in other Tunisian dialects, such as in Tunis.²²² In the imperative, the reflex *xūd* shows us that once again the second radical initiates the word. Not all the persons for this particular verb were attested, so only the ones that have been recorded are mentioned in the tables below:

Perfect

3. p.sg. masc.	<i>xḍā</i>		‘he took’
3. p.sg. fem.	<i>xḍāt</i> / <i>xḍit</i>	-t	‘she took’
3. p.pl.	<i>xḍū</i> / <i>xḍāw</i>	-ū/āw	‘they took’

Imperfect

1. p.sg.	<i>nāxuḍ</i> / <i>nāxiḍ</i>	n-	‘I take’
2. p.sg. fem.	<i>tāxḍi</i>	t- _i	‘you (fem.) take’
3. p.sg. masc.	<i>yāxuḍ</i>	y-	‘he takes’
1. p.pl.	<i>nāxḍu</i>	n- _u	‘we take’

Imperative

sg. masc.	<i>xūd</i>		‘take!’ (masc.)
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A captivating reflex which emerged from this verb is that of the 3. p.pl., which seems to have two reflexes of *xḍū* and *xḍāw*. The latter seems to be the more preferable reflex, and it is also the reflex which is attested in other Tunisian dialects, such as that of the Maṛāzīg.²²³

8.10.3. Geminated Radicals

Verbs with a gemination in the second and third radical act quite normally, in that nothing out of the ordinary occurs to the geminated radicals. The following list features examples of such verbs attested mostly in free speech:

²²² Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 253.

²²³ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 330.

<i>t̥hibb</i>	‘she wants’	<i>t̥habbi</i>	‘you (fem.) want’
<i>ḥaṭṭu</i>	‘they settled’	<i>t̥huṭṭ</i>	‘she puts’
<i>tlimm</i>	‘she gathers’	<i>yfizzu</i>	‘they wake up’
<i>yxalliṭ</i>	‘he mixes’	<i>xalliṭ</i>	‘he mixed’
<i>xallṭit</i>	‘she mixed’		

The next section is a compilation of verb (both strong verbs and weak verbs which act like strong verbs outside the 1st form) attested in some of the other forms of the Arabic verb. As can be noted, some forms, like the 2nd form, are much more productive than others:

II Form

<i>nkallm-ik</i>	‘I speak to you (sg.)’	<i>nṭayybu</i>	‘we cook’
<i>nsayygu</i>	‘we wash’	<i>tsakkir</i>	‘she locks’
<i>yqayyil</i>	‘he naps’	<i>ydawwuš</i>	‘he showers’
<i>t̥haddid</i>	‘she irons’		

V Form

<i>yitkallmu</i>	‘they speak to each other’	<i>titfarriž</i>	‘she watches (t.v.)’
<i>yitṣaššu</i>	‘they have dinner’		

VIII Form

<i>taḥtaflu</i>	‘you (pl.) celebrate’	<i>naḥtaflu</i>	‘we celebrate’
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X Form

<i>yistaḥla</i>	‘to consider something good’	<i>yistifād</i>	‘to profit from something’
<i>yistanfaʿ</i>	‘to profit from something’		

8.10.4. Weak Verbs

The following section revolves around the reflexes of verbs which feature a weak radical. Unfortunately, not all the reflexes for all the verbs have been attested, and as such the following tables will only include the ones which have managed to be gathered:

8.10.4.1. 1st radical weak

‘To arrive’

Perfect

1. p.sg.	<i>wṣult</i>	-t	‘I arrived’
3. p.sg. masc.	<i>wṣul</i>		‘he arrived’
1. p.pl.	<i>wṣilna</i>	-na	‘we arrived’
3. p.pl.	<i>wuṣlu</i>	-u	‘they arrived’

Imperfect

1. p.sg.	<i>nūṣil</i>	n-	‘I arrive’
2. p.sg. masc.	<i>tūṣil</i>	t-	‘you (masc.) arrive’
3. p.sg. masc.	<i>yūṣil</i>	y-	‘he arrives’
3. p.pl.	<i>yūṣlu</i>	y-__u	‘they arrive’

Imperative

pl.	<i>ūṣlu</i>	__u	‘arrive!’ (pl.)
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When compared to the strong verbs, it can be noted that the weak verb does not affect the temporal affixes, nor does it have anything out of the ordinary when compared to the MSA variant of the verb, in its treatment of the 1st weak radical. As such, the weak radical in the initial position, which in this case is /w/, is retained in the perfect. However, it can be noted that in the imperfect as well as in the imperative the /w/ drops but the vowel following the prefix is elongated.

8.10.4.2. 2nd radical weak

‘To bring’

Perfect Tense

1. p.sg.	<i>žibt / žibit</i>	-t / -it	‘I brought’
3. p.sg. masc.	<i>žāb</i>		‘he brought’
3. p.pl.	<i>žābu</i>	-u	‘they brought’

Imperfect Tense

3. p.sg. masc.	<i>yžīb</i>	y-	‘he brings’
1. p.pl.	<i>nžību</i>	n-_-u	‘we bring’
3. p.pl.	<i>yžību</i>	y-_-u	‘they bring’

Imperative

sg. masc.	<i>žīb</i>		‘bring!’ (masc.)
sg. fem.	<i>žibi</i>	-i	‘bring!’ (fem.)

In the 1. p.sg. the primary reflex is *žibt*, although the reflex with the epenthetic vowel /i/ was attested from more than one person.

8.10.4.3. 3rd radical weak

‘To come’

Perfect

1. p.sg.	<i>žīt</i>	-t	‘I came’
2. p.sg. fem.	<i>žīti</i>	-ti	‘you (fem.) came’
3. p.sg. masc.	<i>žā</i>		‘he came’
3. p.sg. fem.	<i>žit</i> / <i>žāt</i>	-t	‘she came’
3. p.pl.	<i>žū</i> / <i>žāw</i>	-ū / -āw	‘they came’

Imperfect

1. p.sg.	<i>nžī</i>	n-	‘I come’
3. p.sg. masc.	<i>yžī</i>	y-	‘he comes’
3. p.sg. fem.	<i>džī</i>	d-	‘she comes’
1. p.pl.	<i>nžū</i>	n-_-ū	‘we come’
3. p.pl.	<i>yžū</i> / <i>yžīw</i>	y-_-ū / -w	‘they come’

Imperative

sg. masc.	<i>īža</i>		‘come!’ (masc.)
sg. fem.	<i>īži</i>	-i	‘come!’ (fem.)

pl.	<i>īžu</i>	-u	‘come!’ (pl.)
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It can be noted that the one long vowel in every tense conceals the weak radical as well as the final radical, since this happened to be a /ʔ/. For the 2. p.sg. fem., the temporal prefix /t-/ undergoes consonantal change and it becomes a /d-/. This type of change is very common, as we see it occur also in dialects such as the bedouin one of the Maṛāzīg in the Douz region.²²⁴ In the 3. p.pl., two reflexes have been attested, and this was previously seen in the verb ‘to take’. The reflex *žāw* builds on the reflex of the 3. p.sg. masc, through the addition of /-w/. This ending is somewhat related to that of the Maṛāzīg, which is *žaw* or *žow*,²²⁵ as well as that of Tunis²²⁶ and Sousse²²⁷ which is *žāw*. It is worth noting that in all the sources of the aforementioned dialects, the verb ‘to come’ is considered to be an irregular or special verb. The long /-ū/ is seemingly not as common as /-aw/ in other dialects, however, it is attested in Ben Gardane²²⁸ or Sidi Bouzid²²⁹ in the verb ‘to walk’, the reflexes for which are *məšu* and *mšū*, respectively.

‘To forget’

Perfect

1. p.sg.	<i>nsīt</i>	-t	‘I forgot’
2. p.sg. fem.	<i>nsīti</i>	-ti	‘you (fem.) forgot’
3. p.sg. masc.	<i>nsāʔ</i>		‘he forgot’
3. p.sg. fem.	<i>nsit / nsāt</i>	-it / -āt	‘she forgot’
1. p.pl.	<i>nsīna</i>	-īna	‘we forgot’
3. p.pl.	<i>nsū / nsāʔu</i>	-ū / -u	‘they forgot’

Imperfect

1. p.sg.	<i>nansa</i>	n-	‘I forget’
2. p.sg. fem.	<i>tansi</i>	t- _i	‘you (fem.) forget’

²²⁴ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 328.

²²⁵ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 328.

²²⁶ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 363.

²²⁷ Talmoudi, *The Arabic Dialect of Sūsa (Tunisia)*, 90.

²²⁸ Mion, “The Arabic Dialect of Ben Gardane (Tunisia): Some Observations,” 113.

²²⁹ Prinoth, “Der Dialekt von Sidi Bouzid (Zentraltunesien),” 85.

3. p.sg. masc.	<i>yansa</i>	y-	‘he forget’
1. p.pl.	<i>nansu</i>	n-_-u	‘we forget’
3. p.pl.	<i>yansu</i>	y-_-u	‘they forget’

Imperative

sg. masc.	<i>ansa</i>		‘forget!’ (masc.)
sg. fem.	<i>ansi</i>	-i	‘forget!’ (fem.)
pl.	<i>ansu</i>	-u	‘forget!’ (pl.)

The most interesting aspects within this verb are its perfect tense variants, in which one can see the elision of the first short vowel, and the elongation of the one core vowel, either into a /ī/ or an /ā/. The 3. p.pl. reflex is particularly intriguing, as two variations were attested, *nsū* and *nsāḏu*, the latter of which seems to be a pausal form of *nsāw*, which is similarly attested in Tunis.²³⁰ A clear attestation of -aw/-ow (without the pausal form) which was attested in *mišaw* or *mišow* ‘to walk’ of the Maṛāzīg²³¹, was not recorded in Testour.

8.10.5. Passive Verbs

Perfect

In the perfect, the passive form is generally formed through the prefix /t-/ or /n-/. The former prefix seems to be the most productive ones in this dialect. For the fem., the /t-/ is quite often succeeded by a short vowel, usually the /i/. When followed by another consonant, the prefix /t-/ might undergo a change and become a different consonant, most commonly a /d-/.

Examples of the passive verbs in the perfect:

<i>dgāl</i>	‘it was said’ (masc.)	<i>tgālit</i>	‘it was said’ (fem.)
<i>itkil</i>	‘he was eaten’	<i>tiklit</i>	‘she was eaten’
<i>tnaḥhit</i>	‘she was removed’	<i>tinsā</i>	‘he was forgotten’
<i>tinsāt</i>	‘she was forgotten’	<i>dgaslit</i>	‘she was washed’
<i>tiktib</i>	‘it was written’ (masc.)		

²³⁰ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 360.

²³¹ Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 321.

Imperfect

By and large, the imperfect of the passive verbs builds on the perfect tense, through the addition of a number of prefixes. Such pronominal prefixes mirror the ones of the regular imperfect verbs, therefore the /y-/ prefix for the 3.p.sg. masc., the /t-/ prefix for the 3.p.sg. fem., and so on.

<i>tidgāl</i>	‘it is said’ (fem.)	<i>yittaʕmal</i>	‘it is done’
<i>yittikil</i>	‘he is eaten’	<i>tittikil</i>	‘she is eaten’
<i>yitnaḥḥa</i>	‘he is removed’	<i>titnaḥḥa</i>	‘she is removed’
<i>yitinsā</i>	‘he is forgotten’	<i>titinsā</i>	‘she is forgotten’
<i>yitiktib</i>	‘it is written’ (masc.)	<i>titiktib</i>	‘it is written’ (fem.)

8.11. Future Particles

Testouri Arabic makes use of two main particles to mark the future tense: *bāš* and *taww*, both of which are homophones. These particles are found in many Tunisian dialects, including that of the Maṛāzīg,²³² and Tunis on the opposite side of Tunisia. The /b-/ verbal prefix which was attested in Ben Gardane did not surface in Testour.²³³ The homophone of *bāš* is the conjunction ‘so that’ or ‘in order to’, and it seems to be much more productive as a conjunction than as a future particle. This seems to be the case as well for Tunis.²³⁴ As for *taww*, its homophone is the adverb of time ‘now’, which is more commonly expressed as *tawwa* or *tawwika*. The future particle were noted to always precede the verb that is meant to be in the future tense:

<i>hāw bāš ngul-lak</i>	‘I will tell you’
<i>giddūlī il-bīt biš iṭṭiḥ ‘liyya</i> ²³⁵	‘Repair the room for me! It will fall on me!’
<i>taww nżī</i>	‘I will come’

Aleksandra taww taḥkī-lik ʕla tarīx tastūr? ‘Aleksandra will tell you on the history of Testour?’

²³² Ritt-Benmimoun, *Grammatik des arabischen Beduinendialekts der Region Douz (Südtunesien)*, 400.

²³³ Mion, “The Arabic Dialect of Ben Gardane (Tunisia): Some Observations,” 116.

²³⁴ Singer, *Grammatik der arabischen Mundart der Medina von Tunis*, 696.

²³⁵ Oueslati, “‘Iṣe in light of her idiolect,” 75. This example is taken from the idiolect of one woman living in the outskirts of Testour who uses *biš* rather than *bāš*. As such, the transcription here is faithful to the transcription of the article, from which this example has been taken. The article also mentions the usage of *miš* + imperfect in this particular idiolect as a future particle, however, this has not been attested in the speech of any of the other informants.

9. Conclusion

This thesis aims at documenting some phonological and morphological aspects of the dialect of Testour, a town in northwestern Tunisia. The people of Testour consider themselves to be descendants of Moriscos, a community of Muslims from Spain who were forced into exile a century after the Spanish Reconquista. The majority of the Moriscos made their way into North Africa where they could practise their religion freely, and there they established new towns with their own style of architecture, as is visible in Testour, as well as introduced state-of-the-art methods for agriculture, new clothing, food and culture, which improved the lifestyle of the locals (in this case the Tunisians) drastically. Therefore, being related to this distinguished community, which contributed so much to the current Tunisian cultural identity, is a source of great pride for the current Testouri inhabitants, and this is quite visible in the way they act, the preservation of Moriscan customs and trades, and the fondness and gratitude that they display when they speak about the town's history.

For what concerns typology, it is still hard to provide an absolute classification for Testour as being completely sedentary, or as being an archetype for Sulaymī or Hilālī bedouin dialects, as it was observed that the dialect shares features which are shibboleths of each typological classification, as well as having features that transcend these categories and which are instead features shared by all known Tunisian dialects.

Of the latter kind of features, in the realm of phonology, one may speak of the retention of interdental, monophthongization (as well as the retention of the diphthongs in some typical cases) and the reflex of /q/ as /g/ (alongside /q/), which albeit being an archetype of a bedouin dialect, it has spread to sedentary towns, so much so that its occurrence alone is not enough to deem a dialect as bedouin. As for the *ʔimāla*, all in all there is nothing peculiar in its manifestation in the dialect of Testour when compared to other Tunisian dialects, nor is there in the vowel elision patterns that serve as a defining element of the Maghrebi dialects.

On the other hand, if we look at morphology, one may find more individualistic features (features which are not shared with all the Tunisian dialects), such as in the attached pronouns where there is no gender distinction in the 2. p.sg., and in the attached pronoun for the 3. p.sg. masc. which is /-u/ and not /-ah/. This is typical of the Hilālī and the sedentary dialects. With regards to personal

pronouns, Testouri Arabic does not have gender distinction in the 2. and 3. p.pl., but in the 2. p.sg. there is both a gender distinction as well as one reflex which may act as a communis form, according to the speaker. The diminutive, both in its forms and usage (namely by the older generation), mimics that of the dialect of Tunis, the urban vernacular, as for example the bedouin form C1C2iC3iC4 for quadrilateral words was sparsely attested, in favour of C1C2iC3iC4. The definite article /il-/ is quintessentially Tunisian, and the same may be said for nominal categories such as the elative and the plural in general (besides plural agreement, for which very little information is available on Tunisian dialects to be able to establish patterns or draw comparisons), most of the adverbs and prepositions amongst other features, which are not only a representative of the majority of Tunisian dialects, but generally speaking are also identical in many other Arabic dialects.

Consequently, this thesis is naturally not an all-encompassing record of the dialect of Testour, nor does it claim to be, as extensive components of grammar such as syntax have been excluded. Rather, the purpose of this thesis was to introduce Testour to the linguistic map of Tunisia and perhaps prompt a better understanding of the country's typological isoglosses.

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A. Appendix

A.1. Transcribed and translated texts of the Arabic dialect of Testour

Text 1

1	M1: šnuwwa illi tħibb?	M1: What does she want?
2	M2: iħki řa-l-marři, ħīya (...) il-lahža, ařřīha	M2: Speak about the market. She (...), the dialect, give her ...
3	M1: ā řa-l-lahža?	M1: About the dialect?
4	M2: al- <i>langue</i> ay.	M2: The language, yes.
5	M1: hađāya ismu sūq il-žumla mbīřu is-silřa; nkallmik dīma b-il-řarbi?	M1: This is the wholesale market. We sell the merchandise; Should I always speak in Arabic to you?
6	M2: lā ħīya tifhim b-il-řarbi	M2: She understands Arabic.
7	A: b-il-lahža t-tastūrīya	A: With the Testouri dialect.
8	M1: b-il-lahža t-tastūrīya, il-lahža t-tastūrīya ay tifham řīya, la-hnā l-fallāħ, hađāya, hađāya mħall ikbīr fhimt tawwa tařmlu id-dawla yītsamma sūq il-žumla	M1: With the Testouri dialect, the Testouri dialect, do you understand me? Here, the farmer, this is a big shop. The government sets it up now, it is called the wholesale market.
9	M1: il-fallāħ, yuntuř s-silřa mtāřu w-yřībha l-il-marři la-hnā, aħna nbīřūha l-il-xađđār illi ħūwa ybīř b-it-tařřīl tifham řīya w-řanna adařāt nāxđūha w-nařřu l-flūs mtāř il-fallāħ, fhimni?	M1: The farmer grows his produce and brings it here to the market. We sell it to the greengrocer who sells it in small quantities. And we take our share and we give the money which belongs to the farmer (to him).
10	M1: w-tastūr blād andalusīya tħabb naħkīk řala tastūr řwayya? blād andalusīya, ađlabīya mtāř l-andalus řāw min řām alf w-sitta mīya w-řařra ħāža kīm-akka řāw l-tastūr fhimni?	M1: And Testour is an Andalusian town. Do you want me to tell you a bit about Testour? It is an Andalusian town. Most of the Andalusians came from 1610, something like that. They came to Testour.

11	M1: yitsammāw il-muriskīyīn hūma andalus, <i>bon</i>, mhāžrīn žāw mhāžrīn, (...) mhāžrīn hakahaw žāw li-hnā, ḥaṭṭu f-is-slīmān, siknu f-is-slīmān, blād ismha slīmān fi-tūnis, w-siknu li-hnā fi-tastūr, fhimni? w-žābu mṣāhum il-ṣādāt w-t-taqālīd mtāḥḥum illi hīya baṣša ḡilāl taww baṣša ḡilāl hīya min, žāya min isbānya kīma ngūlu iṣ-ṣummān, il-mišmāš fhimni?	M1: They are called the Moriscos, they are Andalusians. (They came as) migrants, they came here as migrants. They settled in Soliman, they lived in Soliman, a town called Soliman in Tunisia, and they lived here in Testour, do you understand? And they brought with them their customs and traditions, which were many fruits, now many fruits are from Spain, like pomegranates, apricots, do you understand me?
12	M1: ṣanna b-in-nisba... z-zaṣṣfān, b-in-nisba l-il-ward, žābu l-yāsmīn, žābu l-fill min ḡādīka fhimni? w-žābu anwāṣ mtāṣ ākil ma?ākil mtāṣ uklāt tifham fīya? mitṣadda. w-š-ṭhibb naḥkī-lik āxar ṣala tastūr? blād ḍrīfa hīya, flāḥa blād flāḥa hīya, mā-fihā-š, mā-fihā-š mantqa šināṣīya, in-nās ṣāyša kān min, aḡlabīyitha ṣāyša m-il-flāḥa, aḡlabīya, fhimni? <i>bon</i> blād ḍṣīfa mutwaṣṣṣa akahaw, blād maqbūla w-mutwaṣṣṣa fhimni?	M1: As far as the saffron and the flowers are concerned, they brought the jasmine, they brought the Arabian jasmine from there. And they brought varieties of food, do you understand me? A lot of them. What else would you like me to tell you about Testour? It is a charming town, an agricultural town, it doesn't have an industrial area. The people here live only off, most people here live off agriculture. Right, it is a weak and average town, a fine and average town, do you understand?
13	A: il-aṣyād? bāš taḥtaflu?	A: The feasts, what do you celebrate?
14	M1: naḥtaflu b-il-aṣyād, il-aṣyād id-dīnīya mtāṣna dīma l-aktarīya, il-aṣyād id-dīnīya. ṣanna l-ṣīd iz-zḡīr w-ṣanna l-ṣīd l-ikbīr, il-ṣīd iz-zḡīr li yittaṣmal fīh il-ḥalawīyāt il-ṣarabi, famma l-ḡrayyba, famma l-makrūḍ tifham fīya? w-famma il-kaṣk kull wāḥid w-š-yaṣmil, fhimni?	M1: We celebrate the feasts. our religious feasts mostly. The religious feasts. We have Eid al-Fitr (the small Eid) and the Eid al-Adha (the big Eid). It is Eid al-Fitr, in which traditional pastry is baked; there is ḡrayyba, there is the makrouth, do you understand me? And there is the pastry rings. Every person bakes what he likes, do you understand me?

15	M1: w-l-ḡīd l-ikbīr, haḍāka ḡīd l-aḍḥa maḡrūf, l-ḡallūš fhimni? ḡīd l-aḍḥa. šniyya illi ḡanna? ḡanna šahr ramaḍān naḥtaflu bīh il-muslimīn il-kull, fhimni? fhimni? lā lā, <i>ça va</i>. naḥtaflu bīh n-nās l-kull, māḡ taḡrif. taḡrif ramaḍān inti? tšūm walla mā-tšūm-š? mā-tšūm-š. inšālla twalli tšūm, inšālla, fhimni? taḡrif waqt iṣ-ṣiyām min waqtāš min šurūq iṣ-šams.	M1: The big feast is Eid al-Adha, it is well known for the lamb, do you understand? Eid al-Adha. What is it that we have? We have the month of Ramadan, all the muslims celebrate it, do you understand me? No, no, <i>ça va</i>. We all celebrate it, as you know. Do you know Ramadan? Do you fast or not? You don't fast. God willing you will fast, God willing, do you understand me? Do you know about the period of fasting from sunrise.
16	A: li-ḡurūb iṣ-šams.	A: Until sunset.
17	M1: li-ḡurūb iṣ-šams, fhimni? haḍīka m-il-aḡyād mtāšna ir-rasmīya famma zāda l-mawlid in-nabawī iṣ-šarīf. <i>Bon</i>, fi-tastūr zāda naḥtaflu bīh b-il-gdā naḡmlu fīh l-aḡšīda, anwās mtāš ḡšīda, hī aḡlabīyitha taḡmil ḡšīdit iz-zgūgu. taḡrif iz-zgūgu taḡrif? l-aḡlabīya taḡmil ḡšīdit iz-zgūgu. w-illi mā-yaqdar-š ḡlīh yaḡmil l-aḡšīda l-bīḍa haḍīka tifham fīya, mtāš fārīna fhimni? khaw. marḥba bīk fi-tastūr, marḥba bīk, šarraftna, fhimni? š-tḥabbi naḡkī-lik āxar?	M1: Until sunset, do you understand? These are some of our official feasts. There is also the feast where we celebrate the birth of the prophet Mohammad. <i>Bon</i>, in Testour, we also celebrate it a lot by making the <i>ḡšīda</i>, there are varieties of <i>ḡšīda</i>, the majority would make it with pine nuts. Do you know what pine nuts are? The majority would make it with pine nuts, and who cannot afford it, they would make the white <i>ḡšīda</i>, do you understand me? Out of flour, do you understand? That's it. Welcome to Testour, welcome, pleased to meet you, do you understand me? What would you like me to tell you more about?
18	M2: lā yikfi hīya xḍāt...	M2: No it is enough (she took..).

Remarks about Text 1:

1. Row 10: *naḡkīk* = *naḡkī* + *-lik*
2. The recurring question *fhimni* is not always translated for the purpose of eloquence.
3. The words within the brackets have been added to aid with a more coherent translation. This is also applicable to the following texts.

Text 2

1	UB: ḥāža yōmīya hāy.	UB: A daily thing, yes.
2	A: qaddāš min šgār yžību?	A: How many children do they (usually) have?
3	UB: ā lā, akkā intī w-iž-žāww?, famma li...	UB: Well, it depends on their mood, there are...
4	A: qaddāš gbal w-tawwa.	A: How many (would they have) before versus now?
5	UB: qbal yžību ḥatta b-il-atnāš, tisfa, fašra, tmānya, sabfa, arbfā, sitta, tawwa lā, taww yžību tnīn bark, ḥaddik famm, bikri lā?	UB: Before they would have up to 12 children, nine, ten, eight, seven, four, six. Now, no. Now, they only have two. The limit is there, before no.
6	UB: kānt idžīb kull fāmīn žžīb šgīr, kull fāmīn žžīb šgīr, kull fāmīn ḥatta yikbru yabda wāḥid fūmru xumštāšin snā w-l-āxur fūmru fāmīn.	UB: Before, she would give birth every two years, every two years a baby, every two years until they grow up (and) one of them is fifteen years old and the other is two years old.
7	UB: tawwa lā?, tawwa šgīr bark, tnīn, īla tārīt itnīn. w-yāklū mfa baṣḍhum w-ybātu mfa baṣḍhum w-yilbsu mfa baṣḍhum w-, taww mā-fād-iš bnayyiti ḥadāy?	UB: Now, no, now (they have) only one child, or two, maximum two. They would eat together and they would share the same room, they would wear each other's clothes, but nowadays it's not like this any longer, my dear.
8	UB: tawwa lā kull wāḥid w-bītu, kull wāḥid w-faršu, kull wāḥid w-ṣaḥnu, kull wāḥid, hay. mā-fād-š yḥibbu mfa bṣaḍhum... (bāhi, bāhi, bāhi), ḥamdūlla.	UB: Now no, each child has his own room, each child has his own bed, each child has his own plate. They no longer want to share anything. (Ok, ok, ok), thank God.

Text 3

1	UB: il-ħarka yawmīya, hīy l-ħarka yawmīya w-ngūmu iṣ-ṣbāḥ, naġslu wżūhna, nṭayybu qahwa, naṣṣnu xubiz, nsayygu, naġslu ṣābūn, namshu, nṭayybu l-ftūr, yżi w l-awlād m-il-maktib,	UB: Work is daily, work is daily. We wake up in the morning, we wash our faces, we make coffee, knead the bread, wash the floor, we do the laundry, we wipe, prepare lunch, the children would come from school,
2	UB: hīya li ṣandha rāzil yżi rāzilha mā-ṣandhā-š hīya w-wlīdātha bnayyātha titqāra w-wlīdātha titqāra, illi tiṭwi iṣ-ṣābūn, txayyṭu, tamsaḥ id-dār, dżi żāriṭha yuṣrubu it-tāy, yitkallmu kīma hakkāya, hakkahāw.	UB: She who has a husband, her husband would come back, if she does not have (a husband) she would (stay with) her children. Her daughters would go to school, her sons would go to school, she would fold the laundry, she would sew it, she would clean the house, her neighbour comes and they would drink tea, they talk like this, that's it.
3	UB: trawwaḥ żāriṭha tsakkir bayyibha tlimm dinyitha kān ṣandha ḥāža daxlānīya bāš taxsilha walla bāš txammilha fi-bīt walla blākār walla bāš taġsal gaʔz walla friżidār, mā-kān-iṣ tugṣud titfarriż f-it-talvza. haḍākahaw.	UB: When her neighbour leaves, she locks her door, she gathers her things, if she has something private to wash or tidy in the room, or to polish or to clean the cooker or the fridge (she would do it). If she doesn't have (to do such things) she would sit and watch tv. That's it.
4	A: w-ir-rżāl? kīfāš? kīfāš yaṣmlu?	A: And the men? What do they do?
5	UB: rāzilha yuxruż yixdim, yuxruż, kān ṣandha rāzil hānu yuxruż yixdim, kān mā-ṣandhā-š yqayyil šwayya, yurgud iṭrayyif w-imbaṣid ygūm yarżaṣ yixdim, ṣand il-muġrib titlamm l-awlād m-il-maktib w-l-imṣā tsaxxan l-aṣṣā,	UB: Her husband would go out to work, he goes out, if she has a husband he goes out to work. If she doesn't have one. He would nap a little, sleep a little bit, and then he would wake up and go to work again. Around sunset, the children return from school and the woman would heat up dinner.

6	UB: dzīd iṭṭayyib l-aṣṣā kān šwayya, ṭuṭṭ it-ṭāwla, yzūzu l-awlād yaxslu sāqīhum, yaxslu ydīhum, yzūz ṛāzilha, ydawwuš yugṣdu ṣa-ṭ-ṭāwla	UB: She would cook dinner again if the food (from lunch) was not enough, prepare the table, the children would come in and wash their feet, they wash their hands, the husband would come back and he would shower, and they would gather around the table.
7	UB: yitṣaššu yšūfu mašākilhum āš bāš taṣmil inti š-bāš naṣmil āna, bāš nišri ġudwa haḍika bāš nišri ġudwa haḍika inti bāš timši l-hak il-blāša inti bāš taqḍi haḍika hakkahaw, yurgdu w-iṣ-šbāḥ yfizzu w-yawmīyan akkāka l-aḥkāya l-hak il-blāša.	UB: they would have dinner and talk about their problems, (who would do what) “What will you do? What will I do?, I will buy that (thing) tomorrow, you will go to that place, you need to do that errand,” and that’s it. Then they would go to sleep and in the morning after they would wake up, and everyday it’s the same story for that place.

Remarks about Text 3:

1. Row 1: *naḡslu ṣābūn* literally mean to wash with soap, but it refers to the laundry.
2. Row 3: *ḥāža daxlānīya* means ‘an inside thing’, but in such a context it is believed to refer to intimate wear.
3. Row 5: *kān ṣandha ṛāzil hānu yuxruž yixdim, kān mā-ṣandhā-š yqayyil šwayya* - This part is illogical, however, the translation remained as faithful as possible.

Text 4

1	S: bi-mā-annik m-is-sukkān maṣnāha tsamma m-is-sukkān il-aṣlīyīn mtāṣ madīnt tastūr kān ṭhibb taḥkī-nna ḡla tārīxha šwayya, maṣnāha	S: Since you've been living here, which means you're a native inhabitant of the town of Testour, if you like you could tell us a little bit about its history.
2	M: tārīx tastūr? Hay Aleksandra taww taḥkīk ḡla tarīx tastūr? b-ḥukm hīya ḡandha xibra.	M: The history of Testour? Aleksandra will tell you about the history of Testour, because she has the experience.
3	S: tastūr qbal kī kānu fīha, kānu fīha l-amāzīg qbal, w-baṣd kīf šārit hak il-futuḥāt il-ḡislāmīya, hay, hay, kānu fīha l-amāzīg qbal tastūr. kīf šārit il-futuḥāt w-kull šāy žāw, žāw hak il-hižra mtāṣ al-andalūsīyīn maṣnāha tawwa l-ihnā ḡanna l-ḡāra, ḡanna r-ḡḡba, l-kullha banyāt gdīma maṣnāha.	S: In Testour there were the Amazigh before, and after when the Islamic conquest happened, yes, yes, the Amazigh lived in Testour before. When the Islamic conquest and everything else happened, they came, they came, the migration of the Andalusians (happened). Now here we have the quarter, the square, all of them are old buildings.
4	S: w-kānit qbal mā-ismhā-š tastūr, kānit ismha tišīla w-baṣd wallit kī žū fīha l-žālyā il-yahūdīya w-kull šāy wallit ismha tazātūr kān yitsamma žāmiṣ iḡ-ḡarāḡib bāš yāxiḡ minhum l-iflūs, ḡarāḡib mtāṣ l-wāḡid. w-b-il-maṣnāha, b-iz-zamān ṭawwil iz-zamān wallit ismha tastūr.	S: And before it wasn't called Testour, it was called Tichilla and after that, when the Jewish population came and everything else, its name became Tazātūr, which means the person who collects taxes and takes money from them, one's taxes. As time went by, its name became Testour.
5	S: mšīti kān mšīti l-ḡāra mšīti iž-žāmiṣ l-kbīr, mšīti-š l-iž-žāmiṣ l-kbīr? iž-žāmiṣ l-kbīr yitsamma ahamm maṣlim fi-madīnt tastūr. fīha is-sāḡa ddūr b-il-ḡakkis w-fīha sāḡa timši b-iš-šams, fīha sāḡa ddūr b-iš-šams w-famma, taqri b-il-ḡarḡbi?	S: If go to the quarter and to the Grand Mosque... Did you go to the Grand Mosque? The Grand Mosque is known as the most important monument in the town of Testour, it has a clock which runs counterclockwise and a clock which operates through sunlight, there is a clock which operates through sunlight, and there is... Do you read Arabic?

Remarks about Text 4:

1. Row 2: *taḥkīk* = *taḥkī* + *lik*
2. Row 3/4: It is interesting to note that the speaker alternates between *žāw* and *žū*, although the former seems to be the more popular reflex of ‘they came’.

Text 5

1	A: aḥkī-li bi-šakl ʕāmm kīfāš kānt il-ḥayā qbal.	A: Tell me in general how life was before.
2	UB: ā il-ḥayā kānat bāhya qbal. kānt l-imṛā mā-txruš-ši. hāw bāš ngūl-lak, kānt l-imṛā mā-txruš-ši w-iṛ-ṛāzil yaqḍi hūwa mā-yxallī-š l-imṛā tuxruž, iṛ-ṛāzil yžīb, iṛ-ṛāzil yžīb il-lḥam, yžīb il-qaḍya yžīb il-wāḥid.	UB: Life was good before, women would not go out, let me tell you. Women would not go out and the man would run the errands, he would not let the woman go out. The man would bring, he would bring the meat, the groceries, anything else etc.
3	UB: w-l-imṛā tṭayyib, taḡsil šābūn, txayyit, tḥaddid, taʕmal gamaḥ f-id-dār, taʕzan, tuʕruk, taʕmal id-dinya l-kull, trabbi l-awlēd, yabdāw l-awlēd bāhīn, gāʕdīn w-yxāfu w-yiḥšmu w-yāklū li yžī.	UB: And the woman would cook, she would wash the clothes, sew, iron, she would make wheat at home, she would knead (the bread), she would wash, she would do everything, she would raise the children, the children would behave well, they would stay in their place and they would fear and respect (their elders), and they would eat whatever they have.
4	UB: w-ummhum ki-tgulhum “arkaḥ” yarkaḥ, w-ʕand il-muḡrub yurgdu, mā-yaṭlaʕū-š l-iš-šāriʕ w-tqarrīhum w-tlimmhum f-il-bīt, tqarrīhum mā-yuxuržū-š w-yxāfu, “aḡslu sāqīkum” yaḡslu, “mā-tkallmū-š hakkīka” mā-yitkallmū-š, “urgdu” yurgdu,	UB: And if their mum tells them “Be quiet,” they would be quiet, and in the evening they would sleep, they would not go out in the street. She would help them study, she would gather them in the room and help them with their homework, they would not go out, they would be fearful, (she would tell them), “Wash your feet” and they would wash their feet, “Don’t talk like this,” they wouldn’t talk like that, “Go to sleep” they would sleep.

5	UB: tawwa mā-ṣād-š hakkāka tawwa walla šay āxar. taḡsal, tugṣud l-imrā taḡsal f-iṣ-ṣābūn m-il-māḍi sāṣa ḥatta l-it-tisṣa mtāṣ il-līl b-il-gasṣa fi-yiddha w-ṣ-ṣābūn w-tibda taṣmal hakka hakka hakka hakka hakka hakkāk	UB: Nowadays it's not like that, now everything has changed. (In the past) the woman would wash clothes with the washing basin in her hands from one o'clock until 9 o'clock in the evening, and she would do like this. (x6)
6	UB: w-mā-tgūl-š “aṣyīt!” w-mā-tgūl-š ak il-ḥāža tawwa “aṣyīt! kitfī yūžaṣ fiya, ṣidri yūžaṣ fiya, rāsi yūžaṣ fiya,” mnāš yūžaṣ fik?	UB: And she would not say “I'm tired!” and she wouldn't say a thing like that. Nowadays (they always complain) “I'm tired! My shoulder is hurting, my chest hurt is hurting, I have headache!” From what is it hurting you?
7	UB: mā-kunnā-š nṭayybu, kunna nṭayybu b-il-babūr ṭaf ṭaf ṭaf ṭaf ṭaf tawwa l-gā's w-kunna nṭayybu ṣa-l-ḥṭab w-naṣṣnu l-xubz b-īdīna, naṣṣnu l-xubz b-īdīna tawwīka lā bnayti.	UB: We did not cook..., we used to cook with the kerosen stove (like so) ṭaf ṭaf ṭaf ṭaf ṭaf, now (they use) the gas cooker, we used to cook over firewood, and knead the bread with our hands, we kneaded the bread with out hands. Nowadays, it's not like this anymore, my dear.
8	UB: kānt l-aṣbād txāf w-tiḥšim w-mā-titkallim-š w-iṣ-ṣḡār mitrubbīn w-il-muṣallim. rudd bālik m-il-muṣallim, min sīdik, sīdik aṣmil ak il-ḥāža, sīdik mā-titkallim-š, sīdik mā-, tawwa mā-zāl yxāfu m-il-mudīr walla m-il-muṣallim? taww lā ṣād yxāfu lā m-il-mudīr lā m-il-muṣallim (...)	UB: People used to be fearful and timid and they would not speak, and the children were well educated. And (about) the teacher; you would take care of the teacher (you would behave well), of your master, your master would (tell you) “Do that,” your master (would tell you) “Don't speak!” your master (would tell you)... Nowadays, do they still fear their headmaster or their teacher? Nowadays, they no longer fear neither the headmaster nor the teacher.
9	A: mā-fammā-š iḥtirām	A: There is no respect.

10	UB: lā, lā, lā...haḍika l-kullha m-il-wāldīn, lā il-wāldīn miš mrubbya wlādha, dīma ngūl, il-wāldīn kī yuxruḡ wildha min bāb id-dār mā-yhimmhā-š fih, mā-twaṣṣihū-š,	UB: No, this is all because of the parents. Parents are not raising their children right, I always say that. The parents, when their child goes out from the door of the house, they no longer care about him, they do not guide him.
11	UB: mī-tgul-lū-š “ṡayyiš wildi mā-taṡmil-š hakkāka, kī yuṡurḍik kbīr gul-lu ṡbāḥ il-xīr, kī talga mṛā ṡzūza waṣṣalha l-iblāṡitha, talgāha hāzza guffa gul-lha hāti nhizzha mṡāk”. hādīya lā, hādīya lā.	UB: they do not tell him “my son, please do not do so and so, if you meet an old person, tell him good morning, if you meet an old woman accompany her to her place, and if she is carrying a basket, tell her give it to me, I will carry it for you.” Nowadays no, nowadays it’s not like this.
12	UB: txallīh ummu w-tuxruḡ ṡandha. w-wildha yabda yhidd w-yiglib w-ybazzaṡ w-ykassir w-yṡayyiṡ w-yṡīḥ w-ummu tabda titkallam mṡā žāriṡha w-normal	UB: His mother leaves him (her child) and goes out, and her child begins to act out, disturbs (things) and spill (things), destroy (things), he begins to yell, scream and the mother would just talk to her neighbour as if everything is normal.
13	UB: mā-tgul-lū-š “hāni ṡlāṡ tkallimit?” walla “ṡlāṡ ṡuḡt?” walla “arkah!” hādika lā lā lā lā lā lā lā. mā-tgūl-š l-wuldha “ḥrām, uskut mā-tkallim-š hakkāka ṡēb.”	UB: She does not tell him “What did I talk about?” or “Why did you scream?” or “Be quiet!” None of this, no, no, no, no, no, no. She doesn’t say to her son “That’s bad! Shut up don’t speak like this, it’s shameful.”
14	UB: lā, tabda tuḡzur-lu ummu w-tabda mā-ṡandik “ṡ-aṡmal-lik māw ṡḡīr?” āṡ min ṡḡīr? famma ṡḡīr w-famma kbīr. hakka wal-lā? w-famma iḡtirām w-famma qdaṡ.	UB: No, his mother sees what he’s doing but would (tell you) “What did he do to you? He’s just a child.” No, what kind of child? There are children and there are adults, isn’t it so? And there’s respect and honour.

15	UB: “lā mā-ysāl-iš aš ʕanna fih.” lā muš mā-ysāl-iš š-ʕanna fih. lā, famma t-turbiya. tawwa k il-msākin killi ydūru hak iḍ-ḍaḥīya haḍīka l-kull rāy m-il-wāldīn mā-hum-š hūma ʕamlīn iḍ-ḍaḥīya li tšūf haḍīka l-kulliha hak iš-šabāb li ydūru kull ḍaḥīya min wāldīh.	UB: “No, it’s okay.” No, it’s not okay, no, it’s a matter of upbringing. Now, those poor (children) that you find around, those are all victims of their parents, it’s not them who are creating these victims that you find all around, the youth running around are all victims of their parents.
16	UB: il-mukṭur min ummu. il-bū yākul marra w-yuxruḡ ʕla barra yimši yixdim āma l-umm f-id-dār kān bṭa mā-tgul-lū-š “šbīk bṭīt?” kān bazzaʕ mā-tgul-lū-š “šbīk bazzaʕt?”	UB: Most of them it’s because of their mothers. The father eats and leaves, he goes to work, but the mum is at home and if he is late she doesn’t tell (her son) “Why are you late?” If he spills something, she does not ask “What have you spilled?”
17	UB: kān gāb gaṭṭaḥ ḥwāyžu mā-tgullik-š ʕlāš gaṭṭaḥ ḥwāyžu, kān mass mā-tgul-lū-š “šbīk massīt?” ummu tabda ʕāmla ḥī mā bīnha w bīn wildha.	UB: If he was away and tore his clothes she doesn’t ask him why the clothes are torn, if he touches something, she doesn’t ask him “Why have you touched this?” The mother starts building a wall between her and her son.

Remarks about Text 5:

1. Row 2: *mā-txruš-ši* = *mā-tuxruḡ-ši*
2. Row 5: *gasʕa* is a large wooden bowl, in this context it is believed to serve as a washing basin bowl.
3. Row 17: *gaṭṭaḥ ḥwāyžu* = *gaṭṭaʕa ḥwāyžu*

Text 6

1	W: xaržu min, tamm ʔarḏhum min isbānya, taʕrafha l-qišša hāḏi walla lā? lā? Bāh! alf w-arbʕa myā w-... naḥki walla lā? alf w-xamsa myā w-tisʕa , lā alf w-arbʕa myā w-tisʕīn (...) rīti fi-āxir il-qarn il-xumṣtāš, fi-āxir il-qarn xumṣtāš, ɖaʕfat id-dawla l-ʔumawīya fi-isbānya,	W: They left from, they were exiled from Spain, do you know this story or not? No? Well, in 1400, shall I tell (you) or not? In 1509, no, 1490 (...) You see, in the end of the 15th century, the Umayyad state in Spain was weakened.
2	W: kīf ɖaʕfat ʕa-l-ixxir tamm ʔarḏ l-aʕrab min isbānya, xaržu l-kull, w-hūma bāš yissammāw, yissammāw waqtha l-muriskīyīn. ʕlāš? xāṭir mušhum ʕrab šāfīn, mxalltīn, tamma li māxḏīn isbānīyīn, famma li māxḏīn ʕrab, ysammīwhum muriskīyīn.	W: When it was totally weakened, the Arabs were expelled from Spain, all of them left. And what were they called? At that time they were called Moriscos. Why? It's because they were not pure Arabs, they were mixed, some of them were married to Spanish, others were married to Arabs, they called them Moriscos.
3	W: kīf tamm ʔarḏhum l-āxir wāḥid min isbānya, wuṣlu l-marḥla kīf yibda l-żidd iṛ-ṛabaʕ, iž-żidd iṛ-ṛabaʕ ʕarbi mā-yxallū-š, šnū maʕna iž-żidd iṛ-ṛabaʕ? fimtīha šnū maʕna iž-żidd iṛ-ṛabaʕ? ay ay iṛ-ṛabaʕ, iṛ-ṛabaʕ, rītīha? yibda ʕarbi mā-yxallīwhū-š fi-isbānya, yilzmu yuxruž.	W: When even the last one was expelled from Spain, they reached a point that when (they found out) that someone had a great-great-grandfather who has Arab origins (an Arab ancestor from four generations before), they would not let him (stay) as well. What does a great-great-grandfather mean? Do you know what a great-great-grandfather is (4th generation)? Yes, from the fourth generation, from the fourth generation, do you see? When he was an Arab, they did not let him stay in Spain, he had to leave.

4	W: xarržuhum, kīf xarržuhum w-mā-bqā-š ḥatta wāḥid, ḥatta wāḥid, w-ʔašlu iṛ-ṛābaṣ ʕarbi mā-bqā-š. twazzʕu ʕla šamāl ifrīqya l-kull. akṭar istīṭān kān f-il-maḡrib, šwayya f-id-dzāyir muš baṛša, lā,lā,lā,lā,lā... ṭabīʕat, šaxšīyt id-dzīrīya kānt iṣṣība mā-nažžmū-š yitʔaqlmu mʕāha, fhimtīni, šwayya rāw f-id-dzāyir.	W: They forced them into exile and not even one person who had Arab ancestors going back four generations remained, not even one such person. They spread all over North Africa. Most of them went to Morocco. Few of them went to Algeria, not a lot, no, no, no, no, no. The nature of Algerians was difficult, they did not manage to adapt to them, do you understand me? So a few went to Algeria.
5	W: w-il-akṭarīya fi-tūnis, fi-tūnis hūma b-iṣṭibār innu kānu yṣṣū f-il-mudun mā-nažžmū-š yṣṣū f-il-ižbal kīma l-igbāyil illi la-hnā. ʕāšu f-il-mudun w-wīn il-mudun? yilzimhum dīma baḥḍa l-mā. wīn baḥḍa l-mā?	W: The majority settled in Tunisia, in Tunisia. Since they used to live in cities, they were not able to live in the mountains like the tribes here. They lived in the cities, and where were the cities? They had to always live close to the water, and where close to the water?
6	W: naḥna waqtha hnā fi-šamāl ifrīqya ʕanna akṭar ḥāža hīya wād mažrda, wād mažarda mtāʕna hāḍi, wallāw ʕāšu ʕla ɣifāf wād mažarda. ahamm il-mudun illi ʕāšu ʕlēha hīya ʕla ɣifāf wād mažarda.	W: At that time here in North Africa, we had most of all the Medjerda river, our Medjerda river. So, they started to live at the shores of Medjerda river. The most important cities in which they lived were at the shores of Medjerda river,
7	W: ʔabdāha tastūr, l-imžāz, ṭburba, qalʕit l-andlus, ḥattāš, ḥattāš līn-tūšil il-mašabb mtāḥḥa, tūšil il-nābil wīn yṣubḥ il-wād f-il-bḥar fhimtīni? rīti wīn il-qurā hāḍi l-kullha?	W: starting with Testour, Medjez (al-Bab) Tebourba, Qalat al-Andalus, until you reach its.. you arrive in Nabeul, where the river pours into the sea, do you understand me? Do you see where all these villages are?
8	W: lgū l-aṣbād maṣnāha illi nažžmu yitʔaqlmu mʕāhum w-daxxlu mʕāhum il-ʕādāt mtāḥḥum taww maṭalan il-baqlāwa, il-baqlāwa aṣlha muriskīya rāw...	W: They found the people to whom they managed to adapt and they imported with them their customs, for example the Baklava, the Baklava has Moriscan origins.
9	M: lā sūrīya	M: No, it's Syrian.

10	W: lā yā wildi il-baqlāwa ašlha muriskīya w-mā-yṣānidni fīha ḥatta wāḥid. taṣraf ṣalāš? kīf ṭarrdūhum šanṣu l-baqlāwa w-xabbu fuṣṭha l-muḏawharāt mtāḥḥum, xabbu fuṣṭha l-xwātim, xabbu fuṣṭha iṣ-šrakk.	W: No, man! The origin of the Baklava is Moriscan, no one can tell me otherwise. Do you know why? When they expelled them, they baked Baklava and hid inside of it their jewellery, they hid inside of it their rings, they hid inside of it their necklaces.
11	W: kīf yṣī wāḥid bāš yṣī yfarkishum, ygūlu “ḏuṣt iṣ biṣ nākil, wallīt šnaṣt il-baqlāwa w- mrawwaḥ bāha.” w-hīya fuṣṭ il-baqlāwa ḍ-ḍhab mtāḥḥum. il-baqlāwa ašlha mūriski mā-yṣānidni fīha ḥatta wāḥid.	W: When someone would come to search them, they would say “When I am hungry what can I eat? So I baked Baklava.” However, inside of the Baklava (they were hiding) their gold. The Baklava is of Moriscan origin, no one can disagree with me about this.
12	W: w-ḏābu li-hnā ṣādāthum maṭalan f-il-binā? maṭalan qbal mā-kānū-š yibnu b-iz-zlīz. mnīn ṣarfūh iz-zlīz? ṣarfūh m-il-muriskīyīn, daxxlu ṭarīqt il-binā? mtāḥḥum, daxxlu lūgithum, daxxlu l-iḡnā.	W: They brought here their customs like in architecture, for example before they (the native Tunisians) did not use tiles. From where did they get to know about the tiles? They got to know about them from the Moriscos. They brought their architecture, their language and they brought music.
13	W: ṣṛab lākin ṣandhum ṣādāt uxra, miš kīfna naḥna yā sī ṣizz id-dīn. daxxlu l-iḡnā, mā-kān-š qbal šnū maṣna l-iḡnā. ḥāḏa ḥarām naḥna ngūlu tganni, hūma kīf ḏāw, ḏāw l-iḡnā, ḏā iḏ-ḏaww mtāḥḥum (...)	W: (They are) the Arabs, however, they have other customs, not like us, Mr. Ezzeddine. They brought (with them) music, before we didn’t have music, it was considered <i>ḥarām</i> to sing, as we say. When they came, music came along, and their vibes.
14	W: yā siwār, ak iṛ-ruḥḥal, l-isbān iṛ-ruḥḥal, š-ysammūhum, k il yabdu kīma naḥna ṣanna l...	W: Siwar, those nomads, the Spanish nomads, what do they call them, the ones like those that we have?
15	M: l-ḡaḏar	M: Gypsies.

16	W: l-ġažar. ʕāšu mʕāhum, ʕandhum l-iġnā hāža asāsīya fhimtīni? hāṣīlu, daxxlu māklithum zāda, il-makrūḍ, daxxlu baṣša ḥlūw žābūh, šnuwwa āxir yā sīwār?	W: Gypsies. They lived with them, music for them was essential, do you understand me? Anyways, they also brought their cuisine, like the makrouth, and they brought many other pastries. What more, Siwar?
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A.2. Abstract (Deutsch)

Die Stadt Testour liegt im Nordwesten Tunesiens nahe des Flusses Medjerda. Die Gründung der Stadt im 17. Jh. geht auf die muslimische Gemeinschaft der Morisken zurück. Diese wurden infolge des durch die Reconquista hervorgerufenen religiösen Eifers der spanischen Eroberer nach Nordafrika ins Exil geschickt. In ihrer neuen Heimat führten sie ihre Gebräuche, landwirtschaftliche Methoden, Baukunst, Essgewohnheiten und Mode ein. Die heutigen Bewohner Testours berufen ihre Abstammung auf die Morisken und pflegen nach wie vor ihre Traditionen, wie die Herstellung des Chéchia-Hutes und dem Aufführen der Maʔlūf-Musik.

Die Masterarbeit dokumentiert phonetische und morphologische Merkmale des arabischen Dialektes der heutigen Bewohner Testours, von dem nach meinem Wissensstand noch keine wissenschaftliche Untersuchung existiert. Die Audioaufnahmen, auf die diese Arbeit aufbaut, wurden im Rahmen des TUNOCENT-Projektes der Universität Wien gesammelt, das die Dialekte einiger Städte Norwest- und Zentraltunesiens dokumentieren möchte. Das Ziel ist es, den Sprachatlas Tunesiens mit den Erkenntnissen des Dialektes von Testour zu erweitern und damit einen besseren Einblick in die vielseitige dialektologischen Klassifikationen Tunesiens zu gewährleisten.

A.3. Abstract (English)

The town of Testour lies close to the Medjerda river in northwestern Tunisia and it was founded in the 17th century by the Muslim Moriscan community who was exiled from Spain, after the Reconquista led to a rise in Christian zeal in the Iberian peninsula. By making North Africa their new home, the Moriscos introduced their customs, agriculture, architecture, food and dress amongst many other things, to these new towns and to the locals. The inhabitants of Testour today claim that they are the descendants of the Moriscos, and as such as keen to practice typical Moriscan trades, such as producing the chéchia hat and celebrating the Maʔlūf music.

This master's thesis aims at documenting some of the phonological and morphological features of the Arabic dialect of the present community of Testour, on which to my knowledge, no such linguistic works currently exists. The recordings on which this thesis is based have been collected during the framework of the TUNOCENT project hosted by the University of Vienna, which strives to collect and document the dialects of certain towns in northwestern and central Tunisia. The outcome of this thesis is to put Testour on the linguistic map of Tunisia, a country on which relatively very little has been done in this regard, as well as to hopefully contribute a better insight on the ambiguous dialectal classifications in Tunisia.