**Introduction**

The Arabic Dialect of Damascus Jews (DDJ) has features qualitatively distinct from those of the Common Dialect of Damascus (CDD), as is to be found with other dialects within the same language environment. These unique features are clearly identifiable in DDJ’s phonology, morphology, and vocabulary. This study, based upon a corpus of interviews with consultants, is the first on the language of the historic Jewish community of Damascus which, unfortunately, no longer exists. In addition to examining the linguistic situation, the study documents other aspects of the life of Damascene Jews and thus helps to preserve an important aspect of Jewish history and language.

**Consonant Phonology**

Commonly identifiedconsonantal sound shifts between Classical Arabic (CA) and the urban dialects in the Levant were also found in respect of DDJ. CA interdentals have shifted to their stop equivalents, alongside another shift, also familiar in other contexts, to their fricative equivalents (§&&&&&). CA *q* has predominantly shifted to *ˀ* but, as in CDD and other urban dialects, *q* is still articulated, especially in loans from Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) (§&&&&).

The DDJ consonantal system features elements not found in CA, notably *p* and *g*. What is unique about the usage of these consonants in DDJ, compared to CDD, is that they were brought in partially via Hebrew loans: e.g. *pərāšā* ‘the weekly portion of the Torah readings’; *gōy*‘a Muslim’. The consonant *v* was also borrowed in some cases from Hebrew: e.g. *məṣvā* ‘a religious duty’ (§§&&&&&&). The single identified occurrence of the consonant *č* in DDJ is derived from Spanish: *corāča* ‘a bag for the praying shawl’. This is a marked difference to the situation in the Dialect of Aleppian Jews (henceforth: DAJ), where this consonant is much more frequently attested (§&&&& and fn. &&&&&). The consonant *g* also occurrs in*ʾagraʿ* ‘bald’ and *garʿa* ‘baldness’, corresponding to CA *q*. In some other cases *g* is cognate with CA *k*: e.g. *ragad* ‘he ran’; *nəgla* ‘a nickel’ (§&&&&&). CA consonant *ğ* has shifted to *ž* in some cases, but there are numerous other examples where it is retained, just as in other dialects in the region (§&&&&&&).

Velarization extends in both directions, but this subject requires further detailed study (§&&&&&). Lengthy phonological articulation of consonants is found in DDJ, but shortened in clusters relative to the CA type CACACB, which become CACB:e.g.CA *nulabbisu+hu>nlabbs-o*> [ˈnlapso] ‘we dress him’. Clusters of the type CACACA are not reduced, but rather incorporate a helping vowel between the second and third consonants: e.g. CA *yḥallel+u>*CA *yḥalllu>yḥálləlu* ‘they desecrate (the sabbath)’ (§&&&&&&). There seems to be no difference between the pronunciation of CACACB>CACB and the pronunciation of CACB║CACB, e.g.: *ʾəmm+na*>[ˈʔəmna] ‘our mother’ is pronounced the same way as *ˀəmna* [ˈʔəmna] ‘we removed’ (§&&&&&&).

The most common type of consonantal assimilation in DDJ is regressive assimilation, e.g.: *ḥžār*>[ˈʕʒaːṛ] ‘stones’; *nbīd*>[ˈmbiːd] ‘wine’ (§&&&&&). There are also instances of voicing between vowels, e.g.: *b-tāxod*>[ˈptaːɣod] ‘you 3.sg.m take’ (§&&&&&&).

**Vowel Phonology**

Average long **vowel** **duration** is 130ms, while a short vowel’s duration is 63ms on average, with some as short as 48ms. The phonemic value of vowel duration is evident from minimal pairs such as *ṭābxa*:*ṭabxa* ‘she cooked a dish’.The CA *i* and *u* vowels are usually elided in open unstressed syllables, and in stressed open syllables or before a cluster they become *ə*, as is also the case in CDD: e.g. \**wulida>wə́led* ‘he was born’; \**šuṭṭār>šəṭṭār* ‘smart (pl.)’. In the CA nominal pattern C1iC2āC3(T) CA *i* tends to be maintained: e.g. *mn-əl-bilād* ‘from the country’; *bi-l-bidāye* ‘in the beginning’ (§&&&&&&). The CA *u*║*u* is usually maintained in open unstressed syllables in loans from CA: e.g. *sənnəṭ-ṭufūle* ‘early childhood’ (§&&&&&&&). The phomnology of *ə* is highly influenced by its consonantal environment. In proximity with labials *f*, *b*, *w*, *m* and near pharyngealized consonants it can be *u*: e.g. *ṣəfi*>[ˈsˁufi] ‘it remained’; *məšyet*>[ˈmuʃyet] ‘she went’; *ḍəxme*>[ˈdˁuχme] ‘huge (f.sg.)’. When in proximity with glottal, pharyngeal, and fricative velar consonants it can be *a*: e.g. CA *ğuhdu+na>žə́həd-na*>[ˈʒahadna] ‘our effort’; *ʿəmr-i*>[ˈʕamri] ‘my age’. In cases where *ə* is affected by two different consonantal neighbors, a pharyngeal consonant has a stronger influence than other kinds, giving *ə* the sound of *a* (§&&&&&&).

DDJ tends to maintain CA *a* in open unstressed syllables. There are also identified cases in CDD: e.g. *yahūd* ‘Jews’; *masīḥi* ‘a Christian’; *maṣāḥef* ‘prayer books’. There are counterexamples in CDD also, however: e.g. *nxárbet* ‘it was ruined’. *Maṣāḥef* demonstrates a fundamental difference between DDJ and the dialects of Aleppan and Baghdadi Jews, in which the *a* in the first syllable is elided. However, forms with elided *a* were found in the corpus: e.g. *ṭábxet* ‘she cooked’. This example matches the regular CDD pattern, but the elision of -*a*- in 3.pl. verb forms was also found: e.g. *ʿamlu* ‘they did’; *ʾaxdū-won* ‘they took them’. These forms show DDJ to be distinctive from both CDD and DAJ. Likewise, the elision of *a* was detected in nominal forms e.g. *máslan* ‘for example’; *ḥmāt-a* ‘her mother-in-law’; *bandōra* ‘tomatoes’; *ʿašra* ‘ten’. In some cases, a correlation between rapid ennunciation and the elision of *a* was found. An elided *a* is also found in the pattern \*C1aC2īC3(T) whereby C1 is a front consonant (*l*, *m*, *n*, *b*, *d* etc.) (§§&&&&&).CA *a>ə* was located especially before CC (the shifting vowels are marked ): \**wažžabet+hu>wažžə́bt-o* ‘she respected him properly’; \**madrasT+na>madrə́st-na* ‘our school’; *sāfarna>sāfərna* ‘we traveled’; \**farʿun>fərʿ* ‘a branch’; \**žabhatun>žəbha* ‘front’; *ḥatta>ḥətta* ‘even’. *The CA a>ə* shift was detected also not before CC: e.g. *qawiyyatun>ˀəwiyye* ‘strong f.sg.’; \**sanatun>səne* ‘a year’ (§§&&&&&&&).

Long vowels also are maintained when unstressed. A long final vowel is preformed if it precedes an enclitic component, even if this component is inaudible: e.g. CA ṣalāT>ṣalā́ ‘a prayer’; \*kmšī+h>kəmšī́ ‘hold him!’.

Unlike DAJ and Judeo-Baghdadi, a medial *imāla* was only detected in words that ended with -*āʾ*: e.g. *šitāʾun>šitēʾ>šitē>šə́te* ‘winter’; *qittāʾ>ˀətte* ‘cucumis chate’. In other cases, ى (*alif maqṣūra*)has shifted to *e*: e.g. *ḥəble* ‘a pregnant woman’; *nəde* ‘dew’. Only in rare instances has final *alif maqṣūra* shifted to -*e,* notably with *hāda* ‘this’: e.g. \**hādā huwa*#>*hāde huwwe*# ‘and that’s it’ (§&&&&&).The shift \**ī>ē* was identified in the *mīn~mēn* ‘who?’, but, while found in DAJ, it is a rarity in CDD. This shift has also been noted before *ḥ*: e.g. \**mnīḥ>mnēḥ* ‘good’, \**ṣfīḥa>ṣfēḥa* ‘*sfiha* (a dish)’ (§&&&&&).

A zeroing of final vowels, which are, by definition, phonologically long, was documented in DDJ. This phenomenon is rarely mentioned in relation to the various Arabic dialects: e.g. CA *lammā kuntu>lam kənt* ‘when I was’; CA*ʾidā mā b-aʿrifu-o>ʾiz mā b-aʿarf-o* ‘if I don’t know him’; CA*ʾabū mūsā>ʾab mūsa* ‘Abu Musa’ (§&&&&&). The commonly documented shift of CA *ay* and *aw* to *ē* and *ō* is also found in DDJ, but with some consultants a shift *ay*>*ey* was also noted: e.g. *b-əl-lēl*>[bəlˈleyl] ‘in the night’; \**layš*>[leyʃ] ‘why?’. The minimal pair *dawle* ‘a state’/*dōle* ‘a kettle for brewing coffee’ grants the diphthong *aw* a phonemic status (§&&&&& and fn. &&&&). There are some instances in which *əw* and *əy* are maintained, while in other cases these diphthongs have shifted to *ū* and *ī* (§&&&&&&).

**Syllabic Structure**

Syllabic structure in DDJ allows for the existence of a medial triconsonantal cluster: e.g. *yəktbu* ‘they write’; *nafs-na* ‘ourselves’. Final biconsonantal clusters are also found: e.g. *dimašq* ‘Damascus’; *əs-sabt yəˀra* ‘on Saturday, he reads.’ In pause, a final cluster is likely to be broken: e.g. *fətt ʾana* ‘I entered’, but *baʿdēn ē fətət ē* ‘after that, I entered’. A final -*lt* cluster tends not to be broken in any case. In clusters that contain five consonants, the leftmost triconsonantal cluster is first dealt with, and then the rightmost: e.g. CA *mətl b-t-tānāx*IHB*>mətəlb-t-tānāx*IHB*>mətəl b-ət-tānāx*IHB ‘like in the Bible’ (§&&&&&). Monosyllabic words are lengthened in three ways: by doubling the last consonant: e.g. \**l-yadu l-ʿāmilatu>l-yadd əl-ʿāmle* ‘working hand(s)’; by prolonging the medial vowel: e.g. CA *tiq>seq>sēq* ‘be (sg.m.) sure!’; by addition of a syllable: e.g. CA *l+hu(m)> l-o(n)>ʾəl-o(n)* ‘for him/them’; CA*ʾaḥadun>ḥad>ḥada(n)* ‘someone’. Although very rare in urban dialects, there are a few instances of the ‘*gahawah* syndrome’in DDJ: e.g. CA *la-wáḥd-i>la-wáḥad-i* ‘on my own’; CA *bi-ráḥmet žədd-i>bə-raḥámet žədd-i* ‘by my late grandfather’ (§&&&&&).

**Stress**

Stress rules in DDJ are broadly similar to those of the other dialects in the region. Stress mainly falls on VCC or V̅ closest to word final position (§&&&&). Otherwise, stress falls on the first syllable of the word, unless a morphological border is to the left: e.g. *ˀúṣaṣ-o* ‘his stories’ but *ka-bálad* ‘as a state’. A key exception is found with stress in Form VII and VIII verbs falling after CC: e.g.: *nəḥtə́fel* ‘we celebrate’. Another is found in the stress (as well as prolongation) on the last syllable of the unit words in the numbers 23-99: e.g.: *tlātā́-w-sabʿīn* ‘seventy-three’ (cf. CA *tlāte w-sabʿīn*) (§&&&&&&).

Of interest in this regard is the stress patterns with the addition ofsg.f.3. and pl.3. pronominal suffixes to words that end with a consonant. Two stress patterns have been identified, with stress either on the penultimate syllable or the one before it: e.g. \**katab+ha>katáb-a* ‘he wrote it (sg.f.)’ but \**ʾaxad+hon>ʾáxad-on* ‘he took them’. These two patterns were found in the speech patterns of all consultants, whether male or female, and the considerations for choosing one pattern over the other require further investigation (§&&&&).

The epenthetic vowel that breaks up phonologically problematic clusters cannot be stressed. This may be why the stressed vowel in words (such as *šāyə́ft-o* ‘she sees him’; *kāšə́ft-o* ‘she exposes him’) is not epenthetic, but rather a historical stem vowel: e.g. \**šāyifT*, \**kāšifT* (§&&&& and fn. &&&&).

**Prepositions**

Unique prepositions in DDJ are *nāḥ* ‘towards’ (§&&&&) and *mʾābīl* ‘in front of’ (§&&&&). Although not found in all cases, a doubling of enclitic preposition -*l*- after a cluster was marked: e.g. alongside with *katabt-ə́ll-o* ‘I wrote to him’ also forms such as *ˀəlt-l-o* ‘I told him’ were found. Forms without double *l* are different from those in CDD (§&&&&). A proclitic *la*- occurs also before the explicit part referred to in the pronominal suffix: e.g.: *ʾərtəḥt mənn-o la-ha-š-šaxɔṣ* ‘I got rid of him, of that person’ (§&&&&). The preposition *ʾəl-* is sometimes used to emphasize a preceding pronominal suffix: e.g. *baʿat wara mənn-i ʾəl-i* ‘he sent (someone) after *me*’ (§&&&&). Unlike in CDD, the form of the preposition *mən* in 1.pl. is *mə́nn-əna* ‘from us’ while in 3.sg.f. it is *mənn-a* ‘from her’. Another difference between DDJ and CDD concerns the preposition *mən* in that in DDJ it is shortened to *mə*- before the definite article (CDD: *mn*-) (§&&&&). The preposition *maʿ* ‘with’ has only the short form before pronominal suffixes in DDJ: e.g. *maʿ-ak* ‘with you’ and not *maʿā-k*. One of the utilities of this preposition is to express the relevant argument effected by an unaccusative verb: e.g.: *mā ẓəbṭet maʿ-na* ‘it did not work out for us’ (§&&&&). 3.sg. f. and 3.pl. pronominal suffixes attached to the proposition *ʿala* ‘on’ in DDJ always begin with *h*: e.g. *b-ifūt ʿalē-ha* ‘he enters to it’; *muʿtámad ʿalē-hon* ‘they can be relied upon’ (in CDD and JA a *y* can also feature) (§&&&). 3.sg.m. forms with the preposition *fī* has two allomorphs: *fī́* and *fī-yo*. The latter, which exists also in DAJ, has only the sense of ‘in it’, whereas the former also has the sense ‘there is’ (&&&&). The preposition *yā* declines in DDJ the same way as it does in CDD, but in a completely different way to DAJ (&&&& and fn. &&&&).

**Verbal phonology and morphology**

The verb system in DDJ, as in other Arabic dialects, continues that of CA. In DDJ the *a* vowel of 1.sg.c. p-stem (“imperfect”) prefix is maintained even in places where it is elided in CDD (the prefix is marked ): e.g. *bdīt ʾana ʾaxayyeṭ* ‘I began to sew’; *bd-i ʾasāfer* ‘I want to travel’ (&&&). In DDJ, unlike the case in CDD, the 3.sg.f. end vowel is elided before a pronominal suffix beginning with a vowel: e.g. *ḍarbet+o>ḍáṛəbt-o* ‘she hit him’; *ftákret+o>ftákərt-o* ‘she thought that he was …’. In DDJ this vowel is also omitted in many instances of C2w/y: e.g.*ˀālet+l+ak>ˀalt-l-ak* ‘she told you (sg.m.)’; *ṣārt təḍrə́b-ni* ‘she started to bit me.’ (&&&&).

An unusual DDJ verb form is *ʾarāḥ* ‘he went’, known also in the dialect of Cairene Jews (&&&). In addition to other stative Form II verbs that exist in CDD, DJJ has also the verbs *waṣṣal* ‘he arrived’, *laˀˀa* ‘he found’ (&&&).

As already mentioned, alongside forms known from CDD, DDJ has forms in which C2’s vowel has been maintained in 3.sg.f. s-stem (“perfect”): e.g. *ṭábaxet* ‘she cooked’. There are also forms of 3.pl. c. s-stem in which this vowel has been elided: e.g. *ragdu* ‘they ran’. Form I imperatives have a long vowel in monosyllabic forms: e.g. *ktōb* ‘write! 2.sg.m.’; *xōd* ‘take! 2.sg.m.’; *ˀīm* ‘take sth. off! 2.sg.m.’. However, these vowels become *ə* or *a* in polysyllabic words: e.g. *ktə́bu* ‘write! 2.pl.’; *xəd-o* ‘take 2.pl. him!’; *ˀəmi* ‘take (sth.) off! (sg.2.f.)’. It seems that there is a link between vowel length and number of syllables in this form. The participle forms *C1āC2eC3*(mainly for transitiveverbs) and *C1aC2C3ān* (mainly for intransitiveverbs) are also known in CDD (&&&&&)

Form II is used in DDJ, as in other vernaculars of Judeo Arabic, for embedding a Hebrew-derived component: e.g. *hallax*(<Heb.: *hålak* ‘he went’);‘he fled (to Israel)’, *ʾayyax*(<Heb.: *ʾēkåh*, the book of Lamentations) ‘he cried buckets’. The same goes to pattern C1ōC2aC3 of Form III: e.g. *bōraḥ* (<Heb.: *båraḥ* ‘he ran away’) ‘he fled (to Israel)’, *mbōxi*(Heb.: *båkå* ‘he wept’) ‘he is crying buckets’. The *maṣdar* form of Form V is *taC1aC2C2oC3*, unlike the pattern in DAJ (§§&&&&). Form VIII denotes the passive voice when C1=R: e.g. *ltabas* ‘been worn’; *mā b-təntása* ‘unforgettable’ (§§&&&&&). There are some remnants of the inner passive in DDJ which exist also in CDD (§&&&&&). The reflexive particle is *ḥāl*-, while the reciprocal particle is *baʿḍ.* They are placed after the verb and before pronominal suffixes. Reciprocality is also expressed by the syntagma *wāḥed…t-tāni* ‘one … the other’, a structure that is relatively unmarked in CDD (§§&&&&&). S-stem and p-stem verbs are negated by the particle *mā*. Imperative forms are negated by *lā* (§§&&&).

The s-stem of *C1w* verbs in DDJ decline in three ways: prolongation of the vowel after the subject prefix: e.g.: *nūṣal* ‘we arrive’; elision of C1 altogether: e.g.: *təsaʿ* ‘it contains’; diphthongization after the subject prefix: e.g.: *yəwladu* ‘they give birth’. The third is rare in, but not in DAJ and some Palestinian dialects (§§&&&&&). In some p-stem forms of the verb *sāwa* ‘do’ the *w* has shifted to *y*: e.g.*ʿam b-isāyi mašākel* ‘he makes problems’; *šū msāy-īn-l-kon nəḥna?* ‘what have we (the Muslims) done to you?’ This is also known in DAJ, but only in verbal forms, not in the participle (&&&&&&).

3.pl.c p-stem and s-stem forms of C3*y* verbs end with *u* whether the singular form ends with *a* or *i*. DDJ thus has a regular system, unlike those of DAJ and Judeo-Baghdadi Arabic (&&&&&&).

The verb *ʾəža* ‘ come’ in DDJ initiates with *ʾə*- only in third person absolute forms. In other persons, or if a third person form is attached to an enclitic morpheme, this initial syllable is elided: e.g.*ʾəža* ‘he came’, *žīt* ‘I came’, *žā-k* ‘(sth. or so.) came to you’ (&&&&&&&).

When a proclitic *b-* is attached to a p-stem 1.sg verbal form the vowel of the inflectional prefix is usually maintained, unlike in CDD: e.g. *b-ašaġġl-ak* ‘I employ you’ (cf. CDD *b-šaġġl-ak*). The inflectional prefix *y* of 3.sg.m and 3.pl.c can be omitted after a proclitic *b-*: e.g. *b-əswa* ‘it has the value of’. This is again unlike what is common in CDD (&&&&&&&). The particle *ʿam* comes in DDJ before p-stems that are attached to a proclitic *b-* in various persons, whereas in CDD *ʿam+b-* is common especially before 1.sg: e.g. *ən-nās əlli ṭūl nhār-on ʿam b-yəˀru b-ət-tōrā* ‘the people who all their days read in the Torah’ (&&&&&&&).

The future marking particle evinced by all consultants is *laḥ*, while in CDD the particle *raḥ* is more common (&&&&&&&&). The particle *bədd*- has two shorter allomorphs: *bd*- and *d*-, which were not referred to in the extant literature consulted (&&&&&&&). The use of the proclitic *la*- before a p-stem form to denote a threat or a promise is found in DDJ also without the expression *wáḷḷa* ‘by God’: e.g. *la-nədbáḥ-kon* ‘we are going to slaughter you’ (&&&&&&).

**Nominal phonology and morphology**

DDJ continues the system of CA in the realm of the nominal system also, with the deviations also known in other dialects.

The feminine marker *T* in the absolute state has three allomorphs: -*a*, -*e*, -*t*. The first two act as in CDD and many other dialects in the region. -*e* occurs also after *r* provided that it succeeds *ī*: e.g. *faˀīre* ‘a poor woman’ but *fatra* ‘a period of time’, \**dakātira*>*dakātra* ‘doctors’. The allomorph -*t* occurs in some words that mirror CA -*āT*, notably in the word *ḥayāt* ‘life’ (DAJ: *ḥayā*), but in other words with some consultants too: e.g. *ət-tawrāt* ‘the Torah’. The units words in the numbers 23-99 are stressed, and *T* is reflected as*-ā́*: e.g. *xamsā́-w-ʿəšrīn* ‘twenty-five’. In the construct state *T* has three allomorphs as well: -*et*, -*ə́t*-, -*t*(-). Feminine nouns that do not end with *T* in their absolute state usually receive one of these allomorphs in their construct state: e.g. *madām+i*>*madāmt-i* ‘my wife’. The construct state of words that end with an -*a* that is not *T* can have a final -*āt*: e.g. CA *maʿna+a*>*maʿnāt-a* ‘its 3.sg.f. meaning’ (&&&&&&&).

Plural forms known in CA are also found in DDJ. The sound masculine plural suffix is -*īn*, that of the sound feminine plural is -*āt*, and that of nouns ending with -*i* is almost always -*yye*: e.g. *ˀahwaži-yye* ‘coffee shops owners’; *brōfesōr-iyye* ‘professors’. The broken plural measures resemble those of CDD: e.g. *žarīḥ*>*žə́raḥa* ‘wounded’; *ḥazīn*>*ḥazāna* ‘sad, poor’; \**ḥidāʾ*>*ʾaḥəzye* ‘shoes’ (&&&&&&&).

The common phenomenon of adding -*t*- before plural forms after numerals 3-10 is also found in DDJ. Two forms for counting months were identified: *-t-ə́šhor* and *-t-əšhɔ̄́r* with a long vowel between *ū* and *ō*. It is possible that the second form is a corruption of the plural form *ʾašhor* combinecd with the plural form *š(u)hūr* (&&&&&&&). One can also find multiple plural forms in DDJ: e.g. *ṣāḥeb*>\**ʾaṣḥāb*>*ṣḥāb+i*>*ṣḥāb-āt-i* ‘my friends’ (this specific form not being attested in CDD) (&&&&&).

The dual synthetic is formed by adding an enclitic -*ēn*, and the analytic by adding *tnēn* ‘two’ before the plural form: e.g. *pāsūˀ*+*ēn*>*pāsūˀ*-*ēn* ‘two verses’, *tnēn* *əḥṣān-āt* ‘two horses’ (&&&&&&). The numerals in DDJ are largely the same as in CDD. A significant difference between the two dialects is that in the numbers 11-19 DDJ has only the shorter series, without the -*aṛ* before the counted noun. This contrasts with what is found in CDD: *ṭnaʿš sāʿat* ‘twelve hours’ ( cf. CDD *ṭnaʿšaṛ sāʿa*). With the numbers 23-99, the units words 3-9 end almost always with *-ā́*. With the series 23-29 some instances of an asyndetic bond between the units and the tens was detected: e.g. *tlātā́-ʿəšrīn yōm* ‘twenty-three days’. Numbers that contain nine are pronounced sometimes with initial *ts*-, as is also the case for Jews in Haifa (CDD: *təs*-): e.g. *b-təswa tsʿa* ‘it costs nine (pounds)’ (&&&&&&&). The word for ‘first’ in DDJ is normally *ʾawlāni*(*yye*) (cf. CDD and DAJ: normally *ʾawwalāniyye*) (&&&&&&&).

The *l*- of the definite article does not always assimilate to the ‘sun letter’ that follows, either because of hesitation of the speaker or because of the insertion of an anaptyctic vowel between the article and the noun. However, there are some instances in which the article has not assimilated to the following ‘sun letter’ without any identifiable reason (&&&&&). The indefinite articles are: *wāḥed/wāḥde*, *šī* and *falān~flān* (the form *falān* is rarely attested in CDD according to the extant literature consulted) (&&&&&&).

There are forms in DDJ that end in -*Vn* added to the basic form of the word. These remnants of nuunation have been partially assimilated from CA: e.g.: *taˀrīban* ‘approximately’. Of much more interest are the *tanwīn* forms after -*a*, as in the pairs *ḥada~ḥadan* ‘someone’, *ʾēmta~ʾēmtan* ‘when?’, *ḥatta~ḥattan* ‘even, until’, *lamma~lamman* ‘when’. These forms have been rarely attested in CDD. It seems that this nuunation is not due to the Aramaic substrate, and its presence demands another explanation (&&&&&&).

Another form of nuunation is the addition of -*en* as a copula element between *waˀt* ‘when’ and the following phrase: e.g. *waˀten ṭləʿt* ‘when I went out’. This phenomenon is not attested in CDD in the literature consulted. The suffix -*en* also features between the preposition *mən* ‘from’ and a preceding preposition: e.g. *ˀablenmənn-a* [ˌʔabləmˈmənna] ‘before it’. The authors that have referred to this form in CDD appear unsure whether to relate the -*əm*- element to the preposition *mən* (thus forming *əmmən*-) or to the preceding preposition (thus forming, for example, *fōˀəm* ‘above’). From the way Syrians write their own dialect it appears that this element reflects ن that is attached to the preposition preceding the *mən*, as in تحتن منها ‘beneath it’. This gives support to the assumption that these are nuunation forms (&&&&&). The existence of nuunation in an urban dialect such as DDJ is of obvious and rare interest.

The pronoun for 1.pl. in DDJ is *ləḥna*, whereas the regular form in CDD is *nəḥna*. The 3.pl.c. pronoun in DDJ is *hənnen~hənne* (cf. CDD: mainly *hənne*). The 3.sg.f. and 3.pl.c. pronominal suffixes after a consonant in DDJ, unlike in CDD, are always without CA *h*. A glide is inserted after a vowel between it and the following pronominal suffix: e.g. *kabbēnā-hon* ‘we threw them’; *rəžl-ē-hon* ‘their legs’. *ʾaxadū-wa* ‘they took it’. This is similar but not identical to what is found in Syrian dialects in and around Aleppo, the countryside around Latakia (but not inside the city itself), in the strip of land between these two cities, and in the Homs area (&&&&&).

As for plural demonstrative pronouns, the form *dōl*(*e*) ‘these’, unattested in CDD, was documented for DDJ. However, the forms *hādi* ‘this (sg.f.)’ and *hadōk~hadənk* ‘those’ documented for CDD were unattested in DDJ (&&&&&)

**Lexicon**

DDJ is unique in the nature of its vocabulary borrowed from Hebrew. The word *gān* (<Heb.: *gan*) ‘kindergarten’ was borrowed from Modern Israeli Hebrew due to Zionist activity in Damascus in the first three decades of the twentieth century. The word *maḥanē* (<Heb.: *maḥané*, lit. ‘a camp’) meant ‘a person belong to the (Syrian) security services’ and seems to have been used in this sense only by Jews from Damascus and Aleppo. The word *ʾəssūr* (<Heb.: *ʾissūr*, lit.: ‘forbidden’) was used to mean ‘for someone to stop talking out of caution’. The verb *hallax* (<Heb.: *hålax*, lit. ‘he went’) was used apparently only by Damascene Jews in the sense of ‘he fled (to Israel)’. A Sunni Muslim was called *gōy* (<Heb. *gōy*, ‘a Gentile’, f. *gōyā*, pl. *gōyīm*), a Christian an *ʿārēr*(<Heb.: *ʿårēl*, lit. ‘uncircumcised’, f.*ʿarērtā*, pl.:*ʿarērīm*), and a Shiite Muslim a *sōʿēf* (Heb.: *såʿēf*(?), lit. ‘of a double mind’, pl. *sōʿafīm*), a term used also by Baghdadi Jews. Two distinctive words, *ṭāmē* and *ṭōmē* (both from Heb.: *ṭåmē*, lit.: ‘impure’), have been used with different meanings: the first to denote a non-Jew, the second a filthy man or vessel. Words associated with synagogues such as *ˀāhāl* (<Heb.: *qåhål* ‘congregation’, ‘visitors of the Synagogue’, *ḥazzān* (<Heb.: *ḥazzån*, ‘cantor’) ‘cantor’, and *hēxāl* (<Heb.: *hēxāl*, ‘temple’) ‘the Holy Ark in the Synagogue’ are not unique to DDJ, but the word *xābōd* (<Heb.: *kåbōd*<*bəkåbōd*, ‘with honor’) appears to be unattested in any other Jewish community language and has been used to invite a person to read from the Torah. The praying shawl was called *ṭaḷḷēt* (<Heb. regularly *ṭallīt*) and the phylacteries were called *t(ə)fillīm* (<Heb.: regularly *təfillīn*). A unique pronunciation for ‘Writings’ (the third section of the Jewish Bible) is *kətubbīm* (<Heb.: *kətūbīm*). Most names of the holy days were borrowed from Hebrew: e.g. *rōššānā* (<Heb.: *rōš ha-ššånåh*)‘New Year festival’; *kəppūr* (<Heb.: *kippūr*) ‘Day of Atonement’. The festival of the nineth of Av was called *ʾēxa* (<Heb.: *ʾēxå*lit. ‘the book of Lamentations’) in DDJ, as in some other Jewish community languages, but is *tšəʿbōb* in DAJ. The day preceding a holy day was called *ʿrə́bba* (<Heb.: *ʿarubbā*, lit.: ‘eve’) or *yōm* (*əl*-)*ʿrə́bba*. Many Hebrew words were also part and parcel of the vocabulary of Jewish life: e.g. *fədyōn* (<Heb.: *pidyōn*, lit.: ‘redemption’) ‘Redemption of the Firstborn (a Jewish custom)’; *ˀəddūšīm* (<Heb.: *qiddūšīm*, *qiddūšīn*, lit.: ‘sanctification’) ‘a matrimonial ceremony’ (&&&&&&&&). This work also surveys the way that Damascene Jews wrote Hebrew words in Arabic characters in one of their texts (&&&&&).

Besides this distinctive Hebrew component, DDJ’s lexicon also contains a unique and unknown Arabic component: the name of the festival of Tabernacles (*sukkōt*) was*l-əmḍaḷḷe* (<Ar.: \**l-miḏ̣allatu*, lit.: ‘the booth’). A secondary feast day was named after the prime feast day that follows it, with the addition of the word *mrāyet*- (lit.: ‘a mirror of’), e.g.: *mrāyet ʾēxa* ‘the feast of seventeenth of Tammuz’, a lexical expression not found in other Jewish community languages. The days between the seventeenthh of Tammuz and ninth of Av were called *l-ʿakəs*  (<Ar.: *l-ʿaksu*, lit.: ‘the opposite’), and the nine days between the first and ninth of Av were called *rafʿ əs-səkkīn* (<Ar.: *rafʿu s-sakkīn*, lit.: ‘taking the knife off’). A distinctive greeting between the Jews was *žəmʿə́t-kon xaḍra* (<Ar.: *ğumʿatukum xaḍrāʾ*, lit. ‘may you have a green week’ in the sense of ‘have a good week’). This greeting is also attested among Cairene Jews.

Some unique usage of Arabic words is noted in the field of food and dishes. *Zafar* (<Ar.: *zafar*, lit.: ‘meet fat’) was used to denote meat and *laban* (<Ar.: *laban*, lit.: ‘milk’) was used to denote any kind of dairy product. The word *ṭamīre*  (<Ar.: *ṭamīratu*, lit.: ‘hidden, buried’) was the name of the Damascene style *cholent*, and seems attested only in DDJ. Examples for unique Arabic words in synagogue ceremonies are: *radde* (<Ar. *raddatu*, lit.: ‘an act of returning’ i.e., the returning of the Torah scroll to the Holy Ark), *dallāle* (<Ar.: *dallālatu*, lit.: ‘an indicator’, a finger-like pointer that is used to direct the readers while reading in the Torah scroll).

Many words used in everyday life appear unique to DDJ: e.g. *ˀbūl* (<Ar.: *qubūl*, lit.: ‘acceptance’), denoting a welcome ceremony held upon the birth of a daughter; *mˀaddme*(<Ar.: *muqaddimatun*, lit.: ‘one who offers’, i.e., the woman who offers the newborn son to the godfather in the circumcision ceremony; *xəbəz tarḥīm* (<Ar.: *xubz tarḥīm*, lit. ‘compassion bread’), a round loaf distributed to people upon the death of a relative. DDJ also uses some Arabic words and phrases unknown in CDD: e.g. *šēxa maryam*, a woman whose appearance and mind are not right; *barrāt l-əbyūt* (lit.: ‘out of the houses’), an expression used when a calamity is mentioned.

DDJ even has distinctive words for the most basic things compared with CDD: e.g. *wədən*  ‘ear’ (cf. CDD *dēne*, *ʾədən*); *ʾōḍa* ‘a room’ (cf. CDD *ʾūḍa*). There are several Spanish borrowings in DDJ:, e.g.: *korāča* ‘a bag for carrying the praying shawl and book’; *kənəswēgro*  ‘affinal relatives’. A French word which is apparently unique to DDJ is *l-ʾalyōns* ‘Alliance, AIU’. Some lexical items of obscure origins exist in DDJ are: e.g. *dōti*  ‘a Druze’; *takmīr* ‘thorough cleaning of the house before the holy days’; *ʾāzīn*  ‘nursery school (pre-kindergarten)’; *məḥzāye* ‘a silver plate used in synagogue’ (&&&&&&&).

**Given Name Patterns**

As a part of the lexical survey of DDJ, this work provides a study of given names among Damascene Jewry, something distinctive from the naming patterns common to other inhabitants of Damascus (&&&&&&&&).

**Note on Informants**

Informant awareness of the uniqueness of their dialect ranged from a belief that there was no difference between DDJ and CDD and one that considered Jews’ manner of speaking so distinct that they could have been easily identified just by the way they spoke.

**Conclusions**

DDJ is a part of the dialectal texture known in this part of the Arabic-speaking world. It is an urban dialect that shares many features with other dialects, but also has distinctive features in phonology, morphology and lexicon that set it apart from CDD (&&&&&&).

DDJ is also distinctive from the dialects of other Jewish communities in the region, notably Judeo-Aleppan. The differences between DDJ and DAJ are substantive across phonology, morphology and lexicon (&&&&&&).

DDJ reflects its geographical situation as a meeting of the Palestinian dialects in the south, the Syrian dialects in the north and the Lebanese dialects in the west. It makes DDJ unique, and has also contributed to some irregularities: e.g. *ʾaxadet~ʾaxdet* ‘she took’; *ragadu~ragdu* ‘they ran’; *ḍaráb-on~ḍárab-on* ‘he bit them’. The distinctive vocabulary of DDJ, in the religious and others fields, deserves a dedicated study of its own, and would be best served by comparing DDJ lexicon both with that of other Jewish dialects in the Arabic-speaking world and also with non-Jewish Syrian and Levantine dialects.