Imaginaries of Space and Language:

A historical view of the scalar enregisterment of Jordanian Arabic[1]

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ملخّص:

ينظر علماء اللسانيات عادةً إلى التباين اللغوي_الإقليمي في العاميات العربية من منظور مفهوم اللهجات المحلية.إلا أن مفهوم اللهجة الدارج في علم اللسانيات يفتقر لفهم علاقة الميتابراغماتية الاجتماعية-المكانية بالتباين اللغوي، والتي هي محورٌ رئيسٌ في تقييم مستخدمي اللغة للغتهم، ومصدرٌ مهمٌّ من مصادر شعورهم بأنهم من مكانٍ ما، أو في مكانٍ ما. في هذه المقالة، أرسم مراحل التطور التاريخي للهجة العربية الأردنية على مدار القرن العشرين مقترحاً بدلاً من مفهوم اللهجة مفهوم اللّغة كسجلٍّ للمكانية المحلية مفعم بنظرة أيديولوجية لغويةلمستويات اجتماعية مختلفة: أنماط الحياة، حدود الدولة القوميّة، الطبقة الاجتماعية، الجنس والعمر.

كلمات مفتاحية: *اللهجة العربية الأردنية، التسجيل اللغوي، أيديولوجيا اللغة، المستويات الاجتماعية، القوميّة*

Abstract:

Linguistic variation over territorial space is usually conceptualized in terms of dialects. However, the notion of dialect fails to capture the highly charged socio-spatial metapragmatics involved in such variation which is central to speakers' apprehension of their language and what it means for them to be in, or from, a particular place. Here, I chart the historical development of Jordanian Arabic over the course of the 20th century to argue that it is better understood not as a dialect but as a register of locale enmeshed in a language ideology that cut across different social scales: forms of subsistence, national territory, class, gender and age.

Keywords: *Jordanian Arabic, enregisterment, language ideologies, social scales, nationalism*

Much like the rest of the Middle East, genealogies and notions of genealogical 'origins' are central to social life in Jordan. In any personal encounter between strangers, knowing where someone is from is key to determining how to proceed with the interaction. To get to know someone, you need to know where that person is from. The most direct way is to ask: 'where are you from?' and indeed this is a question that comes up frequently at the beginning of a conversation between any two strangers. But it is also a question that can cause much anxiety and discomfort as people can be suspicious of what revealing their origins may entail. Instead, one would usually try to guess where one's interlocutors are from without having to explicitly inquire about their origins.

Names are one way to make such guesses. Someone's first name may reveal something about his identity, such as whether that he is Muslim or Christian; Circassian, Chechen, Armenian or Arab. But this is only in the rare case when that person's name is ethnically marked. Last names, on the other hand, can reveal much more. Someone's last name is usually either the name of that person's tribe or family; or most people have a sense of where these families or tribes are from. For example, knowing that someone's last name is al-Ḥusseinī[2] automatically reveals that that person hails from Jerusalem. Similarly, a Majālī is from Karak, a 'Arabiyyāt is from as-Salṭ and a Ṭūqān is from Nablus.

Yet, sometimes last names do not reveal one's origins very clearly. Some people may have dropped their tribal names in favor of their lesser known family names. Others may be from small families that are not known well enough to determine where they are from. Yet others, while their family names are recognizable, they are common enough that they could be from any of several places. This could well lead to the same question about origins: 'where are you (pl.) from?' A question that often means: what family or tribe are you from? If you know what someone's family or tribe, you may well be able to tell what geographic area that person hails from.

Less intrusively, one can make guesses about someone's origins by paying attention to how that person speaks. Elderly Jordanians who are linguistically savvy would often boast that they can tell where someone is from just by noticing that person's *lahja* (dialect). For example, someone who uses the morpheme *–ki* for the 2nd person feminine pronoun instead of the more

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common –ǝk is most certainly from the town of Karak in southern Jordan. Similarly, someone who uses the voiceless velar stop variant [k] instead of the more common variants (the voiced velar stop [g], or the glottal stop [ʔ]) is most certainly from rural Palestine. For this reason, language is the object of much reflection in Jordan, and Jordanians are always searching for stereotypes of language use that can aid in knowing where people are from. This is the case in almost any urban or semi-urban environment, but it is especially the case in the capital Amman where no one would claim to be native of the city and where everyone, in one way or another, is from somewhere else.

While the elderly are more certain about linguistic stereotypes of origins, young Ammanis are not. This uncertainty seems to have been a cause of such anxiety that when I was doing my research on stereotypes of language use in Amman in the summer of 2009, I had more trouble limiting the number of people to interview than recruiting them.[3] Everyone wanted to talk about dialects and seem to have long been reflecting on their dialects, how they are perceived by others and how they perceive the dialects of others. There was never a shortage of issues to talk about. Many of them even wanted me to share the results of my research with them to help them make sense of it all. My friend Samer—who was my point of contact for recruiting informants—was particularly enthusiastic. Especially troubling for him was the issue of why different people spoke the way they did and how it rarely coincided with their familial origins. "There are no rules," he kept telling me; "It makes no sense. People sometimes speak as their fathers and mothers did, but more often than not, they don't. It's a big mess!" In fact, his enthusiasm for my project seemed to stem from his eagerness to prove that dialects no longer make sense, that people speak all sorts of different dialects these days and that there is no biographical or geographical grounds for linguistic variation.

It may well be possible to find biographical grounds for patterns of language variation and shift in Jordan across different generations. Yet the notion that such patterns should rely solely on family origins as if change is merely a matter of generational drift seems to bespeak a language ideology that takes the family as the prime locus for language socialization—if not the only one—and generational transitions as a movement away from a genealogical source. A comprehensive analysis of such shifts would require a consideration of other dimensions of social

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[3] I have conducted 16 interviews with people from diverse sociocultural backgrounds between the ages of 18 and 45. Given the broad historical focus of this article, I discuss only a small part of that material.

stratification such as education, class, occupation and place of residence, among others. Such a study would look at the micro-level linguistic practices and how they might be shifting along these various dimensions.

This, however, is beyond the scope of this paper. What I would like to focus on instead is the historical shifts in macro-level social categories in which the micro-level practices at any moment are implicated. This paper is concerned with the ways in which the conceptualization of language variation is implicated in the imagining and construction of space and locale, and how shifts in the apprehension of variation is part and parcel of shifts in the imagining and the construction of locality in social and physical space. The point here is not that language determines the apprehension of social and physical space, nor that space determines the apprehension of linguistic variation. Rather, that language, sociality, spatiality and temporality are all mediated by cultural formations, or language ideologies. I suggest that social and geographic mobility involve not only shifts in how individual and groups identify themselves, but more importantly, the re-partitioning of social and geographic space which are the grounds on which identification is made. Further, I argue that this ongoing process of re-partitioning and differentiation happens by way of drawing parallels between perceived qualitative similarities between forms of speech, types of people and locale—a process that is inherently ideological.

1.   The Metapragmatic Norms of Arabic

Arabic speakers construct themselves as single language community informed by an ideology of diglossia (Ferguson, 1959, 1996; Hudson, 2002). They differentiate between *Fuṣḥā* (High Arabic, or literally 'the most eloquent') and *ʿĀmmiyya* (Low Arabic, or literally 'of the people'). *Fuṣḥā* is the official language of all Arab states, but is not normatively the language of any particular social group. It is usually acquired through formal schooling, used mostly in written form and never used in daily conversations. *ʿĀmmiyya*, on the other hand, refers to any of the non-standardized, informal, vernacular varieties spoken by people in their daily discourse. They are conceptualized as 'dialects' (*lahjāt*) and seen as diverse in contradistinction to *Fuṣḥā*, which is presumably unitary and invariant. For instance, speakers of Arabic make no distinction between Quranic Arabic (the language of the Quran), Classical Arabic (as codified by Arab and Persian linguists in Kūfa and Baṣra during the 7th and 8th centuries), and Modern Standard Arabic (the simplified form currently taught in schools which was the result of revivalist movements in

the 19th and early 20th centuries). All of these varieties are perceived as *Fuṣḥā*, and speakers of Arabic claim that they could read and understand any text written in *Fuṣḥā* regardless of whether it is a 12th century manuscript or a 21st century blog.[4]

In many respects, the relation between *Fuṣḥā* and ʿ*Āmmiyya* is quite different from that between a standard language and its dialects. In fact, the whole conceptualization of diglossia in sociolinguistics has been set against the backdrop of the Western European situation of a standard language with dialects. While in the case of a standard language with dialects a part of the language community may claim the standard variety as their native variety, in the case of diglossia no social group can claim the H-variety as their own. In the case of a standard language with dialects, linguistic variation is conceptualized in terms of distance from the standard. For this reason, some scholars have conceptualized linguistic variation in standard languages in terms of a conical model whereby the standard variety occupies the top-and-center and the non-standard varieties stand at some—downward and outward—distance away from it (Silverstein, 2003b). This distance is not merely metaphorical, but maps onto social hierarchies in the form of a cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1991) and space in relation to a center or several centers(Gal, 2010).[5]

However, there is some grounds for comparison between the standard-with-dialects situation and Arabic diglossia. While *Fuṣḥā* is not the native language of any particular group and thus is not implicated in social hierarchies, its supra-local status does create a variational space in which ʿ*Āmmiyya*—or rather, the various ʿ*Āmmiyyas*—can be compared and contrasted as emblems of locale. Speaker of Arabic often intuit dialect zones that can range from whole regions—e.g. *Khalījī* (of the Gulf, Gulfi) and *Maghāribī* (of the Maghreb)—to states (e.g. *Maṣrī* (Egyptian), *Jazāʾirī* (Algerian), *Kuwaytī* (Kuwaiti) and *Sūrī* (Syrian)—to cities and towns—e.g. *Khalīlī* (of Hebron), *Ḥomṣī* (of Homs) and *Skandarānī* (Alexandrian)—to even certain neighborhoods within cities, towns and villages. National 'dialects' have become particularly salient since the 1990's when a plethora of state-owned and private Arabic satellite channels have started broadcasting throughout the Arab World each with programs produced in the national dialects. These are often the ʿ*Āmmiyyas* of each respective state's capital city—so Egyptian

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[4] For a more comprehensive study of language ideologies with respect to the *Fuṣḥā* and ʿ*Āmmiyya* in Egypt, see Haeri (2003).

[5] Some scholars of Arabic have attempted a similar mapping of socio-linguistic variation along the lines of Arabic diglossia. For example, Mitchell and El-Hassan (Mitchell, 1986, 1980; El-Hassan, 1977) have talked about 'educated spoken Arabic' as a language variety spoken by 'the professional classes.' Their project was aimed at finding a language variety that might function as the equivalent of a standard language in Arabic.

Arabic is Cairene and Syrian Arabic is Damascene and so on, since Arab nation-states have usually constructed their national identities around the cultural capital of the capital cities and their continued inhabitance from the pre-colonial, through the colonial and into the post-colonial periods.

In Jordan, however, the situation is different. When asked what dialects are spoken in Jordan, Jordanians would often mention two or three, referring to them by any of their shibboleths. This usually takes the form of the inflection of the *Fuṣḥā* verb *qāla* (= he said) in the third person masculine past as *gāl*, *ʾāl* or *kāl*; or less frequently in the first person present with a second person singular masculine pronoun indirect object as *bagullak*, *baʾullak* or *bakullak*; or some other verbal form. Alternatively, they are referred to by their phonological shibboleths: the realization of the voiceless plosive uvular [q] of *Fuṣḥā* (*qāf*) as a voiced velar stop [g] (*gāf*), a glottal stop [ʔ] (*ʾāf*) or a voiceless velar stop [k] (*kāf*). Different speakers might give these varieties different names on different occasions. For example, an elderly Jordanian of Palestinian descent might refer to the [g] dialect as *Badawī* (Bedouin) and the [k] dialect as *Fallāḥī* (Peasant). An elderly 'native' Jordanian might refer to the [g] dialect as *Fallāḥī* (Peasant) and the [k] dialect as *Falasṭīnī* (Palestinian). However, among the younger generation, these dialects are referred to as *ʾUrdunī* (Jordanian) for the [g] dialect, *Madanī* (Urban) for the [ʔ] dialect, and *Falasṭīnī* (Palestinian) for the [k] dialect. The latter, moreover, is usually mentioned as an afterthought since very few speakers use it nowadays. My aim in this article is to discuss the socio-historical process by which these forms of speech came to be recognized as expressions of locale in Jordan during the course of the 20th century.

2. The Enregisterment of Locale in Language

In an article discussing how social and geographic mobility accelerated by globalization affects notions of linguistic locale, Johnstone, Andrus, & Danielson, (2006) follow the historical process of enregisterment of Pittsburghese as a valorized emblem of local identity in Pittsburgh. Their discussion relies on three key concepts in linguistic anthropology. First is Silverstein's (2003a) notion of indexical orders as a theoretical framework by which micro-social events of communication are related to the abstract, macro-social categories of communication that perdure beyond their instantiation in concrete events. Events of communication are construable as events—i.e. are recognizable and interpretable—to the extent that interactants index the macro-

social categories by means of signs that function as indexical icons of the macro-social categories. The mediating condition for this process of signification is ideological, in as much as linguistic and other signs instantiate macro-social categories mediation by language-specific or broader semiotic ideologies (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994; Woolard, 1998; Silverstein, 1992; Heath, 1977; Keane, 2003). The relation between the micro and macro levels of communication, as Silverstein (2003a) points out, is dialectical so that much as the categories are presupposed in events of communication, they are also entailed, even transformed, in-and-by the use of signs. This entailment is creative—by degrees—so that a re-categorization is always immanent in any event of communication. In Silverstein's terms, "for any indexical phenomenon at order n, an indexical phenomenon at order $n+1$ is always immanent, lurking in the potential of an ethno-metapragmatically driven native interpretation of the n-th-order paradigmatic contextual variation that it creates or constitutes as a register phenomenon" (p. 212).

The second point of theoretical reference is the notion of 'registers' and the process of 'enregisterment' as discussed by Agha (2005). Agha defines enregisterment as the process "whereby distinct forms of speech come to be socially recognized (or enregistered) as indexical of speaker attributes by a population of language users" (p. 38). As the definition makes clear, Agha's focus is particular: (1) registers are linguistic phenomena; and (2) the macro-social categories they index are categories or types of speakers,[6]or more generally the speech situation.[7]The third point is Silverstein's discussion of the transformation of local linguistic communities (1998), and Agha's (2003) study of the historical process of enregisterment of Received Pronunciation (RP) as a standard register of English generalizable over a large geographic area. The issue here is not merely how registers become indexical of speaker

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[6] My point here is that there is no reason why the theoretical framework of the orders of indexicality should be particularly limited to registers as defined by Agha (2005). On the one hand, non-linguistic resources may be mobilized in micro-level social interactions to index speaker attributes—e.g. sartorial, biological/racial, bodily-hexis (Bourdieu, 1990), etc. On the other hand, the macro-social categories need not be categories of speakers. For example, they can include categories of referents as socio-historical formations and where shifts in the extension of signs could also be understood as a dialectical and equally ideological process—cf. Sahlins (1985) on the notion of the 'structure of the conjuncture' and social change.

[7] As Agha in a later iteration (2007) points out, looking at speech varieties as products of enregisterment renders untenable the traditional sociolinguistic distinction between, say, dialects and sociolects when viewed from the perspective of the variables themselves. This is because enregisterment happens by way of connecting variables to any aspect of the speech situation, and often several aspects at once. These can include speaker types (e.g. upper class), event-types (e.g. literary), function (e.g. law), and locale (e.g. Parisian). In all of these cases, the association of speech varieties with aspects of the speech situation happens by way of metasemiotic cultural models. A single register will not only include a complex of variables, but will also be construed from a particular perspective and recognized by a particular speech community.

attributes in general, but rather how registers become indexical of linguistic locale in the sense of geographical space. Here, "particular, geopolitically conceptualized, bounded swatches of the earth [are] attached to particular labels for 'languages'—and their bearers" (Silverstein, 1998, p. 405) so that local language users have a sense of "what it means linguistically to be 'here' or 'from here'' in relation to linguistic forms emanating from elsewhere (Johnstone et al., 2006, p. 79).

Johnstone et. al.'s article follows social history of two linguistic variables—one phonological (monophthongization of the diphthong /aw/); the other lexical (yinz)—as working-class Pittsburghers became mobile in social and geographic space. Initially unaware of their linguistic difference, some Pittsburghers came into contact with other social groups through education and social mobility and started perceiving their speech as non-standard, working-class and local. Now aware of the 2nd order indexicality in which their speech is swept up, Pittsburghers trying to move upward in the social and educational hierarchy correct their speech towards supra-regional standard registers to sound educated and cosmopolitan. The socially immobile working class Pittsburghers, on the other hand, maintain the local linguistic features. As these become geographically mobile in the post-WWII era, their speech gets enregistered as local of Pittsburgh. Here, the 2nd order indexicality (working class) is swept up into a 3rd (Pittsburgh locale) and what was once a working class register becomes emblematic of being from Pittsburgh and object of valorization and commodification.

Johnstone et. al.'s narrative is compelling in many ways and opens up new avenues for thinking about how locality gets constructed in and through language. However, drawing on the same literature they use for theoretical framework, it leaves a few questions unanswered. First, the notion that working class inner-Pittsburgh dwellers were so isolated and socially immobile that they were unaware that other people spoke differently is quite unconvincing, regardless of the history of Pittsburgh or this group in particular.[8] No language community is empirically homogeneous because linguistic variation—and hence, linguistic heterogeneity—is the norm in any community of any sort (Gal & Woolard, 2001). Rather, in any such community there are metapragmagic norms that presume upon a schema of internal—i.e. pertaining to acceptable but marked and deviant registers—as well as external differentiation—i.e. pertaining to antagonistic

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[8] Even historically, one wonders if working class Pittsburghers had no contact with their upper or upper-middle class bosses to notice that they spoke differently.

registers. This is to say for any community to be a community it needs to have a shared sense what their social—including linguistic—norms are and what these are defined against.[9] Thus, it is inconceivable that inner-city, working class Pittsburghers simply thought that everyone spoke the way they did. For them to have started devaluing their own speech, they must have started perceiving it from the perspective of a different schematization than what was prevalent earlier—i.e. a different language ideology. This leads to a second question that focuses on the role of language ideologies in enregisterment: why of all the different possible axes of differentiation, Pittsburghese was enregistered as working class? For example, it is equally conceivable for it to have been enregistered as incorrect because it is ethnically marked—as Scottish or Scottish-Irish. Third, the shibboleths of Pittsburghese were not simply working class, but also male and white. This leads to the question of from what ideological perspective were working-classness, whiteness, and masculinity seen as aligned and later aligned with Pittsburgherness? What mediated this particular enregisterment?

In trying to address some of these questions in the case of Jordan, I draw upon Susan Gal's (2016) review of the literature on sociolinguistic differentiation. The growing Sociolinguistic literature on register phenomena has focused on the process of enregisterment as the forging of indexical correlations between linguistic variables (or semiotic forms more generally) and aspects of the speech situation.[10] However, as Gal points out, the rubric of indexicality alone is not sufficient to explain how enregisterment takes place. Drawing on other aspects of Peircean semiotics, she suggests that more attention should be paid to other concepts, namely: axes of differentiation, diagrammatic iconicity, qualia and rhematization. Minimally, enregisterment takes place by way of drawing parallels between two axes of differentiation.[11] The first charts a differentiation between linguistic or semiotic variables, the second between variations in context (e.g. different types of speakers, speech occasion, professional domain, etc.).

The parallels between the two axes are drawn on grounds of qualitative similarity between variants in one axis and variants in the other. In Peircean terms, a variation in one axis becomes construed as a diagrammatic icon of variation in the other axis. This is a diagrammatic relation in

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[9] In other words, it is not simply difference that marks a speech form as different, but rather *a difference that makes a difference* relative to some schema of classification, as Gregory Bateson (1955/1972) has long argued.
[10] Notice here that there are two sides for enregisterment: linguistic variables and aspects of the speech situation. Hence, one can speak of a variable being enregistered, as well as of a speech variety (or register) being enregistered.
[11] I say minimally because register phenomena rarely involve a single variable, but rather a whole complex of variables. However, often only a few variables will be considered shibboleths of the register and subjected to high degrees of awareness by the language community.

the sense of being a relation between relations ($x:y::X:Y$). It is also iconic in the sense of drawing a qualitative resemblance between the corresponding parts. Hence, x and X are seen as qualitatively similar, so are y and Y. In this move, a certain quality of X-ness is seen to inhere in the different instantiations of the shape of the letter X which, in turn, become qualisigns of X-ness. This process of drawing iconic resemblances out of indexical relations of co-occurrence is what Gal (2005) and Irvine (2004) have called rhematization. Rhematization is particularly powerful when it takes place across domains that participants recognize as distinct. For example, it can draw similarities between ways of speaking, habits of eating and dress in a synesthetic complex that involves visual, aural, tactile and gustatory phenomena construed as sharing a certain quality (e.g. 'plain' rather than 'florid'). It can also allow for comparisons within single domains in encompassing levels of categorial generality. Hence, the various variables evaluated as 'plain' in contrast to those evaluated as 'florid' can themselves be further evaluated as variably 'plain' or 'florid' in a process of fractal recursivity that brings an axis of differentiation and its qualia to organize a wide range of phenomena across different scales of social life.

I find this formulation particularly helpful in describing and analyzing the formation of what is now known as Jordanian Arabic, and the various dialects organized around the territorial schema on which it is based. In what follows, I chart the historical development of Jordanian Arabic over the course of the 20th century to argue that it is better understood not as a dialect but as a register of locale enmeshed in a language ideology that cut across different social scales. My argument bears resemblance to Arjun Appadurai's (1995) discussion of the production of locality. According to Appadurai, the local is not simply a point on a map of abstract space that subsumes everything, but is rather relational, no matter how natural and positive it may appear. The local is the product of a self-aware process of differentiating a here in relation to an elsewhere, which requires "a theory of context" or a sense of what the local "is produced from, against, in spite of, and in relation to" (p. 213). The landscape that this relation presumes upon and constructs is not absolute, but rather perspectival and mediated by local metapragmatics—i.e. language ideologies—that make the apprehension of space phenomenologically dense, and make the relation between the here and the elsewhere essentially political and historical.[12]

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[12] Hence, when Pittsburghers take the working-class register as a register of Pittsburgher locale, they are making a claim about what it means to be from Pittsburgh, not merely becoming aware of what the local forms of speech are. This parallels Eckert's (2008) discussion of the enregisterment of locale in Labov's (1963) account of Martha's Vineyard.

3. The Enregistement of Jordanian Locality

3.1. Historical Background:

It is a well-known fact that nation-states in the Arab World in general, and in the Levant and Arabia in particular, are products of colonial politics. The current configuration of states in the Levant was product of two treaties between Britain and France following the Ottoman defeat in WWI—Sykes-Picot in 1916, and San Remo in 1920—by which modern day Syria and Lebanon came under a French mandate; and modern day Jordan and Israel/Palestine came under a British one. The borders between these states were almost entirely arbitrary from a native perspective. Yet, of all the states that emerged from the mandate system, Jordan is particularly singled out as a state entirely constructed by colonialism. As a common description would have it, it is a state envisioned "from the backseat of Churchill's car."

Before the founding of the state in 1921, that geographical region had no particular name, but was rather perceived from the perspective of urban centers to the north and west. Historically, it was referred to as *Mashārefi sh-Shām* (the approaches to *Shām*; a term that simultaneously refers to the city of Damascus and the northern part of the Arabian Peninsula in general). During Ottoman rule, the northern part was part of the Vilayet of Damascus, administered from the city of Damascus in modern day Syria. The southern part belonged to the Vilayet of Hijaz, administered from Mecca and Medina in modern day Saudi Arabia. Government was exercised from urban centers, but except in Anatolia, the Ottomans had little control outside the cities. The main administrative centers in the Levant were Jerusalem, Damascus and Aleppo, but other cities, such as Beirut, Nablus and Haifa were also prominent. However, the Ottomans had little control over Jordan and it was only in the second half of the 19th century that the Ottoman administration started expanding its dominion over that region by creating administrative centers in ʿAjlūn and Karak and enforcing a tax collection policy tied to a new land tenure policy that institutionalized property.

A typical geographic description of 19th century Jordan would have it divided into three regions. The first laid north of the Zarqa River and mainly consisted of peasants (*fallaḥīn*) settled in small villages and towns. The second, called Balgā, laid between the Zarqa River in the north and Wādī al-Mūjib in the south. This region was a mix of peasants settled in villages and town, and semi-nomadic tribes of Bedouin descent. Despite the similarities in modes of subsistence

Figure 1: <u>Map of Jordan, showing the West Bank and nearby urban centers</u>

between the two groups, the Balgā Bedouins maintained a clear distinction between themselves and the peasants. The third was the area south of Wādī al-Mūjib and consisted of nomadic tribes whose activities centered around the town of Karak and had little contact with the Balgā and its tribes. The inhabitants of northern Jordan had traditionally associated with Syria, those of southern Jordan with the Arabian Peninsula, and those of central and western Jordan with the administrative districts in the west bank of the River Jordan, centered around the city of Jerusalem (cf. Abujaber, 1989). Following the defeat of the Ottomans in WWI, these areas came under the control of the British who referred to it as Trans-Jordan,[13] a designation that bespeaks the marginal position this area had in relation to the urban centers west of River Jordan.

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[13] Arabic: *Sharq al-ʾUrdun* (east of the River Jordan).

In WWI, the Hashemites—rulers of current Jordan—fought alongside the British who, in return, promised to establish a unified Arab state in Arabia, headed by Sharīf al-Hussein bin ʿAlī al-Hashemī of Mecca. But as soon as the war was over, the British signed an agreement with their French allies to divide the territories of Greater Syria and Iraq among themselves, whereby Syria came to be under French control. The 1916 agreement known as Sykes-Picot, and its reiteration in 1920 at San Remo, essentially precluded the establishment of a Hashemite state in Greater Syria. In 1920, Emīr Fayṣal, son of Sharīf al-Hussein bin ʿAlī was defeated by the French army and was forced to relinquish a government he had established in Damascus for two years. Soon after, Fayṣal's brother, Sayyid ʿAbdullāh I, came to his aid from Mecca with troops to attack the French. While on the way, ʿAbdullāh was persuaded by the British to forgo the attack in exchange for establishing a state in Trans-Jordan.

The state was established in 1921 with a dual name reflecting different possible future trajectories. Potentially as a part of a unified Arab state, it was called *Ḥukūmat Mintaqat esh-Sharq el-ʿArabī* (Government of the Territory of the Arab East). As a potentially independent nation-state, it was called *ʾImārat Sharq al-ʾUrdun* (Emirate of Transjordan). The Emirate gained formal recognition as an independent state under British Mandate in 1927. In 1946 the mandate was terminated, and the state was renamed 'The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan' under King ʿAbdullāh I. The year 1948 saw the end of the British mandate in Palestine and the breakout of a war between Zionist militant groups attempting to establish an independent Jewish state on Mandate Palestine and the newly formed states of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan. The Arab states lost the war, but Jordan kept parts of Mandate Palestine under its control—what later came to be known as the West Bank. Two years later, in 1950, Jordan formally annexed the West Bank. This tripled the kingdom's population (from 375K to 1.185M) which now included residents of the West Bank as well as refugees from other parts of Palestine displaced during the war.

Unlike neighboring states, however, Jordan had no major urban centers at the time of its formation. Up until the 1930's, al-Salṭ—20 miles to the north west of Amman—was its largest urban settlement. Yet, with a population of less than 10,000 at the time, it was by no means a match for neighboring cities in Syria and mandate Palestine. At the time, Amman was a little town of a few thousand inhabitants, but was chosen as the capital city due to its strategic location

on the Hijaz Railway. As a capital city, it attracted many educated migrants from Damascus, Beirut, Jerusalem, Haifa and Nablus to work as bureaucrats in the state functions, as well as merchants mediating between the capital cities and other regional centers. In the early years of the state, top government positions were occupied by this class and it was not until the mid-1950's that those who considered themselves native Jordanians started assuming high positions within the state bureaucracy.

In 1967, the West Bank was occupied by Israel and Jordan received hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees, mostly from rural backgrounds. In 1970, a civil war broke out between the Jordanian army and Palestinian guerrillas affiliated with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) following their ambush of King Hussein's motorcade. The Jordanian army prevailed and the PLO members were exiled. Four years after the civil war, Jordan recognized the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people, but maintained administrative control over the occupied West Bank until 1988 when it severed legal and administrative ties with the Occupied Territories. More refugees came to Jordan from Kuwait and the rest of the Gulf states after the Gulf war of 1991. Moreover, constant internal migration from other towns and villages within Jordan, and the settlement of nomadic tribes and their incorporation into the city through suburban sprawl over the last 50 years, has contributed significantly to the city's growth. That, coupled with high birth rates, has caused the population to grow a thousand folds over the past century.

Yet, despite being the seat of government and home to almost half the population, Amman has hardly any significance within the Jordanian national imaginary which congealed after the civil war and anchored around the moment of state formation. Since 1970, those who could trace their patrilineage to 1921 Jordan, considered themselves native Jordanians, while those who traced it to Mandate Palestine considered themselves Palestinian or Palestinian-Jordanians. Being a city of more recent vintage and home to a predominantly migrant community, Amman had little significance in this kind of identity politics. As such, the claiming of places of origin outside Amman has become central to identity politics within the city. Rarely would Jordanians describe themselves as Ammanis or from Amman regardless of whether they were 'native' or claiming some other hyphenated Jordanian identity. Instead, they would often name their ancestral towns or tribes as their place of origin even if they themselves had never lived there. This is more so the case for native Jordanians whose claims to authenticity and,

hence, political superiority rests upon their ability to claim origins from within the territory of the state, but from outside Amman.[14]

3.2. Linguistic Variation

The earliest accounts on linguistic variation in Jordan come from the work of two philologists: Gotthelf Bergsträsser and Ray L. Cleveland. Both accounts give a linguist's view, 1st order indexicality of linguistic variation in Jordan before and shortly after the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, the imposition of the mandate system and the founding of the nation-state. Bergsträsser's *Sprachatlas Von Syrien Und Palästina*[15](1915) provides a systematic and comprehensive study of Levantine Arabic in the early 20th century. Teaching at the time at the University of Istanbul, Bergsträsser made several research trips to the Levant to record the local dialects of different cities, towns and nomadic tribes, noting regional variations and across modes of subsistence. In line with a sharp social distinction between sedentary and nomadic Arabs prevalent at the time, he differentiates between speech of city and village/town dwellers on the one hand and that of Bedouins, on the other, despite the depiction of both groups as co-existing within the same geographic space.

Bergsträsser's account of the phonological variable [q] is particularly interesting. He states that the variant [ʔ] is a distinctive feature of urban dialects because it hardly exists outside urban centers. Yet, he notes that not all city dwellers use it. For example, in the city of Aleppo, a major urban center at the time, he notes that [ʔ] is used by Christians and the educated, while Muslims and the uneducated use [q]. On the other hand, the variant [g] is characteristic of the dialects of nomadic groups. This is not because it is not used by other groups, but because other variants rarely occur in Bedouin speech. With respect to Jordan and Palestine, Bergsträsser identifies four dialect regions: northern Jordan, northern Palestine, southern Jordan and southern Palestine. In the northern regions, a linguistic rift valley runs along the geographic rift valley between the two banks of the River Jordan. Yet, he finds the dialects of northern Jordan and northern Palestine to

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[14] This contradicts findings by Al-Wer (2007) and Al-Wer and Herin (2011) that third-generation migrants to ʿAmman identify as ʿAmmanī. The discrepancy between their findings and mine may well be related to the range of speech situations and population surveyed. While I have encountered third-generation migrants who occasionally claimed a ʿAmmanī identity, this was usually limited to upper middle class youth who in making these identifications were distancing themselves from their parents' generation and its politics. To my knowledge, the phenomenon remains limited, but certainly not insignificant as the authors well demonstrate.
[15] Language Atlas of Syria and Palestine.

be closer to each other than to the dialects in the two southern regions. While he finds the southern dialects to be closer to those spoken in the Arabian Peninsula, he finds the dialects spoken in the north to be closer to Levantine Arabic. Cleveland (1963) gives a similar account. Writing shortly after independence and the annexation of the West Bank,[16]he offers a quadripartite classification of the Arabic dialects of Jordan all linked etymologically to *Fusḥā*. Linguistically, the four dialects vary along phonemic, morphological and lexical lines. These divisions are exemplified by the inflection of the *Fusḥā* verb *qāla* (*verbum dicendi*) in the third-person masculine present tense in the four dialects as *yigūl* , *bəgūl, bəkūl* and *bəʔūl*; and the realization of the voiceless plosive uvular [q] as a voiced velar stop [g] in the first two, a voiceless velar stop [k], and a glottal stop [ʔ] in the third and fourth, respectively.

The linguistic divisions correspond to social divisions along social groups with distinct forms of sustenance dispersed over territorial space. The first dialect (*yigūl*) is a Bedouin one, assigned to the southern parts of Jordan and is closer to that of Northern Arabia than to any of the other dialects in Jordan. The second (*bəgūl*) is a rural dialect assigned to southern Palestine, the Jordan Valley, and the settled region lying to the east of this valley. The third (*bəkūl*) is another rural dialect assigned to the villages around Jerusalem and northward in central Palestine. The forth (*bəʔūl*) is an urban dialect indigenous to Jerusalem, but also found with variation in the West Bank cities of Jenin, Hebron and Nablus, as well as in Amman among the refugees from the coastal Palestinian cities of Haifa and Jaffa, and from Jerusalem. He calls this dialect 'Jerusalem Arabic' and considers it a variety of Levantine Arabic that shares closer similarities with Damascene and Beiruti Arabics than with any of the varieties spoken in the more immediate vicinity.

Yet, Cleveland believes that the four dialects may well be consolidated into three groups. He identifies the two rural varieties of *bəgūl* and *bəkūl* as extremely close except for the phonemic variable [q]—realized as [g] and [k] respectively—and some lexical differences placing the *bəkūl* dialect further from the *yigūl* of Northern Arabia than the *bəgūl* is. The *yigūl* and *bəgūl*, while phonemically very close, are highly divergent with respect to lexicon and morphology. Consequently, he finds justification in classifying the two rural dialects as one group whose speakers "represent the bulk of the population of Jordan" (p. 58). The other two

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[16] While the article was published in 1963, the data discussed in it was collected during the year 1955-1956. See footnote 1, p. 56 in the original article.

varieties are localized in the cities and the hinterland respectively, and further point to cities and hinterlands located outside the territory of the state.

Table 1. <u>Variation in Arabic vernaculars found in Jordan and their etymological relationships to *Fushā*.</u>

Source: Adapted from Cleveland (1963, p. 57)*; See also,* Abdel-Jawad (1982, p. 71)

		Fushā	*Bedouin*	*Rural Dialects*		*Urban*
Morphological Shibboleths		*yaqūlu*	*yigūl*	*bəgūl*	*bəkūl*	*bəʾūl*
Primary Phonological Shibboleths	ق	k	g	g	k	ʔ
Secondary Phonological Shibboleths	ث	θ	θ	θ	θ	θ ~ t ~ s
	ج	dʒ	dʒ	dʒ	dʒ	dʒ ~ ʒ
	ذ	Đ	Đ	Đ	Đ	ð ~ z
	ض	dˤ	ðˤ	ðˤ	ðˤ ~ dˤ	dˤ ~ Z
	ظ	ðˤ	ðˤ	ðˤ	ðˤ	dˤ ~ Z
	ك	k	k ~ tʃ	k ~ tʃ	k ~ tʃ	k
	ل	l	l ~ lˤ	l ~ lˤ	l	l
	ء	ʔ	ʔ ~ iː~ æː~ uː	ʔ ~ iː~ æː~ uː	ʔ ~ iː~ æː~ uː	ʔ ~ iː~ æː~ uː

With respect to the most salient shibboleths, these dialects can be seen as a continuum with the Bedouin dialect at one pole, and the urban dialect at the other. While the *yigūl* and *bəgūl* are phonologically identical, they are highly divergent with respect to morphology.[17]Similarly, while the *bəgūl, bəkūl* and *bəʔūl* are morphologically almost identical, they differ in phonology. The urban dialect *bəʔūl* is highly divergent from the two rural dialects. This includes the changing of the inter-dentals to corresponding stops or sibilants, i.e. /θ/ → [θ] or [θ~t~s], /dˤ/ → [ðˤ~dˤ] or [dˤ~Z], /ðˤ/ → [ðˤ] or [dˤ~Z]; and the palatalization or non- palatalization of /k/ → [tʃ] or [k].

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[17] Cleveland notes several morphological differences: the use of the prefix *b-* in the present tense in all groups except the *yigūl*; the use of the suffix *-sh* with negative verbs in all groups except in the *yigūl*; and the different possessive pronouns. However, since I am ultimately concerned with the enregisterment of the variable [q], I will focus on phonological variation between these dialects.

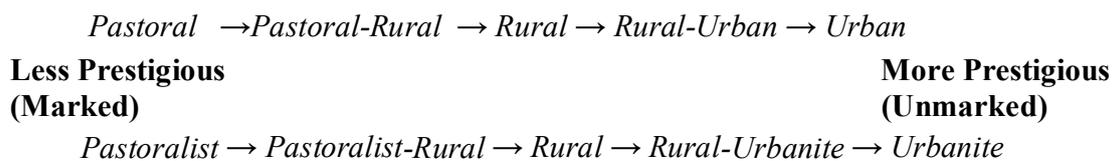### 3.3. Urbanization and 2nd Order indexicality:

These various groups did not live in isolation, but were rather in constant contact. Apart from migration, cities and towns were connected through a trade network, and villages were both in direct contact with the cities and towns in their vicinity, as well as with the Bedouins inhabiting their hinterlands. By the end of the 19th century, however, and in a more accelerated pace during the British Mandate, the region was undergoing a process of urbanization. The state—initially the Ottomans and later the Mandate regime—was extending its presence outside the cities, and securing trade routes that connected them. This increased trade between cities and between cities and countryside. It also deprived the Bedouins of their main source of income: raiding trade caravans and levying *khawa*—literally 'brotherhood' or 'fraternity', a tax they collected from the peasants in return for not attacking them, but which also obliged them to protect these peasants from attacks by other Bedouins.

The central parts of Jordan (the Balgā), for example, were dominated by the ʿAdwān tribe who collected *khawa* all the way north to the town of ʿAjlūn. However, when Rashid Pasha, the Ottoman governor of Damascus, conquered the Balgā in 1867, he forbade the custom and held several of the ʿAdwān tribal leaders prisoners (Abujaber, 1989; Rogan, 1994; Shryock, 1997). Rather than being dominated by Bedouin tribes, the towns of as-Salṭ and ʿAjlūn became administrative centers from which the Ottomans established their dominion over Jordan, relieving peasants from paying taxes to the Bedouins. This, along with a new land tenure system by which land-owners were required to register their property with the Ottoman authorities and to pay property tax—rather than tithe—meant that even Bedouins were forced to settle into villages and farm land.

Moreover, the Ottomans started establishing and securing transport routes between the different towns, connecting them to each other—through the Hijāz Railway which ran from Istanbul to Medina—and with the urban centers across the River Jordan by caravans and ferries, and opening these towns to regional markets. As trade flourished, a merchant class started developing in the Ottoman administrative centers, of which many were migrants from the urban centers across the river eager to expand their trade networks. Amman started receiving migrants from Damascus. Similarly, the town of al-Salṭ received many migrant merchants from Nablus in Palestine. According to al-Qāsimī, a religious scholar traveling from Damascus to Jerusalem through Amman and al-Salṭ in 1903, the region was undergoing heavy urbanization. He notes

"the commerce [of Amman] which is reaching the highest level of activity, as is the construction of buildings, as a result of the numerous people settling there" (Rogan, 1994, p. 52). Urbanization, and the settlement of nomadic groups continued at an accelerated pace in the interwar period. While in 1920 nomadic Bedouins constituted 46 percent of the population, by 1946 they were only 26 percent. This was despite the fact that the population of southern parts extending from Ma'an to Aqaba, annexed in 1925, was predominantly nomadic.

The geographic and social mobility that the process of urbanization engendered seems to have created the conditions for a 2nd order of indexicality to emerge out of the 1st described earlier. From the perspective of urbanites, the three—or four—dialects were enregistered in a schema of civilizational progress. This reflects a unidirectional process of urbanization from pastoral to rural to urban life, which in turn reflects a hierarchy of types of people with pastoralists at the bottom and urbanites at the top. This process can be diagrammed in the following way:

Pastoral → Pastoral-Rural → Rural → Rural-Urban → Urban

Less Prestigious   **More Prestigious**
(Marked)   **(Unmarked)**

Pastoralist → Pastoralist-Rural → Rural → Rural-Urbanite → Urbanite

Historically, it is difficult to ascertain when this schematization came to be dominant, but Bergsträsser's account suggests that it was well in place at the turn of the 20th century. For example, he reports that in the town of as-Ṣalṭ—classified at the time within the rural-urban category—with respect to the *Fuṣḥā* /k/, the corresponding rural variant [tʃ] was losing grounds to the urban variant [k], which he takes to be a sign that the town is urbanizing.[18] Urbanites considered themselves to be more refined, elegant and cosmopolitan compared to rural dwellers whom they considered simple and vulgar, or to Bedouins, whom they sometimes considered to be downright savages. From an urban perspective, urbanization involved a process of 'refining,' and 'softening.' From a Bedouin perspective, this 'softening' meant downright 'domestication' and 'feminization.' Shryock (1997) reports a conversation with a tribal leader (*Shēykh*) from the Balgā commenting on the difference between 'real' Bedouins and the urbanized Bedouins of today:

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[18] The social life of the variables [tʃ] and [k] and its role in effecting grammatical change in the dialect of as-Salṭ has received an excellent discussion in Herin and Al-Wer (2013).

"Ḥaj ʿArif Abu l-ʿAmash, the octogenarian patriarch of the ʿAmāmsha, often complained to me that his legion of sons, grandsons, and nephews were growing up like "barnyard hens" (*jājāt mazraʿa*), well fed but domesticated and ripe for slaughter.

"The age of the sword and lance (*zamān as-sayf wa-l-rumiḥ*) has passed away," he would exclaim within an earshot of his citified offspring, "and now the Bedouins hide like peasants behind walls and doors." (p. 54)

Within the schema of urbanization, the variant [ʔ], the primary shibboleth of urban speech, became iconic of 'softness' compared to the 'roughness' of the rural and pastoral variants [g] and [k]. Conducting a study on attitudes towards various ʿAmmiyya registers in Jordan using the matched-guise test, Sawaie (1987) has found that speakers found [g] to be most masculine, trailed by a slight margin by [k], while he found [ʔ] to be most feminine. Table 2, below, summarizes the enregisterment of various dialects within a schema of urbanization:

Table 2. <u>The enregisterment of Arabic dialects in Jordan within a schema of urbanization</u>.

		yigūl	*bəgūl*	*bəkūl*	*bəʔūl*
	Morphological Shibboleth				
	Phonemic Shibboleth	g	g	k	ʔ
1st order indexicality (presupposed)	**Geographic Area**	Southern Jordan and northern Arabia	Towns and Villages in Northern Jordan and southern Palestine	Villages in Northern Palestine and around Jerusalem	Cities across the Levant
2nd order indexicality (entailed)	**Register**	Pastoral	Rural		Urban
	Civilizational Progress	Backward	Intermediate		Advanced
	Tone	Roughest	Rough		Soft

3. Nationalism and 3rd Order indexicality

Most historical accounts place the beginnings of the institutionalization of the distinction between Jordanianness and Palestinianness in the year 1970, following the clashes between the Jordanian Army and Palestinian guerrillas. More research is necessary to determine when this distinction started happening linguistically. With the waves of migration, natural or forced, that took place from Palestine to Jordan over the course of the 20th century, there is evidence of an intuition of where everyone came from based on the local dialects of these groups. As I

mentioned earlier, this intuition still exists, particularly among the older generation who claim to be able to guess people's origins from the way they speak. Yet the notion of a 'Palestinian dialect' and a 'Jordanian dialect' is undoubtedly recent. Recall that, unlike European and many other post-colonial nation-states, Arab nation-states did not invest in creating standardized, national *ʿAmmiyyas* to be taught in schools for the national population. The official and only codified Arabic in all Arab states is *Fuṣḥā*. However, Arab states did and continue to invest in the creation of national standards in the oral-aural mode of language use, mostly through such media as film, TV and radio (cf. Abu-Lughod, 2008; Danielson, 2008; Salamandra, 2005).

As mentioned above, the 1970's and 1980's was a period of heavy differentiation between Palestinians and Jordanians along genealogical lines; a period when a Jordanian national imaginary took form in contradistinction to that of Palestinians. Those who could trace their genealogy along patrilineage to pre-1948 Jordan, considered themselves native Jordanians. Those whose genealogies were traced to the west of those territories were considered Palestinian. This was the case regardless whether their genealogies were traced to the West-Bank—officially, still a part of Jordan at the time—or to the lands on which the state of Israel was formed. This differentiation took place in many semiotic modes. Sartorially, Jordanian men started wearing red-checkered head-covers (*shmāgh* or *kaffiyyeh*) similar to those worn by the Jordanian army, to differentiate themselves from Palestinians who started wearing black-checkered ones emulating Yasser Arafat, head of the PLO (Al-Wer, 2007; Massad, 2001). Cuisine-wise, *Mansaf*—a lamb dish prepared with rice and dried yogurt—became the Jordanian national dish in contrast to *Msakhkhan*—a dish prepared with chicken and onions—which was taken to be emblematic of Palestinian cuisine.

Massad (2001) notes that a new genre of Bedouin music and songs came to be popularized by the state in the 70's through the newly established state-owned Jordan TV and Radio. Early attempts to popularize Bedouin folk-music through radio broadcast was highly unsuccessful because Bedouin dialects were extremely local and could not be understood by the predominantly urban population, let alone by the nationals of neighboring states. Later, Jordan Radio and TV adopted a new strategy whereby:

> "Traditional Bedouin forms of singing were completely dropped in favor of an invented semi-Westernized musical genre with "understandable" accents and words that the urban population could understand and that could be exported outside to the rest of the Arab world. This new genre was sold to the urban and

Bedouin population as *Bedouin* songs and music was exported abroad accordingly. Moreover, the words of the songs were mostly sung in urban accents with a slight pronunciation variation (the *qaf* sound becoming a *ga* sound) and with the use of few "Bedouin-dialect" words familiar to urbanites, which give the songs their "authentic" Bedouin flavor." (Massad, 2001, p. 76. Emphasis in original)

More research needs to be done on the development of this nationalist media genre, particularly how a national Jordanian/Bedouin register might have been created in the process. Yet, there is sufficient evidence that indicates that enregisterment of Jordanian Arabic took place during the 1970's. First, the earliest attempt to record linguistic variation in Jordan by a Jordanian was folklorist Rūkus al-ʿUzayzī's *Qāmūs al-ʿĀdāt, al-Lahjāt wa-al-ʾAwābid al-ʾUrduniyah* (1973).[19] In the introduction, the author asserts that he decided to write the book to "serve this [Arabic] language, show the beauty of the dialect of Jordanians, help researchers in studying Arabic dialects and learning our customs and epigrams which urbanity tries to erase" (p. 5). However, he soon admits that the term 'dialects' (pl.) is more suitable to describe Jordanian speech than 'dialect' (sing.) because even the inhabitants of the same town often spoke different dialects.[20] Al-ʿUzayzī's section on phonological and morphological features of Jordanian Arabics is more an unsystematic attempt to map linguistic variation across various towns and tribes than an account of a single Jordanian Arabic. Second, variationist sociolinguistic studies on Jordanian Arabic in urban centers, many of which were done in the 1980's, refer to a single Bedouin dialect where [q] is realized as [g] and take such a realization in urban speech as 'Bedouinization' (Abd-el-Jawad, 1981, 1986; Hussein, 1980; Sawaie, 1987).

However, the contemporary linguistic situation confirms the enregisterment of a Jordanian Arabic (*ʾUrdunī*), the shibboleth of which is the realization of the *Fuṣḥā* variable [q] as [g]. The earlier schema of 2nd order indexicality described above became the presupposed *nth* order, for an entailed 3rd order indexicality (*n+1*) within a schema of national space. Here, Jordanian was defined in contradistinction to two registers: a Palestinian (*Falasṭīnī*) register, the shibboleth of which is the realization of the variable [q] as [k], and an Urban (*Madanī*) register, the shibboleth of which is the realization of the variable [q] as [ʔ]. Three things are important to note here. First, that only one linguistic feature (the variant [k]), common to some of the dialects spoken in Palestine—namely, the rural dialects of northern Palestine—was singled out as a

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[19] Dictionary of Jordanian Traditions, Dialects and Epigrams.
[20] The wide diversity in Arabics spoken in Jordan has been well documented by the Finnish linguist Heikki Palva throughout his impressive career. See in particular Palva (1984, 1992).

shibboleth of Palestinian register. This variant did not exist in any of the dialects spoken in Jordan pre-1920, and was thus non-Jordanian by negation. Similarly, only one linguistic feature (the variant [ʔ]), common to urban dialects across the Levant was singled out as a shibboleth of Urban register. Like the variant [k], the variant [ʔ] did exist in what might retrospectively be considered the dialects of pre-1920 Jordan. Second, that only one of the various linguistic features of different dialects spoken in Jordan then was singled out as a shibboleth for a Jordanian register (the variant [g]) and that this process entailed an erasure of the structural differences—most notably morphological, as well as lexical—between the rural Jordanian and pastoral dialects. This happened despite the fact that some dialects in Palestine had the same variant. Third, the three variants [g], [k] and [ʔ] constitute a paradigmatic set of variation because, being realizations of the same *Fuṣḥā* variable, they cannot co-occur in a single register.

Table 3: <u>Third order indexicality of Arabic dialects in Jordan</u>

	Phonemic Shibboleth	g	k	ʔ
2nd order indexicality (presupposed)	**Register**	Pastoral-Rural	Rural	Urban
	Civilizational Progress	Backward	Backward	Advanced
	Tone	Rough / Masculine	Rough / Masculine	Soft / Feminine
3rd order indexicality (entailed)	**National Space**	Jordanian	Palestinian	Amman

Stigmatized as both rural (traditional/backward) and Palestinian (foreign/non-Jordanian), the [k] variant fell out of use. It is now virtually impossible to find users of [k] below the age of fifty, except, perhaps, in intimate settings such as Palestinian refugee camps where identification with Palestine took a particularly rural/peasant form (Farah, 1999; Sawalha, 1996). As such, their use of the variant indexed a Palestinian identity that presupposed the earlier schema of urbanization but entailed the association of Palestinianness with rural life.

When I was searching for people to interview, a friend introduced me to Salem (b.1976) as one of the rare people that still speak with a [k], albeit only occasionally. Salem is a Palestinian-Jordanian born in the West Bank town of Bēt Saḥūr. Unlike those who were displaced to Jordan following the war with Israel in 1948, his family was displaced from Ṣarafand, a village near the town of Ramla in central Palestine—now Israel—to the West Bank. He lived in Bēt

Saḥūr until he moved to Amman with his family in 1988, at the age of 12. He studied at one of the schools run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) until the age of 15 when he moved to a public school. He holds B.S. in civil engineering and an MBA from the German-Jordanian University, speaks English, some German and a bit of Hebrew. He grew up speaking the rural-Palestinian dialect of his family, but when he moved to Amman, he realized that this dialect was stigmatized.

During the interview, all the tokens of *Fuṣḥā* /q/ that Salem produced were [k] except when referring to the Urban register as '*ʾāl* and *ʾulnā*' where he produced it as [ʔ]. Moreover, he switched to English whenever he was talking about how his speech was stigmatized in Jordan. Half-way through the interview, however, Muhammad, Salem's colleague at work who happened to be sitting in the same room, interjected to point out that Salem was not speaking normally, but was rather trying to hide the fact that he always strove to speak in the Urban register:

> Researcher: So, in school you had people from...
>
> Salem: We were in the UNRWA school. A big part of my education was at the UNRWA school.
>
> R: So, I assume that at the UNRWA school, there were lots of Pales..
>
> S: Yeah, but they were influenced by the Jordanian dialect here more. Our people here were influenced. So the *kāl* and *kulnā* [speakers] were few.
>
> R: Hmm, so what did they speak?
>
> S: In between, in between. Because they had an unclear identity.
>
> R: You mean in between *kāl* and *gāl*?
>
> S: No, no. A Palestinian speaking *gāl* and *gulnā*!? [stressing the voiced velar stop, and pharyngealizing the alveolar lateral approximant, articulating it as a 'dark l'] That doesn't work. They spoke Urban, but not the very soft Urban. It was something between the dialect of Jerusalem [Urban] and that of qalandyā [Rural-Palestinian].
>
> R: Hmm. Hmm. So this was at the UNRWA. You stayed there?
>
> S: No, no. I went to the Hussein Academy. 10th, 11th and 12th grades I was at the Hussein Academy. I finished in '94. So as a youth when you speak with *kāl* and *kulnā* you feel that they single you out. You know what I mean? So I was trying to use it less, but I can't.
>
> R: Hmm. Single you out, meaning in a bad way?

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S: OK. Many people who were in the Hussein Academy, used to be in the army [schools]. And many of them came from the Prince Faysal Academy.[21] See what I mean? You know the army..[22]

R: Hmm..

S: So this stage, in the group, you try to give yourself a certain definition.[23]**You have to belong to a group**. So this is where the.. **You need to belong to a group**. Meaning **if you don't belong to a group** you have a problem in your life. **You have to be part of the group**. So sometimes you are speaking with a certain **dialect,** this can cause you a problem, or gives you a **label**. You don't want that **label, at least** at that stage. **Not to be labeled**. So that you become **part of this group**.

R: Hmm.. So which group were you in?

S: The Palestinian group of course!

R: What did they speak?

S: They spoke the light Palestinian dialect. And a good part of them spoke with ʾāl. Those from Hebron or Jerusalem, for example, they spoke with ʾāl. From Hebron, and its environs, and from Walajeh, and from Nablus and its environs.

R: These also came from the UNRWA School?

S: No, no, no. They came from public schools and from the Frère.[24] A few of them came from Frère. But most from public schools. The UNRWA were few. But even those who were there, they had been living in Amman for a long time. They did not have the **exposure** I had. Because I am closer, closer to the West Bank people specifically. And I was in contact always.. and our people and our customs and traditions.

R: So you started speaking with ʾāl?

S: No, I speak with ʾāl.. No, no I speak half the time with kāl.. I don't speak with ʾāl...

[Salem's friend, Muhammad, who was sitting in the same room, seems uncomfortable and suddenly interjects]

Muhammad: No, I think you speak with ʾāl. But the kāl comes out sometimes.

S: I speak with ʾāl when..

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[21] One of several high schools run by the Directorate of Education and Military Culture in the Jordanian Armed Forces.
[22] The Jordanian army's rank and file are mostly of Bedouin descent.
[23] Bold type-face indicates English. Regular type-face indicates Arabic.
[24] Private, Catholic school in West Amman.

M: Or maybe the words you use do not have this thing.. You search for the words that don't... I feel you speak normal [*meaning ʾāl*], except for few words that show..

S: When I am being natural.. So, when I am being natural, I speak *kāl and ʾulnā*.. Didn't I yesterday, when I said *kultillak* ...

M: *kultillak*.. [*confirming*]

S: Aha.. see.. I speak naturally. When I speak naturally...

M: Hmm

S: But sometimes I don't speak it.. not **intentionally**.. But we have this **paradigm**.. Like Muhammad for example: 'MBA and stuff.. and I don't know what.. and English and German.. and you speak with *kāl* and *kulnā*?' People do not consider a peasant to be intelligent. Or they consider peasants not to have certificates. This is a **paradigm** in our society..

M: So a peasant cannot be educated...

S: To the contrary, the peasants are the smartest people.. But the idea is that **you have to look a little bit sophisticated**. **Sophisticated** means *ʾāl* and *ʾulnā* and to speak languages and stuff... [*turns to Researcher*] which is part of the artificiality of our life... unfortunately.. when we came to Amman we saw how artificial people are. In Bēt Saḥūr, 95% of the people are Christian.. our Christian brothers.. but we never felt that there are class differences, ever. Here in Amman **from day one** I felt that there are class differences. There is West Amman and there is East Amman.[25] That is why the nature of life in this country is very artificial, very, very. So you find people who say *kāl* and *kulnā*. In a different **setting,** they say *ʾāl* and *ʾulnā*! I used to go to university when I was little. My aunt used to take me with her to the University of Jordan. And there were these guys that I knew from the Hussein Refugee camp, they used to play volleyball with my cousins. At the university they would speak with *ʾāl* and *ʾulnā*.. refined and **sophisticated**!

Unlike the Palestinian register, the Urban register continued to be prestigious, indexing refinement and modernity, albeit also foreignness. As I mentioned above, the early top state bureaucrats came from the class of urban elites. Early migrants to Amman from rural areas in Jordan oriented towards the Urban register as they moved up the social hierarchy, through the educational system and into the bureaucracy. As this happened, the Urban register that emerged

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[25] East Amman is the lower and lower middle class part of the city. It also happens to be where most Palestinian refugee camps were located and where some of the earlier migrants from rural Jordan lived. West Amman is the more affluent part of the city.

was not based on the dialect of any of the cities were the urban migrants came from. Rather, these dialects underwent dialect leveling and the emergent Urban register, while drawing on these dialects phonologically were drawing on *Fuṣḥā*, lexically (Abd-el-Jawad, 1986). The association of the state bureaucracy with the urban register, however, was reversed in the 1970's, when the state started 'Jordanizing' its bureaucracy (*ʾardanat en-niẓām el-ʾidārī*). While the state bureaucracy expanded during that period, appointments became the exclusive domain of native Jordanians, and the new Jordanian register came to index state officialdom (Al-Wer, 2007).

4. Conclusion: Rough and Soft as a Scalar Outlook

By now, Jordanians meta-pragmatically differentiate between two registers of Arabic in Jordan: *'Urdunī* (Jordanian) and *Madanī* (Urban). The distinction between the two is usually made on territorial grounds—i.e. as dialects. As the designation makes clear, Urban is considered the dialect of the city; more specifically, the capital city Amman. Jordanian on the other hand, is the dialect assigned to the rest of the country. However, not all those who live in Amman speak Urban, nor all those who live outside Amman speak Jordanian. In fact, a statistical study of language use in Amman is most likely to indicate that more people speak Jordanian than Urban. Consider the following response to an online discussion about whether Jordanians should start writing in *ʿĀmmiyya* or should continue to write in *Fuṣḥā*:

> People in Jordan, specifically, speak various dilects [sic]. We are a schizophrenic society. Within certain social networks people are comfortable speaking whatever dialect they are used to, once we meet Jordanians with different backgrounds we switch. i.e. [sic] I met a fellow Jordanian the other day (not in Jordan) He speaks with 'Gaf', I speak with '2af'.[26][27]Ya3ni, 2oltello vs. goltello. He started speaking my language and I started speaking his to make each other comfortable. Other people in Jordan take this further and build political and social impressions based on it, i.e [sic] origins and social status and education level. Girls mostly speak a soft dilect [sic] 'bel 2af' some of those girls' own brothers speak bel gaf. In certain social circles when guys speak bel 2af they are perceived [as] soft, in other circles when guys speak bel gaf they are perceived [as] '7afartal.'[28] [...] I think the Jordanian society is very unique when it comes to dilects [sic], we have bakollak vs. ba2ollak vs.

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[26] In internet and short-text-messaging (SMS) conventions for transcribing Arabic in the Latin alphabet, [2] indicates a glottal stop (*hamza*); while [7] indicates a voiceless pharyngeal fricative (*ḥāʾ*); and [3] indicates a voiced pharyngeal fricative or a pharyngealized glottal stop (*ʿayn*).

[27] 2af (*ʾaf*) = glottal stop [ʔ]; gaf = voiced velar stop [g]

[28] 7afartal (*ḥafartal*) is Jordanian slang for a vulgar person.

bagollak and this is basically driven [sic] from the unique composition of the Jordanian society. Jordanians come from various backgrounds and with that comes various dilects [sic]. It will take some time until all dialects [sic] fuse into one. At least that won't happen until all disputes about people's origins are resolved and we all have inner peace about how our society is built. Until then I think writing in 'Fosha' [sic] will prevail. (Abu ʿAdas, 2009)

There are gender and class distinctions too. In Amman in particular, Jordanian is considered the dialect of males, while Urban is considered the dialect of females. Jordanian is considered a 'rough' dialect and thus masculine, while Urban is considered to be 'soft' and feminine. It is very common, for instance, that within a single family in Amman, that males would speak Jordanian, while females would speak Urban. The same applies to other cities and urbanizing towns, particularly in middle and northern Jordan, such as Zarqa and Irbid. In southern Jordan however, this tends to be less so the case. There, both genders tend to speak Jordanian. On the other hand, in the more affluent western parts of Amman, both males and females tend to speak Urban, which they consider to be more 'refined' and 'modern' in contrast to Jordanian, which they perceive as 'vulgar' and 'backward'.

The notion of a 'soft' urban dialect that is also feminine and a 'rough' dialect associated with non-urban areas and masculinity is not limited to the way Jordanians perceive Jordanian speech. It is also a scheme that they often use to classify *any* local ʿĀmmiyya within their repertoire:

Suppose there was a summit for the Arab League and they decided to issue their concluding statement in ʿĀmmiyya.. If it was in Saudi ʿĀmmiyya.. It would sound rough, and get ridiculed by the urban and refined of the Arabs. If it was in Lebanese ʿĀmmiyya.. it would sound soft and get ridiculed by the Bedouins and the Gulfies [...] we Jordanians, in particular, mock the Lebanese president because his dialect is close to that of spoiled girls (excuse my expression).. *[my translation]* (Abu ʿAdas 2009)

As this brief description suggests, what is at hand here is not simply dialects in the sense of a language variety spoken by people inhabiting a certain geographic area, but rather registers of locale enmeshed in local metapragmatics: a cline that ranges from the 'roughness' of pastoralism and ruralism to the 'softness' of urbanity. This ideologically charged apprehension of

social and physical space is produced through a process of rhematization across social scales by mediating diagrammatic icons between polar opposites in the following way:

PASTORAL-RURAL : URBAN :: [g] : [ʔ] :: ROUGH : SOFT :: JORDAN : AMMAN :: MALE : FEMALE :: LOWER-CLASS : UPPER-CLASS :: GULFIES : LEBANESE.

Understanding how rhematization works to draw iconic resemblances out of indexical co-occurrences across these different registers helps tackle some of the shortcomings of classical approaches to variation in dialectology, and which scholars of the [q] variants in Jordanian Arabic have rightly pointed out (cf. Al-Wer & Herin, 2011). Moreover, it would allow for a comparative approach to the study of variation in *ʿĀmmiyya* Arabics across national boundaries. Quite significantly, the distinction between 'rough' and 'soft' I have discussed here, and its juxtaposition with 'ruralism' and 'urbanity,' 'masculinity' and 'femininity,' and with class distinctions seems to be a recurrent trope for Arabic speakers, not only in Jordan, but in other parts of the Arab World. Hachimi (2012) has discussed a similar process of enregisterment that draws on the same distinction in the formation of a *Fessi* register of Moroccan Arabic in Casablanca. I suspect that a similar process can be seen among Arabic speakers elsewhere. More historical and linguistic research in this regard will help us understand how such a distinction came to play a similar role in such diverse places, and how it continues to be operative in ongoing linguistic differentiation in Arabic.

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