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## **ARABIC URBAN VERNACULARS: DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE**

**Catherine Miller**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Cities are ‘par essence’ places of contact and heterogeneity; and since the 1960s have been the locus of research on language variation and change. Most of the recent comprehensive publications on dialect contact and language variation in the urban environment focus on the Western World, i.e. on countries where the process of urbanization of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was closely linked to the process of industrialization (e.g. Auer et al. 2005, Chambers et al. 2002, Kerswill 2005).

Urban sociolinguistics, and particularly variationist sociolinguistics, attempts to develop rules, models and typologies; this has turned out to be a rather

challenging task due to the number and types of factors and data that need to be investigated (Owens 2005a). The link between social and linguistic processes is particularly complex. The same phenomenon (for example, migration and settlement in a given city) can produce very different linguistic outcomes depending on the historical and social settings. To what extent do the rules observed in industrialized and post-industrialized Western cities, and the socio-economic categories developed in these countries, apply to other parts of the world? Like any other social science, urban sociolinguistics balances universalism and localism, generalization and particularism. In this respect, investigating non-Western urban settings might help to identify both universal trends and more specific local issues.

The Arabic-speaking world covers a wide and heterogeneous geographical area and includes very different types of urban settings, national constructions, social organizations and language situations, in addition to the spread of the Arabic-speaking Diaspora in many parts of the world. Historically, Arab countries had experienced very different rates of urbanization. However, urbanization has been one of the important socio-economic changes of the second part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Predominantly rural in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> c., the population of most Arab countries is now predominantly urban (see Table 1,

Appendix). This urban expansion co-occurred with a high demographic growth, and arose in a particular political context: the creation or the consolidation of post-colonial states leading to internal as well as external competitions and conflicts in an increasingly globalized world. Little is known about the linguistic outcomes of this massive urbanization process, although hundreds of historical and urban studies have focused on the urbanization of the Middle East (Bonine et al 1994). For a number of cities, we find relatively old dialect descriptions, which usually fail to account for variation and change. For others, we have more focused variationist studies, restricted to a small number of phonological variables. Although valuable data have been collected for over a century, they are often not easily accessible.<sup>1</sup> The absence of a synthesizing perspective does not facilitate cross-cultural comparison on the correlation between social changes and language changes.

The desire to foster dialogue between researchers from different countries and scientific traditions was at the heart of a collective project that led to the organization of an international workshop on Arabic urban vernaculars in Aix en Provence in October 2004.<sup>2</sup> From the very beginning, it was clear that the challenge of reaching a more analytic and synthetic perspective based on commonly recognized firm grounds had still a long way to go before its

realization. By offering a panorama of Arabic linguistic urbanization, this book represents an initial step in this process.<sup>3</sup> It gathers fifteen case studies on eighteen cities from ten countries (see map 1). The selected cities are mainly capital cities, which have undergone different types and degrees of urbanization: old cities (Cairo and Damascus); emerging cities (Amman or Nouakchott); expanding cities (Casablanca, Riyadh, Sanāa and Tripoli); cities that went through civil war (Beirut), a few provincial towns (Ksar el Kebir and Meknes in Morocco, Damman, Buraidah, Abha and Skaka in Saudi Arabia), and cities in which Arabic speakers are a political or demographic minority (Ceuta, Maiduguri, Zaragoza). The book encompasses various methodological and theoretical approaches, some more linked to Arabic dialectology, some more linked to variationist sociolinguistics and some to anthropological linguistics. The chapters present cases of dialect contact and language variation, analyzed at various linguistic levels going from an overall perspective to phonetics and acoustic analyses. Most papers discuss the impact of internal migration on both individual speech and on the evolution of urban vernaculars (dialect convergence or divergence); a few papers focus on other aspects of urbanization, more linked to the spread of education, modernization and globalization. Beyond the diversity of the data, which partly reflects the past

and present human and cultural diversity of these cities, some strong trends emerge that will be highlighted in the present chapter.

This chapter discusses some key aspects of Arabic urban linguistics.<sup>4</sup> It analyzes the status attributed to urban vernaculars by traditional Arab grammarians and Western dialectologists vis à vis other dialectal categories (section 2). It then summarizes the main socio-economic characteristics of 20<sup>th</sup> century urbanization trends in the Middle East and the various linguistic impacts of this population renewal (section 3). It discusses the status of urban vernacular Arabic versus national vernacular and points to the problematic use of the concepts of standardization, prestige and norms in the Arabic setting (section 4). Finally it presents the issue of multilingualism and new urban cultures in the globalized cities (section 5). Because we subscribe to the view that language change needs to be explained on the basis of a multiplicity of factors (internal, external and extra-linguistic), particular attention will be given to extra-linguistic phenomena which play an important role in the social construct of the Middle Eastern cities. Urban dynamics cannot be isolated from their wider national or regional political context and from the ideological conflicts that arise in such contexts.

## **2. CLASSIFICATION OF ARABIC URBAN VERNACULARS: STEREOTYPES AND FACTS.**

Before looking at the contemporary settings, it is important to recall how the Arabic linguistic tradition, in both the Arab and Western world, has conceived the linguistic categories, which have shaped, consciously or not, our perception of the language situation. The issue of dialect categorization is closely connected to the theorization of the origin(s) of the Arabic vernaculars, a topic which has been widely discussed over the past fifty years. Only brief reference will be made here to the rural/bedouin/urban distinction, which continues to be a key and controversial classification of Arabic linguistics.

### **2.1 Traditional dialect categorizations**

Arabic urban vernaculars are considered to have played a crucial role in the history of Arabic. Following the early Arab-Muslim conquest of the 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> centuries (AD), a number of garrison towns became the first Arabized centers outside the Arabian Peninsula (Donner 1981, Versteegh 1997). Because Arab speakers were in contact with local non-Arab population, the Arabic vernaculars that developed in these cities came progressively to be considered as more ‘corrupt’ than the more ‘pure’ bedouin vernaculars of the Arabic Peninsula. The distinction between the ‘conservative’ Arab bedouin speech and

the ‘corrupted’ urban speech is epitomized in 14<sup>th</sup> century Ibn Khaldoun’s *Muqaddima* but can be traced back to some of the early Arab grammarians such as Ibn Jinni in the 10<sup>th</sup> century (Larcher 2006, Owens 2005b, Versteegh 1997). According to the tradition, the first Arab grammarians were called upon by the rulers to ‘protect’ the pure Arabic language from foreign influence (Versteegh 1997:3). They started to pinpoint the ‘faults’ (*laḤn*) of the urban speakers and are said to have relied on isolated bedouin speakers to fix the grammatical rules of Classical Arabic. This *topos* of the purity of the bedouin language and its close relationship to Classical Arabic has survived until now in both Arab societies and the meta-linguistic discourses.

The typological division between sedentary (*Ḥaḥarī*) and bedouin (*badawī*) dialects, and within the sedentary, between urban (*madanī*) and rural (*qarawī* or *fellāḤī*) dialects inherited from Ibn Khaldoun was taken over by the early European dialectologists and is still in use today (Palva 2006). The linguistic basis of the urban/rural/bedouin typology led to many controversies, i.e. few features distinguish all bedouin dialects from all sedentary dialects (Holes 1996, Ingham 1982). But the structural similarities recorded between dialects separated sometimes by huge geographical distances indicate that these dialectal classifications are not completely unfounded (Palva 2006, Rosenhouse 2006).

An important analytical tool of Arabic dialectology has been the concept of koine/koineization, inherited from the Hellenic linguistic tradition. It was used to explain the origin and the nature of the early urban vernaculars which developed in the garrison towns.<sup>5</sup> The concepts of koine and koineization has also been applied to many urban and non-urban Arabic dialects in transitional zones or in areas that had experienced successive waves of settlement (Palva 1982). By using the term koine, linguists accredited the postulate that various Arabic vernaculars share a systemic unity between themselves and with Classical Arabic. They tended to minimize the influence of non-Arabic languages in the historical and contemporary development of Arabic vernaculars. But because the term koine has been dominantly used in reference to Arabic urban vernaculars, it reinforces the idea that urban vernaculars are more mixed than other, particularly bedouin, vernaculars, even if some postulates have since been criticized by a number of linguists (i.e. the possible unity of pre-Islamic Arabic vernaculars, the supposed conservatism of bedouin dialects, the genealogical link between Classical Arabic and modern Arabic vernaculars, etc.).<sup>6</sup> In contemporary studies, the term koine refers to a shared variety (see below for Morocco).

This traditional dialect classification/representation had important repercussions for contemporary settings, both linguistically and symbolically.

## **2.2 Sociolinguistic implications of the urban/bedouin dichotomy**

Linguistically, the categories of bedouin, rural and urban dialects are still used by most linguists on the basis of the presence/absence of a set of features rather than by reference to a geographical region or lifestyle. Categorizing a dialect X as a bedouin-bedouinized dialect does not mean that the speakers pursue a nomadic bedouin way of life but that they display in their speech a number of features associated with bedouin dialects. This categorization implies that some varieties spoken in urban environments will be nevertheless categorized as ‘bedouin-bedouinized’, ‘rural’ or, more often, ‘mixed’. The implication is that ‘origin’ (i.e. genealogy) is considered a more important criterion of categorization than ‘geographic location’. At this stage, it is interesting to point out that these linguistic representations echo some of the local identity discourses. Reference to ‘origin’, ‘lineage’ and ‘family’ is a corner-stone of self-affiliation discourses, particularly but not exclusively, among groups claiming an Arab tribal origin. Many urban dwellers categorize themselves by referring to a tribal-regional-family affiliation, rather than a contemporary place of residence.<sup>7</sup>

The continuing use of the terms rural or bedouin varieties or bedouinized koine in urban contexts can be diversely interpreted. One interpretation is that these

terms refer to fixed categories and participate in the orientalist and essentialist vision of Arab societies. Another interpretation is that the use of these terms shows that there is no discontinuity between the city and the bedouin/rural hinterlands, and that urbanization does not necessarily radically transform patterns of affiliation and identification, or language use. Taking into account the theory of ethnic boundaries (Barth 1969), it is evident that the term 'bedouin' may refer to very different and changing entities, the important thing being its social meanings and uses in the given society. In this respect, these categories might act as badges of identity and might be just as relevant as more 'modern' categories such as social or professional classes.

The traditional dialect categorization has proved useful in identifying the various historical linguistic layers found within a city as well as in understanding the origin of communal/religious variants/varieties found in many cities. In North Africa, in particular, historical dialectology has distinguished non-Hilali from Hilali dialects and within non-Hilali, Andalusi from Jbala, etc. (Aguade et al. 1998). In Iraq, a distinction has been drawn between sedentary *qɔtu* dialects and bedouin *gɔɔ* dialects (Jastrow 2006). An important correlate is that urban variants/varieties that appear at first sight to have religious or communal or sectarian affiliations (i.e. Jewish or Christian

versus Muslim, or Sunni versus Shi'i) were found to reflect successive patterns of settlements and a division between former sedentary and former bedouin groups (Blanc 1964, Holes 1987, 1995b). To sum up, the population of the old urban centers spoke a sedentary vernacular, irrespective of its religious affiliation (*qeltu* dialect in Mesopotamia, non-Hilali and often Andalusí dialect in North Africa). With the progressive settlement of former bedouin groups, a process of koineization occurred which led to the emergence of mixed urbanized bedouinized vernaculars spoken mainly by Muslim groups (particularly males), while the old city vernaculars were kept by non-Muslim communities and women.

Two important sociolinguistic implications can be deduced from these historical processes. First, it is not possible to generalize the linear developmental model proposed by linguists such as Cadora (1992), which postulates a linear evolution from bedouin dialects to rural dialects to urban dialects, given that many Arabic urban vernaculars went through a later bedouinization process, which continued throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Abu Haidar 2006b). Secondly, the maintenance over centuries of some 'old urban features' attested in pre-Hilali and *qeltu* urban dialects, in spite of huge population movements and koineization processes, indicates that dialect contact induced by migration does not automatically lead to a general process of

leveling and koineization and the emergence of a single vernacular that eradicates all previous varieties. Social, communal or spatial segregation can foster the preservation of different varieties (Siegel 1993). This means that the three-generation pattern endorsed by many sociolinguists (such as Calvet (1994) for the French school, Trudgill (1986) and Kerswill (2005) for the British school (see also AL-WER this volume) must be investigated very carefully.

### **2.3 The ambivalent image of the city**

Symbolically, the perception of Arabic urban vernaculars as “mixed” or “corrupted” forms of speech might affect their contemporary status and seems to fit with the ambivalent perception of the city that prevails in many Arab countries. The ambivalent symbolic status of the city is an universal *topos*, that has come and gone since antiquity according to the historical-political context and the dominant ideological discourse of the time. At some periods, cities are seen as essentially places of cosmopolitanism and corruption as opposed to the rural simplicity and honesty. At other periods, cities are epitomized as places of civilization, refinement, dynamism and modernity as opposed to the backward rural areas. In Arabic, the Arabic root *H-r* has given *taHaḥḥur* ‘urbanization’ and *Haḥāra* ‘civilization’, suggesting that both processes were seen as

constitutive to each other. But the modern urban way of life, particularly when associated with Westernization, is also the focus of social and religious criticism. It must be remembered here, that, starting from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the major Middle Eastern cities developed in a context of political domination, i.e. the urban ruling elite of most countries was of foreign origin (Mamluk, Ottoman, Circassian, Moghol, Spanish, Portuguese, etc.) and the cities attracted merchants, mercenaries, workers, etc. from various places (Dakhliya 2004, Raymond 1993). From the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century up to the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, under colonial or protectorates rules, many cities had very important non-Muslim European communities and in some cities like Algiers the local Muslim population was a minority (Boucherit 2002).

When independence took place, urbanization led to an important population renewal in a context of Arab nationalism where the notions of Arab identity, Arab authenticity, purity of origin (*ʿaṣāla*) were some of the cornerstones of a new political discourse, supported by an educational policy in favor of Arabization. The arrival of many provincial migrants and the departure of members of foreign as well as Jewish communities fostered the emergence of new urban practices and cultures. Depending on the city and the national and regional context, the outcome of this population renewal led to different dynamics.

### **3. URBANIZATION AND MIGRATION**

#### **3.1 The growth of the capital cities**

One of the major characteristics of the urbanization trend in the Arab world in the second part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is the decisive role of internal migration on urban growth, with the notable exception of the Gulf countries, Iraq and Libya, where the oil industries attracted an important regional and international migration. Another exception is Amman (AL-WER), which since its creation has accepted many refugees from neighboring countries (Palestinians and more recently Iraqis).

This internal migration took place at differing speeds and rates depending on the country. In countries such as Egypt or Syria (see Annex) with a pre-1900 high rate of urbanization, internal migration was particularly important up to the 1970s and started to slow down in the 1980s, while it increased considerably since the 1970s in countries with previous low levels of urbanization such as Mauritania, Libya, Jordan and Yemen.

Internal migration appeared at first to be directed towards the capital cities or the economically dominant centers. Since the mid 1970s, urbanization has spread to many regional and secondary urban centers as well as former villages

(Kharoufi 1995, Denis 2007, GEOPOLIS).<sup>8</sup> However, every Arab country has one major city which stands far above all the others in terms of demographic growth and economic wealth, and acts as the dominant national pole. This is usually the capital city, except in the case of Morocco where Casablanca surpasses Rabat and acts as the economic capital of the country. This domination has sometimes occurred to the detriment of former important regional cities (cf. Cairo versus Alexandria; Damascus versus Aleppo; Casablanca versus Rabat, Salé, Fes; Sanā'a versus Aden, Amman versus Irbid, etc., see Table 2 in Annex).

At the spatial level, the growth in urbanization has witnessed the expansion of urban suburbs, going from upper- and middle-class districts to unplanned or 'informal' settlements or 'bidonvilles'. While the first type of suburbs has not attracted too much attention, the unplanned suburbs, with sometimes more than 50% of the total city population, are often stigmatized in dominant public discourses as places of urban poverty, instability and unstructured rurality that 'threaten' the former urban balance and culture.<sup>9</sup> Although this negative perception has been qualified by many social studies, it remains a strong urban meta-narrative, which questions the migrants' ability to integrate within the city. Often expressed in terms of traditional opposition between urbanity and

rurality, or even ‘rurbanity’, it sometimes tends to focus on specific ethno-regional groups such as the Shi‘i living in Eastern Beirut (Harb el Kak 2006), or the Upper Egyptians living in the suburbs of greater Cairo (Miller 2005).

At a sociolinguistic level, this growth in urbanization raises the following questions:

- a) what is the influence of internal migration upon the development of urban vernaculars and what kind of dialect contact, dialect accommodation or dialect shift has taken place?
- b) to what extent does urbanization lead to the emergence of established (or focused) urban vernaculars which could be considered as urban standards? What are the main factors in the variations and changes that have been recorded?
- c) what is the regional-national diffusion of the capital’s vernacular, if it exists? How does it interact with other urban regional vernaculars?

### **3.2 Impact of migration upon the development of Arabic urban vernaculars**

The contemporary linguistic impact of migration has been unevenly studied. In the period 1950-1970, structuralist and functionalist linguistics dominated Arabic dialect descriptions, giving little place to the study of variation. From the 1960s, more attention has been given to contact between Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and the dialects than to contact between the various regional/national vernaculars (see section 4). In the early 1980s, a number of variationist studies focused on dialect contact in the urban context, particularly in Jordan-Palestine (Abdel Jawad 1986) and Bahrain (Holes 1987). The development of dialectal studies in the 1980s and the publication of a number of dialect atlases contributed indirectly to the emergence of Arabic urban sociolinguistics, since dialect contact cannot be properly studied without sufficient knowledge of the linguistic features in contact! Different models and approaches have been developed in the Maghreb and the Mashreq. Generally speaking, francophone studies on North African cities have favored a historical-dialectal approach and have focused on the formation of urban koines. The best-studied examples are found in Morocco (see below). Most studies on Middle Eastern cities have followed a variationist approach and have investigated variation based on age, sex, social class and education with a recent shift to ethno-methodology (focus on context of interaction and variation seen as a social practice). Finally, political factors (Arab pan-nationalism) have

impeded the development of both dialectal and sociolinguistic studies. In most Arab countries, studies on Arabic vernaculars are not yet considered legitimate topics of research and are not supported by the local institutions. Civil wars and political instability have sometimes reinforced this trend. It is therefore not surprising that data are seriously lacking for countries such as Algeria or Lebanon.

#### *North Africa*

In North Africa, urban dialectology has drawn a distinction between cities whose vernaculars are considered to be a bedouin-based koine (Oran, Marrakech, Casablanca, Constantine, etc.) and those characterized as former pre-Hilali or Andalusí dialects (Algiers, Fez, Rabat, Sale, Tunis, Tlemcen, Tangiers, Tetouan, Tripoli, etc.). For the former group, we have very little information concerning the impact of recent migration. The latter groups has attracted most attention, particularly in Morocco, where linguists have developed a further categorization of the urban dialects into *vieux parlers citadins* (old city vernaculars spoken by the original urban dwellers) and *nouveaux parlers urbains* (neo-urban vernaculars spoken by the new urban dwellers) for cities such as Rabat, Salé or Fez (Messaoudi 2003). The neo-urban vernaculars described as koines influenced by the ‘rural-bedouin

features' brought by the immigrants, are said to have spread at the expense of the old city vernaculars. The neo-urban koine is becoming the public inter-group language while the old-city vernacular is increasingly restricted to close family relationships, is mainly spoken by old women and is in a process of attrition following the departure of some old urban communities, particularly the Jewish (Aguade et al. 1998, Cohen 1973 & 1981, Dendane 2002, Jabeur 1996, El Himer 2001, Messaoudi 2001, Trabelsi 1988). The decline of the old urban vernaculars corresponds to the decline of the aristocratic culture and lifestyle symbolized by the Medina, (often abandoned by rich families who moved to new high-class suburbs) and coincides with the decline of an old urban elite (often from Andalusí origin) and the emergence of a new lifestyle and a new urban middle class of provincial origin (cf. the *bḥdi/barrāni* dichotomy of Tunis). In all the big urban centers (Casablanca, Algiers, Tunis, Oran, Constantine, Rabat-Sale, Nouakchott, etc.), the expanding urban koines exhibit various degrees of mixing with the surrounding bedouin/rural dialects. This is certainly the reason why the *citadin* versus *urbain* paradigm became so prevalent in the North African urban social sciences (Naciri and Raymond 1997). Each city, however, represents a specific case; below are some examples developed in this book.

Nouakchott in Mauritania (TAINÉ CHEIKH) represents the atypical case of a ‘new city without a new vernacular’ and Taine Cheikh’s paper questions the passage from bedouinity to urbanity. Nouakchott was built ex-nihilo in 1957 and its development coincided with the building of the nation-state. For centuries, the Moorish society was characterized by its bedouin and nomadic way of life. The pre-modern urban centers were mainly caravan cities that, in contrast to the rest of North Africa, did not develop any specific urban dialects. In spite of, or maybe as a result of, the strict social hierarchy of Moorish society, the Hassaniyya bedouin vernacular remained remarkably homogenous and knew very little dialect divergence. Therefore urbanization did not lead to a process of koineization or leveling but rather to increasing contact with Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) or with French, and to a certain amount of lexical renewal and borrowing. Language mixing, which was perceived negatively in the conservative Moorish society, is now spreading either through the use of a classicized colloquial variety or increasing lexical borrowings with French/English and African languages (see DIA in Part III).

Tripoli (Libya) is another capital that developed in a dominant bedouin environment. PEREIRA carefully describes the linguistic features of the present-day urban koine. He recalls the long history of the city, which saw

numerous population changes and points to the tremendous urbanization that followed the oil revolution in the 1960s. The oldest descriptions of Tripoli Arabic show that at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century this vernacular was already a koine, mixing bedouin and pre-Hilali features at all linguistic levels. A pre-Hilali dialect was spoken by the important Jewish community of Tripoli at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. With the departure of this community, the old city dialect has totally disappeared. Compared to these older dialect descriptions, Pereira's data indicate that certain bedouin features are reinforced (verbal gender distinction, dual nominal forms, synthetic genitive constructions, lexis). In the case of Tripoli, the absence of a strong local Tripolitan elite and the regime's discourse emphasizing the values of the bedouin ethics accompanied the development of this bedouinized urban koine and the total disappearance of the former urban culture. It seems, however, that very recently a new interest toward the old Tripoli culture has been emerging.

HACHIMI explores contact between an old urban variety (Fessi) and a new urban variety in Casablanca (Morocco). Casablanca developed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century under French colonial rule and attracted a large rural population. Its vernacular is described as a koine that includes many rural/bedouin features taken from the neighboring Chaouia group. Today, Casablanca Arabic is

considered to represent the national Moroccan koine, and has attained a certain degree of focusing and stabilization. It has yet been little studied and we do not know the degree of homogenization/differentiation. Hachimi studies the process of accommodation among women of Fessi origin (from the city of Fez) living in Casablanca. Following Eckert's theory of variation as social practices and not as structures, Hachimi shows that the degree of accommodation varies according to linguistic features, to context of interaction and to the personal attitudes of the speakers. Degree of leveling/accommodation is not directly linked to time of migration. An important insight is the symbolic value attributed to each specific feature. A number of Fessi women want to sound 'normal', 'modern', 'harsh' and 'popular' by using some Casablanca features (and dropping Fessi features viewed as too particular and aristocratic), but refrain from using others considered as too 'rural'. Hachimi's focus on the social meaning of variation highlights the fluidity of individual practices and self-identification.

Concerning the old versus neo-urban vernaculars in North Africa, a number of issues deserve more investigation.

One is the possible convergence between the different neo-urban koines at the national level. This question remains open for Algeria, due to lack of

comparative studies between Oran and Algiers. In the case of Morocco, and due to the attested prestige of Casablanca Arabic, it is not yet clear if what authors such as Messaoudi call the neo-urban vernacular of Rabat, Salé or Fez are local urban koines or if they tend to reproduce the Casablanca koine. Messaoudi (2001 & 2003) considers the Rabat neo-urban vernacular to be characterized by the dominance of rural/bedouin features coming from the surrounding tribes, particularly the Zaer, while in Casablanca, the rural/bedouin features are mostly associated with the neighboring Chaouia group.

The issue of dialect convergence in the Diaspora context is discussed by VICENTE, who is working on the Moroccan communities of two Spanish cities, Ceuta and Zaragoza. Previous studies on Moroccan Diaspora in Europe (France, the Netherlands) indicate that Moroccan migrants continue to speak specific local varieties rather than the Moroccan koine. It is well known that migrant groups are often linguistically conservative compared to speakers in their region of origin. Vicente shows that this situation does not apply in Zaragoza, due to the fact that the Moroccan migration is a very recent phenomenon. Migrants (mainly young males) come from different areas and speak the Moroccan koine between themselves. As a Spanish enclave within North Africa, Ceuta constitutes a special case. Due to its proximity to Morocco, the speech of the Arab minority is more influenced by the regional linguistic

changes. As in other Moroccan cities, Vicente detects the disappearance of a number of pre-Hilali features (preserved only by old women) and their replacement by koine-like features. However, she notes that some pre-Hilali features associated with the local prestigious Tetouan dialect are maintained. The Moroccan situation appears therefore rather complex with a number of regional urban koines, whose interconnection awaits further investigation.

Another question concerns the possible territorialization of the urban variants. Some authors have attempted to map the territorial distribution of the old versus neo-urban varieties within the city and believe there to be a close correlation between types of urban varieties and types of urban districts (cf. El Himer 2001 for Sale).<sup>10</sup> However, this mapping fails to take into account social and stylistic variation and has not yet been investigated in a quantitative approach. The territorialization might rather be conceived in a more symbolic perspective, i.e. following what sociologists have labeled ‘imagined territories’ (Tarrus 2000), i.e. the symbolic association between speech and place. EMBARKI adopts the concept of territorialization and investigates the realization of some phonetic parameters (duration of vowels, syllables and words) among two groups of young Moroccan students born and bred in the town of Ksar el Kebir, in north-west Morocco. One group lives in the old center and the other in the new

suburb. Relying on the quantitative analysis of phonetic data, Embarki concludes that there is indeed a difference between the speakers of the new and the old districts. While the girls of the old districts tend to maintain the phonetic parameters of the old city vernacular, the boys of the old districts and the boys and girls of the new districts tend to use the phonetic parameters of the neo-urban vernacular. Embarki's study seems to indicate that in Ksar el Kebir, as in other Moroccan cities, the neo-urban vernacular is expanding at the expense of the old one, with change spreading from the suburb to the urban center. It might be noted here that realization of duration in the suburbs is closer to that of Modern Standard Arabic than to that of the old city vernacular. Here again, more data on Casablanca Arabic are needed in order to compare the various urban koines and the possible influence of Modern Standard Arabic.

Another issue is the genderization of the distinction between old versus the neo-urban vernacular archetypes. Women are said to be the main users of old city vernaculars (both retainers or acquirers), while men are said to favor new urban features. Therefore, old city vernaculars are typically perceived as sophisticated and more feminine (Boucherit & Lentin 1989, Cohen 1973, Miller 2004), while the new urban koine is perceived as more virile and tough. This 'toughness' is often associated with the ruralization/bedouinization of the city. This

genderization is not specific to North Africa and can be found also in the Mashreq, where urban vernaculars tend to be considered more feminine than rural/bedouin vernaculars (Abdel Jawad 1986, Sawai 1994). This gender distinction typically concerns a limited number of phonological features (such as reflexes of (q), reflexes of (r), +/- emphatization and velarization, backing/fronting vowels) as well as a few morpho-lexical features (use of diminutives) and lexicon. Genderization of speech, however, appears to be evolving. HACHIMI indicates that a relative degree of ‘toughness’ is considered a positive sign of modernization by some Fessi-Casablanca young women, a finding that finds some echoes in studies on code-switching, youth language and new urban music (see Part III).

To conclude this brief overview of dialect contact induced by internal migration in North African cities, it appears that the long historical process of ruralization-bedouinization of the former old North African city dialects have accelerated during the second part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, leading to the weakening of the previous Andalusian aristocratic medina culture. However, the koineization / homogeneization process has not yet been completed at either city or country levels. Dialectal variety that might lose visibility in the daily life can be maintained through artistic practices, patrimonialization, symbolic

memories, etc. As Hachimi shows, dialect variation carries strong but fluid social meanings, and we need to investigate to what extent the neo-urban varieties symbolize a new urban style life. Urbanization in North Africa has other linguistic aspects. One is the increasing contact with other languages (Berber, French, English, Spanish) and the development of new language practices (see Part III).

### *Mashreq*

In the Mashreq, the linguistic impact of migration varies widely due to the very different types of urbanization that coexist. The best known historical cases of dialect change due to migration have been investigated in areas where Bedouin groups became dominant: Lower Iraq (Baghdad), following the settlements of North Arabian tribal groups between the 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and their political dominance in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Blanc 1964); Bahrain in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, following the settlement and political domination in the 18<sup>th</sup> century of the Sunni tribal groups over the local urban BaHārna Shiʿi group (Holes 1987). In Baghdad, the settlement of numerous Shiʿi southern migrants in Baghdad’s suburb is said to have reinforced the bedouinization of Baghdadi Arabic in the second part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Abu Haidar 2006). In Bahrain, two varieties

coexist, together with a public koine, close to the Sunni bedouin speech (Holes 2006a).

Apart from Bahrain and Iraq, Jordan-Palestine is one of the few regions where dialect contact induced by migration/urbanization has been dealt with in some detail (Sawai 2006). The area had witnessed considerable population movements. Urbanization brought urban (Palestinian) and rural/bedouin (both Palestinian and Jordanian) vernaculars into contact, leading to a complex pattern of variation related to gender, ethnicity and religion as well as contextual uses. Among the different trends that have been recorded, we note that women tend to dominantly keep/adopt urban (Palestinian) variants, while men are said either to shift to some Modern Standard Arabic phonological variants (Amara 2005) or maintain (particularly in the case of Jordanian speakers) their phonological rural/bedouin variants (Abdel Jawad 1986, Sawai 1994). Christians (both men and women) are also said to use more urban variants (Amara 2005 for Bethlehem) and rural phonological variants appear less resistant than bedouin variants.

AL-WER investigates the recent linguistic history of Amman, the Jordanian capital created in 1923. She recalls the successive waves of settlement which brought first an urban elite from neighboring Palestinian-Syrian cities and then a far larger rural Palestinian population in addition to the local Jordanian

population. She shows how progressive ‘Jordanization’ of public political life led to a crucial redefinition of the social meanings of localized linguistic features. While urban Palestinian features tended to dominate in the first decades, the rural/bedouin Jordanian features became progressively associated with political influence and a Jordanian identity. Therefore urban Palestinian men also tend now to use some Jordanian dialect features in public. Her study examines the realization of a number of phonological and morpho-phonological features by a group of speakers (from Palestinian and Jordanian origin) living in western Amman and describes the gradual changes that occurred over three generations. She indicates that in the third generation, the mixture and variability recorded in the second generation is considerably reduced and that focusing (i.e. stabilization and regulation) is taking place. Young Ammanis of both origin share numerous new fudged forms with a clear gender distinction with regards to the realization of (q). However, by correlating linguistic variation with social activities rather than pre-constructed groups, AL-WER highlights the fluidity of gender-related variation. The linguistic focusing is corollary to a sense of identification with the locality (Amman). Therefore, a kind of standardized koine Ammani vernacular is expected to stabilize and to represent the local identity, in spite of the continuous influx of foreign migrants. AL-WER suggests that the formation of the Ammani koine is closely

connected to the formation of a Jordanian national entity, which partly contrasts with and partly interacts with the Palestinian identity.

The situation of Beirut, an older urban center, appears quite different to that of Amman (GERMANOS). The Arabic variety(ies) of Beirut had been little studied (Naim 2006), apart from phonological studies which have focused on gender, religion (Christian/Muslim) and territorial distribution (Eastern/Western Beirut). Between 1975 and 1990, the civil war changed the demographic balance of the city and divided it along strong religious-communal lines. Ever since the official reunification of the city at the end of the civil war, communal division remains extremely clear-cut. The southern suburb of Beirut (known as Daqiyeh) hosts a large and growing number of southern Shi'i migrants. The presence of a public neutral koine is not clearly attested, although authors such as Srage consider that the young Beirut generation uses a 'constituted urban dialect' very similar to the one used by the inhabitants of Achrafieh, a Beirut Christian area. Germanos describes the uses and attitudes of Beirut speakers towards greeting formulae and indicates that use varies according to age, sex, place and religious affiliation. While some formulae are considered 'neutral' by the speakers, others are closely associated with a specific group. Due to the sectorization of the city, the social distribution is reflected in a territorial

division. Some districts, such as Haret Hreik in the southern suburbs, form distinct linguistic territories as far as the use of greetings is concerned. Greetings are a type of linguistic formulae that have important religious significance in the Muslim world (Elzeini 2006); in most Arab countries, Christians and Muslims do not use the same greetings. Therefore, greetings alone cannot be used to prove the absence/presence of a common koine shared by all speakers and Germanos concludes with caution that ‘the hypothesis of the existence of a koine needs to be explored, with further identification of its linguistic features, if it exists’. The present sociolinguistic situation of Beirut and the absence of a well established urban koine might be representative of the political and communal tensions that prevail in this small but very heterogeneous country.

Sana'a (Yemen) is another capital city of a previously divided country. Sana'a has witnessed tremendous population growth over the last few decades, attracting migrants from all provinces. According to WATSON, this urbanization has led to a limited degree of linguistic leveling, a fact agreed upon by other authors (Freeman 2006). Until 1962, Yemen was a feudal country with very limited centrality; since 1962, the country has witnessed numerous disputes and local wars. Tribal/local affiliation is still very strong and

urbanization has not diminished the sense of belonging to an original locality. Male migrants, in particular, are said to keep their own vernaculars and speak a kind of koine in public, but a koine that has not leveled the various vernaculars. Watson analyzes the language of a popular radio series, which arouses contradictory statements among its listeners. Some people consider it to reflect “pure old San‘ani Arabic’ while others consider it to be either Yemeni, but not San‘ani, or Classical Arabic. She shows that the actors born in San‘a from non-San‘ani families have a good command of San‘ani Arabic at the morphological and lexical level but that they lack some of the low-level phonological features such as glottalization in pause. The future will see whether glottalization in San‘ani progresses or, whether, as a result of dialect contact, glottalization weakens. Due to its specific history and rich dialect diversity, Yemen deserves far more sociolinguistic studies in order to evaluate the relationship between the different cities and the type of leveling recorded in them (cf. Vanhove 2002).

In the old established capital cities of Damascus and Cairo, the stabilization of the urban koine is considered to have occurred at an earlier period, probably the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Lentin 2006, Woidich 1994). Both countries have experienced a fairly high level of urbanization during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Since that time, successive waves of migration have not seriously affected the development of the capital dialect and both Damascus Arabic and Cairo Arabic act as national standards. However, although both vernaculars are among the best studied dialects of the Arab world, few studies have focused on dialect contact and the process of accommodation. Miller (2005) studied processes of accommodation among the first generation of Upper Egyptian migrants in Cairo and showed the ambivalence of language uses and attitudes. Lentin (1981) indicated that regional, communal, neighborhood variants are very frequent in Damascus, but also very fluid. Other sociolinguistic studies on Cairo and Damascus have highlighted variation relating to education, gender, social class and neighborhood rather than to origin (Daher 1999, Haeri 1996, Royal 1985).

Following this trend, ISMAIL investigates variation and change in two Damascus neighborhoods, Shagoor an inner-city quarter and Dummar, a high-class suburb and asks whether different neighborhoods and lifestyles induce different patterns of change. Ismail compares the realization of two phonological variables in the two neighborhoods. The presence/absence of (h) in suffix position is a long-standing variable of Syrian dialectology. Examining the sources, Ismail postulates that the h-zero form appeared first in the coastal cities before spreading to inland dialects such as Damascus and Aleppo, while

the nearby rural areas remained h-full (a process that fits with the 'urban hierarchy model' of linguistic diffusion). Her data confirm that the h-zero form is the favored form of both districts. The variable (r) appears to be a change in progress that originated in the suburbs and spread to the inner city and is particularly used by members of the younger generation. Ismail's data strongly fit with the findings of variationist sociolinguistics that old variants (stable variation) are no longer territorialized and cannot be associated with an age group, while new variants (change in progress) are more closely associated with specific urban territories and age groups (Eckert 2000:136).

The Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf witnessed considerable urbanization following the oil boom of the 1970s. In the Gulf states, this urbanization has reinforced long-standing contact with non-Arabic languages such as Hindi/Urdu, English, as well as with various Arabic dialects spoken by the native population or by the Arab expatriates (Holes 2006b). This has led to the formation of a Gulf Arabic Pidgin used between the Gulf speakers and the Asian migrants and to various degrees of leveling between the local dialects, even if the bedouin/sedentary distinction is still very noticeable. AL-AZRAKI investigates the leveling of one phonological feature in five Saudi cities. The selected feature is kashkasa/kaskasa, i.e. the realization of 2<sup>nd</sup> feminine singular

pronoun suffix as either [Σ] or [s], a well-known feature also attested in a number of other dialects of the Arabian Peninsula. Al-Azraki compares the realization of this variable among educated speakers of both sexes and various ages. Her study shows that this feature seems to recede, at least in formal context, and particularly among male speakers, and is replaced by a koine form /k/. Women appear to avoid the use of the 2<sup>nd</sup> feminine pronoun suffix and develop alternative syntactic means. The use of the koine feature varies from one city to another: greatest use of /k/ is recorded in Riyadh, the lowest in Buraidah. Al-Azraki analyzes the spread of the koine form as a result of both pan-dialectal influence and MSA influence linked to urbanization and education. The results of Al-Azraki can be contrasted with other studies such as Alessa (2006) on Nejd speakers in Jeddah, which shows a significantly higher rate of occurrence of affricated /k/ in the suffix form.

To conclude this preliminary panorama on migration-induced dialect contact in urban environments, we can state that although the sociolinguistic situation of each city does not entirely mirror the state of the social and political relationship between the different urban dwellers, it does provide some cues about it, particularly concerning the rise of new social groups within the city

and the country. In this respect, the processes of reallocation, (a variant previously associated with a specific dialect becomes a social variant in the urban context) require additional comparative studies. The current focus on contextual and stylistic variation will certainly help provide a better understanding of the process of social interaction and power negotiation between the various groups. For the time being, it appears that the use of a common public variety which reflects adherence to a common urban identity is far from being attested in all the cities surveyed. An important question is the potential role of these urban vernaculars as regional/national standards and their relationship with MSA.

#### **4. URBANIZATION AND STANDARDIZATION**

A long-standing issue has been the possible role of urban vernaculars (and particularly that of the capital city) as the supra-local standard at the regional or national levels, and the status of urban vernaculars vis à vis MSA.

In the 1950-1960s, following the independence and the rise of pan-Arab nationalism, many observers and national actors believed that the local vernaculars, both rural and urban, would converge towards MSA thanks to the mass media and mass education. Most studies were thus dedicated either to

descriptions of intermediate varieties emerging from this convergence (*arabe median* in French, Educated Spoken Arabic in English) or to the variationist analysis of age, gender and social variation induced by the MSA-dialect contact, with the postulate that MSA variants represented the ‘prestigious standard features’.<sup>11</sup> A number of voices (Abdel Jawad 1987, Al-Wer 1997, Ferguson 1997, Daher 1999, Gibson 2002, Haeri 1996, Ibrahim 1986, Palva 1982) rejected this unilateral vision of change and discussed the ambivalence of the concept of ‘prestige’ in Arabic. They pointed to the fact that MSA was restricted to certain domains of use (the official public sphere) and was more a male than a female phenomenon, due to division of work and presence in the public sphere. Moreover, convergence towards MSA was mainly recorded at the lexical level (increasing use of MSA words in certain semantic domains), while in all other linguistic levels, variation between MSA and dialect features would be better analyzed as stylistic variation or instances of code-switching rather than an indication of change in progress. Other studies indicated that a number of changes in progress in the various vernaculars had little to do with MSA, including when these changes were initiated among educated speakers, particularly women (Haeri 1996, Al Wer 2002). The debate is far from closed. Many authors consider that *de facto* MSA contributes in the processes of

koineization and standardization of urban vernaculars, while others stress the opposite and show that current changes in progress have little to do with MSA. Among the arguments of authors who have defended the vitality/prestige of urban vernaculars is the idea that, in a number of countries, the urban vernacular of the capital city is *de facto* acting as the national standard and has more influence on the other local vernaculars than MSA. This representation is in accordance with the Prague school's functionalist conception of standard, which considers the presence of a standard language a major correlate of an essentially urban culture. However, it might be noted that the terms urban and national standards are often used in the Arab context without much elaboration concerning the actors and modalities of the process of standardization. Standardization involves a process of more or less conscious, and planned regulation of the language that includes codification of its form in standardized grammars and dictionaries, functional extension, expansion of the range of social uses and acceptance of the norms both officially and on part of the population at large (Haugen 1966, Pedersen 2005). In Europe, the standard variety and standardization are closely associated with the construction of the nation-state, the emergence of a bourgeois culture and the modernization of society. In a number of European countries, for instance, the national standard vernacular developed from one regional urban dialect that became

progressively a supra-local vernacular (cf. standard Italian based on the dialect of Tuscany/Florence). But the transformation from a local vernacular to a national standard language was a long process involving the progressive institutionalization of the vernacular and its adoption by the urban bourgeoisie (the *Bildungsbürgertum* of Germany, England and Scandinavia) as well as the abandonment of the previous literary language (cf. Latin in the case of the Romance languages).

The current situation of the Arab world appears rather different. As is well known, the desire for modernization expressed by the 19<sup>th</sup> century *naḥḍa* and conducted by Arab intellectuals and nationalists led to the adoption of a ‘modernized’ form of Classical Arabic as the official national standard of most Arab countries rather than a national/local vernacular. Most discussions about the concept of standard/standardization have concerned the status/norms and stabilization of MSA (Mejdell 2006). However, a certain degree of codification and functional extension of the main Arabic vernaculars has occurred, but without official acceptance and institutionalization and often with denial. Focusing (i.e. stabilization and agreement on delineable norms) occurred as a result of speaker practice, i.e. native speakers have clear intuitions about the acceptability of a given utterance and speakers practice converge around certain norms (Walters 2003) Many vernaculars have been described and codified in

grammars and dictionaries by foreign as well as local linguists. Urban vernaculars are more and more used in official spoken contexts as well as in writing (novels, plays, advertising, internet, SMS, etc.). But the reality of language practice is not recognized through official standardization and institutionalization. The official standard language remains MSA and not the national/urban vernaculars. In this respect, the increasing use of mixed styles (MSA-vernaculars) may appear to be a non-institutional, non-guided tentative move towards the expansion/diffusion and future standardization of the vernaculars.

For the time being, the conceptualization of an urban standard as a national standard remains a hypothetical construct for many Arab countries. One issue to be resolved is which social group, life-style, cultural model is associated with the 'standard' urban vernacular (when it exists), and how far the urban vernacular is recognised as a symbol of national expression by the overall society. Does the urban standard really correspond to the dialect variety spoken by the professional and educated classes of the capital city as is so often claimed? What is the convergence/similarity between the koineization process and the standardization process? What is the influence of MSA within these processes? Can we consider there to be a nationally-based educated spoken Arabic which de facto functions as the national standard? In some countries, the

emergence of a 'standard' vernacular goes along with the adoption of a number of non-national pan-dialectal features (cf. the influence of Egyptian/Levantine features in Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula). Another issue concerns the actors in the possible standardization of the urban/national vernacular. Do members of the urban elites play the same role as the urban European bourgeoisie of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, since many members of these urban elite received an education in English or French? Instead of looking for one national vernacular standard, should we postulate the coexistence of numerous varieties and ways of speaking according to context, interlocutors and self-image?

## **5. MULTILINGUALISM, GLOBALIZATION AND NEW URBAN CULTURE**

Apart from increasing dialect contact through migration and increasing contact with MSA through education and media, urbanization in the Arab world means increasing contact with non-Arabic languages, and opening up to globalization through the use of new technologies, circulation of new cultural models, social mobility and social contestation.

Contact with non-Arabic languages implies a wide range of situations that will not be discussed here, including:

- Arabic as a minority language in dominantly non-Arab countries such as the old established Arab communities of Iran, Turkey, sub-Saharan Africa, Cyprus, or the more recent Arab diaspora of Europe and America.
- Non-Arab groups living in contact with a dominant Arab environment including the Berbers in North Africa, the Kurds, Armenians, Nubians etc. in the Mashreq.
- Contact with European languages such as French, English or Spanish which have been the official colonial language and still play an important role at the national/official level.

All these types of contact have led to types of language shift, language mixing, borrowing and code-switching. Contrary to the monolingual ideology that prevailed in the Arab countries, language diversity is a historical characteristic of most important Arab cities (Aguade et al. 1998; Dakhliya 2004; Doss and Miller 1997). Depending on the particular historical and political context, this diversity has been differently accepted and conceptualized. The dominance of Arab pan-nationalism after independence and a context of post-colonial conflicts have contributed to a description in terms of language conflict, language domination, etc. The Arabization policies followed by most Arab

states have led to a monolithic/monolingual perception of the relationship between the nation-state and the language and have fueled the linguistic claims of the non-Arab 'minorities'. Important is the fact that a shift started to take place during the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in many Arab countries, with progressive opening towards, and recognition of, language diversity, including codeswitching and mixing associated with urban cultures.

Codeswitching is increasingly present in the language practices of the young urban population, in both the written and oral form. It is both a sign of informality and of ability to move across and play within the languages and the culture. Many instances of codeswitching are found in new written practices such as chat on the internet, e-mails, sms, as well as in new urban musical practices such as rap. More often than not, code-switching goes with a trend towards lexical creativity in the dialect. This 'fashionable' use of code-switching occurs mainly between Arabic and European languages and functions as a badge of identity for youth belonging to the upper- and middle-class strata. From the available literature, code-switching appears to be socially more widespread in North African cities than in the Mashreq, where it remains an upper-class practice. In North Africa, code-switching is associated with urbanization, modernization, youth lifestyle and 'fun', functioning as a subversive humor device (Caubet 2002). Code-switching between Arabic and

local languages (Berber, Kurdish, etc.) has not yet been described in detail, although local languages increasingly play a role in urban musical genres. Studies on code-switching in the Arab world have followed the general theoretical trends of code-switching studies, with many works focusing on linguistic rules and constraints.

OWENS examines code-switching between Nigerian Arabic (NA), English, Hausa and Classical Arabic (CA) among Nigerian Arabic speakers in the city of Maiduguri. Arabic speakers in Nigeria form an old rural community. In Maiduguri, they represent about 10% of the total population of the city and are multilingual. Owens' paper studies instances of code-switching in five syntactic environments and demonstrates that English and CA insertions in a NA matrix follow various rules. Owens explores structural, psycholinguistic and areal factors to explain the differences in treatment. Code-switching practices among Maiduguri Arab speakers are not confined to youth speakers, but distinguishes urban from rural use.

ZIAMARI studies French-Moroccan Arabic (MA) code-switching within the speech of young educated students from two professional schools of Meknes. She shows that compared to previous studies on French-MA code-switching, the morpho-syntactic rules of code-switching tend to become increasingly fluid and she points to numerous innovations. Girls seem to be more innovative at

the structural levels, while boys appear more innovative at the lexical level.

Code-switching is accompanied by lexical creation and semantic shift in both French and Arabic and therefore plays a cryptic and identity function for this age group.

Youth urban linguistic and cultural practices have become an active field of urban sociolinguistics in the Western world. Youth, more particularly teenagers, are considered to be the most active initiators of language change (Eckert 2000). In Europe, particularly France, youth language is associated with the suburbs and with a wider process of social contestation (Caubet et al. 2004). In the western world, the 'youth/teenager' category is a well established social fact. Studies on youth language are more developed in North Africa than in the Mashreq. In North Africa, youth languages or youth ways of speaking are correlated to a wider social and cultural phenomenon, and involve criticism of Arabism and a narrow definition of national identity; an opening up towards different cultures considered to be parts of the national heritage; and a claim for more social, political and cultural freedom. The presence of youth language characterized by code-switching and lexical creation goes together with the valorization of *dārija* (Moroccan Arabic), the growth of new urban music inspired by rap, rock, fusion, world music etc. and a more general aspiration toward democratization (Caubet 2006).

RIZQ describes the emergence of the 'youth' category in Cairo (Egypt). She shows how the terms 'youth', 'youth language', 'youth songs' became generalized in the mid 1990s in the Egyptian media and analyzes the interaction between public discourses, the cultural scene (movies) and the language practices of young students. Rizq presents a number of lexical and syntactic constructions recorded in the speech of young educated students. She shows that most features associated with youth language are in fact already present in Cairene dialectal Arabic and that 'youth' ways of speaking are mainly a systematization of these discursive devices. One of the questions raised by Rizq's paper is the relevance of 'youth' category in Egyptian society. How far is the perception of the 'youth', acting as a distinctive group, an importation from western models or a local social reality?

This question is important because in most Middle Eastern societies the young age group is demographically dominant and their language use may influence the overall society. But unlike western societies, 'youth' in the Arab world has had little public visibility and freedom. Moreover, family structure and hierarchy is still very strong and the nuclear family does not represent the dominant model even in old urban centers such as Cairo. Within western sociolinguistic models, the nuclear family is believed to favor the acceleration of change and the influence of the youngsters (Auer and al. 2005). In this

respect, Middle Eastern cities and societies may have reached a watershed.

Globalization, access to the internet and television modify the self-image of the younger generation as well as their cultural and linguistic practices. However, this age group is caught between contradictory models and may oscillate between tradition and change.

One domain, so far rather neglected in Arabic sociolinguistics (with the exception of Rai music in North Africa) is the social function and linguistic characteristics of new urban music. Here again, Middle Eastern cities are at the junction of numerous trends between Western oriented musical genres, oriental music, the revival of traditional local genres, and African music and types of fusion. Urban music and songs accompany the social transformation of the society.

TAUZIN's paper describes the anthropological and linguistic aspects of rap music in Nouakchott. Rap is a new musical genre mainly performed by young people living in the popular suburbs. Rap singers are members of the low-status class known as Haratins. Rap performances contest the social order and reflect a radical social and cultural rupture. Rap songs mix Hassaniyya, African languages, French and, sometimes, English, each language having a different function. What is fascinating is the recycling of traditional Hassaniyya oral poetry devices as well as the important religious tone, a phenomenon

encountered in other countries such as Senegal. Mixing different musical influences, rap is a perfect example of a growing trend towards globalization. The dominant social order is also at the heart of DIA's paper investigating the language attitudes and uses of Afro-Mauritanian young people living in Nouakchott. These young people speak Hassaniyya as a lingua-franca, together with Wolof, Fulfulde and French. They have an ambivalent relationship with Hassaniyya, due to the existing political and racial tensions between the Moorish population and the African groups. It seems therefore that they refuse to shift exclusively to Hassaniya and that they favor code-switching. Dia's contribution adds to our knowledge of the complex role of Arabic lingua-francas in sub-Saharan Africa and multilingual cities such as Ndjamen in Chad and Khartoum in Sudan (Julien de Pommerol 1997, Miller & Abu Manga 1992).

References to African roots and cultures, sometimes via Black American models (rap and hip hop) seem to be expanding to other countries such as Morocco or Egypt. In these two countries, acknowledgement of an African heritage is advanced by young musicians and artists who want to free themselves from an 'oriental' domination.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

The description of Arabic vernaculars has evolved tremendously in the last few decades, moving from the description of homogeneous and fixed diasystems to include attention to social interactions. In this respect, Arabic urban linguistics has followed the general trends of sociolinguistics with a shift from structures to meanings, from developmental perspectives to a contextual and interactionist approach. Many domains remain to be investigated. At the structural level, there is a paucity of studies dealing with syntax. There is also need for an anthropological-oriented approach concerning the role of family structure, the place and role of the individual versus the group, the evolution of gender status and women's access to the public sphere (Sadiqi 2003), the issue of standardization, the conflicting representation of urbanity and modernity, and the trend toward globalization.

Arab cities constitute an extremely important field of investigation not only for urban sociolinguistics but also for general linguistics because of crucial questions such as the conflictual representation of language and modernity and the relation between language, power and identity.

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Table 1 Number of urban inhabitants + urbanization rate by Arab country from 1900 to 2005

	1900	1950	1980	2005	1900	1950	1980	2005
	Number of urban inhabitants				Rate of urbanization			
<b>Algeria</b>	425,911	1,472,680	7,157,235	19,920,679	9.1	16.5	39.3	59.9
<b>Morocco</b>	281,500	2,217,072	7,350,074	16,322,432	8.0	25.3	38.1	53.8
<b>Tunisia</b>	223,000	901,893	3,121,984	5,865,969	11.7	26.3	49.3	58.4
<b>Mauritania</b>			306,081	915,503			20.0	32.9
<b>Libya</b>	55,000	192,667	1,953,726	5,010,175	8.0	20.5	63.9	85.7
<b>Total Maghreb</b>	<b>985,411</b>	<b>4,784,312</b>	<b>19,889,100</b>	<b>48,034,758</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>58.4</b>
<b>Egypt</b>	2,307,720	8,087,484	24,249,826	48,226,544	22.8	39.6	59.8	70.0
<b>Syria</b>	372,426	1,174,680	4,018,863	11,194,537	39.4	33.2	46.3	60.9
<b>Jordan</b>		149,582	1,407,815	3,850,060		29.9	54.9	74.3
<b>Lebanon</b>	155,667	354,000	1,853,756	3,553,920	26.8	37.6	60.6	60.8
<b>Palestine</b>	84,800	197,843	729,985	2,617,480	15.3	19.2	56.0	74.6
<b>Yemen</b>	44,000	320,768	960,145	5,500,367	1.8	7.5	9.5	27.8
<b>Bahrain</b>	47,000	65,871	269,307	570,255	69.1	59.6	79.6	80.2
<b>UAE</b>		44,000	784,061	3,819,000		8.8	30.6	73.7
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	193,000	420,479	4,685,397	18,420,111	12.8	12.1	50.4	79.5
<b>Sudan (North)</b>	139,000	516,692	2,848,543	10,283,321	5.6	7.9	19.8	36.1
<b>Total M. E.</b>	<b>3,343,613</b>	<b>11,331,399</b>	<b>41,807,698</b>	<b>108,035,595</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>60.3</b>
<b>Total Arab world</b>	<b>4,329,024</b>	<b>16,115,711</b>	<b>61,696,798</b>	<b>156,070,353</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>43.7</b>	<b>59.7</b>

Urbanization is accounted for cities > 10,000 inhabitants

Source GEOPOLIS

Table 2. Population growth of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cities of each Arab country from 1860 to 2005

<b>City</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>1860</b>	<b>1920</b>	<b>1950</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Algiers</b>	Algeria	62,174	203,927	422,100	1,646,360	3,360,788
<b>Oran</b>	Algeria	28,330	135,070	253,282	532,763	754,023
<b>Constantine</b>	Algeria	38,365	61,172	88,514	374,634	480,278
<b>Casablanca</b>	Morocco	700	102,000	700,559	2,136,088	3,569,988
<b>Rabat</b>	Morocco	40,000	55,000	200,763	782,035	1,670,618
<b>Fez</b>	Morocco	88,000	71,000	177,578	420,232	983,751
<b>Tunis</b>	Tunisia	145,000	227,837	601,695	1,062,486	1,926,788
<b>Sfax</b>	Tunisia	3,000	37,149	75,237	317,328	485,294
<b>Sousse</b>	Tunisia	8,000	37,994	80,999	156,224	340,731
<b>Nouakchott</b>	Mauritania	—	—	4,812	184,139	628,814
<b>Nouadhibou</b>	Mauritania	—	—	685	29,165	77,901
<b>Zouerat</b>	Mauritania	—	—	—	19,834	36,385
<b>Tripoli</b>	Libya	40,000	70,000	105,741	771,928	1,595,490
<b>Benghazi</b>	Libya	15,000	36,000	55,989	348,445	638,050
<b>Misrata</b>	Libya	—	14,000	29,950	87,335	274,064
<b>Riyadh</b>	Saudi	—	23,664	97,892	1,054,529	4,241,543
<b>Jeddah</b>	Saudi	30000	25,000	49,898	848,290	2,868,269
<b>Damman</b>	Saudi	—	—	—	430475	1616266
<b>Damascus</b>	Syria	48,000	167,152	340,616	1,233,389	2,799,352
<b>Aleppo</b>	Syria	125,000	154,383	37,9193	938,154	1,688,558
<b>Homs</b>	Syria	20,000	53,360	124,232	328,594	774,567
<b>San'a</b>	Yemen	—	23,000	85,000	256,819	1,790,275
<b>Ta'iz</b>	Yemen	—	—	25,000	86,739	623,317
<b>Aden</b>	Yemen	20,000	56,500	118,768	289,040	601,079
<b>Cairo</b>	Egypt	277,438	961,648	2,578,284	7,732,819	12,617,647
<b>Alexandria</b>	Egypt	184,447	456,672	1,025,943	2,409,472	3,340,353
<b>Al-Mahalla Al-Kubra</b>	Egypt	25,000	41,464	126,265	364,475	559,709
<b>Amman</b>	Jordan	—	—	89,860	747,481	257,0596

<b>Irbid</b>	Jordan	—	—	19,947	120,093	388,094
<b>Aqaba</b>	Jordan	—	—	2186	27926	81533
<b>Beirut</b>	Lebanon	—	128, 529	211,000	1,030,474	2,153,176
<b>Tripoli</b>	Lebanon	—	4,0449	100,000	441,170	558,519
<b>Saida</b>	Lebanon	—	12,000	20,000	120,630	207,366
<b>Baghdad</b>	Iraq		250,000	627,885	2,832,044	6,252,189
<b>Mossul</b>	Iraq		60,000	144,925	490,162	1,940,672
<b>Basrah</b>	Iraq		30,000	114,914	372,019	1,552,537

Source: GEOPOLIS

<sup>1</sup> The publication of the *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics* (EALL, 4 volumes in press), fills a very important gap. It includes 14 lemma on specific Arabic urban vernaculars (Amman, Baghdad, Beirut, Bahrain, Cairo, Damascus, Jerusalem, Khartoum, Kuwait, Sanaa, Tripoli, Tunis) as well as numerous lemma on national vernaculars. The lemma describe ‘stable diasystems’ and do not account for variation, but they include historical data and valuable bibliographies.

<sup>2</sup> The complete report of the conference, including a summary of the contributions can be consulted in the ESF website at <http://www.esf.org/generic/1935/03134Report.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> By focusing on Arabic urban vernaculars, this book complements previous collective publications dealing with contact in Arabic (Owens 2000, Rouchdy 2002), as well as many individual papers published in journals or proceedings. A preliminary ‘state of the Art’ of study of variation and change in urban vernaculars can be found in Miller (2004).

<sup>4</sup> For lack of space, bibliographical references have been kept to the minimum. For section 2, readers looking for more references are advised to consult the EALL. For section 3, the references already mentioned by the contributors of this book have not been repeated and can be found in each relevant article.

<sup>5</sup> The urban koine hypothesis led to huge controversies and has involved numerous eminent linguists such as Blau, Cohen, Corriente, Ferguson, Fück, Levin, Versteegh, etc. For a brief bibliography see Abboud Haggar 2006 and Miller 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Those issues have been discussed since the beginning of Western Arabic linguistics. For some recent references cf. Holes 1995a & 1996, Owens 2005b, Versteegh 1997.

<sup>7</sup> Studies on communal/tribal affiliation in several Middle Eastern cities have shown that tribal affiliation is very much instrumentalized in the urban context (Eickelman 2002, Seurat 1985). In the Gulf, Holes (2005) considers that the Bedouin/sedentary distinction still survives in the collective memory. See also Shryock (1997) for the genealogical imagination of Jordanian nationalism.

<sup>8</sup> The GEOPOLIS data-base established by Eric Denis and François Moriconi (CNRS-Paris) records the demographic growth from 1860 up to date of all Arab cities that surpass 10,000 inhabitants in 2005. Thanks to Eric Denis for giving me access to these statistics.

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<sup>9</sup> The stigmatization of the popular suburbs and their identification through derogatory terms which associate spatial and social categorizations (such as ‘slums’, ‘ghettos’, etc.) is also a universal paradigm (Depaule ed. 2006).

<sup>10</sup> El Himer distinguishes three varieties: old urban vernacular (*parler citadin*) located in the Medina, neo-urban vernacular (*parler urbain*) located in the close peripheries of the medina and what he calls *parlers à aspect ruraux*, i.e. vernaculars with rural features located in the outskirts. Each variety is identified by a set of isoglosses and appears as a kind of prototypical construction.

<sup>11</sup> The issue of diglossia, contact and variation between MSA and dialects constitutes the dominant focus of Arabic linguistics and will not be dealt with here. For recent comprehensive reviews of the question see Mejdell 2006, Boussofara-Omar 2006 and numerous issues of the series *Perspectives on Arabic Linguistics*.