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Abstract

This dissertation investigates standard language ideology as a key site of modern power in the postcolonial world through an archival and ethnographic examination of vernacular language politics in urban Morocco. Specifically, it examines how a very particular and historically contingent set of ideas about language—namely, that every nation-state should have its own language in which citizens carry out all aspects of their daily lives—has come to set the terms for debates over the Arabic language in contemporary Morocco. While explicit debates over language often seem to lay bare opposing linguistic ideologies, I argue that such debates in fact serve to both reinscribe and invisibilize standard language ideology as the common ground of discussion—in this case, further entangling Moroccan Arabic (*dārija*) speakers within the logics and sensibilities of postcolonial modernity even as they struggle to imagine alternative linguistic and national futures.

The dissertation draws on historical research conducted in the archives of the French Protectorate in Morocco, as well as on ethnographic research carried out over a period of 21-months across three major Moroccan cities: Tétouan, Rabat, and Casablanca. By looking at a wide variety of sites—from colonial-era schools to contemporary dubbing studios—I locate fraught debates over the Arabic language within changing conceptualizations of what language is (or is not) and how it should (or should not) function. In particular, I focus not only on sites of text production, but also on sites of sound production. Similarly, I attend not only to Moroccan actors, but also to non-Moroccan others—particularly West African immigrants—who have become unexpectedly entangled in "the dārija question."

I show that over the course of the past century, such debates have facilitated the transformation of "dārija" from a mere adjectival modifier describing a type of language (*al-*

lugha al-dārija, vernacular language) into a proper noun (*Darija*) understood to describe a particular national language. Further, I show that this reification of dārija into a national language of sorts has led to new and unexpected tensions about dārija as a local form of speech tethered to ethnic Moroccan bodies, versus the potential for dārija to be an anonymous public language that can be spoken by anyone by virtue of belonging to no one in particular. I argue that the Moroccan case exposes this as a core tension that has long existed at the heart of standard language ideology. Yet I conclude that the stakes in a postcolonial context like Morocco are higher than in the global north, as such a tension serves to further solidify a country's location as marginal and never fully-modern—even while it remains stuck within the logics and sensibilities of modernity, and struggles to imagine futures beyond these confines.

Chapter 1

Introductions

On a summer evening, a group of friends and I wove our way through the streets of Casablanca's grungy *centreville* to attend an open-air concert in the main square, Place Maréchal. The performer that night was the preeminent *shaʿbiyy* (popular) musician Botbol, a Moroccan singer of Jewish origin who had emigrated to Israel several decades earlier. He had come back to Casablanca just for this concert and my friends were eager to see him perform because they themselves had become well known for performing his songs under the moniker *Kabareh Cheikhats*, a reference to the female singers and dancers (*shaykhāt*) who had brought *shaʿbiyy* music from the Moroccan countryside to urban centers like Casablanca during the colonial era.

I only had passing familiarity with Botbol, and did not recognize the first few songs he performed with his orchestra. But then the group began playing a song that I was able to recognize, not through the melody or rhythm but through the lyrics:

A lā bās, aylī a lā bās	Oh it's alright, oh it's alright
A lā bās, l-ḥobb wa l-hawā yaʿdib shī nās	Oh it's alright, love and affection hurt some people

I turned to my friend Hamza, proud that I had recognized it. "This is that song by Mazagan, isn't it?" I asked him. Mazagan was a rock fusion band that had gained popularity a few years earlier for blending a shaʿbiyy-style violin (*kamanja*) with electric guitars, heavy bass, and rap interludes. Hamza looked at me confused. That Mazagan song was just a cover of the classic shaʿbiyy song "A lā bās" (It's alright) which had been performed by innumerable musicians before them. Embarrassed at my confusion, I turned my attention back to the concert. But my

familiarity with Mazagan's cover, which I had heard as the original, made it difficult for me to listen to this more traditional version of the song. I could clearly hear Mazagan's cover in my head, but it was nearly impossible for me to line it up with the song being played live in front of me.

Traditional shaʿbiyy can be difficult to listen to for the uninitiated, particularly because of its complicated rhythms. "At first, I often hear the rhythm as the reverse," explained a French friend named Vincent, a professional musician living in Casablanca, "then at some point I realize that I'm hearing it the wrong way around." But for novice listeners like Vincent and myself, how does one distinguish between a poor performance on the part of the musician, versus poor reception on the part of the listeners due to untrained ears?

This is precisely the question that emerged several months later, at a cabaret in downtown Casablanca. Cabarets were some of the only places in Casablanca where shaʿbiyy music was actively being played, and they were notably disreputable and seedy locales. I was eventually taken to one by the same group of friends after saying that I wanted to hear "real" shaʿbiyy music, not the updated covers that they themselves played in their *Kabareh Cheikhats* performances. That night, as we danced to the music, downing our beers and smoking cigarettes in the windowless underground cabaret, the band began playing the song "Hājtī fiy grīnī" (I need my partner), a classic shaʿbiyy song and a staple of the *Kabareh Cheikhats* repertoire. All of the French regulars at *Kabareh Cheikhats* knew "Hājtī fiy grīnī," including my friend Lucie, who was with us at the cabaret that night. Halfway through the song, Lucie turned to me and frowned. "I thought these were supposed to be good musicians," she complained, disappointed, "This version of 'Hājtī fiy grīnī' is horrible!" She was not wrong, in my estimation. The version being played in the cabaret strained her ears and mine. We both knew that it was the same song we

were used to hearing at *Kabareh Cheikhats*, but we were having difficulty recognizing that song—the version we knew—in the version being performed in front of us. As we tried to make sense of the music, our first reaction was to assume that our ears were straining because the musicians were doing a poor job of playing the song—not because our ears had been insufficiently (or differently) trained.

In the same way that we all are trained to feel to music in particular ways—to hear certain sonic events as good versus bad music, or even as music versus not-music—so we are trained to feel language. For several decades, linguistic anthropologists have written about what they call language ideologies, cultural models for conceptualizing particular languages (denotational codes), particular ways of speaking and writing (registers), and their relationship to the social (Agha 2007; Irvine and Gal 2000; Kroskrity 2000; M. Silverstein 1979). Language ideologies are what enable us to hear segments of speech as educated versus ignorant, upper class versus lower class, or local versus foreign. Further, language ideologies shape our understanding of the category of "language" itself: what language is (or is not) and how it should (or should not) function.

This dissertation traces the story of one particular language ideology, standard language ideology, in one former French colony, Morocco. It examines how this very particular and historically contingent set of ideas about language—namely, that every nation-state should have its own language in which citizens carry out all aspects of their daily lives—came to inform the ways that Moroccans think about language, and specifically about "the Arabic language." This dissertation particularly focuses on the story of *dārija* (Moroccan Arabic) and the rise of *dārija* language politics in Morocco in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Proponents of *dārija* often describe it as the most widely spoken language in the country, and historically it has

been neither written nor subject to standardization. The word itself, often translated as 'vernacular' or 'colloquial', is a North African[1] term used to refer to any local form of speech: *al-dārija al-jazāʾiriyya* (Algerian vernacular), *al-dārija diyāl al-shamāl* (northern vernacular), *al-dārija diyāl al-zanqa* (street language), *al-dārija diyāl mūskū* (Moscow dialect of Russian). In the chapters that follow, I explore how the conscription of urban Moroccans into an ideology of standard has facilitated the transformation of *dārija* from a mere adjectival modifier describing a type of language (*al-lugha al-dārija*, vernacular language), into a proper noun (*Dārija*)[2] understood by more and more Moroccans to describe a particular national language.[3]

By tracing the story of standard language ideology, this dissertation also tells the story of French in Morocco. Yet it does so in an atypical way. Research on the French language in Morocco and other outposts of Francophonie have generally explored the colonial presence of French and its contact with local languages through the investigation of topics such as code-switching and bilingualism, or the development of French-medium education and the production of Francophone elites. Conversely, this is a story about French as an ideological specter, a language that has come to inhabit Moroccans not just as a denotational code but as an invisible metric (Gal 2016): the very embodiment of standard language ideology, against which all other languages in Morocco are measured.

[1] While North Africans tend to refer to colloquial speech as *dārija*, Middle Easterners generally refer to the same kind of speech using the term *ʿammiyya* (popular).
[2] Notably, the Arabic alphabet does not allow for any distinction between lower case and upper case letters as in English.
[3] Following Boutieri (2016, xv-xix), I refer to Moroccan Arabic throughout this dissertation as "*dārija*." Similarly, I use the term "*fuṣḥa*" to refer to what is alternately glossed in English as either "classical Arabic" or "Modern Standard Arabic" (MSA). In doing this, I follow the way that my informants collapsed what are arguably two distinct registers into a single term: *fuṣḥa.*

Through an archival and ethnographic investigation of the social and political life of dārija, this dissertation argues that standard language ideology has largely set the terms for contemporary debates over language in Morocco. More broadly, it argues that standard language ideology should be understood as part of the discursive space of modernity, and that it has served to both constrain and inform postcolonial subjectivities in places like Morocco well after declarations of independence. In so doing, it opens up the question of whether vernacular "revolutions," as they are often called, can in fact be revolutionary—in the sense of enacting a complete change by overthrowing a system—or whether vernacular standardization in the context of (post)colonial modernity can only serve to further reinscribe improperly modern modes of linguistic being into a more "legible" framework.

1. Modernity, Standardization, Diglossia

Standard language ideology is a particular set of beliefs about language, in which it is assumed that one particular form of language—often a codified written register—is the best representation of that language and hence the form towards which all speakers should align their speech. Silverstein (2017) has offered a particular useful image of standard language ideology, which he describes as a cone-shaped cultural model: the peak of the cone is the "standard," and all other forms of speech are "variations" which are understood as being located at variable degrees of distance from this center peak. Instances of variation, and their degree of distance from the standard, are understood as indexical of types of persons. He writes:

> To those within the language community, the standard seems like a fixed and non-situational way of using language to communicate about, to represent the universe of experience and imagination, a form of language spoken or written 'from nowhere' – that is, from anywhere and everywhere within the sociological envelope of the language community. Standard is what one should be using. Period. Although we all know that for some folks – like all of us? – and for some situations – like most! – dat ain' də way we talk. (135)

Silverstein's quip about the disparity between the standard and what everyone actually speaks is an important point. Standard exists as a sort of ideal type that speakers approach asymptotically, and as such it is recognizable even to those most inept at producing it. By way of example, within metropolitan France, Parisian French is heard and taught as the accentless, neutral, unmarked form of French, the 'peak' of the cone whose virtue is its transparency, its universality, even its blandness (Jullien 2008). Conversely, French from elsewhere (*les provinces*) is heard by standard speakers and non-standard speakers alike as being marked, and hence as existing at varying degrees of distance from Parisian French. From an anthropological perspective, the crucial point is that, for listeners, these degrees seem to index information about and qualities of the speaker herself.

Broadly speaking, standardization is not a new phenomenon. Lane, Costa, and De Korne (2017, 2) write that "processes akin to standardisation have existed in Europe and elsewhere in the world since at least the advent of literary language in Ancient Greece." Yet there is something particular about processes of standardization that have occurred since the 18th century that mark them as distinct and different from their predecessors. Standard language ideology in its current form, they argue, "constitutes an outcome as well as one of the main defining features of modernity" (4). The chief difference between older processes of standardization and a distinctly modern ideology of the standard is that these later of standardization processes "are descended from the 17th and 18th century philosophical projects which aimed at decontextualising language and at instituting a democratic, universally accessible public space" particularly at the scale of the nation-state (3). In its modern guise, then, linguistic standardization has been principally concerned with creating languages that are safe for national politics and political deliberation (Gustafson 2008). In a similar vein, Bauman and Briggs (2006)

have argued that such concerns have led to modern standardizers on a quest to "purify" language by carving it out as an "autonomous domain."

The national standards created through these processes are not registers like any other. Rather, "within the territory of the nation-state, or among speakers of the standard, that same national standard… is heard as neutral, simply instrumental or informational. It is the objective 'voice from nowhere'" (Gal 2011, 34). Yet the standard is only heard as a voice from nowhere within the confines of particular borders, generally the borders of the nation-state. "At an international scale," Gal argues, "speakers' identity (i.e. 'authenticity') is indexed by use of their national standard language" (ibid). In other words, what is heard as 'universal' within the bounds of the nation, is heard as 'particular' beyond national borders.

The spread of standardization, famously depicted by Anderson (1983), has led to the normalization of monolingual lifeworlds: national quotidians in which individuals expect and are expected by the state to carry out their daily tasks in some variation(s) of the national standard. Yet as many linguistic anthropologists have shown, Anderson's assertion that "then and now the bulk of mankind is monoglot" largely erases the complex linguistic lifeworlds in which people lived prior to the spread of standard language ideology; prior, that is, to the "triumph" of the idea that "a single language, with no rivals, is the proper mediator of a properly 'modern' polity" (Gal 2011, 33).

While we often think of standards as existing in an isomorphic relationship with nation states, Lisa Mitchell (2009) reminds us of the extent to which standard language ideology permeates differently scaled languages. This includes languages that are not national, but perhaps regional or pan-national. The crucial distinction for Mitchell is that we have moved from what she calls "heteroglossic language use (which can be described but never counted)" to

"polyglossic languages" which she defines as languages "which can be counted, listed, compared, and contrasted" (163). What this looks like in the south Indian case that Mitchell studies is a transition from seeing various forms of speech or writing as connected to particular settings or interactions (e.g. using X in the marketplace, Y for poetry, and Z language in school), to the idea that "anything that could be said or done in any one language should be able to be said or done in any other language, audience notwithstanding" (163). While it can be easy to narrate this transition as one in which a colonial European language ideology simply repressed and replaced local language practices, Ramaswamy (1997) reminds us that it is never that simple. As she shows in the case of Tamil language politics, colonial conceptions of language came to blend in unexpected ways with preexisting modes of linguistic being.

Ramaswamy's argument finds echoes Haeri's (2003b) account of contemporary Egyptian language politics and specifically the twentieth century standardization of Arabic. While Ramaswamy is interested in the melding of pre-colonial practices of "language devotion" (e.g. the maternal figure of Tamiltay) with standard language ideology, Haeri traces twentieth century attempts to reimagine a "diglossic" language—Arabic—within the mold of a standard (pan)national language. As Haeri explains, Arabic is a classic example of what Ferguson (1959, 336) called diglossia,

> a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any section of the community for ordinary conversation.

Later in the article and in much of the subsequent literature, these two varieties are referred to as High and Low. In Egypt and much of the Islamic world, the "High" or "superposed variety" was

al-lugha al-ʿarabiyya al-fuṣḥa (i.e. the eloquent Arabic language, commonly referred to simply as *fuṣḥa*). This was the language of the Qur'an and, as with Latin and Sanskrit, it was a learned language of knowledge and education, and was subject to extensive study and definition. Alongside this superposed variety used for writing and recitation, local populations lived within "heteroglossic" language practices (L. Mitchell 2009), including but not necessarily limited to divergent and widely varying local forms of spoken Arabic, grouped together under the vague categories of *lahja* (dialect), *ʿammiyya* (popular), *dārija* (colloquial), or other local terms.

In *Sacred Language, Ordinary People* (2003b), Haeri is precisely interested in the contemporary predicament that resulted from the transformation of *al-lugha al-ʿarabiyya al-fuṣḥa*, on the one hand, and the heteroglossic language practices that surrounded it, on the other hand, into a single national language called "Arabic." In Egypt and throughout the Arab world, the Arabic language emerged during the post-independence period as the "reinstated" national language within a logic of modern standardization. Indeed, all constitutions in the Arab world declared "the Arabic language" as the language of state, and governments came to imagine Arabic within a model not unlike Silverstein's aforementioned cone. The 'standard' register located at the peak was *fuṣḥa*, which was then subject to regulation and modernization via the Arabic Language Academy (itself modeled on the Académie Française). For Haeri, this transformation of fuṣḥa into a national standard resulted in a predicament for Egypt (and much of the Arab world). The predicament is presented thus: the reimagining of a premodern religious language within a modern language ideology of the standard has created an ongoing crisis of authority. Within the borders of the Egyptian state, fuṣḥa is simultaneously a sacred language (drawing its authority from religion and the Qur'an) as well as a modern language (drawing its authority from the nation-state).

Haeri identifies this crisis of authority as a problem, the result of which is that fuṣḥa becomes frozen in time, unchanging and brittle. Through interviews, she puts into question the capacity of fuṣḥa to effectively perform the role of national language within the public sphere and the educational system. Notably, for many of those she interviews, it seems that fuṣḥa might lack this capacity. One of Haeri's major arguments, then, is that due to the sacred character of fuṣḥa Egyptians have come to see themselves not as its "owners" but as its "guardians"—an ideology that prevents them (and arguably Arabic-speakers in general) from truly modernizing it.

Yet this problem that Haeri identifies—the problem of a language torn between religion and modernity—itself relies on the implicit identification of another problem: the 'gap' between how Egyptians actually speak and the official 'standard'. Put differently, while Haeri most explicitly concerns herself with the sacred character of fuṣḥa, the very identification of this as a problem relies on an implicit assumption that the 'gap' between fuṣḥa and spoken Arabic is too large. On the one hand, the existence of such a 'gap' should perhaps be expected. As linguistic anthropologists have long noted, there is always a distance between standard languages and how people actually speak. Yet with Arabic, the distance between these two is often described as being problematically large. Indeed, Egypt itself, Haeri's very site, has been a fertile ground for linguists attempting to quantify this distance through the intense enumeration of various intermediary types of Arabic that exist between the two poles of fuṣḥa and vernacular speech. Throughout the ethnography, Haeri's concern with this distance is evident, such as in the following passage:

> most Egyptians find speaking and writing Classical Arabic difficult, especially given the dire state of pre-college education. The official language thus acts as an obstacle to their participation in the political realm. There is of course no suggestion here that this is the only reason for the absence of democracy in Egypt. But the language situation makes a strong comment on the nature of politics in that country. (150)

Fuṣḥa, it seems, has not been sufficiently purified or decontextualized, putting into jeopardy Egypt's project of "instituting a democratic, universally accessible public space" (Bauman and Briggs 2006, 6). In identifying this as a problem, *Sacred Language* walks an ambiguous line between analyzing the logics of standard language ideology, and actually prescribing such logics.

I dwell on Haeri's implicit problematization of the gap between standard and spoken Arabic because the larger conversation in which Haeri is intervening is by no means a neutral one. This distance between 'standard' and 'spoken variants'—a distance that is imagined as both ideological and linguistic—has long marked Arabic as a problematic national language. While we know that no one speaks standard, the gap in the Arab world is somehow too egregious. Indeed, this distance is often mobilized to both explain and index a kind of hypocrisy or false consciousness that supposedly exists in the Arabo-Islamic world. This trope is a common one in popular writing both within and outside the Arab world. In a 2014 article entitled "Literary Arabic: Language of Domination," for example, a Syrian journalist argues that "this supposedly 'pure' language is inept at expressing modernity" and that the difficulty of classical Arabic as a language—a difficulty due to its extreme difference from spoken language—is responsible for jihadism and fundamentalism (Al-Haj Saleh 2014). Similarly, in a more academic register, psychoanalyst Moustafa Safouan (2007) argues in his book *Why Are the Arabs Not Free?: The Politics of Writing* that "the divorce" between classical Arabic and colloquial dialects is the foundation of despotism in the Arab world. While Haeri (2003b, 150) certainly does not make such outlandish claims, it is notable that at various points in her ethnography, she appears to make a case for vernacular standardization: "the censure of Egyptian Arabic from official and national culture, seem to prevent Egypt from tapping its many potentials… as I have tried to indicate, Egypt has a fraught and uncertain relationship with its own contemporaneity."

How can we study contemporary Arabic language politics in a way that does not smuggle in the sensibilities of standard language ideology? Is it possible to do this in a way that does not pathologize Arabic, but rather puts into question its very pathologization, while also looking beyond it? My suggestion is that ethnography offers a way to approach these questions with a level of "epistemological humility" (Mertz). While Haeri investigated Arabic through the problematization of fuṣḥa, this dissertation approaches the question of Arabic through an ethnography of the spoken vernacular. How, I ask, has standard language ideology made vernacular language politics in the Arab world even thinkable? And how might we study vernacular language politics in the Arab world without implicitly assuming it to be a solution to the region's social and political problems; without, in other words, reinscribing our particular linguistic sensibilities into the questions we ask.

2. Writing the Vernacular, Sounding the Vernacular

When we speak about vernacular language politics and vernacular standardization, we often first think of so-called minority languages. Lane, Costa, and De Korne (2017, 8) define minority languages as the "communication practices" of "linguistically marginalized social actors." Well studied examples of minority languages that have undergone processes of standardization include languages such as Basque and Catalan, ethno-linguistic minorities within European national territories which have varying degrees of governmental recognition.

Within Morocco, Tamazight is a well-studied example of a minority language—or a series of languages—that has undergone a process of standardization.[4] In 2001, the Royal

[4] Following Becker (2010), I use the term "Tamazight" to refer to the variety of Amazigh languages that exist in Morocco. Further, I use the term "Imazighen" rather than "Berber" to refer to the people, and I adopt the adjectival form "Amazigh."

Institute for Amazigh Culture was founded by royal decree of King Mohammed VI; this came after decades of activism on the part of Amazigh communities who faced severe repression after independence in 1956. Subsequently, Tamazight was officially recognized in the Moroccan constitution of 2011, which was presented in the midst of the Arab Spring (P. Silverstein 2011). In many ways, the standardization of Tamazight in Morocco is typical of the dynamics of minority standardization described by Lane et al. (2017) in that it has proven to be a Faustian bargain: while many feel that the process has been emancipatory and empowering for a marginalized population, others have pointed to the way that the process has "establish[ed] linguistic standards that speakers themselves cannot meet, together with new hierarchies that give advantage to some speakers over others" (2). At worst, some scholars have shown how government standardization of Amazigh has depoliticized the movement through cooptation (Aslan 2014; Crawford and Silverstein 2004; Maddy-Weitzman 2011; Pouessel 2011, 2012; P. Silverstein 2009).

While dārija is certainly a vernacular language, it does not fit neatly into the category of a minority language. On the one hand, the mere ubiquity of dārija in the Moroccan public sphere seems to sharply distinguish it from languages like Amazigh. Pro-dārija activists who emerged in the early 2000s have often been quick to assert that dārija is the mother tongue of all Moroccans, the "real" national language. Yet just as they make a case for its indubitable presence throughout the country, these same activists depict dārija as an oppressed language and a language of the oppressed. As with Egyptian Arabic, they describe Moroccan Arabic as being "shunned" and "censored" in national culture (Cohen 2011; Hall 2015). In a similar vein to Haeri (2017), they often make the case that the social and cultural exclusion of dārija has led to the exclusion of large swaths of the country from politics, in turn marking a failure of democracy.

Yet proposals for the standardization of dārija have presented a particular puzzle for researchers. Unlike Tamazight, a language that "matters in some ways to most everyone who speaks it" (Crawford 2001, 21) and whose standardization was strongly supported by its speakers, such has not been the case with dārija. The kind of ethnolinguistic loyalty Tamazight speakers display towards their language has appeared to find its polar opposite in how most Moroccans feel about dārija, often dismissed as "not a language" and "having no grammar." In the face of activist calls for the standardization of dārija and its adoption in education and administration, most Moroccans remained strongly opposed. Such opposition has often led to arguments of false consciousness on the part of activists and allied linguists, who brush off these responses as the result of religious and pan-Arab ideology (in the pejorative sense of the term). Consequently, little interest has been given to taking such opposition seriously through deep ethnographic research. Rather, researchers have tended to focus on one of two topics. First, there has been much interest in changing "language attitudes"—i.e. asking whether Moroccans are becoming more accepting of dārija as a written standard, and the speed at which peoples' language attitudes are shifting. Second, researchers tend to be particularly enamored with language activists themselves and the production of novel dārija language text artifacts: text messages, Facebook posts, song lyrics, newspapers, scripts, novels, poetry, etc. As sociolinguist Catherine Miller (2016) has noted, "there are nearly as many Western researchers studying the phenomenon as there are translators and writers engaged in writing in Darija."

In this dissertation, I engage in ethnographic fieldwork with pro-standardization dārija activists, but I also conduct ethnography beyond the bounds of their highly circumscribed projects. Namely, I look to other kinds of 'language workers'—Moroccans and non-Moroccans who, for various reasons, take up and manipulate dārija outside the framework of explicit

"political" projects of vernacular standardization. Further, I specifically attempt to look beyond the realm of the written. My contention is that in the case of Morocco, written texts are not the only—or even the primary—site where dārija is becoming increasingly beholden to standardizing sensibilities. Instead, I look to the mediated soundscape where I investigate the concerns, discomforts, and negotiations surrounding the transformation of dārija not just into a written language, but into an anonymous public language (Woolard 2016).

3. Methods

Although this dissertation is principally concerned with the social and political life of dārija in contemporary Morocco, it seeks to locate contemporary debates and sensibilities within a broader transformation of the conceptualization of language as a category in twentieth century Morocco. Because of its temporal scope, this dissertation relies on a combination of archival and ethnographic methods.

Archival research on the era of the French protectorate in Morocco was conducted in the summer of 2012 at the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the Centre des archives diplomatiques de Nantes. The archives in Nantes proved particularly productive, as I was able to access the archives of the Protectorate's Direction de l'instruction publique which contained a rich collection of time schedules, textbooks, official correspondences, and internal memos related to Arabic language education in Protectorate era Morocco.

While the first chapter of this dissertation relies on archival materials, the subsequent chapters approach the questions posed by the dissertation ethnographically. Initial ethnographic research for this project was conducted in Rabat during the summers of 2011 and 2013, and in Casablanca and Tétouan during the summer of 2014. From this starting point, the majority of the

research for this project was carried out across these same three cities over the span of eighteen months: Tétouan (January 2015-September 2015), Casablanca (October 2015-December 2015, January 2016-September 2016), and Rabat (January 2016-March 2016). I was subsequently able to carry out follow up research in all three cities during the winter of 2017 and summer of 2018.

Casablanca and Rabat are both located in the prosperous center of the country, along the Atlantic coast. Casablanca is the economic and cultural capital of Morocco and it is a relatively new city, marked by the absence of a traditional elite and with a population of largely rural origins who were urbanized during the twentieth century. In contrast to Casablanca, the administrative capital of Rabat is an older city whose population traces its heritage to al-Andalus. Tétouan similarly claims Andalusian heritage, but as the former capital of the Spanish protectorate, it has faced political, social, and economic marginalization during the post-independence period as part of the larger disenfranchisement of the northern region of Morocco bordering the Mediterranean.

4. Outline of Chapters

The dissertation begins during the era of the French protectorate in Morocco (1912-1956). The protectorate provides an interesting starting point, as it embodied a direct reaction to and explicit disapproval of the colonial policies of French colonization in Algeria (1830-1962). Whereas the latter was grounded in the assimilationist ideology of the French Third Republic (1870-1940), the French Protectorate in Morocco distanced itself early on from liberal values and embarked on a more conservative colonial project. With this context in mind, **Chapter 2** draws on archival sources from the Protectorate in order to show how French administrators attempted to position themselves as the "protectors" of both Moroccan culture and the Arabic language. It

is often assumed that French colonial administrators were involved, explicitly or implicitly, in the suppression of classical Arabic (fuṣḥa) and the promotion of French. Yet this chapter tempers that assumption by arguing that French colonial administrators in Protectorate era Morocco (1912-1956) were in fact deeply concerned about Arabic language pedagogy and were actively involved in its modernization. Drawing on time schedules, textbooks, official correspondences, and internal memos from the Protectorate's Direction de l'instruction publique, this chapter examines how French colonial administrators attempted to radically transform "traditional" models for teaching Arabic. In particular, it focuses on their efforts to remake the Arabic language classroom—and the Arabic language teacher—on the model of their French counterparts. The result, I argue, was a profound reconceptualization of the Arabic language qua language. While pre-colonial education had previously framed the study of Arabic as the study of Language, French colonial pedagogy effectively reframed Arabic as "second" or "foreign" language—a mere language amongst others.

This shift was significant in that it foreshadowed subsequent movements for standardization by enabling Moroccans to ask new questions about Arabic. **Chapter 3** explores how new questions about standardization were taken up immediately after Morocco gained independence in 1956, with the implementation of Arabic as a national language on the model of French. In first half of Chapter 3, I trace how the Istiqlal, Morocco's powerful nationalist Arabist party, attempted to frame the newly independent Moroccan state as a legible post-colonial nation by means of linguistic decolonization: switching the language of the public sphere (e.g. education, administration) from the 'colonial' language of French to the 'authentic' language of Arabic. The adoption of Arabic as the primary language of education and administration was an enormous task that relied on pan-Arab political and bureaucratic bodies for processes of

standardization and "modernization." While post-colonial "Arabization" (*taʿrīb*) was deemed a success in many Middle Eastern countries, in North African states like Morocco the process was much more contentious. Critical studies of North African Arabization policies have focused on the obstacles to implementation such as the lack of finances and human resources, as well as a constantly changing political will. Building on this, I argue that the uneven processes of Arabization resulted in an elite class who rhetorically promoted standardization, but who crucially did not buy into it. I show how this resulted in a 'hollow' standard and an empty state discourse of Arabization, as neither state nor society were unable to make good on the promise that competency in the 'standard' language (fuṣḥa) would be valued socially, politically, and economically.

In the second half of Chapter 3, I argue that it was precisely this disillusionment with Arabization that led particular Moroccans to look for alternative standard languages. For many Moroccans, French and other European languages were sought out as alternative linguistic currencies when it became increasingly clear that they could not 'bank' on fuṣḥa in the way that they had thought. But others turned to a different place: dārija. Beginning in the 2000s, language activists began promoting dārija as an alternative standard to either supplement fuṣḥa, or to replace it wholesale. For these activists, dārija was envisioned as a form of speech that was more legibly national than fuṣḥa because it existed within the bounds of the nation-state—a claim that erased both local variation as well as similarities between forms of local speech across the border in Algeria. Further, for these activists, dārija aligned with a larger political trend of promoting a kind of Moroccan exceptionalism, turning the country away from the increasingly problematic Middle East and reframing fuṣḥa as a foreign import and an "ideological" imposition. Dārija, by contrast, was felt to represent the absence of ideology (in the pejorative sense). Ultimately, the

chapter argues that despite their efforts to move beyond "ideology," dārija activists themselves were caught up in the same ideologies of standardization as the proponents of Arabization who came before them. And crucially, in both cases, French served as the unquestioned embodiment of this standard.

With this background in mind, **Chapters 4** and **5** explore what happens when the abstract ideas of dārija language activists hit the ground—often in unexpected ways. While activists themselves were primarily concerned with text artifacts—dictionaries, grammars, etc.—the last two chapters largely focus on the issues of standardization that emerged in the soundscape.

Chapter 4 looks at perhaps the most controversial site of dārija standardization in Morocco yet one with little political ambition: the dubbing studio. Dubbing studios emerged in Casablanca in 2009 and were contracted by government television stations to produce dārija language versions of foreign soap operas, largely from Latin American and Turkey. Such shows immediately caused an uproar, not because of the content, but because of the register of language being used—a sort of standardized dārija speech that left many Moroccans with feelings of immense discomfort. In this chapter, I explore how employees in the dubbing studio—sound engineers, voice actors, translators—manage both their own discomfort with this standard dārija being voiced by foreign bodies, as well as the projected discomfort of Moroccan television viewers. How, I ask, do they negotiate the demand to voice foreign bodies (Turks and Mexicans in soap operas) in a local dialect (dārija)?

Through an analysis of in-studio metalinguistic discussions, I argue that far from being radical agents of vernacularization, studio employees reinscribed diglossia into dārija itself by producing two different dārija registers: 1) a neutral "un-Moroccan" dārija that circulated in the soundtrack of the dubbed soap operas; and 2) a viscerally "Moroccan" dārija that circulated in

the space of the studio itself, but which employees actively resisted reproducing in the dubbed soap operas. In other words, despite their anti-vernacular standardization sensibilities, the result was a standard dārija that was uncomfortable because it was unlocatable. I conclude with the argument that, by fractally reinscribing their diglossic sensibilities at a different scale (i.e. within dārija itself), Plug In employees were complicit in opening up a new space within the dārija soundscape with the radical potential to voice difference.

In **Chapter 5**, I shift away from dubbing to look at what happens when actual foreigners (as opposed to dubbed soap opera characters) begin voicing themselves in dārija. Placing debates about dārija into the larger context of growing West African immigration to Morocco, I argue that West Africans' increasing adoption of dārija (in place of, or in addition to French) has productively forced Moroccans to rethink dārija not as an ethnically-defined "private" language but as an anonymous public language that can be voiced by anyone. Such a reimagining of dārija as "public" is particularly difficult, I suggest, in a post-colonial context like Morocco where potentialities for a liberal Maghrebi subject—shorn of race and ethnicity—fell by the wayside in the period following independence.

Chapter 2

From Alfiyya to Berlitz: Modernizing Arabic Language Pedagogy

1. Introduction

On November 25th, 1922—just ten years after France established a colonial protectorate in Morocco—the French Director of the *école des fils de notables* (school for the sons of notables) in Fez wrote to the Direction générale de l'instruction publique (Direction of public) in the newly designated capital of Rabat on the topic of an outstanding teacher. The teacher in question, a Moroccan by the name of El Qorri, had distinguished himself in the eyes of the Director by proposing to write a new textbook and developing a novel pedagogical technique for teaching his young pupils:

> I have the honor of sending you here a few pages of a poem by the teacher (*moudèrres*) El Qorri designed to facilitate the study of the Muslim rules of etiquette, politeness and religion. It is a replica of similar poems by Bnou Achir etc. … which should not replace them, but precede them and prepare [students] for them by introducing a little bit of variety in this somewhat austere and monotonous study.[5]

The enthusiastic handwritten letter—these were the early days of the protectorate after all and typewriters were not yet widespread outside of Rabat—contained a copy of the poem as well as a tune to go along with it, which the French Director of the school had composed with the help of his Moroccan students. In closing, he requested permission to print both the poem and the tune for wider circulation.

[5] Le Directeur du Petit Collège d'Andalousiyne to Monsieur le Directeur Général de l'Instruction Publique, "Exposition pour un ouvrage de savoir-vivre et religion musulman," 25 November 1922, Box 6, Folder 20, Direction générale de l'instruction publique, Centre des archives diplomatiques de Nantes (CADN).

In response, the General Director at the DIP in Rabat wrote back with unequivocal frustration. He insisted that not only was the Egyptian textbook *Safinat al-Nohat*[6] "infinitely superior" to anything this El Qorri might produce but, moreover,

> I will not surprise you by declaring that I find the methods of this *fquih* (expert in Islamic jurisprudence) obsolete. He brings nothing new... As for the teaching of morality by poetry—God knows what poetry—it is doomed to the most complete failure. To summarize, El Qorri only deals with the external aspect of form, he is copying his most distant ancestors.[7]

Having made clear his disapproval of El Qorri's approach to teaching Arabic, the General Director then expounded on the importance of imposing upon this overzealous *fqīh* "the general methods of language teaching" (*les méthodes générales de l'enseignement des langues*). To ensure that there was no confusion about what he meant, the General Director spent a full page explaining in excruciating detail how Arabic verb conjugation should be taught. In closing, he exclaimed in evident frustration, "Why would El Qorri not have prepared something identical to that of French teachers (*maîtres français*) for language?

This chapter examines the efforts of colonial administrators during the French protectorate (1912-1956) to modernize the teaching of Arabic in Morocco's elite primary and secondary schools, changes illustrated by this opening vignette as a shift from versed poetry to modern textbooks. While it would seem logical for French colonial administrators to closely oversee the instruction of their own language, French, it is less immediately evident why they were concerned with the practices by which students were taught a language that was not theirs,

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[6] *Safinat al-Nohat* (1896) was an Arabic language textbook edited and printed in Alexandria by the Frères Evagre and the Institut des frères des écoles chrétiennes (http://saint-marc.ws/index.php/reseau-lassalien/historique, accessed April 2, 2019).

[7] Directeur Général de l'Instruction Publique to Monsieur le Directeur de l'Ecole de Fils de Notables Musulmans FES, "a.s. de la rédaction de livres arabes," 6 December 1922, Box 6, Folder 20, Direction générale de l'instruction publique, CADN.

Arabic. Why were French administrators so concerned with the methods for Arabic language instruction? What kinds of reforms did they introduce to modernize Arabic language pedagogy? What does this reveal about how the French understood the concept of "language" in the early twentieth century?

An inquiry into the practice of teaching Arabic during the protectorate might seem misplaced given the common assumption that French colonial administrators intentionally repressed Arabic in Morocco and other North African colonies by systematically undermining the quality of its instruction. This assumption is common place not only amongst historians of francophone North Africa, but also amongst participants in contemporary debates over language in Morocco. Diverging from these views, I approach French intervention into Arabic pedagogy not as repressive, but as productive.[8] In other words, instead of assuming that the adoption of a new kind of Arabic pedagogy had the effect of erasing Moroccans' relationship with Arabic, I ask how new pedagogical practices transformed Moroccans' relationship with Arabic and with "language" more broadly.

Drawing on the archives of the Direction de l'instruction publique (DIP), this chapter traces the imposition of a new scientific model of pedagogy in which school subjects were divided into two categories: language and all other subjects. The effect, I argue, was a radical recategorization and reconceptualization of Arabic. Whereas pre-colonial education framed the study of Arabic as the study of language tout court, colonial pedagogy reframed the Arabic language classroom as a mere token of a type. The Arabic language, in turn, became a mere

[8] By analyzing French intervention into Moroccan education as productive, I adopt on a Foucauldian approach to studying colonialism as a transformative force with the capacity to "inviolably and insidiously remake the living conditions and lives" of colonial subjects (Neptune 2008, 69; see also Asad 1992, Mitchell 1988, and Scott 2004).

language amongst others, yet another national standard that was—or should have been—infinitely interchangeable with French or any other national language.

2. The French Protectorate and the Protection of Arabic (1912-1956)

2.1 From Assimilation to Association

On March 30, 1912, the Moroccan Sultan Abdelhafid signed the Treaty of Fez, marking the beginning of the French protectorate in Morocco. The Sharifian kingdom of Morocco[9] was one of the last pieces to fall into place in France's African empire. Never controlled by the Ottomans, Morocco had long managed to limit European colonial enterprises to its Mediterranean and Atlantic coastlines. The Portuguese and Spanish had made trade inroads on the Moroccan coast as early as the 15th century, followed much later by the British and French. But it was only in 1912 that the kingdom came more fully under the sway of European colonial influence. The Treaty of Fez was essentially an exchange between two colonial powers: the French granted the British control of Egypt, and the British allowed the French to be the dominant players in Morocco—an exchange which effectively solidified French influence in the region by territorially connecting Afrique française du nord with Afrique-Occidentale française (S.G. Miller 2013b).

From its very beginning, the newly installed Protectorat français dans l'Empire chérifien was a conservative reaction to the project of colonization that had begun in Algeria nearly a century earlier. Whereas French Algeria was premised on the republican principle of "assimilation," the protectorate in Morocco under General Louis Hubert Gonzalve Lyautey

[9] In the 16th and 17th centuries, the region of what is now Morocco was ruled by a succession of Arab dynasties who claimed descent from the Prophet Mohammed. Descendants of the prophet are known in Arabic as *shurafāʾ* (sing. *sharīf*).

(1854-1934) explicitly took up the contrasting principle of "association." Under this premise, the goal was not to turn Moroccans into Frenchman but to understand and work within the limits of the *âme marocaine* (Moroccan soul) and its particular *mentalité* (way of thinking) (Segalla 2009). Perhaps the most visible—and still present—manifestation of this principle of association was in urban planning of Moroccan cities: the schism between the *ville nouvelle* (new city) and the *madīna qadīma* (old city) (Abu-Lughod 1980; Rabinow 1995). Association not assimilation, Lyautey believed, was the sustainable way to govern colonial peoples.

2.2 A Curriculum for the Protectorate

As Spencer Segalla (2009) has shown, this juxtaposition of French modernity and Moroccan tradition was also the guiding principle for French intervention in Morocco's educational system. In juxtaposition to the pre-colonial *msīd* (Qur'anic school) and al-Qarawiyīn mosque-university,[10] the newly created DIP established a tiered educational system. The crown jewel of the system were the *écoles des fils de notables* at the primary level and the *collèges musulmans* (Muslim colleges) at the secondary level.[11] These two elite institutions had as their goal the training of a limited group bilingual and bicultural elite, French in style but Moroccan in spirit.[12]

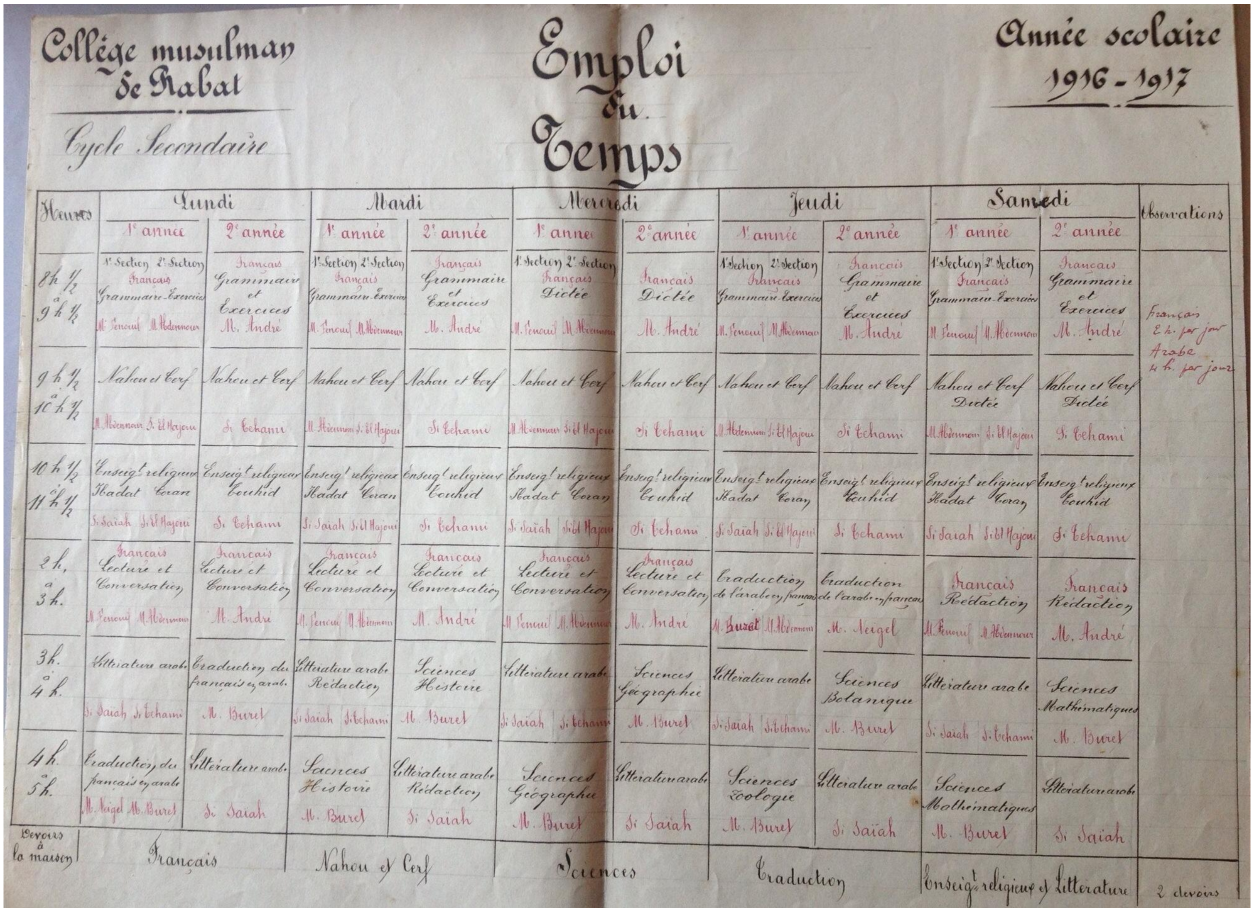
[10] Established in Fez in 859, al-Qarawiyin is reputed to be the oldest university in the world.
[11] "By December, 1926, there were five Écoles de Fils de Notables and two Collèges Musulmans, with a total of 802 pupils" (Scham 1970, 153).
[12] "… the fundamental formula of the Collège Musulmans is reduced to this: Muslim culture and French education. Muslims culture is taught by Moroccan Muslim teachers and is based on the study of Arabic language and literature, moral studies, and religious law; French education is taught by French teachers, and includes the study of the French language" (Viziriel Decree of September 4, 1920 cited in Scham 1970, 155).

This goal of bilingualism and biculturalism was evident in the time schedules for these students. At the collèges musulmans, for example, first-year students spent an equal number of hours doing Arabic-language coursework and French-language coursework. According to a time schedule for 1915, from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. students had three one-hour classes in Arabic reading, writing and grammar using texts such as *Al-Muqaddima al-ajurrūmiyya fī mabādīʾ ʿilm al-ʿarabiyya*, more popularly known as *al-Ajrumiyya*, a famous versified text on Arabic grammar dating back to the 13th century. Then in the afternoon from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., students spent another three hours studying French reading, writing, and grammar as well as other subjects (history, geography, math, physics, chemistry, drawing) in French.[13]

One might expect that over time, the balance between these two languages would begin to shift, with more hours being spent on French-language education, and fewer on Arabic. In fact, time schedules from subsequent years suggest the opposite. In 1916, for example, there was a slight increase in the ratio of Arabic to French, such that students received four hours of instruction daily in Arabic, and only two in French (see Figure 1)—possibly a reaction to complaints from Moroccan parents about their children receiving fewer hours of Arabic language instruction than their counterparts in the msīd. This concern about teaching enough Arabic in schools continued throughout the entire protectorate era. At the écoles des fils de notables, for example, students in *élémentaire I* received 2.5 hours of Arabic per week in 1920. This was increased to 5 hours in 1938, and 6.5 hours in 1942.[14]

[13] Curriculum for *Collège Musulman,* Box 63, Folder Écoles Arabes 1915-1916, Direction des Affaires Indigènes (DAI), CADN.

[14] Horaire hebdomadaire consacré à l'arabe dans l'enseignement primaire et professionnel musulman (I), uncategorized, CADN.



Collège musulman de Rabat

Cycle Secondaire

Emploi du Temps

Année scolaire 1916 - 1917

Heures	Lundi 1re année	Lundi 2e année	Mardi 1re année	Mardi 2e année	Mercredi 1re année	Mercredi 2e année	Jeudi 1re année	Jeudi 2e année	Samedi 1re année	Samedi 2e année	Observations
8 h ½ à 9 h ½	1re Section 2e Section Français Grammaire-Exercices M. Fenouil M. Abdennour	Français Grammaire et Exercices M. André	1re Section 2e Section Français Grammaire-Exercices M. Fenouil M. Abdennour	Français Grammaire et Exercices M. André	1re Section 2e Section Français Dictée M. Fenouil M. Abdennour	Français Dictée M. André	1re Section 2e Section Français Grammaire-Exercices M. Fenouil M. Abdennour	Français Grammaire et Exercices M. André	1re Section 2e Section Français Grammaire-Exercices M. Fenouil M. Abdennour	Français Grammaire et Exercices M. André	Français 2 h. par jour Arabe 4 h. par jour
9 h ½ à 10 h ½	Nahou et Cerf M. Abdennour Si El Hajoui	Nahou et Cerf Si Tehami	Nahou et Cerf M. Abdennour Si El Hajoui	Nahou et Cerf Si Tehami	Nahou et Cerf M. Abdennour Si El Hajoui	Nahou et Cerf Si Tehami	Nahou et Cerf M. Abdennour Si El Hajoui	Nahou et Cerf Si Tehami	Nahou et Cerf Dictée M. Abdennour Si El Hajoui	Nahou et Cerf Dictée Si Tehami	
10 h ½ à 11 h ½	Enseigt religieux Hadat Coran Si Saïah Si El Hajoui	Enseigt religieux Touhid Si Tehami	Enseigt religieux Hadat Coran Si Saïah Si El Hajoui	Enseigt religieux Touhid Si Tehami	Enseigt religieux Hadat Coran Si Saïah Si El Hajoui	Enseigt religieux Touhid Si Tehami	Enseigt religieux Hadat Coran Si Saïah Si El Hajoui	Enseigt religieux Touhid Si Tehami	Enseigt religieux Hadat Coran Si Saïah Si El Hajoui	Enseigt religieux Touhid Si Tehami	
2 h. à 3 h.	Français Lecture et Conversation M. Fenouil M. Abdennour	Français Lecture et Conversation M. André	Français Lecture et Conversation M. Fenouil M. Abdennour	Français Lecture et Conversation M. André	Français Lecture et Conversation M. Fenouil M. Abdennour	Français Lecture et Conversation M. André	Traduction de l'arabe en français M. Buret M. Abdennour	Traduction de l'arabe en français M. Neigel	Français Rédaction M. Fenouil M. Abdennour	Français Rédaction M. André	
3 h. à 4 h.	Littérature arabe Si Saïah Si Tehami	Traduction du français en arabe M. Buret	Littérature arabe Rédaction Si Saïah Si Tehami	Sciences Histoire M. Buret	Littérature arabe Si Saïah Si Tehami	Sciences Géographie M. Buret	Littérature arabe Si Saïah Si Tehami	Sciences Botanique M. Buret	Littérature arabe Si Saïah Si Tehami	Sciences Mathématiques M. Buret	
4 h. à 5 h.	Traduction du français en arabe M. Neigel M. Buret	Littérature arabe Si Saïah	Sciences Histoire M. Buret	Littérature arabe Rédaction Si Saïah	Sciences Géographie M. Buret	Littérature arabe Si Saïah	Sciences Zoologie M. Buret	Littérature arabe Si Saïah	Sciences Mathématiques M. Buret	Littérature arabe Si Saïah	
Devoirs à la maison	Français		Nahou et Cerf		Sciences		Traduction		Enseigt religieux et Littérature		2 devoirs

Figure 1: Time Schedule for the Collège Musulman in Rabat, 1916-1917. Centre des archives diplomatiques de Nantes.

2.3 Styles of Pedagogy

In addition to the quantity of Arabic being taught, French administrators were also constantly debating how Arabic was being taught, whether it was being taught properly, the efficiency of current methods, and how it might be taught better.

Yet before discussing French attempts to "reform" the teaching of Arabic, we should ask the question: How was Arabic being taught before the French arrived? Although this is not the place for a detailed historical account of pre-colonial educational practices and methods in Morocco and the larger Maghreb, something brief should still be said on this matter.

It is generally agreed that the practice of education and knowledge transmission in pre-colonial Morocco involved a great deal of memorization. Primary education took place in the msīd and children were taught by a fqīh,[15] someone trained in Islamic jurisprudence and law:

> The Koran was the only text studied, and after the pupils had learned the alphabet, the faqih proceeded to dictate the Koran, *sura* by *sura*, and the pupils were supposed to commit it to memory, one *sura* at a time… Boys who were unable to memorize the entire Koran eventually left school to learn a craft, or to become shepherds. (Scham 1970, 144-145)

Those students who progressed to secondary school learned "also by memorization, classical Arabic grammar, the fundamental doctrines and practices of Islam, and some of the simpler aspects of Islamic law" using texts such as the aforementioned *Ajrumiyya* and *Alfiyya* (Figures 2), two versified grammars which remained on the syllabus for the first half of the protectorate (ibid).[16]

The language of this pre-colonial education was Arabic (fuṣḥā), often referred to in English as classical or Qur'anic Arabic. In Morocco, as in the rest of the Arab world, this linguistic medium for the transmission of knowledge was no one's "mother tongue." Students spoke either colloquial Moroccan Arabic (dārija) or one of the Amazigh languages at home and in daily conversations. Arabic (fuṣḥā) was thus a learned language that was mastered through the formal memorization and explanation of texts, the most central being the Qur'an.

The purpose of learning Arabic was not simply the communication of content, but rather the transmission of what we might think of as form, or disposition. Initiation into Arabic in the pre-colonial msīd was thus initiation into the language of knowledge—the most important and

[15] Also commonly transliterated as *fquih* and *faqih*.
[16] The *Alfiyya*, also known as *Al-Khulāṣa al-alfiyya* and *Alfiyyat Ibn Mālik*, is a 13th century Arabic grammar written by Ibn Malik (1204-1274). It presents grammar in the form of rhymed couplets.

Figure 2: Lesson on the fāʿil (subject of verb) in a contemporary publication of the Alfiyya (https://archive.org/details/alfiya_201812/page/n25/mode/2up)

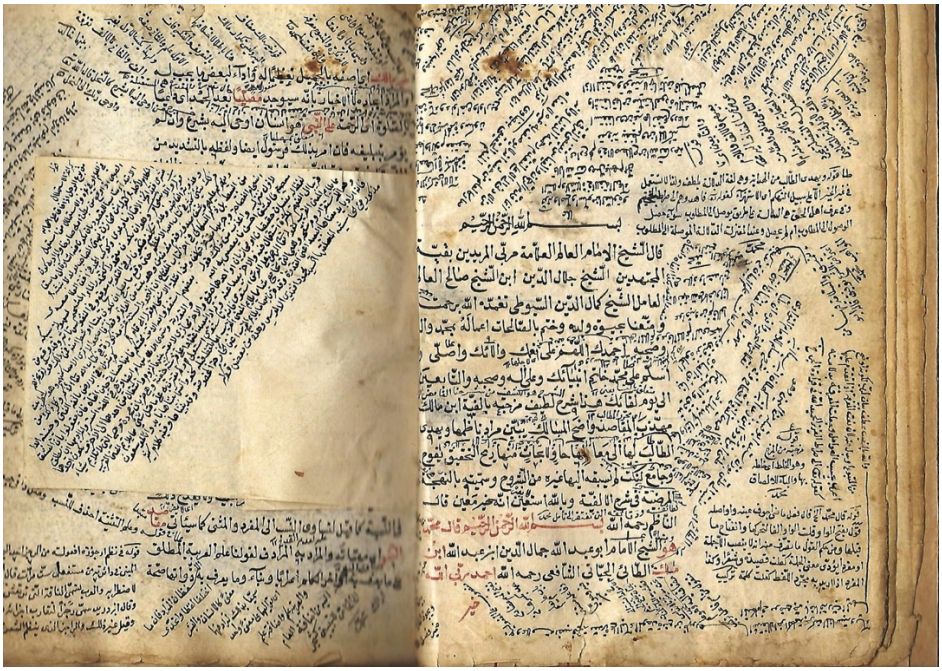


Figure 3: 18th-century manuscript of an explanation (sharḥ) of the Alfiyya (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:شرح_ألفية_ابن_مالك.jpg)

'true' language of knowledge. Competency in Arabic enabled students to access authoritative texts, but it also functioned as a sort of "pre-apprenticeship (*préapprentissage*) in Muslim culture" (Rivet 2004, 269) because it formed subjects who had the ability to both recognize and heed particular kinds of authority (Hirschkind 2006; Mahmood 2011).

Conceptually, then, Arabic was not learned as a second language in the way we might imagine today. Rather, it was learned as what MacIntyre (1988, 374) has called a "second first language," a language learned not by translation but by "becoming a child all over again": "Just as a child does not learn its first language by matching sentences with sentences, since it initially possesses no set of sentences of its own, so an adult who has in this way become a child again does not either." In Morocco, both dārija and Tamazight speaking children learned Arabic (fuṣḥā) not through translation, but according to this same pedagogy of memorization and explanation. Crucially, learning Arabic was conceptualized as learning Language (with a capital 'L'), not as merely learning another language (small 'l') in addition to and through one's 'first language' or 'mother tongue'.

This particular approach to learning Arabic was part of a larger conceptualization of the world in which Arabic circulated. Ricci (2011) has referred to this linguistic lifeworld as the "Arabic cosmopolis," a geographical and linguistic expanse that previously encompassed not just the "Arab world" but South Asia, Southeast Asia, and beyond. Morocco, of course, was a part of this "Arabic cosmopolis," a sort of imagined community held together by the Arabic language. Notably, this notion of a cosmopolis draws on Sheldon Pollock's (2006) notion of a "Sanskrit cosmopolis" which he uses to characterize the linguistic and political landscape that previously stretched from what is now Afghanistan to Java and Bali. Within these premodern cosmopolises, Sanskrit and Arabic played structuring roles which placed them in a hierarchical relationship

with other forms of speech and writing that existed within and beyond these spheres. Abdelfattah Kilito (2008), for example, has argued that in the premodern Arab world there was a reigning sense that texts should be translated into Arabic, but not vice versa. One result of this particular language ideology were Arabic language texts, like the 11th century *Maqāmāt al-Harīrī*, that explicitly resisted outward translation (25-26).

In contrast to this precolonial conception of language as a structuring part of a larger cosmopolis, French was imagined as a different kind of language: a national language. Michael Silverstein (1987) has described such languages as "standards," which partake in a culture and ideology of "monoglot standardization." Importantly, this particular language ideology did not mean that national subjects were expected to be "monoglot" in the sense of being monolingual: only having competency in one language. Rather, the culture of monoglot standardization presumed that an individual should be able to carry out all aspects of her life in one language (L. Mitchell 2009).

It bears noting that some national standards can, of course, be imagined as 'cosmopolitan' and hence extending beyond national borders, French being a case in point. Crucially, however, such languages are generally imagined as cosmopolitan within a world that is already assumed to be split up into nation-states. As such, to describe a language like French as cosmopolitan (for example, within a discussion of *francophonie*) is to characterize French as what MacIntyre (1988) has called a "late-twentieth-century internationalized language of modernity" and what Woolard (2016, 15) has called an "anonymous public language": languages that "are supposed to be able to represent and be used equally by everyone precisely because they belong to no-one-in-particular." In contrast to premodern cosmopolitan languages like Arabic which one could only learn as 'second first languages', national languages like French

were proper ‘first languages’ or could be learned as ‘second languages’. And learning a second language meant learning how to translate the various aspects of one’s daily life from one’s ‘first language’ into this second, comparable denotational code.

Much has been written about the processes and policies by which precolonial, non-standard languages were made the objects of modernization. This literature tends to focus on efforts to change the language in question, to craft it into a better ‘host’ language for modernist projects (Liu 1995). As Hanks (2010) has shown, the remaking of language is often part of a larger project aimed at transforming the habitus of colonial subjects; language is just one part of a larger attempt to reorder life. While the modernization of language has historically been an important point of colonial intervention, less attention has been given to language pedagogy. Pedagogy is not only the means by which we learn a subject—like language—it is also the means by which we learn what a subject is at all, how to approach it, and how to learn it.

In the subsequent section, I look at how the transformation of Arabic language teaching and Arabic language teachers in Morocco during the first half of the twentieth century resulted not in a ‘content’ change, but in a conceptual change. That is, I look at how pre-colonial practices of initiation into Arabic (as a sort of “pre-apprenticeship in Muslim culture”) gave way during the protectorate to what we now might identify as language specific pedagogy. As I will show, this entails a conceptual shift from the study of the Arabic language as the study of language tout court, towards its recategorization within the protectorate-run schools as the study of yet another national standard. While the French were heavily invested in teaching the Arabic language, they were not invested in maintaining the forms of pedagogy that had been used it in Morocco prior to 1912. As we saw in the opening vignette, they explicitly desired to replace earlier forms of teaching with newer and more efficient pedagogy that was transferable and

translatable across subjects. Under the DIP, "languages" became a particular kind of school subject with its own pedagogical demands regardless of the language. In this way, the particular form of "difference" that characterized Arabic in pre-colonial Morocco was "increasingly obliged to respond to—and be managed by—the categories brought into play by European modernity" (Scott 2004).[17] As I show in the rest of this dissertation, this pedagogical reconceptualization of Arabic as yet another national standard had lasting consequences.

3. Internationalized Pedagogies of Modernity

3.1 Incorrigible Fuqahā' and Decadent Methods

Throughout the protectorate, the French administration on the ground displayed an intense preoccupation with identifying, correcting, and often firing teachers who they considered to be bad pedagogues. Letters constantly traveled to and from the new capital of Rabat expressing frustration with Moroccan instructors, particularly those charged with teaching Arabic at Protectorate run schools.

"The professor of grammar and of muslim law MOULAY SMAEL doesn't know how to teach (*faire une leçon*), nor how to make himself accessible (*se mettre à la porter*) to his students," complained the délégué à l'organisation et au contrôle de l'enseignement in the regions of Fez and Meknès in 1915. "We will have to look for a better teacher, younger, more intelligent, without offending the susceptibilities of this old man who enjoys within Meknes the respect and consideration of all the families of our students in particular."[18]

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[17] In this passage, Scott is paraphrasing an argument by Asad (1992).

[18] Letter from the Délégué à l'Organisation et au Contrôle de l'Enseignement dans les Régions de Fez Meknès to Monsieur le Directeur de l'Enseignement à RABAT, "Ecoles de MEKNES," 26 January 1915, Box 63, Folder Ecoles Arabes 1915-1916, DAI, CADN.

Such a complaint was not an isolated case. Letters of complaint voiced at the local level found a sympathetic ear in the DIP in Rabat, which was equally concerned with the state of Arabic language instruction in the newly founded protectorate. On October 8th, 1922, the Directeur de l'Ecole franco-arabe Lemtiyine in Fez sent a letter to the DIP complaining about one Si Abdeddaïm, the fqīh employed at school's msīd. "One student knows the qur'an well," asserts the Directeur, "as for the others, they haven't completed a single *hizeb*[19] that they know well."[20] Six days later, on October 14th, 1922, the DIP sent a letter to the Inspecteur de l'enseignement primaire in Fez instructing him to fire the *fqīh* in question "[who] has never been fully satisfactory" (*n'a jamais donné entière satisfaction*).[21]

The state of Arabic instruction at the school of Lemtiyine appeared to be a source of intense concern for the Direction in Rabat who ordered the personnel to give "the study of Arabic a strong forward thrust (*une vive impulsion*)."[22] In 1921, just one year prior to the aforementioned firing of Si Abdedaïm, his predecessor had similarly been fired. In the eyes of the Directeur in Rabat, "The Arabic Professor who teaches [at Lemtiyine], Si Tasnaouti, is totally insufficient and radically incorrigible."

This concern about Arabic at Lemtiyine was likely due in part the school's location in the former capital of Fez, home to Morocco's social and economic elite as well as the famous

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[19] A *ḥizb* (plural: *aḥzāb,* literally meaning "group") is a unit of the Qur'an. The Qur'an is traditionally divided into thirty *ajzā'* (singular: *juz'*, literally meaning "part") of varying lengths. Each *juz'* is further divided into *ḥizbāni* (two groups), with a total of 60 *aḥzāb* overall.
[20] Letter from the Directeur de l'Ecole franco-arabe Lemtiyine to Monsieur le Directeur Général de l'Instruction Publique, des Beaux-Arts et des Antiquités, "Rapport sur la marché du msid," 8 October 1922, Box 4, Folder 16, DIP, CADN.
[21] From Hardy to Monsieur l'Inspecteur de l'enseignement primaire, FEZ, 14 October 1922, Box 63, Folder Ecoles Arabes 1915-1916, DAI, CADN.
[22] Letter from Brunot to le sous-Inspecteur de l'Enseignement Primaire à FEZ, 29 Septembre 1921, Box 4, Folder 16, DIP, CADN.

Qarawiyyin mosque-university. The administration of the Protectorate was particularly concerned about their students being the equal of those educated in the parallel system of Islamic education, and the potential for damaging comparisons was all the more likely for schools in close proximity to Qarawiyyin. In 1923, the year after the firing of the aforementioned Si Abdedaïm, the Inspector of primary education in Fez sent a letter to the Director of Lemtiyine with a command for the new hire: "Advise the *Mouderris* to follow the grammar lessons at *Kardouiyine* [sic]; the *uléma* visiting your school should not assume that your *moudérris* is ignorant. Very serious.[23]

Though such concern may have been heightened for protectorate run schools in the environs of Fez, it was certainly not absent at schools in other parts of French Morocco. In a memo entitled "Langue Arabe et Droit Musulman" (Arabic Language and Muslim Law), which appears to have circulated in the collèges musulmans sometime between 1917 and 1920, an unnamed author writes:

> It is important, for the good name of our muslim colleges that, in terms of Arabic language and law, their students have knowledge of equal value to that possessed by the *tolbas*. For literature they will succeed easily, literature not being actually studied in Morocco; conversely, for grammar, one must take into account the tradition; it requires that a scholar know the *Djouroumiya* and the *Alfiya*: our students will therefore study these works, but it is hoped that, thanks to their previous studies, they will approach them under particularly favorable conditions and will reach the goal with less trouble and faster.[24]

In the eyes of the French, the source of this "bad pedagogy" was clear: Qarawiyyin. Often compared to Zaytouna in Tunis and Azhar in Cairo, the mosque-university Qarawiyyin was

[23] Letter from Brunot to Monsieur le Directeur de l'Ecole de Lemtiyine, "SUITE A VOTRE RAPPORT TRIMESTRIEL," 16 January 1923, Box 63, Folder Ecoles Arabes 1915-1916, DAI, CADN.
[24] LANGUE ARABE ET DROIT MUSULMAN, undated, Box 112, Folder Collèges Musulmans 1917-1920, Direction des Affaires Chérifiennes (DACH), CADN.

undoubtedly Morocco's most famous institute of learning and, for the French, it was completely lacking in quality pedagogy. In a 1925 memo on Qarawiyyin, the Directeur of the collège musulman in Fez, Paul Marty,[25] describes a mosque-university "in decadence." "The pedagogical methods of Qaraouiyine are deplorable," he exclaims, "Their memory is appealed to, not their intelligence. The intellectual capacity (*acquit*) of a student is proportional to his labors and not to the methods of his masters."[26]

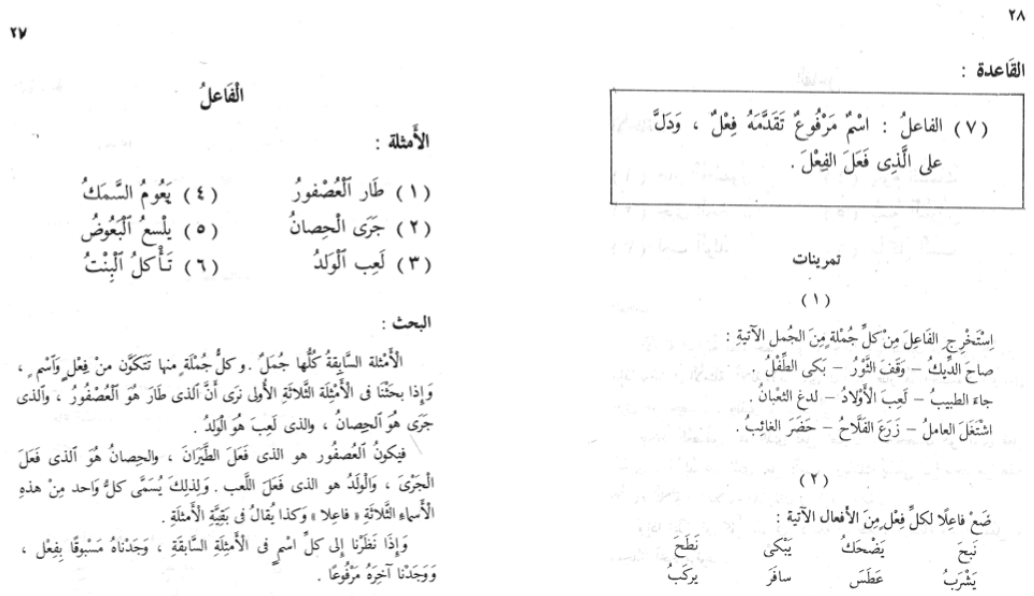
3.2 From Classical Poetry to Modern Textbooks

In the place of what the French saw as unreflective instructional methods in which the teaching of Arabic was mired, they attempted to apply a new pedagogical approach to this 'traditional' subject. After all, they were now the legal protectors of the Arabic language and they felt it was their duty to develop a "modern" and more "efficient" practice of teaching.

One aspect of this new pedagogy involved the use of textbooks. By the mid-point of the protectorate, older texts such as the aforementioned *Alfiya* and *Ajrumiya* were losing their place to Egyptian textbooks edited and printed by Christian missionaries and designed according to Europeans conceptions of proper pedagogy. In 1921, the same year that the unfortunate Si Abdedaïm was fired from Lemtiyine, the Directeur du Collège Musulman in Rabat wrote to the DIP:

> The alfiya has never been used at the Rabat College. For our Moroccans who are obsessed with modernism (*entichés de modernisme*), we need ad hoc works—the 4 works of "Safinat al-Nohat" edited by the brothers of the Christian Doctrine of Cairo fully meet the needs of our students and the desire of their parents… In addition, the study of *alfiya* is arid; it requires a rather long commentary and is poorly digested by the students—This

[25] Marty is more well known as the promulgator of the notion of *Islam noir*, which he developed during his time in West Africa before being stationed in Morocco.
[26] Paul Marty, "L'UNIVERSITE de QARAOUIYNE," 1925, 643, Folder P/5b Karaouiyine, Direction de l'Intérieur, CADN.



٢٧

الْفَاعِلُ

الأَمثلة :

(١) طَارَ الْعُصْفورُ
(٢) جَرَى الْحِصانُ
(٣) لَعِبَ الْوَلَدُ
(٤) يَعُومُ السَّمَكُ
(٥) يلْسعُ الْبَعُوضُ
(٦) تَأْكلُ الْبِنْتُ

البحث :

الأَمْثلة السَّابِقةُ كُلُّها جُمَلٌ . وكلُّ جُمْلَةٍ منها تتكَوَّن منْ فِعْلٍ وَاسْمٍ ، وَإذا بحثْنَا فى الأَمْثِلَة الثَّلاثَةِ الأُولى نَرَى أَنَّ الذى طَارَ هُوَ الْعُصْفُورُ ، والذى جَرَى هُوَ الْحِصانُ ، والذى لَعِبَ هُوَ الْوَلَدُ .

فيكونُ الْعُصفُور هو الذى فَعَلَ الطَّيَرَانَ ، والحِصانُ هُوَ الذى فَعَلَ الْجَرْىَ ، وَالْوَلَدُ هو الذى فَعَلَ اللَّعب . وَلِذلِكَ يُسَمَّى كلُّ واحد منْ هذهِ الأَسماء الثَّلاثَةِ « فاعِلا » وَكذا يُقالُ فى بَقِيَّةِ الأَمْثلَةِ .

وَإِذَا نَظَرْنَا إلى كلِّ اسْمٍ فى الأَمْثِلَةِ السَّابقَةِ ، وَجَدْنَاهُ مَسْبوقًا بِفِعْل ، وَوَجَدْنا آخِرَهُ مَرْفُوعًا .

٢٨

القَاعدة :

(٧) الفاعلُ : اسْمٌ مَرْفُوعٌ تَقَدَّمَهُ فِعْلٌ ، وَدَلَّ على الَّذِى فَعَلَ الفِعْلَ .

تمرينات

(١)

اِسْتَخْرِجِ الفَاعِلَ مِنْ كلِّ جُمْلَةٍ مِنَ الجُمل الآتيةِ :
صاحَ الدِّيكُ – وَقَفَ الثَّوْرُ – بَكى الطِّفْلُ .
جاء الطبيبُ – لَعِبَ الأَوْلادُ – لدغ الثعْبانُ .
اشْتَغَلَ العاملُ – زَرَعَ الفَلاحُ – حَضَرَ الغائبُ .

(٢)

ضَعْ فاعِلًا لكلِّ فِعْلٍ مِنَ الأفعال الآتية :

نَبحَ يَضْحَكُ يَبْكى نَطَحَ
يَشْرَبُ عَطَسَ سافَرَ يركَبُ

Figure 4: Lesson on the fāʿil (subject of a verb) in the textbook al-Naḥū al-Wāḍiḥ

> book is, in my opinion, out of date (*surannée*); it can only be suitable for *tolbas* for whom time does not count. Moroccan youth are eager to learn as quickly as possible.[27]

Not only were the style of these new textbooks like *Safinat al-Noha* and later *al-Naḥū al-Wāḍiḥ* (Figure 4) more legible to French pedagogical sensibilities, their systematized nature also made them more manipulable to the constant ordering and reordering of hours and cycles of the various curricula that preoccupied French administrators at the DIP (T. Mitchell 1988). Their obsession with making the learning of content faster and more efficient extended not just to Arabic grammar, as seen in the letter above, but also to the study of the Qur'an. In contrast to Si Abdedaïm who whose students "did not complete a single *hizeb*," the DIP asked that "students

[27] Letter from the Directeur du Collège Musulman de Rabat to DIP, "A.S. des livres scolaires," 21 June 1921, Box 33, Folder 1920 à 1942, DIP, CADN.

learn at least 1 *Hizb* on average per month, which would lead to the full study of the Qur'an in about 6 years in other words with a gain of 6 years on *msids* ... "[28]

3.3 Arabic as a Second Language

This new and 'efficient' pedagogy came in the wake of a long experience of teaching Arabic to colonial administrators and military personnel in Morocco's neighbor to the east: Algeria. Notably, Algeria was the site where French orientalist William Marçais adopted and elaborated the concept of *diglossie arabe*: the idea that the Arabic language is in fact composed of two distinct registers, written Arabic (fuṣḥa) and spoken Arabic (dārija). Crucially, this concept facilitated French colonial command of the Arabic language, and while also furnishing them with more functional languages of command (Cohn 1996).

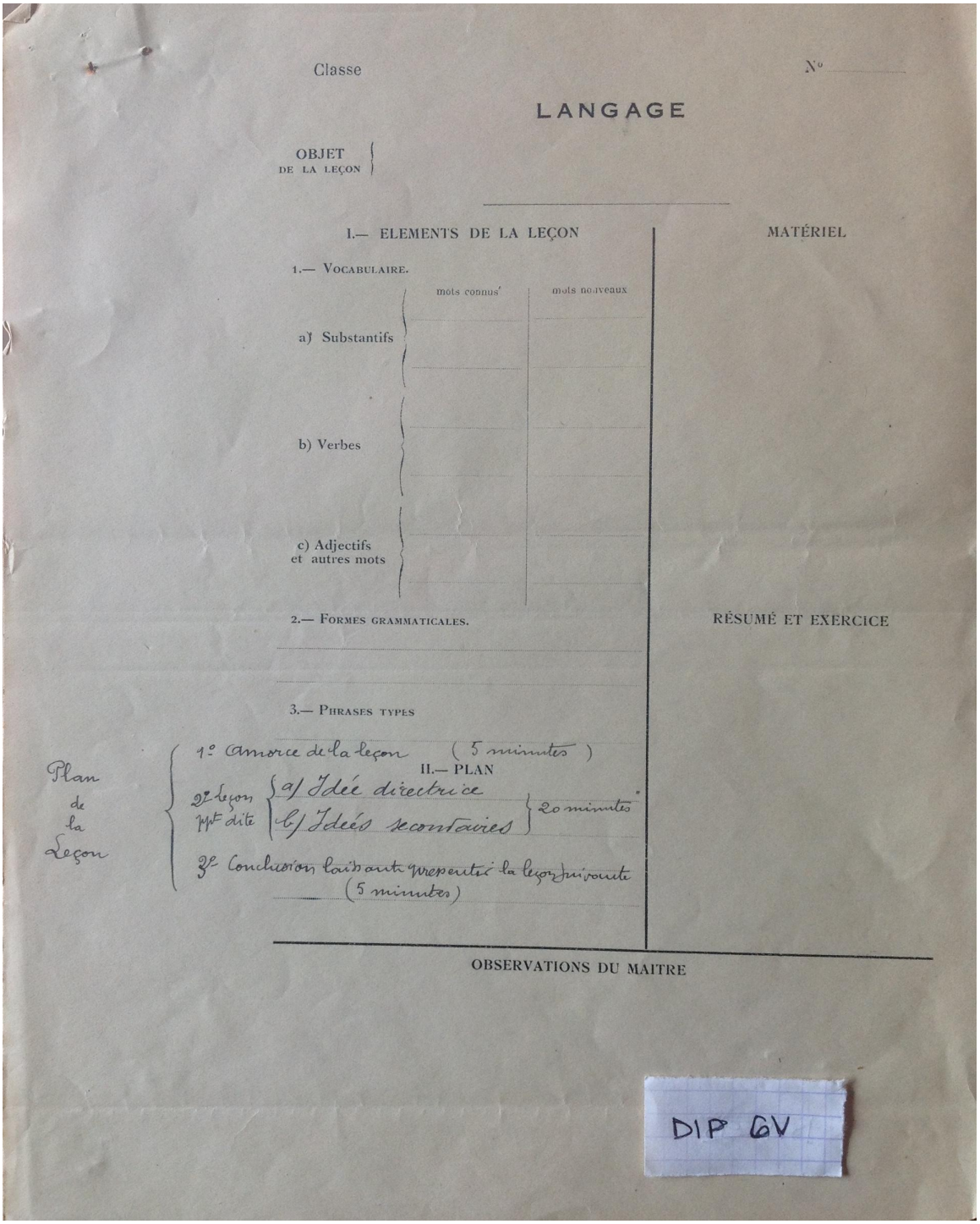
As Arabic became an increasingly important language in the French colonial empire, the French government became interested in streamlining and expanding its teaching in the metropole to those hoping to pursue careers in the colonies. One way they did this was to develop methods for teaching spoken Arabic (dārija), but they also tried to develop methods for teaching classical, written Arabic (fuṣḥa) in a more accessible way. "This teaching should be given in a lively, non-abstract, and so-called 'scholarly' way," insisted Étienne Flandin, president of the sous-Commission des Pays Islamiques du Comité parlementaire d'action à l'étranger. "Very little *alif—ba—tsa* and of *mosdars* (infinitives), but rather practice, like the Berlitz school is needed; no courses by teachers from the School of Oriental Languages because their teaching

[28] Untitled letter, 11 April 1922, Box 6, Folder 20, DIP, CADN.

methods are mostly theoretical."[29] Arabic, Flandin specified, should ideally be taught using "the living and practical methods used for several years in our schools to teach English and German (wall charts - good little practical manuals - along the lines of 'Ali and Aïcha')."[30] These modern methods of second language teaching were not restricted to the teaching of Arabic to French students, but were increasingly employed for the teaching of French to Moroccan students as well as colonial subjects elsewhere in the French empire.[31]

This rise of a scientific foreign language pedagogy for the teaching of Arabic to French students and of French to Moroccan students was mirrored in the transformations that concern us here in the teaching of Arabic to Moroccan students. Moroccan students were increasingly learning Arabic via a foreign language pedagogy. This pedagogy was premised on the commensurability and interchangeability of languages as if there were only one kind of "language" and hence only one scientifically verifiable way to teach it. In this vain, a letter sent to the DIP just two months after the ill-fated Si Abdedaïm was fired includes two formulas for lesson plans that were employed at the école des fils de notables in Fez (Figure 5). One style of lesson plan for "language" (*langage*) and one for "all lessons other than language" (*toutes les leçons autres que le langage*).[32]

[29] OBSERVATIONS suggérées par la lettre adressée par M. FLANDRIN, président de la sous-Commission de Pays Islamiques du Comité parlementaire d'action à l'étranger, au Ministre des Affaires Etrangère," Box 109, Folder TI52, DACH, CADN.
[30] ibid.
[31] A well known textbook by Freté et Magne that was developed for teaching French as a second language to Moroccan students, grounded in the belief that it should be different than teaching French to metropolitan French students, was quickly adopted by French administrators in other colonies hoping to adopt the method.
[32] "Pièces jointes au Rapport trimestriel octobre-novembre-décembre 1922," 31 December 1922, Box 6, Folder 20, DIP, CADN.



Classe N°

LANGAGE

OBJET DE LA LEÇON

I.— ELEMENTS DE LA LEÇON

MATÉRIEL

1.— VOCABULAIRE.

	mots connus	mots nouveaux
a) Substantifs		
b) Verbes		
c) Adjectifs et autres mots		

2.— FORMES GRAMMATICALES.

RÉSUMÉ ET EXERCICE

3.— PHRASES TYPES

II.— PLAN

Plan de la Leçon

1° Amorce de la leçon (5 minutes)

2e leçon ppte dite
- a) Idée directrice
- b) Idées secondaires

(20 minutes)

3e Conclusion laissant présenter la leçon suivante (5 minutes)

OBSERVATIONS DU MAITRE

DIP GV

Figure 5: Lesson plan form for "language" classes. Centre des archives diplomatiques de Nantes.

3.4 A New 'Concours' for a New Generation of Mouderris

Unfortunately for the French, the imposition of materials such as printed lesson plans did not always, or even often, have the intended impact on their Moroccan employees. Increasingly it became evident that instead of 'correcting' old teachers who had been vetted by their position in the pre-colonial hierarchy of knowledge transmission, [33] the administration would have to insist on modern pedagogy as part of their initial hiring criteria. Thus in true French fashion, in 1936 the Directeur of the DIP announced plans for a *concours* (competitive exam):

> In my opinion, the exam will only have to deal with a grammar lesson lasting half an hour. It will be indicated to the candidates that, during a quarter of an hour, they will have to do a grammatical presentation (*exposé*) on the chosen topic and, during a quarter of an hour, do exercises on the blackboard for the pupils on the same subject, each of them will have to send to the commission in writing the exercise he will have the students to do in their notebooks and at home… Grammar books, such as Safinat el Nohat, can be used by candidates and I believe that the best teacher will certainly be the one who can make the most of a textbook like this.[34]

Accordingly, on the 5th of January 1937 the Directeur and a handful of appointed committee members met in Fez to watch seven candidates teach. The committee members all took notes, and met later to decide upon scores for each candidate in three different categories: *exposé*, *interrogation*, and *exercice*. The final scores for the seven candidates ranged from zero to twenty-one out of a possible thirty.

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[33] A handwritten letter from 1920 vets a potential "feqih" by stating that "he did solid studies (*solides études*) in Rabat which he completed in Mecca and Medina in 1912 and 1913" ("Demande de nomination d'un feqih et de titularisation de Si Mohamed El Hadjoui, dans le cadre de Mouderris," 24 February 1920, Box 31, Folder 1918 à 1942, DIP, CADN).
[34] "Recrutement d'un fquih pour remplacer Si Seddik el Fassi," 18 December 1936, Box 4, Folder 16, DIP, CADN.

The candidate coming in last, who taught a lesson on the *hamza* (glottal stop), appears to have failed the concours on all three fronts and was unable to score even a single point. Notes written by the Directeur of the DIP express clear frustration: "The *hamza* - recites with hesitation - painful silences - Ignorant of the subject - Exercise, book in hand, makes mistakes - series of questions written on the board, instead of asking them - It's not a [?], It's a questionnaire.[35] Much to the dismay of the judges, the candidate seemed particularly uncomfortable with what appears to the Directeur took to be the most basic things: the *exposé* format, the textbook, the blackboard.

Some candidates who scored better appear to be slightly more confident pedagogues, though their method of instruction is critiqued for being of the "old Karaouiyine style."[36] The Directeur appears to have been particularly frustrated by two aspects of this style: its slow speed and its seemingly passive pupils. "In 5 m[inutes] he writes 4 lines," exclaims the Director in one note.[37] Another candidate is accused of having a "gloomy class" (*classe morne*) and a lesson plan that "only covered 2 examples" (*n'a porté que sur 2 exemples*).[38] Yet another candidate is critiqued for leaving the students "completely passive" (*élèves tout passifs*).[39] Even the third place candidate is accused of speaking in a monotonous tone and failing to adopt the exposé style of addressing the entire class at once—instead he commits the fault of working with a single student at the blackboard and leaving the others to their devices. In contrast, the Directeur's comments on the candidate who comes in first reveal his ideals of the proper pedagogue: "puts

[35] "Handwritten notes about candidates, 5 January 1937, Box 4, Folder Recrutement du mouderres de Lemtoyine Janv. 1937, DIP, CADN.
[36] ibid.
[37] ibid.
[38] ibid.
[39] ibid.

examples on the board—a sense of ease—students take part in the lesson—clear and fair presentation.[40]

The concours was immediately declared a success and the DIP circulated a memo in the same year declaring that not only would all future hiring follow the concours model used in Fez but moreover, "we will entrust the teaching of Arabic to our young Moroccan teachers (*jeunes maîtres marocains*) who graduate from the Normal Section."[41] In other words, exactly twenty-five years into the Protectorate, those charged with teaching Moroccan students how to embody Arabic would no longer be the *fuqahā'* trained in an Islamic education system radiating out of Qarawiyyin. This "old Karaouiyine style" was replaced with professional "language" teachers trained in a modern (read: French) system who understood "languages" as a particular school subject necessitating a particular kind of teaching method. "The old style mouderres (*mouderres vieux style*) is imbued with his science and his superiority in everything related to Arabic," complained the Director of the DIP. "He only follows the advice given to him when he cannot do otherwise."[42] So he was phased out.

4. Conclusion: Saviors of the Arabic language?

Due to constant efforts towards pedagogical reform, the DIP increasingly came to see itself as the savior of the Arabic language in Morocco, and perhaps beyond. "The teaching of Arabic in Morocco has only developed since the existence of French schools," boasted the aforementioned memo, "and the knowledge that our students possess in this language, whatever

[40] ibid.
[41] Memo from the Chef du Service de l'Enseignement Secondaire, Primaire et Professionnel Musulman, "Circulaire au sujet de l'enseignement de l'arabe," 14 January 1937, Box 5, Folder B Circulaires, DIP, CADN.
[42] ibid.

their quality or volume, has been taught to them by our organization since the inception of the Protectorate."[43]

While such a claim is certainly an overstatement, it should by now be clear that the history of education in colonial Morocco was not one in which the French simply sought to undermine the place of the Arabic language. Colonial administrators not seek to phase out or completely replace Arabic-language instruction with French-language instruction, nor did they intentionally cultivate subpar Arabic language instruction at the elite écoles des fils de notables and collèges musulmans. As previously mentioned, the average quantity of Arabic per week at the écoles actually increased from 2.5 hours (1920) to 5 hours (1938) to 6.5 hours (1942).[44] One way to interpret this, an interpretation already offered, is to see it merely as a reaction to complaints from parents that their children were receiving too few hours of Arabic language instruction in comparison to their counterparts at the more traditional msīd.

In closing, I suggest a slightly different interpretation for why French colonial administrators allowed an increased number of hours of Arabic language instructions vis-à-vis French. While Moroccan students were certainly spending less of their school day in French, they were spending more and more of it within a modern (read: French) pedagogical framework. Even when classes were focusing on the Arabic language, students were nonetheless learning through a French ideological framework premised on monoglot standardization. As we see through the spread of the concours, by the end of the protectorate French colonial administrators had found a procedure for successfully conscripting Moroccan Arabic teachers into this new logic of language.

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[43] ibid.
[44] Horaire hebdomadaire consacré à l'arabe dans l'enseignement primaire et professionnel musulman (I), uncategorized, CADN.

As I show in the following chapter, this recategorization of Arabic via pedagogy set the stage for Moroccans to begin asking new questions about Arabic, questions which emerged through its comparison to French: Was the Arabic being learned in school as a 'first language' (comparable to the French category of *langue soutenue*)? Or was it a 'second language' (i.e. a foreign language)? Such questions, in which French served as an invisible metric, set the terms for the kinds of language activism that followed and kinds of reforms that were initiated to turn Arabic into a proper national language.

Chapter 3

"We Are Condemned to ~~Arabize~~ Standardize"

1. Two Sides of a Single Ideology

In the wake of the French protectorate (1912-1956), the new government of independent Morocco began transforming the linguistic landscape of the country through a major language reform: Arabization (*taʾrīb*). Initiated in 1957, Arabization, was a government-led reform program that aimed at replacing the colonial languages of French and Spanish with classical Arabic (fuṣḥa) in all aspects of public life, from schools to courtrooms to government bureaucracies. By implementing Arabization, Moroccan leaders followed the path of other countries in the Middle East and North Africa, buoyed by resounding calls for pan-Arabism and declarations of independence sweeping across the region.

Yet in fewer than two decades, the immense difficulties of implementing nation-wide language reform had become clear to both the Moroccan government and the people. The glow around Arabization had been replaced with frustration. "We Arabize because we are condemned to Arabize (*Nous arabisons parce que nous sommes condamnés à arabiser*)," avowed the Moroccan Minister of Education, Azzeddine Laraki, in an interview with the pan-African news magazine *Jeune Afrique* (cited in Grandguillaume 1983, 86). His statement was intended to be a play on Sartre's famous phrase "Man is condemned to be free" (*L'homme est condamné à être libre*).

What does it mean to be 'condemned to Arabize'? Why did Laraki and Moroccans more broadly feel that they had no choice? By undertaking Arabization, what exactly were they being condemned to undertake, and by what force? In short, what was the particular bind in which Moroccans found themselves post-1956 regarding language?

The argument of this chapter is in part an attempt to rethink Laraki's provocative statement. Adjusting his terms slightly, this chapter argues that in the wake of independence Moroccans were condemned not to Arabize, but to standardize. As this chapter will show, post-1956 Moroccans dedicated to decolonization had no choice but to fully replace French with Arabic. But as they quickly realized, for Arabic to replace these colonial languages, Arabic itself needed to become a standard language, and Moroccans needed to start seeing it as a neutral mode of communication towards which they should all aspire. In other words, in order for Arabic to replace French, Laraki and his successors felt an imperative to make Arabic and Arabic-speakers—somewhat ironically—more like French and French speakers.

Whereas the previous chapter focused on colonial-era efforts to modernize the teaching of Arabic by bringing it in line with the teaching of French, this chapter focuses on post-colonial efforts to modernize the Arabic language itself by crafting it into a properly standardized national language. As I will show, Arabization was in fact only one of two movements of language activism in Morocco that sought to standardize "Arabic"; and each of the two movements identified a distinctly different locus for the standard-to-be. On the one hand, 20th century government-led Arabization policies sought to modernize classical Arabic (fuṣḥa) and impose it as the language of the new nation-state. On the other hand, frustration over such policies opened up space in the early 21st century for a new wave of public actors to promote Moroccan Arabic (dārija) as the proper future national standard.

As might be expected, proponents of these two movements often depicted themselves as being diametrically opposed. Yet the argument of this chapter is that not only did these two movements share a similar underlying ideology of standardization—a conviction that Moroccans were 'condemned to standardize'—both movements also mobilized the former colonial language of French as an invisible metric for crafting Arabic into a legible national standard.

2. Arabization

2.1 From Colonial Languages to New National Standards

When the French left Morocco, they left behind them an entire governmental apparatus that largely functioned by means of the French language. As discussed in Chapter 2, both the French language and a French pedagogical sensibility had been introduced into the educational system during the protectorate, even if these schools were officially bilingual. But in other sectors of the government and public life, the pretense of bilingualism was less apparent and French was the dominant language. This included the legal system, the financial sector, and all of the government ministries, from the Ministry of Agriculture to the Ministry of Interior.

Beginning in 1956, one of the top priorities of both the new government of independent Morocco and the reinstated monarchy was to replace French with Arabic. Within the government, the majority of the power was held by the conservative nationalist party *al-Istiqlāl* (The Independence) that had played a critical role in gaining independence from France and Arabization had been one of their main platforms during their fight against the protectorate. According to Segalla (2009, 248): "After twenty-six years of nationalist struggle and a decade of assimilationist postwar educational policy, there was much public pressure to use public education to promote a Moroccan identity based in Arabic and Islam." Indeed, there was public

pressure not just to promote the Arabization of education but to promote the Arabization of all other domains as well. “The independence of a nation does not stop only with political sovereignty, but it must affect all domains of administrations and everything else,” declared Hassan II, the Crown Prince of Morocco, in 1960, “therefore, since we are an independent nation, we must employ, in our administration, only the national language.”

Parallel to these calls for Arabization, there was a debate over the future of bilingualism in post-independence Morocco. Notably, “bilingualism” here referred exclusively to the co-existence of French and Arabic (fuṣḥa) in the government, in education, and in people’s everyday lives. “Is bilingualism a solution?” asked Istiqlāl leader Allal El Fassi in a 1964 conference on education,

> One answer: no ... Education in Morocco cannot bear fruit as long as a foreign intruder continues to play a preponderant and paternalistic role vis-à-vis the new Arabic language in schools and colleges, because one’s genius manifests itself completely only in one’s national language ... Bilingualism cannot *give* authentic citizens. (cited in Gravier 1966)

Initially, the hardline stance championed by the *Istiqlāl* faced harsh criticism from certain sectors of the elite, notably leftist activists who had largely been educated in French. Some of the most vocal critics—French language writers like Abdellatif Laâbi, Abdelkebir Khatibi, and Mohammed Khaïr-Eddine—voiced their dissent in the leftist Francophone journal *Souffles* (Breath). “One does not decolonize with words,” wrote Laâbi (2016, 72). In his 1966 article “Realities and Dilemmas of National Culture,” he argued that the fact of shifting one’s writing from French to Arabic was not the radical act that the Istiqlāl and its supporters made it out to be. Rather, Laâbi (59) “urged Maghrebi writers to fashion their own literary voice in any language at their disposal.” Yet by the early 1970s, even Laâbi and his fellow writers at *Souffles* had adopted the Istiqlāl party line regarding the need to abandon bilingualism in favor of Arabization. In practice, this meant that *Souffles* stopped publishing in French, and put all of its resources into

publishing its younger Arabic-language counterpart *Anfās* (Breath). In his last article for *Souffles* in 1970, "Contemporary Maghrebi Literature and *Francophonie,*" Laâbi's support for the Arabization of Moroccan literature was unequivocal: "We want to state clearly that the literature we envisage for tomorrow must definitively overcome bilingualism for the sake of its future effectiveness, coherence, and aesthetic appeal" (229).

As many have noted, the main driver for Arabization was not practical functionality but rather a sense of ideological necessity. In practice, this often meant that ideology took precedent over the many very real obstacles that existed. In the realm of education, the government was struggling to implement Arabization while simultaneously trying to massively expand the network of public schools. There were other practical problems that needed solving such as a lack of Arabic-language textbooks for all subjects and too few teachers (Moroccan or otherwise) capable of teaching in Arabic.[45] Similarly, in the realm of government administration, all procedures and paperwork needed to be translated into Arabic, and civil servants needed to be trained en masse to handle bureaucratic procedures in Arabic.

In addition to these structural problems, government leaders also faced the complexity of the cultural and linguistic situation. Nearly half of the population of Morocco was Amazigh, and a large percentage of this population spoke one of the Amazigh dialects as their primary language. Yet this reality went largely ignored by the Istiqlāl party, who saw Imazighen as a backward population "to be assimilated and Arabized" (El Qadéry, cited in Segalla 2009, 259). Thus while Arabization was presented as a mode of decolonization, such policies were fairly

[45] According to Mohamed Hammoud, the 1956 reforms aimed at arabizing schools were implemented "without prior need assessment or provisions for adequately trained teachers well enough versed in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) to be able to use it to teach basic arithmetic and natural sciences" (Segalla 2009, 251).

hostile to the Tamazight speakers, forcing them to literally "become Arab" after independence (Maddy-Weitzman 2012, 111). This led to a radical shift in the relationship between Imazighen and the Arabic language. According to Grandguillaume (1983, 94): "Arabization was less perceived by the Berbers as a national issue than as the instrument of a party's strategy. From then on, Arabic no longer appeared as the language of the Koran, recognized and esteemed, but as the sign of a reinforcement of the power over regions accustomed to a certain autonomy."

Yet for many contemporary critics, the largest oversight of Arabization was the decision to adopt fuṣḥa as the national standard. Istiqlāl leaders "did not seriously consider the gap between Moroccan Arabic dialects and the written version" (Segalla 2009, 259). Both the government and the Moroccan public more broadly showed little concern with the appropriateness of fuṣḥa as the linguistic medium of the rapidly expanding public education system. Certainly there was some concern about fuṣḥa lacking important technical terms; such problems were to be dealt with by the establishment in 1960 of the Institut d'drabisation, and in 1961 of a Permanent Bureau for the Congress of Arabization meant to coordinate Arabization efforts between different countries. While these institutes were tasked with filling perceived gaps in fuṣḥa, they were not positioned to assess the potential difficulties of implementing it as the medium of public education. From the perspective of the Istiqlāl and administration, the "gap" between dārija and fuṣḥa in Morocco did not seem to warrant any particular attention.

Such inattention to the many obstacles of Arabization has often been blamed on an overly zealous ideology of pan-Arabism. While this might have been the case, it is certainly also true that some of this inattention—particularly the blindness to the "gap" between dārija and fuṣḥa —was also a legacy of the French protectorate and an ideology of standardization that had permeated Morocco for nearly half a century. The nationalists who came to power after

independence had largely been educated in elite protectorate-run bilingual schools in which French and Arabic (fuṣḥa) had been framed as equivalents, mere tokens of a type (Chapter 2). According to Segalla (248-9): "The victory of the nationalists had not brought a divorce from the cultures of colonialism. The nationalists' ability to build a counterhegemony out of the elements of the colonial situation meant that the cultures and policies of 'postcolonial' Morocco would be imbricated with those of the colonial administration."

In particular, the very category of "language" being mobilized in the Istiqlāl's Arabization policies was itself a colonial category. While the idea of a national language appeared to be universal, it smuggled in European languages (namely French) as the metric for assessing Arabic (Gal 2016). The assumption on the part of those undertaking Arabization was that certainly there was some internal linguistic variation in Morocco, but it was not deemed to be any more significant than variation in French. A Parisian did not speak the same way as someone from the south of France, nor did an educated French person speak the same way as a worker. Yet despite such variation, the French government had instituted a standard French language to serve as the basis of both education and administration. In post-independence Morocco, the nationalists assumed that fuṣḥa was the most obvious candidate to fill that same role, and they assumed that the existence of regional "variation" would not be a major impediment.

Notably, during my fieldwork in 2015-2017, this particular model of understanding Arabic as essentially equivalent to French was still widespread in Morocco. Not only did the Moroccan government itself continue to assert this line, this was also the vision of Arabic being communicated and practiced in public schools. At the École Normale Supérieure in Tétouan, for example, students being trained as elementary and middle school Arabic language teachers were

not taught to understand Arabic as a "diglossic" language, or to think of the linguistic situation in Morocco as distinct in any way. Rather, the vast majority of their training relied upon articles, textbooks, terminology, and theorizations developed in France to teach French to French children. Theorizations of the "gap" between the French spoken at home (*langage familier*) and the French taught in schools (*langage soutenu*) were calqued onto the distinction between dārija and fuṣḥa. French, in other words, was literally the model for understanding Arabic.

2.2 Fuṣḥa: A Failed Standard?

Despite the fact that this particular model of comparison was still ideologically and officially dominant in the Moroccan public sphere, the process of Arabization started to be subject to major criticisms as early as the 1960s. While the Moroccan public had initially pressured the Istiqlāl to push through Arabization policies despite clear obstacles, this same Moroccan public became increasingly skeptical of the government's ability to effectively implement Arabization.

As previously mentioned, following independence, both the government and the monarchy declared that Arabization would be implemented in all domains of life. The goal was for an educational system and an administrative system in which only fuṣḥa was used. Yet this desire for quantity quickly came into conflict with the desire for quality. In the realm of education, new schools "were hastily created and teacher-training programs were accelerated" (Segalla 2009, 252). Even so, there was still a lack of trained personnel which meant that school hours had to be reduced and class sizes exploded to an average of seventy students. In an attempt to solve this problem, the first Minister of Education Mohamed al-Fasi brought in thousands of teachers from the Middle East (Egypt, Iraq, and Lebanon)—a decision which ultimately cost him

his job as fears spread of these teachers infecting Morocco with foreign political ideas like Nasserism.

In the wake of al-Fasi's early departure, a succession of different ministers for education were brought in, each with different (and often contradictory) approaches to the scale at which Arabization should be implemented. Omar Abdeljalil (1958) and Abdelkrim Benjelloun Touimi (1958-1961) took a more hesitant approach of progressively arabizing grade by grade beginning with the first years of schooling, and doing so only in accordance with the country's actual capacity. "Full universalization and Arabization," they believed, "had to be postponed in favor of maintaining quality and training a technical and administrative elite" (253). Yet with the appointment of Youssef Ben Abbès (1961-1965), Arabization was deprioritized, bilingualism was accepted, and thousands of new French teachers were brought in to replace the Middle Eastern teachers (254). Continuing with this trend, Mohammed Ben Hima (1965-67) reverted Arabized science instruction at the primary level back to French. Yet a few years later his successor, Abdelhadi Boutaleb (1967-1968), backtracked by reverting all subjects during the first two years back to Arabic, while allowing math and science to be taught in French for remaining three years. Finally, under Azzedine Laraki (1976-1987), both primary and secondary schools were fully Arabized, and French was only taught as a second language. "In 1989," notes Boutieri, "the sciences were the last high school subject to be translated into Arabic" (2016, 11). Yet at the university, science, math, and engineering were (and still are) taught in French.[46]

[46] Segalla (2009, 255-6) offers a clear example of what these uneven implementations felt like from the perspective of Moroccan students: "The repeated reversals of the late 1950s and early 1960s meant that some students began primary school in Arabic, then were required to repeat a year, but with math and science in French; later they might again find themselves in math and science classes that had been Arabized, especially if they were required to redouble again due to poor performance. The next generation of students made their way through a fully Arabized

Schools were not alone in terms of an uneven implementation of Arabization; other public sectors experienced Arabization in similar ways. By the early 1970s, the Moroccan public began expressing outrage at the slow speed with which Arabization was being implemented in public administrations. "The place reserved for a foreign language in our administration is actually greater than it was during the protectorate" proclaimed a petition from residents of Casablanca in 1973 (cited in Grandguillaume 1983, 79). In the same year, residents of Marrakech published a similar petition, declaring that, "The French language continues to exercise its hegemony on our administration without exception (perception, agriculture, P.T.T. [Post, Telecommunications, and Broadcasting], police, gendarmerie, kiadate districts, municipalities, etc.). However, the majority of citizens do not know this language and hence are exposed to very serious injuries" (cited in Grandguillaume 1983, 78).

Yet even as the Moroccan public was demanding Arabization, it was also becoming increasingly clear that Arabization was not—and would not—reach the most prestigious sectors of public life. Just as university level instruction in science, math and engineering remained in French, so did key sectors of the economy such as banking. Most shocking of all, the Moroccan elite—already the products of bilingual Francophone education—were largely sending their own children French Mission schools (elite French-medium schools under the control of the Ministry of Education)[47] instead of Arabized public schools. This tendency for the elite to simultaneously

primary system, only to be faced with math and science instruction in French at the secondary level or, as is currently the case, tertiary level."

[47] "In exchange for educational assistance, French negotiators compelled the Moroccan government to permit a newly created Mission Universitaire Culturelle Française to use seven postprimary schools and more than a thousand primary classrooms for up to seven years. These French Mission schools were the legacy of the DIP schools for Europeans, which had also been educating a significant portion of the Moroccan elite since 1945. Instead of integrating these 'European' schools into a postcolonial Moroccan system, the 1957 agreement removed them from the realm of Moroccan public education entirely. The buildings would eventually be

promote Arabization, while shielding their own children from the consequences of poorly Dlanned implementation, was common knowledge amongst Moroccans and led to a great deal of resentment and bitterness that was still present during my fieldwork.[48] As I was told repeatedly by friends and acquaintances from all social classes, the elite wanted the children of others to bear the burden of Morocco's linguistic decolonization.[49]

In the eyes of many, the result of this experimentation with Arabization was a generation of *nilingues*, students incompetent in all languages (Boutieri 2016).[50] *Nilingues* is a neologism that we could translate as "nonlinguals," which expresses the widespread feeling that the current generation of Moroccan youth are linguistic jacks of all trade, good at none. Indeed, every year newspapers feature front-page articles attesting to the dismal state of education in Morocco, and particularly students' lack of fluency in all languages of education. As many critics of Arabization are quick to point out, the percentage of Moroccans that leave school having mastered fuṣḥa —the official language of education—is dismally low. And those who master French are even fewer. The future, then, in the eyes of most Moroccans is *nilingue*.

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handed over to the Moroccan state, but not the human resources or intellectual capital" (Segalla 2009, 251).

[48] One person who told me this story was actually the granddaughter of a former member of the Arabic Language Academy. When he passed away, he wanted to give his library to his grandchildren. The problem was that they had all been educated at *La Mission* and none of them could read his Arabic-language books.

[49] Perhaps the clearest evidence of the failure of Arabization in Morocco is the long-standing presence of unemployed college graduates (*diplômés chomeurs*) protesting in front of Morocco's Parliament. Many of these unemployed college graduates have degrees from the Department of Arabic, and believed that this degree would enable them to gain a position as a civil servant.

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3. Dārija Activism: "Wake up people, let's stop being crazy!"

Beginning in the early 2000s, the Kingdom of Morocco witnessed a surge of texts published not in fuṣḥa but in dārija. The texts were highly eclectic, ranging from news magazines to translations of Rainer Maria Rilke, and they used a wide variety of scripts and orthographic conventions. Equally eclectic were their authors and publishers, ranging from psychoanalysts and linguists to journalists and painters. Most surprising though was the very fact that these texts artifacts existed at all, that is, that they were written in a language was generally considered to be spoken.

For many in the Francophone press, this new movement had the makings of a possible linguistic revolution, a *révolution Dārija* (Akalay 2010; Lamlili 2006). Western scholars were quick to report on these new dārija-language publications, drawing attention to their novelty as written texts but also to the seeming shift in language attitudes that had given rise to them (Caubet 2008; Cohen 2011; Elinson 2013; Meskine and de Ruiter 2015; C. Miller 2010, 2015). In short, these texts displayed what appeared to be a radically different language ideology than the which had been promoted by the Istiqlāl since independence in 1956: Arabization. While the Istiqlāl had identified fuṣḥa as the locus for a national standard-to-be, these new texts in dārija were performatively and confrontationally putting that decision into question. Why, they seemed to ask, was dārija not chosen as the locus for Morocco's national standard? Why was "Arabic" standardization in Morocco focused on fuṣḥa and not dārija?

"To me it was just obvious!" explained Ahmed, the founder of *Nīshān* (frequently transliterated as *Nichane* in French), Morocco's first newsweekly in dārija, "I thought it was not normal that we should not write the language we speak." Even over Skype, it was evident that Ahmed was an animated speaker, and that 'the dārija question' really agitated him. A few months before our

conversation, *Nīshān* had been forced to shut its doors because it had published "sensitive" material in dārija.[51] Ahmed had subsequently moved to California where he was living in self-imposed exile. "I didn't [create *Nīshān*] out of a reflection, like 'Oh, I have a great idea that no one has had, let's write in our language!' To me it sounded just obvious. The other way didn't sound obvious: writing in a language that I don't practice every day, which is classical Arabic."

As Ahmed himself suggested, he was the first person to have the idea of writing in dārija, or in colloquial Arabic dialects in general. Throughout the Arabic-speaking world, proposals for and experiments with the vernacularization of the Arabic language have existed since at least the end of the nineteenth century (Chejne 1969; Eisele 2000; Stetkevych 2006). As with *Nīshān*, nearly all such efforts were individual initiatives and positioned themselves (or were perceived to be) in direct opposition to the top-down, government sponsored "Arabization" policies that marked the postcolonial, post-independence landscape of the Middle East and North Africa. In Lebanon, for example, linguist Anis Furayha argued for the standardization and officialization of Lebanese Arabic in his well-known *Grammar for a Feasible Arabic* (1955).[52] Around the same time in Egypt, the Coptic journalist and writer Salama Musa advocated for the official adoption of Egyptian Arabic (Musa 1953). Yet as Arabization policies charged on,[53] governments often saw the promotion of colloquial Arabic dialects as, at best, a distraction and, at worst, a (neo)colonial conspiracy to undermine the Arabic-language and Arabic-speaking countries (see Said 1964). Many Arab leaders felt that national unity, which was still fragile in the post-

[51] *Nīshān* was the target of a royal advertising boycott after a publishing controversy (see Cohen 2011).
[52] Anis Furayha was notably Edward Said's Arabic teacher later in Said's life.
[53] "The fact that the main arguments in these texts tend to be repeated ad nauseam in each generation and, in the same generation, in different locations, testifies to the perennial nature of the issues that animate them" (Suleiman 2004, 94).

independent period, required one unified language. Ultimately, they decided that that language should be fuṣḥa, the language of pan-Arab nationalism; not local and regional Arabic dialects, which had the potential to divide the newly formed nation-states.

In contrast to Lebanon and Egypt, arguments over vernacular standardization in Morocco only began in earnest in the 2000s, and Ahmed was one of the main instigators. In 2006, Ahmed founded *Nīshān* as the dārija spin-off of the already well-known French-language newsweekly *TelQuel*.[54] Although *Nīshān* was the kingdom's first news weekly in dārija, it was only one of many texts being published in dārija at the time. Notably, many of the authors, translators, and publishers of these new vernacular texts had the same stance as Ahmed: writing in dārija was obvious.

"I think that it's fairly simple," Mourad told me in a matter-of-fact way, "In America, you speak English, you write in English. For me, as well, it's the same approach. I don't try to complicate things. I speak dārija —Moroccan Arabic, the Moroccan language—so I write it." A retired translator and journalist who had spent more than thirty years in Germany, Mourad had recently moved back to Morocco and decided to use his retirement to publish texts in dārija, everything from a collection of international fairy tales to a translation of Rainer Maria Rilke. Interestingly, he had taken a more solo-approach than Ahmed: he self-published his own texts and translations in dārija, and made them available for purchase at newspaper kiosks in the streets of the capital, Rabat.

For Abdelrahim, also a retiree, the obviousness of writing in dārija had come to him decades earlier at the age of eighteen. He had been sent by the Moroccan government to teach

[54] *TelQuel* has also come under controversy. It was hit by the same boycotts that forced the closure of *Nīshān*, but because it was able to fall back on non-Moroccan, international advertisers, it was able to survive financially.

French and fuṣḥa at a public school in the countryside, and it was there that he first "noticed the anomaly of diglossia. It struck me as an absurd situation in the sense that children had to learn everything from a quasi-foreign language. Two foreign languages, that is, French and standard Arabic!" This formative experience was what subsequently led Abdelrahim to study linguistics in England and France, eventually writing his dissertation at the Sorbonne on Moroccan Arabic and the question of diglossia. After retiring from his position at the university in Kenitra, he had shifted his effort from academic writing about dārija to translating literature into dārija. When I met him in 2011, he had just published a dārija translation of *The Little Prince*, and was in the process of working on a translation of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner."[55]

For many of these language activists, the logic and obviousness of writing in a vernacular language was evidenced in their own experiences of writing in dārija. "The first time I started writing [in dārija] with Arabic characters it came like [*whoosh sound*]," explained Youssef, a well-known Francophone author who had decided mid-career to try writing in Moroccan Arabic:

> It came spontaneously. It was so natural… There was actually a difference between the experience of writing in French and English and between writing in dārija. It was my entire body that was writing. It was a feel, it was something that I could feel physically. I was writing from here [*points to stomach*]. Whereas, when I write in French it's always here [*points to head*], in this sphere, it's my head, it's conceptual. [But writing in dārija] was really visceral, from my body. It's really my gut.

This visceral nature of writing in dārija was something that came up frequently in discussions of how these writers "felt" when writing. "Dārija comes from here," explained Casablanca-based psychoanalyst and writer Rita, pointing to her stomach. "For me, French comes from here [points

[55] See Catherine Miller (2015, 2013a) on the peculiar choice of texts that were being translated into dārija.

to head], but dārija comes from here [points to stomach again]. It's the viscera [*C'est les viscères*]."

Yet for Ahmed and these other language activists, the visceral obviousness of writing (and reading) in dārija stood in stark contrast to the Moroccan government's unwavering stance on language. Constitutionally, "Arabic" was the official language of the kingdom, and Arabic meant fuṣḥa.[56] For proponents of dārija like Ahmed, this evinced a fundamental absurdity in the linguistic status quo, and in the Morocco more generally. "What we lack is rationality!" declared Ahmed over Skype. "When we have rationality, we will be able to have all the rest. And one of the tools of rationality consists in recognizing that we are not speaking the language that we pretend we are speaking. Wake up people, let's stop being crazy!"

For Ahmed and the others, this absurdity was not just symbolic, it had serious material stakes. Namely, it was a mode of linguistic production that maintained an inegalitarian class system.[57] As these language activists often explained in op-eds and interviews, the government's insistence on fuṣḥa as the official language of state effectively excluded the vast majority of Moroccans from public sphere because so few Moroccans could competently read, write, or speak in it. Fuṣḥa, they argued, prevented people from informing themselves about even in the most basic things; and it effectively silenced their voices—and voices of dissent more broadly.

For reformers like Ahmed, the refusal to officially recognize and standardize dārija was—or should have been—the elephant in the room. The problem was that not enough people

[56] The current Moroccan constitution of 2011 now refers to other language than Arabic that make up the linguistic landscape of the kingdom. This was not yet the case when I conducted interviews. Yet despite its efforts at reform, the 2011 constitution still does not refer, directly or indirectly, to dārija.

[57] Francophone Egyptian psychoanalyst Mustapha Safouan (2007) has gone as far as to argue that diglossia accounts for a lack of "freedom" in the Arab world.

in Morocco seemed to "notice" it; a fact Ahmed and others blamed on a kind of "false consciousness" or "schizophrenia." "Moroccans speak in dārija and write in classical Arabic," argued Ahmed. "It's a form of diglossia, if not also an indicator of schizophrenia." And yet, as Ahmed argued, this absurdity was difficult for most Moroccans to see or feel:

> Nobody's fighting for dārija! That's the thing. There are very few people fighting. Everyone in Morocco grows up in a situation where not speaking the language you write in is the norm. So telling them you should just be coherent with who you are, it's completely extravagant as an idea. You see when you grow up in extravagant conditions, extravagance becomes the norm, and something normal becomes extravagant. This is the situation we're in. Not only in Morocco but throughout the Arab world. We still live in a non-egalitarian society where the powerful want to keep a hold on knowledge and this is why they promote the language that only they can speak.

Most Moroccans, from the point of view of Ahmed and others, were unable to objectively "see" the "situation" for what it was.

The solution, for Ahmed, was a bottom-up revolution. And in this fight, dārija was both the ends and the means. It was the ends in the sense that vernacular standardization was quite literally the end point. For Ahmed, the ability to read, write, and speak in the same language was the only mode of linguistic being that was compatible with democracy and modernity. But dārija was also the tool for getting there. He expressed a strong belief that the very act of writing or reading dārija had the capacity to "wake people up" and confront Moroccans with the contradictions of their linguistic status quo.[58] *Nīshān* had done a lot to "decomplex" Moroccans, Ahmed argued. "I mean, it's like if you have a complex and then you take this complex away. Reading in dārija has allowed people to get rid of their complexes." While *Nīshān* had been forced to close its doors, Ahmed still held out hope for change. And in our conversation he

[58] In his well-known article on diglossia, Charles Ferguson (1959) argued that, "Very often, educated Arabs will maintain that they never use [colloquial Arabic] at all, in spite of the fact that direct observation shows that they use it constantly in all ordinary conversation."

wondered out loud about whether another future project might take things a step further than *Nīshān* and write dārija in Latin script, instead of Arabic script. "It's really a pain to read dārija with Latin letters," he admitted, "but who said that changing the language and therefore changing the mentality and therefore changing the culture, the ideology and the level of development was an easy task?"

4. Debating Scale

4.1 Competing Comparisons

In this final section, I look at the ways in which these two stances over the correct national standard (dārija v. fuṣḥa) are being voiced in contemporary Moroccan media. On television, in the radio and in newspapers, language activists from both sides are asserting competing diagnoses of the current language situation in Morocco—competing claims, that is, of the scale at which we should understand the Arabic language. I approach such diagnoses as "politicized acts of comparison" (to borrow a phrase from Timothy Choy). As Gal (2016) has argued in her article "Scale-Making," and as philosopher Nelson Goodman (1972) noted before her, comparisons do not exist naturally in the world. They are made. And once made, they become "powerful semiotic tools" that "can be used to defend existing social arrangements or to conceptualize and establish new ones" (Gal 2016, 93). Building on this observation, this chapter looks closely at a high-profile televised debate that took place between two rival groups of language activists in Morocco: the Centre de promotion de la Darija, or the Center for the Promotion of Darija (CPD); and al-Jamʿiyya al-maghribiyya li-ḥimāyat al-lugha al-ʿarabiyya, or the Moroccan Association for the Protection of the Arabic Language (henceforth: al-Jamʿiyya). As I'll argue, what is at stake as these language activists try to get their particular comparisons to

"stick" is a claim about the correct scaling of Morocco's linguistic present, as well as a claim about the Arabic language's inevitable future.

Not much is known about al-Jamʿiyya, which was founded in 2017 by Musa Chami, a former high school French teacher in Tangier. Officially, the group defines itself as an independent organization with no political or doctrinal associations, and its stated aim is to protect the place of the Arabic language (i.e. fuṣḥa) in the absence of a political will to do so (Sirat 2008). To this end, al-Jamʿiyya organized several conferences and its members made public appearances and statements in the media. While the reach of al-Jamʿiyya was not particularly large, it was just one of many *associations* (clubs, or non-profit organizations) that existed in Morocco to promote the Arabic language, the largest association being the National Coalition for the Arabic Language in Morocco (al-Iʾtilāf al-waṭaniyy min ajl al-lugha al-ʿarabiyya bil-maghrib).[59]

In contrast to al-Jamʿiyya, the CPD gained an enormous amount of publicity in Morocco, not all of it positive. The CPD was originally founded in the 2000s by three friends: Noureddine Ayouch, Ali Ababou, and Driss Moussaoui—none of whom were actually linguists. At the time, Ababou was a high-profile bank manager, and Moussaoui was a well-known psychiatrist, one of the first in Morocco. But it was Ayouch, the advertising magnate, who was the real instigator behind the CPD. Since the 1990s, he had been stirring up controversy in interviews and op-eds, but also through the unorthodox use of written dārija in the advertisements produced by his agency, Shem's Publicité. After years of conversation, the three friends decided to create the CPD as an academic center that would bring together "specialists" and "scientists" to work on

[59] http://iitilaf.org/, last accessed 4/30/19.

'the dārija question'. Khalil Mgharfaoui, a professor of linguistics at the nearby university in El Jadida, was recruited as the CPD's director, and several like-minded linguists and writers were slowly brought into the fold to form a full team (*équipe*). Both the founders and team members of the CPD were aware of the growing number of texts in dārija being published in Rabat and Casablanca at the time. This included *Nīshān* and the attempts of its founder, Ahmed, to "decomplex" Moroccans. But as Mgharfaoui explained to me: "the problem is that we haven't prepared this language [dārija] to be a mother tongue, taught like a mother tongue and corresponding to certain rules that we can transmit." That was where the CPD stepped in.

The CPD aspired to take a top-down approach to language planning, an aspiration that was strongly reminiscent of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's approach to reforming the Turkish language nearly a century earlier.[60] Yet much to their chagrin, the CPD was not as well positioned to adopt Atatürk's strong top-down approach for one simple reason: it was not a government institution, and had no practical capacity to effect policy. Nonetheless, the members of the CPD occasionally acted as if they were a government commission. Their goal was to use language to change the mentality—and culture, and ideology, and level of development—in Morocco. But as Mgharfaoui, explained to me their approach was not to begin with reading material, such as newspapers or novels. Rather, their approach was to produce linguistic

[60] On 1 January 1928, at the behest of Atatürk, the Law on the Adoption and Implementation of the Turkish Alphabet went into effect, making the use of the new Latin-based Turkish alphabet compulsory in all public communication, and removing the previously used Perso-Arabic script. This law, which had passed only two months before, effectively rendered the entire population of Turkey illiterate overnight. In addition to a change in the alphabet and writing system from Arabic to Latin, the modernization of the Turkish language from Ottoman Turkish also involved significant reforms in terms of vocabulary (turkification) and grammar (moving away from Arabic grammar).

infrastructure. “If we want the classical thing of standardization, we need tools,” he argued, “and these tools are a dictionary, a grammar, a method of language teaching, and an anthology.”

4.2 The Medi 1 Debate

In 2013 the show Citizen of Today (*Muwāṭin al-yaūm*) on the Medi 1 channel aired a debate on the question of public education in post-Arabization Morocco. Given that the participants came from the CPD and al-Jamʿiyya, it was basically ensured that debate would focus on the question of whether or not dārija, as opposed to fuṣḥa, should be adopted as a medium of instruction in elementary schools.

It bears mentioning that this was actually an official recommendation that the CPD put forward to King Mohammed VI in October 2013, in the wake of a conference the CPD themselves had organized called “The Path Towards Success” (*Le Chemin de la réussite*) which brought together experts to debate (essentially to affirm) the scientific validity of mother tongue education. Significantly, the implicit comparison that undergirded much of the conference was that Morocco should be imagined in comparison to sub-Saharan African countries like Senegal, and that the relationship between dārija and fuṣḥa was comparable to the relationship between local African languages (e.g. Wolof) and former colonial languages (e.g. French). In other words, dārija and fuṣḥa were two separate languages—not two separate registers—and should be recognized as such (see Figure 6).

Perhaps with this comparison already in mind, Professor Moussa Chami of al-Jamʿiyya began the Medi 1 debate by offering a different comparison, a competing diagnosis of Morocco’s linguistic reality, which reframed dārija and fuṣḥa not as two languages but as two registers of

Figure 6: Discursive scaling in the 2013 Médi 1 debate

the same language: informal French and formal French. In doing so, he geographically rescaled the language situation in Morocco to compare it not to a country like Senegal, but to France (see Figure 6):

> I used to teach French in this very city, Tangier, and I would notice that my students didn't understand what I was saying. And the strange thing is that at that time, in 1968, public education still comprised a large number of French inspectors, and when they would visit us in the classroom, they would say, "Don't speak *dārija* to the students when you teach French!"

For Chami, this example—the prohibition of dārija in French class—was meant to be an example of the need for a distinction between the language spoken at home, and the language spoken in school. The need for a teacher to distinguish between these two registers, he asserted, was not specific to Arabic or to Morocco; rather, it was part of language teaching in general. It was simply bad pedagogy to let students speak in an informal register (i.e. colloquial French, or dārija) while in class. "*Ce qu'on appelle en français la langue familière* [What we call in French the informal language], *hādī dārija* [this is dārija]." Switching from dārija into fuṣḥa, Chami continued: "this is *dārija* because a French child, when he comes to school, doesn't understand French, the French of books, the French of Malraux, the French of Albert Camus, the French of whoever…A French child, when he comes to school, he says: '*Che pas, che pas*,' [I dunno, I dunno] he speaks to the teacher and he says '*che pas*.' And the teacher tells him, 'This language, let it go, let it go, *il faut la garder dans la vestiaire* [you have to leave it at the door].'"

This last comment by Chami lead to a violent outburst with all parties up in arms. But notably, this comparison that Chami made equated dārija with informal French (*la langue familière*) and fuṣḥa with literary French (*la langue soutenue*); it was a comparison that turned dārija and fuṣḥa into different registers, not languages. And in attempting to make this comparison to stick, to ring true, Chami tried to get the presenter and the viewers to see and hear

dārija as a *langue familière*, not as a distinct Language (with a capital L). Speaking in dārija was the equivalent saying "che pas" instead of "je ne sais pas."

When things calmed down, Mokhtar Laghzioui of the CPD immediately began setting up a new comparison, not between Morocco and contemporary France, but between Morocco and early modern France (see Figure 6). He suggested that contemporary dārija was to fuṣḥa as Middle French was to Latin—a comparison which reasserted dārija's standing as a Language (with a capital L), not merely a register. Like early modern France, Laghzioui argued, contemporary Morocco was failing to recognize dārija as a real language simply because of religious fervor and political ideology. "France has settled this problem of hers," Laghzioui argued, "and this language that you just spoke of [*la langue soutenue*], it's just a difference of pronunciation, it's not another language." In other words, Chami's comparison was false because dārija mapped onto French as a whole, not just onto one register of French. Whereas French schoolchildren were merely required to learn how to pronounce things differently ("je ne sais pas" instead of "che pas"), Moroccan schoolchildren were required to learn an entirely new language, Fuṣḥa. "France has settled this," repeated Laghzioui again, "it's not up for discussion. The problem we have today, that's really at issue, is this Fuṣḥa."

Yet this comparison that Laghzioui tried to set up was subsequently jumbled by his colleague, Mgharfaoui (see Figure 6). Whereas Laghzioui had proposed comparing the current language situation in Morocco to that of early modern France (dārija/fuṣḥa = Middle French/Latin), Mgharfaoui proposed comparing the current language situation in Morocco to that of contemporary French—but in a different way than Chami. Whereas for Chami dārija/fuṣḥa had mapped onto informal French/formal French, for Mgharfaoui they mapped onto modern French/Middle French. "A French person reading a French writer right now can still read

Montaigne, he just needs to look up some words because the French language has developed" Mgharfaoui argued, "Shakespeare is not the language of today, but you can still read it; the heritage we have, we can keep it." This particular comparison seemed to come out of a fear on the part of the CPD that if they overly insisted on a comparison in which dārija/fuṣḥa were equated with Middle French/Latin, they would be admitting that a process of vernacular standardization might ultimately lead to a loss of fuṣḥa, a sensitive point for many Arabic-speakers who take immense pride in their continued ability to access their literary and religious heritage in a way that they feel Europeans have largely lost. The comparison to modern French/Middle French was safer.

Even in light of Mgharfaoui's new comparison, Chami came back and insisted again that the CPD was misreading Morocco's linguistic reality, that they were scaling Arabic incorrectly (see Figure 6). He held that dārija was the equivalent of the informal French spoken at home, and fuṣḥa was the equivalent of the French spoken at school. In a mixture of dārija and fuṣḥa, Chami recounted:

> The first trip I took to France after receiving my French diploma, I got to France and French people laughed at me. I would say to them, "*Mais pourquoi vous rigoler?*" [But why are you laughing?]. *Vous rigoler*, I would use those word. And they would say, "Man, you're speaking like some book!" And I would tell them, but I've read André Malraux, I've read Camus, I've read Voltaire, and Montaigne, and that's the language. And they'd say, "No, no, here in France we don't speak in that language." Because they speak in dārija. And it's the same dārija they speak in today.

To nail the point, Chami then yelled out "even France has her own dārija!", i.e. spoken French. Then, referencing the Moroccan constitution of 2011, he argued angrily, "France doesn't even recognize her regional languages, and I can say that in terms of language, we in Morocco are more advanced than France, because we recognize Amazigh [Berber] as a culture and a

language, but France doesn't recognize Breton or Basque or Flemish or Walloon or anything! And it doesn't even recognize its own dārija!"

In addition to these "politicized acts of comparison" that emerged in the Medi 1 debate between language activists, it was quite telling that in the YouTube video of this debate, the user comments were similarly caught up in comparisons when trying to grasp the linguistic reality of Arabic in Morocco via other (often European) languages.

This below set of comments was written in French, and all of the references to other languages have been underlined in the text. The viewer "MaghrebiDialSahh" (RealMoroccan) wrote a comment that largely mimicked one of the CPD's attempts at mapping the current language situation in Morocco onto the trajectory of language in Western Europe:

> french german and english…etc, are basically darijats that were structured into languages with grammar and orthography, moreover quebecois french, and belgian french, are different from the french of france, and were initially darijats in quebec and belgium, but today they've become separate languages…, and yet we moroccans despise our TRUE MOTHER TONGUE, LA DARIJA!

The viewer "mohamed mohamed" then responded to this, point out that there are often discrepancies between standard language and what is actually spoken, a recognition that "for some folks – like all of us? – and for some situations – like most! – dat ain' də way we talk" (M. Silverstein 2017, 135). From such a perspective, the linguistic situation in Morocco appeared to be less of an aberration:

> Why haven't russians constitutionalized russian dialect which is 70% different from standard russian? did you know that ukrainians study in standard russian despite the constitutionalization of ukranian dialect as a language?

Yet another set of comments in Arabic notably mirrored the comparisons made by the CPD and al-Jamʿiyya. Similar to al-Jamʿiyya's argument that dārija/fuṣḥa should be compared to *la langue familière*/*la langue soutenue*, two registers of one language, the user "Oujnin Abdelaziz" wrote:

> There is maternal language and there is scientific language: the darija language doesn't progress into a darija that can be made into a scientific language… go look at the ideas of Vygotsky… and the discussion will end (or… begin)

This reference to Vygotsky was then followed by up a comment from "Ilyass benabid," who made a comparison along the same lines as the CPD, that contemporary Morocco was essentially comparable to early modern France: "+Oujnine Abdelaziz that kind of talk is what they used to say in france, they used to tell them that french isn't a rich language so let's just stick to latin :D."

5. Conclusion

What I have tried to show here is that much of the discussion about Arabic in Morocco revolves around a constant compulsion to compare, to grasp the language situation in Morocco by mapping it onto other examples of standardization. This mapping does not take place randomly. Rather, there is a deeply ingrained sense that Arabic in Morocco can really only be grasped in relation to a perceived universal metric which is often presumed to be exemplified by French. The challenge, then, for language activists on both sides is to make an argument about how Arabic lines up with that metric, and hence how it is doing, and what future it is inevitably moving towards. The metric itself, and its validity as the metric, is never put into question. As the Médi 1 debate reveals, the only question activists are concerned with is how to best use that metric to understand Arabic's present and its future. Yet all activists seem to agree that Morocco is condemned to standardize, even as they increasingly disagree about what the standard should be.

In the remaining chapters, I explore how this uncertainty is foisted upon a wide range of ordinary Moroccans in their daily lives. The first site I turn to is, perhaps surprisingly, a dubbing

studio in Casablanca. While the standardization of dārija has yet to gain political clout in Morocco, in the following chapter I investigate how a team of translators, actors, and sound engineers have nonetheless been asked to cobble together an imaginary foreign world in which dārija functions as the de facto standard.

Chapter 4

Sounding a World of Standard Dārija

1. Introduction

On a cold morning in December 2015, I showed up as normal at Plug In Studios, located on the first two floors of a nondescript apartment building in the Casablanca neighborhood of Maârif Extension. Once inside, I immediately headed to the main bulletin board to check which sound engineers were scheduled to be working on *Ḥayātī* (My Life), the dubbed dārija version of the Mexican telenovela *Una Maid En Manhattan* (2011), itself a remake of the American film *Maid in Manhattan* (2002). As it turned out, my good friend Hanane was scheduled for a recording session with Asmae, a sassy and humorous divorcee who worked as a voice actor at Plug In Studios as a way to her supplement full-time job as an administrator at Lycée Lyautey.[61] In *Hayati*, Asmae played Tanya Taylor, a young black Nuyorican woman who works alongside the main character, Marissa, as maids in a fancy hotel.

Hanane's studio was all the way at the end of Plug In's s-shaped corridor, lined with one recording studio after another. Because Hanane was Moroccan and worked exclusively on dārija dubbing, she occupied one of the studios on the windowless first floor, in contrast to the European sound engineers who worked on French dubbing and had nicer studios on the second floor. After popping in to say hello to Maryam in Studio 7 and waving to Samira in Studio 5, I grabbed a chair from the adjoining lunch room and dragged it into Hanane's studio where I plopped down next to her, both of us staring into the two large computer screens on her desk.

[61] Lycée Lyautey is an exclusive French high school in Casablanca belonging to the French Mission.

Behind us to the left was the interior recording booth where Asmae sat in front of a microphone, headphones on, looking at a duplicate of one of Hanane's screens which contained the dārija-language script[62] as well as the video of the episode she was dubbing over. Speaking to Asmae through a microphone, Hanane cued her to go ahead and then hit play simultaneously on both the recording program and the video so that, through her headphones, Asmae could hear the original Spanish-language soundtrack as she recorded over it.

"*Allah yā rabbī*!" exclaimed Asmae into the microphone. They had picked up somewhere in the middle of an episode in which Tanya and Marissa were gossiping in the employee changing room of the upscale hotel where they both worked. Clearly something bad had just happened to Marissa, leading Tanya to offer a sympathetic "Oh my God!" in the original Spanish-language video. As a code-switching Nuyorican character, Tanya's "Oh my God" came out in English (subtitled in Spanish as "Dios mío"), but the rest of her line was in Spanish.

In the dārija script we had in front of us, Tanya's sympathetic outburst had been rendered as the typically Moroccan phrase "Allah yā rabbī" (God, oh my Lord), a translation which notably erased the code-switching nature of Tanya's character and her identity as a Latin American 'other' within the Mexican show. But this was not the detail that caught Hanane's attention. "Get rid of (*ḥaydī*) 'Allah ya rabbi,'" instructed Hanane over the microphone, cutting off Asmae in the middle of recording. "Why?" asked Asmae, confused. Still looking at the computer screen, Hanane explained that it did not make sense for Tanya to say such a phrase and that it would be better to replace it with something else. "What, black people (*ʿawāzza*) don't say 'Allah ya rabbi'? Are you insulting me (*katʿayyarīnī*)?" retorted Asmae, implicitly referencing

[62] While some Moroccans write dārija in a combination of Latin letters and numbers, particularly when using computers and cellphones, all of the dārija scripts at Plug In were written in Arabic letters.

her own blackness and that of her character, Tanya. Hanane, recognizing the potentially latent racism in what she had just said, apologized and insisted that she meant no harm. But she continued to press her point: "Would someone from Latin American say 'Allah ya rabbi'? Or some buddhist, *matalān* (for example), would he say 'Allah ya rabbi'?"

What struck me about Hanane's intervention was that it evidenced both a discomfort with this particular phrase coming out of Tanya's mouth, as well as a struggle to define why exactly her saying this phrase 'didn't make sense.' While the soap opera itself was totally vacuous, the demands of dubbing something foreign into dārija left Hanane and Asmae struggling with difficult questions: Could a Moroccan audience reasonably imagine Tanya Taylor saying this phrase in dārija? And if not, then why? If it was not because of her blackness, as Hanane belatedly insisted, then was it because 'Allah yā rabbī' was somehow too Muslim for a presumably Christian character? Or perhaps the phrase was excessively Moroccan, but why? Wasn't dārija, by definition, excessively Moroccan? And if dārija was a sonic marker of Moroccanness, then how could foreignness be voiced within dārija at all?

In this chapter, I examine negotiations between Plug In's translators, sound engineers, and voice actors as they struggled with the felt strangeness of dubbing foreign bodies into a language that was imagined to be viscerally local, dārija. Through an analysis of debates over translation and pronunciation that occurred during the dubbing process, I argue that studio employees made sense of this demand to include imaginative non-Moroccan others into a dārija-language soundscape by reinscribing their diglossic sensibilities into dārija itself. As I will show, during the dubbing process studio employees negotiated the requirement of voicing foreign bodies in dārija by producing and distinguishing between two different registers of dārija: 1) a neutral "un-Moroccan" dārija that circulated in the soundtrack of the foreign soap operas; and 2)

a viscerally "Moroccan" dārija that circulated in the physical space of the studio itself, but which employees actively resisted reproducing in the dubbed soap operas. Such diglossic recursions helped render cosmopolitan a language that studio employees—and their projected viewers—felt to be viscerally provincial.

This chapter thus pushes back against regional commentators who have assumed that dubbed soap operas in Morocco serve as a tool of pro-dārija studio executives, working in concert with language activists like the aforementioned Centre de la Promotion de la Darija (CPD) in a combined effort to upend diglossia through the elevation of dārija to a national standard (Chapter 3). By ethnographically investigating inside the dubbing studio itself, this chapter shows that employees like Hanane and Asmae who were responsible for the day-to-day production of dubbing were in fact reproducing precisely the diglossic sensibilities that the CPD—and Plug In's own directors—were trying to erase.

Moreover, I suggest that by fractally reproducing their diglossic sensibilities at a different scale (Irvine and Gal 2000)—i.e. producing registers of Moroccanness and foreignness within dārija itself—Plug In employees were complicit in opening up a new space for foreign voices within the dārija-language soundscape, a space with the radical and unprecedented potential to voice difference. The stakes of this will be further explored in Chapter 5.

2. Foreign Voices, Diglossic Sensibilities

Dārija has very few non-native speakers. This might be an obvious fact, particularly for people familiar with North Africa. Yet it took me quite a while to realize that, because of this, most Moroccans had little sense of what different kinds of foreigners sounded like (or might

sound like) in dārija.[63] Indeed, it was several months into my fieldwork in the northern city of Tétouan when I realized that the only non-native speakers who regularly learned to speak fluent dārija were Morocco's indigenous Amazigh population (also known as Imazighen), who made up a large part of the population in the Rif.[64]

While I was out one day running some errands, I found myself chatting with a shopkeeper who was selling blankets imported from the nearby Spanish enclave of Ceuta (*Sabta*). Out of the blue, he asked me if I was Berber. Confused, I explained that I was Chinese American, and pressed him on his question. "I thought you might be Amazigh because your dārija is *fshī shkil*, kind of strange," he explained to me. "I'm Amazigh, I'm not originally from Tétouan, so when I first arrived here I sounded *fshī shkil*, too." The shopkeeper's comment floored me, partially because throughout my time in Tétouan, I was often accused of sounding like I was from Rabat or Casablanca, which made sense given that I had spent two years working in Rabat before graduate school and several months doing research in Casablanca.[65] Moreover, given that the shopkeeper himself was Amazigh, shouldn't he know what Tamazight-speakers sounded like in dārija? In the wake of this unexpected encounter, I began to consider the possibility that perhaps my "sounding Amazigh" might have a different explanation: maybe sounding Amazigh and sounding foreign in Morocco were being conflated. Perhaps when the Tetouani shopkeeper heard me as Amazigh, he was actually just hearing me as foreign.

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[63] I would occasionally ask Moroccan friends if they could imitate the accents of foreigners in dārija, and this was always met with blank stares.

[64] The Rif is a mountainous region in the north of Morocco. It is the home of a large and historically significant Amazigh population who speak the Tarifit dialect, or *rīfiyya* as it is known in dārija.

[65] When speaking dārija, this meant that I tended to use the harsh 'g' sound where a native Tetouani would use the more refined 'q' sound, or even a glottal stop. My vocabulary, too, was rife with lexical shibboleths that marked me as 'not northern,' not *shamāliyy*. See Aguadé, Cressier, and Vicente (1998) on Hilali/pre-Hilali urban/sedentary dialects.

As was made clear to me on several occasions during my fieldwork, Moroccans generally associated speaking to foreigners with speaking in a language other than dārija. While living with an upper-class family in Tétouan, whenever I spoke to the mother, Noufissa, in dārija, she would respond to me in fuṣḥa. "Mom, she's trying to learn dārija, speak to her in dārija!" her daughter, Fatima-Zahra, would yell from across the kitchen. Even then, Noufissa would often begin unconsciously speaking to me in fuṣḥa, and then correct herself and switch to dārija. Clearly, for Noufissa, speaking to foreigners like myself meant speaking in fuṣḥa (or Spanish). That should have been my proper linguistic place, and I was upsetting that framework.

This observation, about the inexistence of a comfortable register for foreignness in dārija, sits awkwardly with much of the literature on diglossia in the Arabic-speaking world (Ennaji 1991; Haeri 2003b, 2003a; Sadiqi 2003; Youssi 1995). Generally, the diglossic relationship between fuṣḥa and dārija has been described as a primarily "vertical" relationship, as suggested by the commonly used terms High (H) and Low (L) (Chapter 1). In this scheme, fuṣḥa, the H variety, is presumed to be elite and highly valued whereas dārija, the L variety, is presumed to be vulgar and low-class. Although this vertical description has been an important way to think about power relations and their mediation through language (Bourdieu 1991), in this chapter I want to suggest that the kinds of work being done on the ground in Morocco through this linguistic ideological distinction between dārija and fuṣḥa do not just function vertically—they also function horizontally. In other words, diglossia in Morocco manages and produces insides and outsides, Moroccanness and foreignness, within the Moroccan public sphere.

This horizontal functioning of diglossia has resulted in particular practices for representing foreigners in Arabic-language media. Notably, these forms are somewhat different and less structured than in anglophone media, in which films and television shows abound with

English spoken in a wide variety of native and non-native accents. This even includes accents for invented languages, like Dothraki and Valyrian on the popular show *Game of Thrones*. Yet the settled nature of these norms in anglophone media betray the extent to which this question of "foreigner speak," of how to represent foreignness in language, is not as straightforward as it might appear and has many possibilities.

In the popular Egyptian television serial, *Saraya Abdeen* (2014), which recounts the story of the Khedive of Egypt and Sudan, foreignness is represented by actors speaking in fuṣḥa, as opposed to, for example, creating foreign accents within colloquial Egyptian Arabic. In this vein, one of the tactics for dubbing in the Arabic-speaking world has often been to dub things directly into fuṣḥa, a practice that configures fuṣḥa as a sort of "border" language through which native and non-native Arabic speakers can interact—with native Arabic speakers adjusting from their regional dialect (e.g. dārija) and non-native Arabic speakers adjusting from their native language.

Yet this tactic of voicing foreigners in fuṣḥa has not been universally accepted. In a polemic in the *New Yorker*, "Translating 'Frozen' into Arabic" (2014), the Providence-based professor of Comparative Literature, Elias Muhanna criticized Disney's choice of dubbing their hit cartoon "Frozen" (2013) into fuṣḥa as opposed to a colloquial Arabic dialect like Egyptian. "The Arabic lyrics to 'Let It Go' are as forbidding as Elsa's ice palace," writes Muhanna, "From one song to the next, there isn't a declensional ending dropped or an antique expression avoided, whether it is sung by a dancing snowman or a choir of forest trolls. The Arabic of 'Frozen' is frozen in time, as "localized" to contemporary Middle Eastern youth culture as Latin quatrains in French rap" (Muhanna 2014).

But if Arabic dialects are themselves sonic markers of regional identity, standing in contrast to fuṣḥa which has often served the purpose of absorbing the 'difference' of foreign

voices, then how can foreignness be voiced within Arabic dialects themselves? The question is particularly acute for a country like Morocco who's dialect, dārija, has often been characterized as the least comprehensible dialect in the Arabic-speaking world (Hachimi 2013).

Yet while in Morocco, I did come across one interesting—if also uncommon—attempt to linguistically transpose foreign identities onto Moroccan identities in the fanzine *Skefkef*, a quarterly comic book zine largely written in dārija that was started in Casablanca in 2014. In the fourth issue, one of the comics features a working-class Moroccan guy sitting in a neighborhood café, watching a soccer game between Real Madrid and some other soccer team (Figure 7). When Real Madrid begins losing, the man starts yelling at the screen. Magically, the team's coach, José Mourinho, comes out of the screen and challenges the man to do better. But Mourinho is the Portuguese coach of a Spanish team, and *Skefkef* is written in dārija, so the question becomes: how does one linguistically represent Iberianness within dārija? The answer the illustrator came up with is having Mourinho speak in a northern (*shamālī*) dialect of dārija since the north of Morocco is near Spain and, as a former Spanish colony, it is still largely Hispanophone. In the comic, then, Mourinho yells at the man in the cafe, "Amigo (*amīghō*), you (*intīnā)* have a lot to say, come take my place and I'll see what (*shnī*) you'll do (*ta'mel*)." In this speech bubble, the "northern Moroccanness" of Mourinho's dārija is emphasized by words choices like 'intīnā' and 'shnī' and the verb 'ta'mel,' all of which are stereotypically from the northern Spanish-speaking regions of Tangier, Tétouan, and the surrounding Rif mountains.

What we have then is an effort to linguistically transduce foreign identities into Moroccan identities by recruiting locally legible personas via particular registers. Gal (2015, 233) has argued that in transduction, unlike other forms of translation, "there is no preexisting metric of correspondence." To exemplify this, Gal asks how an American Southerner talking to

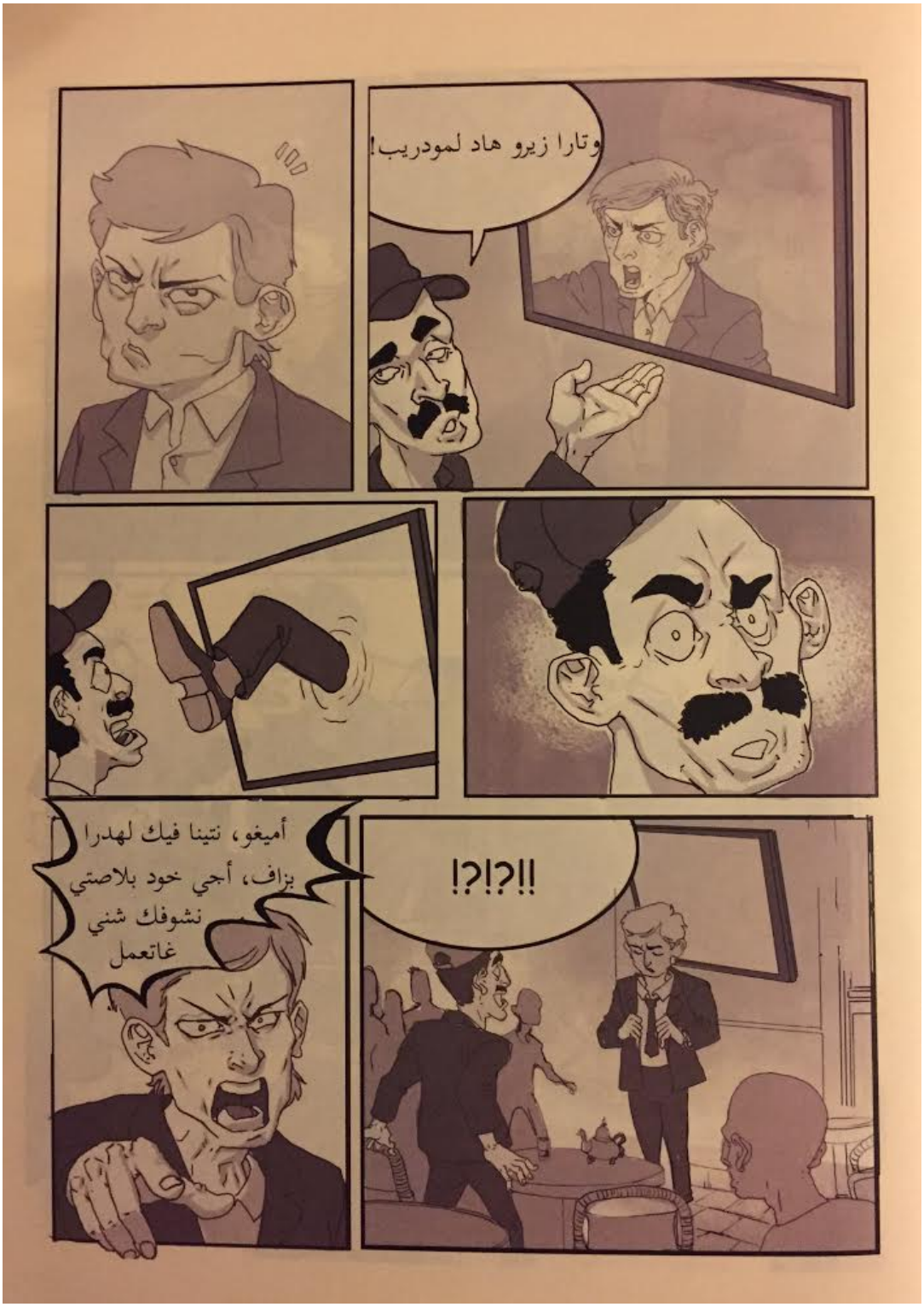

Figure 7: Skefkef comic

Northerners in a Civil War movie would sound in Turkish (235). Transduction, in this sense, is "a communicative effect achieved in one cultural and linguistic system is reproduced—roughly, approximated—in another system by direct analogy and usually with different means" (233).

Yet my fieldwork in Morocco revealed that this tactic of transduction was not a common means of voicing foreigners within the standard dārija soundscape. In fact, I would argue that there was little agreement on how precisely to voice foreigners within dārija. It was in this fluid space that the Moroccan television station 2M[66] commissioned Plug In Studios to dub soap operas like *Hayati* into dārija. In what follows, I look at how Plug In took yet a different tact for translation: rather than marking foreignness with fuṣḥa (as in *Saraya Abdeen* or *Frozen*), or with some regional Moroccan accent (as in *Skefkef* comic), Plug In dubbed Turkish and Mexican soap operas into what they called *dārija bayḍāʾ*, literally 'white dārija, a Dar dārija ija that was "clean" and regionally unmarked (or at least widely understood).

While *dārija bayḍāʾ* has often been analyzed, by academics and lay commentators alike, in terms of its authenticity—i.e. judging it on its relative distance to 'real' dārija —I adopt a different tact. In what follows, I argue that *dārija bayḍāʾ* was an emergent strategy for safely representing— for buffering—foreignness within dārija-language media. After a brief overview of the controversies over dubbed soap operas in Morocco, I will look at linguistic negotiations that took place in the dubbing studio and the ways in which employees at Plug In were not just producing a "cleaned up" or "censored" dārija. Rather as I will show, they were actively struggling to fabricate a plausible register for foreignness. In other words, they were cobbling

[66] 2M was founded in 1989 as Morocco's first private television station. Notably, however, it was established by the royal owned conglomerate ONA (Omnium North Africa). Starting in 1996, the Moroccan state became the majority shareholder (Iddins 2015, 108).

together a dārija that was religiously neutral, not excessively Moroccan, and that could plausibly fit the bodies and faces of Muslim Turks, Catholic Mexicans, or even Chinese Americans.

3. The Vexing Laugh of Moroccan Viewers

> *Zakaria bursts into laughter, Ignacio is declaring his love to beautiful Isabella in these words: "Chetti ya Isabella, ana kan mout 3alik, oullah.. makantkhiyilch el hayat bla bik... rani 3iit." And Isabella answers him "Ana machi dial tfelia, ila kounti baghi chi haja dial bessah, 3ayet lwalid ou chouf m3ah chi hal…" Zakaria's laugh is logical, for him Ignacio, being a foreigner, cannot speak Dârija. And this Ignacio has a strong accent from Hay Hassani… (Allali 2009)*

When 2M introduced dārija dubbing in Morocco in 2009, it had a fairly bumpy start for something seemingly so banal. While station executives had assumed that dārija dubbing would be a welcome addition to the programming line-up—potentially replacing the already popular slate of soap operas dubbed into the Syrian Arabic dialect—the first soap opera dubbed into dārija left Moroccan audiences laughing uncomfortably. Syrian dubbing had been introduced to Moroccan television a few years before with little comment, yet dārija dubbing immediately struck many Moroccan spectators as somehow 'off'.

The uncanny feeling Moroccans experienced when watching shows dubbed into dārija was impressed upon me even before I began my fieldwork. Back in 2009, while working as an English teacher in Rabat and living with a family in the working-class neighborhood of Hay Linbiaat, I had been excited to learn that there was a Mexican soap opera being dubbed into dārija. When I eagerly mentioned the show to the twenty-something daughter of the family, Yousra, one day while she was cleaning the living room, she laughed awkwardly, clearly uncomfortable with the very idea. Much to my dismay, the television remained on Rotana, a station from the Gulf playing a constant stream of Middle Eastern pop music.

As I discovered later while doing my fieldwork, Yousra's reaction was not unusual and did not exist in isolation. The show in question, *Las Dos Caras de Ana* (The Two Faces of Ana, 2006), had in fact been the first television show ever to be dubbed into dārija and had caused an immediate uproar in the media with critics arguing that it would corrupt Moroccan society with foreign values (Hall 2015; C. Miller 2012; Ziamari and Barontini 2013).[67] More interesting to me, however, was the visceral reaction of Yousra and of countless friends who continued to responded in the same way years later when I was conducting my fieldwork. Notably, this included friends who were themselves involved in the dārija dubbing process (I will have more to say about this later in the chapter).

Trying to understand why dārija dubbing elicited different feelings than Syrian dubbing, my friend Hajar—a trilingual English-Arabic-French translator for Maghreb Arabe Presse—explained to me that perhaps it had to do with regional proximity. Thinking out loud, Hajar noted that many of the soap operas being dubbed were Turkish and she speculated that maybe seeing Turks speaking Syrian Arabic seemed normal to her because Turkey and Syria border each other. From a Moroccan perspective the two countries seemed close in terms of culture, history, cuisine, and even physical appearance. As Hajar herself acknowledged, however, such an explanation failed to account for the relative ease with which Moroccans accepted watching soap operas from completely different geographical regions, like Mexico, that were dubbed in Syrian Arabic.[68]

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[67] *Las Dos Caras de Ana* was produced at Plug In Studios for 2M TV.

[68] In her study of Mexican soap operas dubbed into dārija, Miller similarly observes, "For many years now, Moroccan viewers have been used to watching Moroccan series in Moroccan Arabic, Egyptian series in Egyptian Arabic, and Turkish Series in MSA or Syrian Arabic as well as numerous Foreign series in either MSA or French. It seems normal that Turks speak Syrian, but apparently many Moroccans had difficulties conceiving that non-Moroccans could speak Moroccan Arabic" (2012, 171).

Similarly, content did not appear to be the main issue either. *Ana* was far from being the first "racy" Mexican telenovela to be screened on 2M. And critics of dubbing were often just as critical of the "milder" Turkish soap operas as they were of the Latin American ones. As Catherline Miller (2012, 171) observes in her study of Mexican soap operas dubbed into dārija, "the crucial point of discussion concerned the language (the use of Dârija) rather than the content of the series" as evidenced by the fact that while commentators were busy critiquing *Ana*, "the first national channel, al-Awla, was broadcasting another Mexican series translated into MSA [Modern Standard Arabic], which, to my knowledge, did not raise any comments."

Taking up the question of content, Hall (2015) argues that Moroccans' uncomfortable laughter emerged not from the "racy" content itself but rather from a felt incompatibility between form and content, a "disjuncture" that "was experienced by many Moroccan viewers of the series when they witnessed foreign cultural traditions, ways of speaking and behaviors, some of which are taboo in Moroccan society, presented in Moroccan Arabic" (183). Dārija was somehow felt to be an incorrect medium for imported, non-Moroccan content, not just for content that was culturally taboo but rather for anything that was culturally foreign even if banal. Yet despite this feeling of disjuncture, *Ana* was not a one-time experiment. Rather, soap operas dubbed into dārija continued to be produced and to circulate widely in Moroccan households, cafes, and other public spaces with televisions.

But as the dubbing continued, so did the sense of discomfort. Six years down the line, when I began conducting ethnographic research inside Plug In, these shows continued to scandalize the sensibilities of many.[69] Among the offended was Minister of Communications,

[69] Dārija dubbing was felt to be enough of a threat that my fieldwork was bookended by two (unsuccessful) attempts to prohibit dārija dubbing. First, in 2014, there were rumors that the Haut Autorité de la Communication Audiovisuelle (High Authority of Audiovisual Communication,

Mustapha El Khalfi, who publicly proclaimed that "[the use of dārija] in these shows might create a contradiction of values linked to other societies and engender negative behaviors that don't belong to our culture" (cited in El Ouardighi 2015).[70]

For secular liberal commentators like Reda Allali, the responses of both El Khalfi and Yousra could be traced to the same core cause: Moroccans' post-colonial disdain for themselves, and hence for their language, dārija. In his weekly column in the French-language news weekly *Tel Quel* which chronicles the life of a fictive Moroccan Everyman named Zakaria Boualem, Allali (2009) writes:

> Zakaria bursts into laughter, Ignacio is telling his love to beautiful Isabella… Zakaria's laugh is logical, for him Ignacio, being a foreigner, cannot speak Dârija. And this Ignacio has a strong accent from Hay Hassani. This laugh is vexing because we do not react to seeing Comanche Indians speaking French in Westerns. But the use of Darija, in our minds is systematically associated at best with humor and derision, and at worst with vulgarity. We cannot take Ignacio seriously when he expresses his feelings in Dârija because Moroccans themselves avoid speaking about it or even having feelings. They built a language which is romantically underdeveloped…. This laugh is serious; it shows

HACA) was making a change in 2M TV's Cahiers des charges, which specifies the percentage of programming accorded to each language. Although dārija had long been categorized under 'Arabic language' programming, there were rumors that dārija was going to be recategorized as a 'foreign language' along with French, thereby decreasing the amount of possible airtime for soap operas dubbed in dārija, since the largest percentage was given to "Arabic" (read: fuṣḥa) programming and "foreign language" programming would prioritize French over dārija (El Ouardighi 2015). In 2016, almost two years later, the conservative Party de la justice et du développement (PJD) who were then in power threatened to prohibit dārija dubbing outright (Caubet 2018). While nothing ended up happening, it caused a stir at the Plug In. Around that time, Plug In employees had just finished dubbing *Maid* and were only working on two Turkish shows, *Samḥīnī* and *Taman al-Ḥobb*. While many of Plug In's sound engineers are regular employees, about half of them worked as contractors. Those who were contractors had been expecting the studio to pick up another Latin American show once *Maid* was done. However, in the wake of the rumors about prohibition the studio began focusing exclusively on Turkish shows which were deemed to be 'safer'. This shift troubled contractors who worried that there would no longer be enough work for them at the studio.

[70] While such positions might seem patronizing, Catherine Miller (2012, 170) states that "it seems that many viewers are not aware of the dubbing and believe that the heroes are Moroccans (according to what some people told me about their own mother)."

> that the situation is serious, that we have strong complexes. *A people that considers their everyday language ridiculous cannot have a high opinion of themselves*. (my emphasis)

As Allali's commentary makes clear, for many "progressive" Moroccans and researchers alike, the stakes of dārija dubbing was obvious: it was a technology that powerfully exposed the low opinions Moroccans had of their language—and hence of themselves. But it was also a technology that provided a potential solution to this post-colonial self-loathing often characterized as "Moroccan schizophrenia."

In a similar manner, French and Moroccan sociolinguists writing about the phenomenon of dārija dubbing have approached it not only as a tool for diagnosis but also as something with radical potential to instigate new attitudes towards dārija in Moroccan viewers. That is, they look at dārija dubbing as a mechanism which, in the long run, might serve to banalize dārija's controversial expansion into new domains. More importantly, they see such a banalization as laying the groundwork for dārija's eventual standardization, officialization, and valorization. They thus theorize dubbing as having the potential to enact a vernacular revolution along the lines of what the CPD hoped to instigate through the publication of literature in dārija (Chapter 2). Rehearsing the now well-worn argument that, historically, printing was "one of the key changes that progressively induced the writing of the vernaculars languages and their promotion towards literary vehicle," Catherine Miller (2012, 178) observes that,

> Today it seems that the most prominent actors vis-à-vis the promotion of Dârija in Morocco are in the field of audio-visual communication like advertisers, radio and TV animators, singers, film-makers, some press journalists, and the like. Their choices might be guided by commercial or pragmatic interest as much as ideological/intellectual positions. Whereas the functional expansion of Moroccan Arabic in the media is somehow a 'conscious' process induced by specific social actors in a rather short span of time, it is also a spontaneous process largely left to individual choices. It remains to be seen if these new social actors really are in touch with the impulse of the new dynamics within society and thus are able to promote a new urban model.

Significantly, for Miller, this "new urban model" has the potential to be a national model, and even a national standard. In a similar vein, Ziamari and Barontini (2013, 9) conclude that "it is of course premature (and ambitious) to respond definitively" about the effectiveness of dārija dubbing in creating a national standard. Nevertheless they underscore its radical potential by concluding their study of dārija dubbing with the assertion that "these sociolinguistic evolutions are part of a general trend of change that is currently taking place in Morocco and elsewhere, and which could *augur even deeper upheavals*" (ibid). Caubet (2018), writing not just about dubbing but about the larger expansion of dārija in the Moroccan public sphere argues that, "Darija has become a means of expressing Moroccanness publicly through creativity, and not just through nationalism... *the new Moroccanness is underway*!"

Yet such predictions overlook the extent to which something as "novel" as a dubbing studio might actually be quite conservative, less a space for challenging borders than a place where sensibilities that have already settled in continue to reassert themselves. In his study of dubbing in post-Soviet Georgia, for example, Sherouse (2015) argues that popular push back against government efforts to change the film translation paradigm—from dubbing in Russian to subtitles into Georgian—can be attributed to the ways in which the Russian language and Russian language practices from the Soviet era have sedimented into Georgian criteria of quality and ideas about film watching. Language ideologies, as Sherouse demonstrates, become entrenched through sedimentation and are difficult to erase through mere policy changes.

In this chapter, I'm interested in what happens when this kind of sedimentation, a sedimentation of language ideologies, reasserts itself through processes of fractal recursivity (Irvine and Gal 2000). As I hope to show through my ethnographic material in the following section, in creating the new register of *dārija bayḍāʾ*, studio employees actively worked to

reinscribe their diglossic sensibilities and to reproduce a familiar regime of differentiation. In other words, in the same way that the diglossic relationship between dārija and fuṣḥa long served to create distinctions of insider and outsider, Moroccan and non-Moroccan, employees as Plug In were complicit in rescaling this axis of differentiation and opening up new ways of voicing Moroccanness and foreignness within dārija itself.

4. In the Dubbing Studio

4.1 Distinguishing Sound Worlds

Every morning for several months I would walk thirty minutes in a straight line from my apartment to Plug-In Studios, "the only professional dubbing studio for Moroccan dialect (Darija),"[71] where I was observing the dubbing of Mexican, Brazilian, and Turkish soap operas for Moroccan public television. Leaving behind the French-style cafes of my neighborhood, Gauthier, I would walk due south, crossing the chaotic intersection at Boulevard Mohammed Zerktouni where stores like Zara, Nike, and Aldo set up shop. Making my way by 'les Twins,' Casablanca's landmark skyscrapers, I would pass through the *kilimini*[72] streets of Maârif, once an enclave of Spanish immigrants and now a middle-class Moroccan neighborhood lined with small boutiques selling everything from bulk spices and couture *djellabas*,[73] to Turkish pajamas and European beauty products. Upon reaching the gritty Boulevard Bir Anzarane—lined with well-frequented *snacks*[74] offering up fresh juice, cheap paninis, and roast chicken at all hours of

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[71] *"...le seul studio de doublage professionnel en dialecte marocain (Darija)*" (http://www.studio-plug.com/, accessed 1/10/18).
[72] *Kilimini* is a dārija term in urban youth slang meaning bourgeois and francophone/francophile.
[73] A *djellaba* is a traditional Moroccan hooded-robe, originally worn by men but now mostly worn by women.
[74] In French and Moroccan Arabic, a "snack" is a type of fast food establishment popular for breakfasts and lunch.

day and night—my path to the studio would then take me through Maârif Extension, a residential area of full of shiny new apartment buildings and the headquarters for hip startups like Jumia, "Amazon for the African continent," powered by a youthful combination of French expats, Euro-Moroccan returnees, and Casablancan bourgeoisie. Not far from here, next to a sushi restaurant and an empty lot of rubble, was Plug-In Studios, located on the first and second floors of a non-descript apartment building in front of which French and Moroccan employees could often be found taking cigarette breaks while leaning over someone's motorcycle.

* * *

"*Māmā*!" screamed Mehdi, finishing up his take. "Great," replied sound engineer Samira over the speaker, stopping the scene and the recording. As she began cutting and pasting the sound bite for that episode of the Turkish soap opera *Sāmḥīnī*, Mehdi continued screaming in his recording booth to comic effect. "*Al-Wālida! Al-Wālida!*" As he yelled into the mic with exaggerated intensity, Samira and I could not help but crack up at his impersonation of working-class Casablancan masculinity, indexed by his very Moroccan word choice. In dārija, Al-Wālida contrasted strongly with Māmā, the latter sounding more like an elite Francophone Moroccan, lending it a sense of un-/extra-Moroccanness. Sitting in our dark empty studio, Mehdi's comic change in register juxtaposed two distinct sound worlds—the dubbed soap opera and the studio itself. If we had been temporarily inhabiting a strange world of dārija-speaking Turks when Mehdi screamed "Maa!", his jarringly local "Al-Walida!" reminded us that the studio was solidly located in Casablanca, Morocco.

Yet his outburst did more than geographically locate us and expose the deceit of the studio. His outburst also participated in sounding Moroccan diglossic sensibilities, and in reinscribing diglossia within dārija itself by producing two distinct registers of dārija: "dārija

bayḍāʾ" for foreigners in soap operas, and the "real Moroccan" dārija that was embodied in the studio's Moroccan employees. The latter included outbursts like that of Mehdi which were left unrecorded and performatively cordoned off from mediatized circulation. While many commentators have pointed to this cleavage as evidence of a shoddy dubbing job on the part of the studio, critiquing dārija bayḍāʾ as "inauthentic" or "unrealistic," I show this cleavage to be something that is actively worked at and produced by studio employees as they struggle to negotiate the demand to create foreign sound worlds in dārija that somehow make sense.

During my time at Plug In, struggles over marking the boundary between foreignness and Morocanness within dārija —such as in the opening anecdote about "Allah ya rabi"—were a constant occurrence in both the translation service and in the recording studios. If a Turkish character collapsed in a chair out of exhaustion, the translator might consult her colleagues and ask if it was better to render this as "*yā rabbī*" (Oh Lord) or as "*anā ʿayīt*" (I'm exhausted). Similarly, if a Mexican character in the original script said *ojalá*, a Spanish phrase that etymologically comes from the Arabic *insha'allah* (God willing), the sound engineer and voice actor might debate whether to keep it as is or to change it to *kāntamannā* (I hope). I once had a sound engineer explain to me that Turks could say insha'allah, but not Mexicans; but I also witnessed some sound engineers change insha'allah for Turks as well.

What I hope to show in the following examples is that these kinds of linguistic negotiations that go into creating "white" dārija are not simply about creating a "clean" dārija that distances the speech of characters from some sort of street dārija, *dārija diyāl zanqa*. Rather, their negotiations are very much concerned with how to appropriately represent an imaginary foreign presence within dārija; and hence how to draw the linguistic boundary between foreignness and Moroccanness.

4.2 “Halal” Translators

As previously mentioned, Plug In dubbed characters into what it often referred to as dārija bayḍāʾ, or white dārija. As the production manager, Hanae, explained to me several times, the goal was to produce a dārija that was “clean” and somewhat regionally unmarked. Hanae was not the only person involved in supervising the production of this “white dārija,” there was also intervention from 2M who explicitly censored the language (and scenes) in the dubbed soap operas. Scenes that Plug In employees deemed “*osée*” (racy, risque, bold) were often not even translated or recorded since they knew that 2M would never allow them to be shown on television anyways. As for language, 2M had a censor whose job it was to send Plug In an up-to-date list of forbidden words, words that certainly were said in dārija but which could not be part of the dubbed dārija sound world.

I first heard about this list from Basma, the head translator for Plug In, whose job it was to supervise the work of the other dozen or so translators. Occupying the corner desk next to the only window, Basma seemed to have a pretty cushy job in comparison with the other translators who were constantly working at their computers translating scripts as quickly as possible. Mostly former Spanish majors in their twenties and thirties, they all came from working class neighborhoods in Casablanca and saw this job as part of their middle-class aspirations. With the approximate 10,000 dirhams ($1,000) they made per month, the same amount as Fulbright student grantees, the job provided them with a reasonable amount of disposable income to spend on things like clothes, cars, domestic vacations, and perhaps a yearly trip somewhere in Europe with friends of family.

During the time I was there, about half of the translators would be working on a Turkish soap opera, while the other half would be working on something from another country (e.g. Chile, Brazil, Mexico). Since none of them spoke Turkish, their translation into dārija was generally based on a script that itself had been translated from Turkish into Syrian Arabic.[75] Similarly, since none of them spoke Portuguese, when they translated Brazilian shows they would work from a script that had already been translated from Portuguese into Spanish.

But back to the list. As Basma explained to me, there was not much logic to it, and even the manner in which it was written showed its haphazard nature. The list itself was an odd mixture of Arabic script, Latin script, and numbers, with no attention paid to upper and lower cases. Certain words were repeated more than once, and there were spaces here and there for no apparent reason. As Basma said, "*C'est pas coherent*" (It's not coherent). As we looked over the list together, word by word, she eagerly explained to me that certain words on the list made sense because they were a bit vulgar (*vulgaire*), but that the majority of them were ridiculous. Many of the switches demanded by the list privileged the fuṣḥa word instead of the dārija word, even if the latter was not offensive at all. Other switches demanded by the list privileged the French word, such as a preference for *chérie* in place of the Arabic *ḥabība*.[76] Basma explained that some of the banned words, and their suggested replacements, were actually quite dangerous. For example, they were not allowed to use the word *ʿāshiqa* (lover) but instead had to say *ṣāḥiba* (female friends). What if a child, she asked, watched a scene in which a man is behaving with his 'ṣāḥiba' in a completely inappropriate way and thought that this was simply friendly?

[75] At Plug In, it was basically assumed that all Moroccans could more or less understand all other Arabic dialects (Hachimi 2013), something I was repeatedly told by Moroccans with much pride.
[76] After explaining to me that this was silly because Moroccans say the latter all the time, but rarely say the former, she turned to thank her colleague who sent her something and definitely said, "Merci ma chérie."

The list was the work of one single employee at 2M and, in Basma's eyes, he clearly was not well educated and did not deserve his job. Yet he was the one who got to make the calls and make their lives difficult. Because of him, Basma told me, "we're constricted" (*on est serré*). She explained that she was the kind of person who liked to do a good job, which was how she got promoted to her current position as head translator. But with the regulations the censor set, things were impossible and she was never happy with the work she turned in. The translators she supervised were all forced to use ridiculous words, which was why audiences mocked them. It was not the fault of the translators, even if they were the ones that got the blame.[77]

Yet despite Basma's frustrations with 2M's attempts to regulate the difficult craft of creating dārija-speaking foreigners that viewers could take seriously, she was also clear that the soap operas should not be a linguistic mirror of the speech that went on around them in the dubbing studio. Even though dārija was ostensibly their "*langue maternelle*," she felt that some of the translators spoke it "better" than others. As an example, she recounted to me how she was once called in by Hanae about a script that had been poorly translated. When they showed it to her, she herself was shocked at the level of language. The translator in question, she explained, should have written the number twelve in dārija as *ṭnāsh* but instead he had scandalously added an 'r' at the end of the word, rendering it inelegantly as *ṭnāshr*.[78] Her sense of alarm at this was clearly expressed on her face and, sensing my confusion, she explained that the latter pronunciation was one hundred percent *ʿarrūbī* (hick, bumpkin, uneducated). She was shocked that the translator had even thought he could write that. Riffing on the topic, she explained that unfortunately that year there were a lot of shows on Moroccan television featuring actors with

[77] Some of the switches the translators are forced to do are so ridiculous that they have made jokes out of them amongst themselves, using them in conversations to make each other laugh.
[78] Interestingly, this is arguably closer to the fuṣḥa rendering of twelve as *ithnā ʿashar*.

ʿ*arrūbī* accents. During Ramadan, when Moroccans tend to watch a lot of television together as families, 2M would screen more Moroccan shows than normal. And that year there were a lot of ʿ*arrūbī* accents. It was so bad, she said, that she often did not want her daughter to watch out of fear that she would copy them. More importantly, she reflected that even though such things pass in Moroccan sitcoms, it would be totally crazy for them to give these accents to characters in the dubbed shows. Especially because the characters have foreign names. To underline her point, she improvised a few lines in an ʿ*arrūbī* accent—making herself laugh in the process—using names like Mauricio.

4.3 Negotiating Dārija in the Recording Studio

Basma's concern over the scandalous 'r' in the word *ṭnāshr* was in part a concern about linguistic purity, setting a linguistic model for society. But it was also a struggle over figuring out where dārija began and ended, and what 'real' dārija sounded like versus dārija spoken by foreigners—even if such a thing did not quite exist in 'real' life. Translators were not alone in having to deal with such questions. Even after the scripts had been translated, they often continued to provoke debates inside the recording studios themselves.

The day before I looked over the censor's list with Basma, I had spent the afternoon in the recording studio of Soukaina, a young Casablanca-native who had recently gotten engaged to another Plug In sound engineer named Youssef. After spending the morning upstairs in the translation service, I went downstairs to sit in on a recording session for the racy Brazilian telenovela *Avenida Brazil*. When I entered her studio, Soukaina was just finishing up a recording session with Hicham, who played the villain Max on the show.

In between takes, Soukaina began complaining to me about how the script for this particular episode was a "*catastrophe*." A highly conscientious sound engineer, Soukaina explained to me that she was not simply there to hit the record button, she was also attentive to how the script flowed as a whole. This often proved difficult for sound engineers and for actors, since recording sessions were only done one actor at a time, and they never read the full script over before a recording session. The result was that sound engineers and actors often had to work together to figure out exactly what was going on in a given scene without much context. The difficulty of this task was then multiplied if the script itself was a "catastrophe." Not one to pull punches, Soukaina wondered out loud to me if that particular script had been translated by some newbie. She thought about calling Bouchra to complain, but decided to hold off.

In addition to being concerned with the quality of the script, Soukaina was also concerned with the quality of the actors' speech. More than other sound engineers at Plug In, she tended to have voice actors repeat lines multiple times, over and over again, in order to get it just right. On that particular July day, in the midst of Ramadan, Soukaina was particularly hung up on how Hicham was pronouncing the word for "dessert."

Morocco being a largely francophone country, many Moroccans would code-switch when speaking dārija, bringing in French words here and there. This was particularly the case in big cities like Casablanca, where one's ability to speak French—or one's ability to index an ability to speak French—endowed one with immense cultural capital. Yet more interesting than code-switching was the way that French words tended seeped into dārija, melding with it to the point that it became unclear if the use of a given word even counted as code-switching anymore. As Hanae and Basma had both explained to me, many words that had their origin in French were now so thoroughly a part of dārija that they perhaps no longer had the value-added that came

with French words. Basma, for example, once explained to me that for people of her grandmother's generation who grew up during the period of the French protectorate (1912-1956), the "French" word was sometimes their primary "dārija" word. An old illiterate person who barely knew French might, for example, use the "French" word *frigidaire* (refrigerator) with an Arabic accent, even if Basma herself would tend to use the Arabic *tallāja*.[79] Laughing, she recounted how once, much to her surprise, her grandmother had asked her to pass the *louche* (ladle), using the "French" word as a normal part of her dārija. She was so shocked by this that at first she did not understand what she had just been said.

Back in the studio with Soukaina, Hicham had just recorded a take in which he pronounced the word for dessert as *dīsīr*, similar to how I myself would have pronounced it in dārija and similar to what I had heard in the street. Hitting stop on the recording, Soukaina corrected him over the microphone. *It's not 'dīsīr'*, she insisted, *it's 'dāsīr'*. Her intonation and her intentionally feminized body language as she pronounced the latter suggested that this second variant was closer to the 'original' French. Listening to their conversation, I could help but think that a native French speaker would likely hear both variants as Arabized-pronunciations of the French word désert [dezɛʀ], which contained vowels different from both Hicham and Soukaina's pronunciations Hicham resisted, arguing with her over the microphone that he was not speaking French, he was speaking dārija, so it should be pronounced *dīsīr*. After some laughs, and some more back and forth, Soukaina finally won out and the Hicham pronounced it *dāsīr*. Ultimately, what was recorded was neither 'real' dārija, nor French, but some kind of imagined foreign accent in dārija.

[79] Moroccans often voice the letter *thā'* in Arabic as *tā'*.

* * *

One afternoon, I was sitting in the recording studio occupied by Adil, a cocky male sound engineer who was constantly trying to find other recording gigs on the side much to the frustration of Plug In's administration. That day, he was scheduled to record several episodes of *Maid* with Asmae, the actress playing Tanya. Asmae was fun to record with, unlike some of the older actors, but even so Adil had no shame in pointing out to me how little he enjoyed his job. "What we do is boring (*Ce qu'on fait est ennuyeux*)," he said to me between takes, "And I can't stand this language (*mā kānḥimilsh had al-lugha*)... Even the music is horrible (*wa l-mūsīqā mā mūsīqā lā wālū*)!"

In the middle of their hour-long recording session, Adil suddenly stopped the recording. Still looking at the screen but speaking to Asmae over the microphone, he corrected her pronunciation of the verb for 'to marry.' "*Zuwwaj*, not *juwwaj*!" he yelled into the mic. Putting her hands on her hips, in an expression of sass that fit with her character Tanya in *Maid*, Asmae countered: "But in our dārija (*fī dārija diyālnā*), I say 'juwwaj'!"

"*A wīlī*!"[80] Adil responded, sounding genuinely scandalized. They went back and forth a bit, but Asmae stubbornly insisted that she said juwwaj and that even though zuwwaj was closer to the word in fuṣḥa, they were speaking dārija and in dārija it was fine for her to say it like that. Half in jest, Asmae asserted her authority in the matter by pointing out the age difference between the two of them. "I'm older than you (*anā kbār minik*), I'm an old lady lady (*anā shārfa*)," she laughed.

Ultimately, Asmae won out and Adil let her record the take with her pronunciation. But he was not done making fun of her about it. "In Arabic, is there really something called 'juwwaj'

[80] "Oh my goodness!"

(*bil-ʿarabiyya kāyn shī ḥāja smītū 'juwwaj'*)?" he asked mockingly. To which Asmae mocked back, "In Arabic, is there really something called *'naḍāḍer'* (glasses)? Or *ṭomobīl* (car)?" She seemed to intentionally choose two dārija words that non-Moroccan Arabs would likely find absurd, the second in particular being a borrowing from French. As we all laughed, she fired one last bullet: "Or in Arabic, is there something called '*ṣāṭ*' (dude)?"[81]

5. Conclusion

Much of the regional literature on dubbed soap operas in Morocco has written about them as linguistico-political tool of pro-dārija studio executives. In this vein, they have been imagined as working in concert with language activists like the Centre de la Promotion de la Darija (CPD) in a combined effort to upend diglossia through the elevation of dārija to a national standard (Chapter 2).

This chapter has pushed back against this perspective by shifting the focus from studio executives to the actual employees themselves—translators, sound engineers, and voice actors—who were responsible for the day-to-day production of dubbing. As I hope to have shown through an ethnographic investigation into the studio—as opposed a mere analysis of its public relations presence—Plug In's employees were in fact reproducing precisely the diglossic sensibilities that their own employers were trying to erase. While contrasting figurations of Moroccanness and foreignness had long been mapped onto the distinction between dārija and other languages (e.g. fuṣḥa, French, Spanish), dubbed soap operas reinscribed these distinctions

[81] *Ṣāṭ* is a Casablanca youth slang in dārija meaning guy or dude (f. *ṣāṭa*). This last word seemed like a particularly targeted attack, since it is a typical part of the dārija slang used by young Casablancan males, like Adil.

within dārija. That is, employees worked together to produce separate, legible registers of Moroccanness and foreignness within dārija itself.

Yet by fractally reproducing their diglossic sensibilities at a different scale, employees were complicit in creating a new imaginary register—a register for foreigners speaking in dārija— that had not previously existed. The stakes of such a space might have seemed low within the confines of the dubbing studio, where the only occupants of this new linguistic space were assemblages of foreign bodies and scripted Moroccan voices. Yet I want to suggest that this expansion of the standard dārija soundscape in fact had a radical potential for voicing difference.

As Butler (2011) has famously argued, processes of iteration can open up new, unintentional, and unexpected possibilities. While this recursion might have served the immediate goal of protecting an internal core of Moroccanness, it effectively shifted the linguistic border separating Moroccans and 'others' onto dārija itself. In doing so, it opened up a new space of difference—a new world of foreignness—within dārija. As Heller (2017, 21) has recently reminded us, "that world might turn out to have surprises in it."

In the next chapter, I look at what happens when new, unexpected occupants lay claim on this emergent register of dārija: actual immigrants in Morocco, mostly from West Africa, who were beginning to voice themselves in dārija.

Chapter 5

Foreign Bodies, Local Languages

> *Kānbqāū nhar kāmil kāngūlū "ajī." Kānjī maʿtmāniya d ṣbaḥ w tānmchīū maʿ tsʿūd diyāl līl. Ḥnā ghīr f zanqa. Kānkhidmū fil znāqī diyāl al-madīna al-qdīma ḥdā al-magāna al-kabīra. Tānqalbū ʿalā* lay kliyān*. Wa tāndīū lay kliyānāt llī lqīnāhom l wāḥid* le café*. Tānkhidmū ḥtta fāsh ykūn al-ḥāl skhūn taḥt al-shams. Hād chī saʿīb, saʿīb, bzzāf. Ḥtta hādūk llī kāydūzū fī tomobilāt kānbqāū fihom bzzāf.*
>
> We spend the whole day saying "aji" (come). We arrive at eight in the morning and we leave at nine at night. We're just in the street. We work in the streets of the old city, near the big clocktower. We look for clients. We bring the clients we find to a cafe. We work even when it's hot, under the sun. It's hard, really hard. People passing by in cars feel really bad for us.[82]
>
> "Aji-Bi: les femmes de l'horloge" (2015)

1. Introduction

In 2016, I grabbed the hour-long commuter train up the coast from Casablanca to Rabat to watch a screening of the new documentary *Aji-Bi: les femmes de l'horloge* (Aji-Bi: Under the Clock Tower, 2015) directed by the young Moroccan filmmaker Raja Saddiki. The film recounted the story of Marème, just one of many Senegalese women who had traveled to Casablanca to work as a freelance beautician in hopes of a better life. While many Casablancans had encountered women like Marème, known as *aji-bis*, calling to potential clients at the main clock tower entrance to the *medina* (old city), the film gave viewers a window into the hidden life of these immigrant women from West Africa: where they lived, how they socialized, their hopes and struggles, and the patchwork communities they built to sustain themselves. The film

[82] On passe la journée à dire « aji », « viens ». On arrive à 8h et on repart à 21h. On est dans la rue. On travaille dans les rues de la Médina, à côté de la Grande Horloge. On cherche des clientes, et on amène celles qu'on trouve à un café. On travaille même quand il fait très chaud, sous le soleil. C'est dur, très dur. Même ceux qui passent en voiture ont pitié de nous.

also captured a particularly critical year for immigrant communities in Morocco. In 2014, when the film was shot, a controversial royal initiative was underway to regularize 40,000 immigrants. Marème was one of these immigrants, and the arc of the film traced her transformation from an undocumented immigrant to a legal resident within the span of that year.

The screening I attended at Cinéma 7ème Art featured the VOSTFR (Original Version Subtitled in French) in which the original Wolof voices were supplemented with French subtitles. These subtitles were an absolute necessity since no one in the audience (myself included) spoke Wolof. Rather, the audience in the theater that day was a typical Rabati audience, composed of a mixture of francophone Moroccans, Europeans, and probably some North Americans like myself. But this version with French subtitles was not the version that screened on televisions in Moroccan homes. Rather, when 2M[83] originally commissioned the film, they had required the production and screening of a VM (Moroccan Version) in which the entire film was dubbed into dārija with French subtitles. This was also the version that illegally circulated on YouTube, much to the frustration of Saddiki, the film's director.[84]

This dubbed version was not easy to put together. According to Mohammed, one of the sound engineers at Casablanca-based Ali n' Productions where the VM was produced, the dubbing process took several months and lots of work. In order to get an "authentic" sound, the studio made the unorthodox decision to have Marème dub herself into dārija instead of hiring a Moroccan voice actor to dub her. This unusual decision was complicated by the fact that,

[83] 2M is a semi-public company whose majority shareholder is the Moroccan government. It was founded in 1989 as Morocco's first private television station. It was originally established by the royal owned conglomerate ONA (Omnium North Africa). Starting in 1996, the Moroccan state became the majority shareholder (Iddins 2015, 108).

[84]" "aji-bi partie 1" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=71mT972J2Tw, "aji-bi partie 2" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Da9BjbTmLdA, last accessed February 28, 2018.

although Marème spoke some dārija, she was by no means fluent. The studio therefore required her to undergo intensive pronunciation training before the dubbing production began. Because the process was so costly and time-intensive, the studio could barely afford to go through it with Marème; they did not have the means to go through the same process with the other Senegalese women that appear in the film. Marème was thus the only character who dubbed herself. Somewhat awkwardly, all of the other Senegalese people who populated the film and its soundscapes were dubbed over by Moroccan voice actors—a situation which Mohammed, the Ali n' Productions sound engineer, admitted was not ideal. Although no one mentioned it to me, presumably the possibility of subtitling the movie in dārija was never considered.

Yet despite all of the time and money put into producing a VM of *Aji-Bi* featuring the "real dārija voice" of the Senegalese protagonist, the commercials that aired on 2M to advertise the documentary used yet a third version, which seemingly only existed as a commercial. In this third version, Marème's voice was dubbed over into dārija by a Moroccan native speaker—not by Marème herself.[85] The result was that the commercial for the documentary looked and sounded much like the dubbed Turkish and Mexican soap operas that screened on the same channel (Chapter 4). The crucial difference was that whereas those shows featured posh foreigners living in exotic locations, this movie commercial featured a Senegalese beautician who was very clearly located in Morocco, working on a familiar Casablanca street, and potentially living next door to Moroccan viewers themselves.

Why, after all the effort of producing a dubbed version of the film featuring Marème's "real" voice in Wolof-accented dārija, would 2M have decided to advertise *Aji-Bi* using a soap-opera style version of the film in which the dubbing was done by a native speaker? Was 2M

[85] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_L8zezQXwk, accessed February 28, 2018.

simply concerned that a casual Moroccan viewer might not understand Marème's accented dārija? Or was the concern less about understandability, and more about inciting discomfort in a Moroccan audience unaccustomed to sharing their language with foreign others? The dubbing of foreign soap operas on 2M had already stirred up controversy. Now, 2M was asking Moroccans to think about actual foreigners who were increasingly adopting dārija as a mode of communication in their daily lives.

In this chapter, I explore how Moroccans and sub-Saharan African immigrants in the urban centers of Morocco struggled to share linguistic space as co-inhabitants within the dārija soundscape. Much of the literature on language debates in Morocco has proceeded as if 'the dārija question' was a purely *maroco-marocain* discussion, a question that only concerned Moroccans. Yet during the 2010s, 'the dārija question' began to intersect with the ostensibly unrelated issue of immigration as Morocco shifted from being a "sender" to a "receiver" country, from being a place of illegal African transit to a destination for cosmopolitan African immigrants. In an attempt to bridge these two conversations, this chapter explores how dārija became a key site for negotiating the place of "*al-afāriqa*" (Africans) in Morocco, as well as for renegotiating a more cosmopolitan Moroccan identity.

2. Immigration and Language

2.1 Africans in Morocco, Morocco in Africa

In September 2013, Moroccan authorities announced a "radically" new migration policy which would involve an "exceptional" campaign to regularize between 25,000 and 40,000 immigrants living in Morocco in irregular situations from January 1, 2014 until December 31, 2014 ("Le Maroc prépare 2013) . While the policy technically offered the opportunity for anyone

residing in Morocco to apply for a residency card—including the large European population—the campaign was perceived by the media and by most Moroccans as being primarily targeted at the growing sub-Saharan African population (see Figure 7). Like Marème and her friends, this included many people who had arrived in the country legally but subsequently wound up "paperless" after overstaying their visa period.[86] Through this regularization campaign, King Mohammed VI explicitly committed Morocco to a project not of expelling "Africans"—as was happening in neighboring Algeria,[87] not to mention much of Europe—but rather of building an African cosmopolitanism *à la marocaine*.

FOREIGNERS IN MOROCCO			**FOREIGNERS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN**		
Europe	40%	33,615	France	25.4%	21,344
Sub-Saharan Africa	26.8%	22,545	Senegal	7.2%	6.066
North Africa	13.3%	11,142	Algeria	6.8%	5,710
Middle East	12.6%	10,573	Syria	6.2%	5,225
Other Asian countries	4.3%	3,621	Spain	4.8%	3,990
The Americas	2.4%	2,037	Guinea	2.9%	2,434
Other countries	0.6%	468	Ivory Coast	2.7%	2,271
			Libya	2.4%	2,013
TOTAL	100%	84,001	Italy	2.3%	1,970

Figure 8: Population of foreigners in Morocco (Source: Les Résidents Étrangers au Maroc 2014)

[86] Nationals of Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, and Niger could enter Morocco visa-free for up to 90 days. Citizens of Mali, Guinea, and the Republic of the Congo did not require a visa but had to obtain an Electronic Travel Authorization in advance.

[87] According to an article in Le Monde, "In December 2016, while Algeria deported manu militari some 1,500 sub-Saharan Africans in an illegal situation, the King [of Morocco] announced a vast operation of regularization in Morocco, the second since 2014" (Bozonnet 2017).

This campaign came on the heels of reports in summer 2013 that apartment owners in major cities like Rabat and Casablanca were putting up signs indicating that they would not rent their apartments to "afāriqa" (Rboub 2013; Ismaili 2013). In response, on July 15 the Authenticity and Modernity Party (PAM), known to be an appendage of the royal palace, proposed the country's first ever "anti-racism" law to the Moroccan Chamber of Representatives. The proposed law, which carried a penalty of anywhere from three months to twelve years of prison and/or a fine of 10,000-100,000 dirhams ($1,025-$10,250), defined discrimination as "the fact of rejecting a person or a group of people due to their geographical, ethnic or social belonging or due to their sex, handicap, religion, skin color, family status, or political opinion" (cited "Anti-racisme" 2013).

For many, Moroccans and sub-Saharan immigrants alike, these reports of racism perpetrated by Moroccan apartment owners were not particularly surprising. New articles, human rights reports, and first hand stories of the discrimination felt by Morocco's diverse sub-Saharan residents had been circulating long before. Yet the undeniable visibility of these discriminatory signs shocked many Moroccans by unsettling the image of Morocco as a "land of refuge, of hospitality, and of tolerance" ("Les Marocains sont-ils") —an image touted as much in tourism guides as amongst Moroccans themselves. Suddenly, Moroccans were being portrayed in national and international media as concealing an ugly face of racism beneath a veneer of tolerance. Worse, commentators decried this "*négrophobie marocaine*" (Amar 2012) as blatantly hypocritical given the Kingdom's location on the African continent. "As if Moroccans weren't Africans!" declared one Moroccan journalist in the Francophone weekly L'Économiste (Rboub 2013).

In the wake of this summer marred by a slew of high profile acts of racism perpetrated against sub-Saharan African immigrants (Bachelet 2014), the country's National Human Rights Council (*Conseil National des Droits de l'Homme,* CNDH) released a disturbing report on the situation of migrants in Morocco.[88] This report, in turn, led to an immediate response of support and concern from King Mohammed VI (Roger 2013). Contradicting the stance of the recently elected "Islamist" prime minister, Abdelilah Benkirane, the King met with members of the government and instructed them to draw up "a new vision for a national migration policy, that is humanist in its philosophy, responsible in its approach, and pioneering at a regional level" (cited in Bachelet 2014). In was in this context of growing critiques from both local and international human rights organizations that Moroccan authorities announced their "radically" new migration policy to regularize thousands of immigrants during the following calendar year of 2014 ("Le Maroc prépare"). In 2016, just two years later, there was a second round of regularization.

These two regularization campaigns fit within a larger politics being spearheaded by King Mohammed VI that aimed at relocating the Kingdom of Morocco within the continent of Africa, as opposed to the Arab Middle East. Even prior to announcing the 2014 campaign, Mohammed VI had begun aggressively promoting trade relations between Morocco and its neighboring countries south of the Sahara (Wippel 2003). The French newspaper Le Monde went as far as speaking about "the African empire of Mohammed VI," arguing that,

> Since his arrival to the throne in 1999, Mohammed VI has led an ambitious African politics. Under his impetus, the kingdom has set out on an assault (*assaut*) of the continent: methodically, in stages, it has woven its tapestry. In fifteen years, the king has made more than forty visits to the countries of sub saharan Africa and mobilized the

[88] "Foreigners and Human Rights in Morocco: for a Radically New Asylum and Migration Policy" https://www.cndh.ma/sites/default/files/documents//CNDH_report_-_migration_in_Morocco.pdf

> largest Moroccan companies, employing all of his economic, diplomatic, and even religious resources. (Bozonnet 2017)

The final step of this "assault" came on January 31st, 2017 when Morocco successfully bid to rejoin the African Union (AU) after a more than thirty year absence (Barre 2004).[89] Notably, by the time of its reintegration into the AU, Morocco had become one of the largest investors in Africa on the continent, second only to South Africa, with half of Morocco's foreign direct investments in sub-Saharan Africa (Bozonnet 2017).

This much awaited news came soon after several highly publicized royal tours of the African continent, during which Mohammed VI visited dignitaries in neighboring West Africa where Morocco had traditionally held strong ties, as well as in countries as far away—geographically, linguistically, and historically—as Tanzania, where the King inaugurated the Mohammed VI Mosque of Dar es Salaam (Sara 2016).[90] On these occasions, the King cultivated a public presence which displayed his newly valorized African identity in an exemplary manner, from wearing brightly colored outfits when meeting with African counterparts to being filmed "spontaneously" playing a large African drum alongside Tanzanian president John Magufuli. The Moroccan press particularly relished this latter display in which "Mohammed VI let his *fibre africaine* (African disposition) emerge" ("En Tanzanie, Mohammed VI" 2016). "It is so good to be back home, after having been away for too long," declared Mohammed VI in a speech at the

[89] Morocco formally withdrew its membership from the Organization for African Unity (OAU)—the predecessor of the African Union—when the OAU decided to formally recognize the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), more commonly known as the Western Sahara. Not all countries supported the reintegration of Morocco into the African Union. Notable dissidents were South Africa, Angola, and of course Algeria, the primary ally of the SADR.
[90] In 2015, Mohammed VI visited the West and Central African countries of Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, and Gabon. In 2016, he visited Rwanda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Madagascar. After Morocco's readmission to the African Union, he visited Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Zambia, and Mali.

28th African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, “It is a good day when you can show your affection for your beloved home. Africa is my continent and my home" (cited in Jusdanis 2017).

Following the lead of the King, many Moroccans expressed satisfaction that their African identity was now an official fact. “Finally African on paper as well (*Enfin africain sur papier aussi*),” declared my friend Loubna on her Facebook page when Morocco’s reintegration was officially announced. Yet Morocco’s reintegration into the AU raised new, difficult questions about Moroccan identity and society, questions that had already begun to feel more pressing with the 2014 and 2016 regularization campaigns. Even if Moroccans were increasingly being asked to think of themselves as African, it was not clear if other Africans could become Moroccan. What would it mean for Moroccan identity if other Africans were to integrate permanently into Moroccan society? Was “Moroccan” something that one could in fact become, either legally, culturally, or linguistically? And what kind of future Moroccan subject—political, cultural, and linguistic—might that lead to?

Questions about integration were all the more challenging for a population that historically found itself on the opposite side of such questions. Moroccans tended to be concerned with how European countries integrated—or failed to integrate—their compatriots abroad, as opposed to how their own country integrated—or failed to integrate—immigrants from other places. This image of Maghrebian countries as “receiver” countries had become common in academic literature, which has largely focused on a one-directional flow of people from North Africa to Europe. Morocco has typically appeared as a site of transit: a place of borders and illegal crossings, or else a place where migrants get ‘stuck’ and are forced to wait and linger (Alexander 2019b, 2019a; Bachelet 2019; Ngo 2018). North Africa was a transit station for some, an unexpected destination for others.

Yet little work has been done on the forms of life that are emerging on the ground in this new cosmopolitan Morocco, and particularly on how the changing temporality of "African" immigrants is influencing Maghrebi conceptions of self, nation, citizenship, and identity.[91] Notably, the seeming newness of this question is not due to a previous absence of foreigners living in Morocco. Casablanca in particular, has long had a large foreign population of European "expatriates," who have been written about at length in Moroccan fiction (Bourdon and Folléas 2012). Yet Europeans in Morocco have always been a population apart before, during, and after colonization: a population that lived in its own neighborhoods (Abu-Lughod 1980; Rabinow 1995), attended its own schools (Segalla 2009), spoke its own language(s), and maintained its own citizenship. Even those who stayed long enough that they considered themselves to be 'Moroccan' (or 'Casablancan') often sought this identification at the level of cultural, social, or religious belonging; not at the level of legal belonging and equality. Yet for many of Morocco's immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa, legal belonging and recognition were matters of critical importance, opening up possibilities for sending their children to public schools, asserting their right to access housing or to rent shopfronts, and having recourse to services like hospitals (and the police). While many of these immigrants were adopting French, English, Spanish, or even fuṣḥa for carrying out their daily life in Morocco, some began adopting dārija as an additional—or even primary—form of communication in daily life. The result was that dārija, this viscerally local language, was increasingly being inhabited by foreign bodies.

[91] A recent exception is the edited collection *Migrants au Maroc: Cosmopolitisme, présence d'étranger et transformations sociales* (2015).

2.2 Public Languages

As has been explored in previous chapters, the linguistic ideological distinction between fuṣḥa and dārija in Morocco manage both vertical social hierarchies, as well as relationships that are more horizontal or spatial in nature. While much has been written about the ways in which certain social hierarchies are sustained through the distinction between fuṣḥa and dārija — official written Arabic and unofficial spoken Arabic—one of my main interests has been to argue that the dārija/fuṣḥa distinction also allows Moroccans to manage insides and outsides within the public sphere. French or fuṣḥa enable 'foreign guests' to access the public sphere, yet there has remained a more exclusionary dārija -speaking core in which Moroccans imagine their interlocutors to be only other Moroccans. As I explored in chapters 3 and 4, language activists and dubbing studios have worked to reposition dārija on both the vertical axis—making it a more 'valued' language—and on the horizontal axis—making it a language that can be plausibly spoken by foreigners. Notably, neither effort has found widespread acceptance in Morocco. Yet with the growing presence of dārija-speaking African immigrants, this second (previously hypothetical) proposal has become much more real. What are the stakes of disaggregating the categories of 'dārija speaker' and 'Moroccan', so often assumed to be synonymous? What would it mean to reimagine dārija as a different kind of language: one that is self-consciously universal, as opposed to self-consciously particular?

In *Singular and Plural* (2016), Woolard tracks a similar transition from what she calls a "private" language to a "public" language. For Woolard, a private language is one that is closely connected to a particular culture or a particular group of people. A private language is "rooted in and directly expresses the essential nature of a community or a speaker" (7). Conversely, she writes that "public languages are supposed to be able to represent and be used equally by

everyone precisely because they belong to no-one-in-particular" (25). They are believed to be universal views-from-nowhere. Crucially, these categories of public and private languages are not meant to be descriptions of inherent characteristics and qualities of a language. Rather, Woolard offers public and private as linguistic ideological categories that speakers draw on to make claims about (or against) particular languages.

In her study of Catalonian language politics, Woolard uses these terms to track a shift in the discourse of Catalan language activists in terms of how they strategically framed Catalan. Early activism promoted Catalan as a private language, and made an argument for its importance based on Catalan's 'authentic' connection to Catalan bodies and culture. But Woolard shows that in the 2000s activists began to realize that this vision of Catalan as a private language was actually "hampering" its expansion and posed an obstacle to Catalan achieving status as a public language equivalent to, say, Castilian (7-8). Over time it became clear to Catalan language activists that "if local linguistic varieties index authentic local identities, by the same logic they are off-limits to outsiders" (24), and this was a problem for activists who sought to promote Catalan as a language for everyone in Catalonia, including native Castilian speakers.

Through her long-term case study, Woolard shows that the potential for a language to successfully "go public" is dependent upon its ability to be taken up and claimed by new, non-native speakers who contribute to a reimagining of it as public, anonymous, and universal. Yet sprinkled throughout the ethnography, Woolard also references other kinds of non-native speakers as well: Senegalese, Pakistani, and even Moroccan immigrants in Catalonia who take up Catalan not as part of a political project, but simply as a tool of sorts, a way of inhabiting the public sphere. While Woolard's focus is less on these immigrants than on Castilian speakers, their adoption of Catalan seems to be crucial to the emergence of Catalan as a "public" language.

In Morocco, to which we now return, it was precisely these kinds of actors who were gaining audibility. As I explain in the next section, Sub-Saharan African immigrants in Morocco adopted dārija not within the scope of ongoing debates about language in Morocco; rather, dārija offered an effective medium for them to stake their claims on the Moroccan state and Moroccan society. Yet as I will show, in doing so they unwittingly wrenched open a language that had long been imagined as insular, and that was intimately tied up with ideas of ethnic national identity.

3. "We Are the Ambassadors of African Integration"

I have no interest in learning dārija, Yannick explained to me in French over coffee at a popular seaside cafe. We had met through a Spanish friend who Yannick was tutoring in French. A Central African in his mid-twenties, Yannick had already been in the northern Mediterranean city of Martil for a few years, a place he had moved to through a scholarship program for students from sub-Saharan African countries. Martil had not been his first choice, he would rather have gone to a big city like Casablanca with a larger population of African immigrants, but he did not have much say in the matter. When he arrived in Martil to study mathematics at Abdelmalek Essaâdi University, Yannick was frustrated by the racist behavior of Moroccans in the city, including his fellow students. Why, he asked me, would he make an effort to learn their language, dārija? Besides, he had no desire to spend the rest of his life in this country.

While Yannick was representative of many of the sub-Saharan immigrants I encountered in Morocco, his friend Abdoulaye represented a counter-current. A Guinean student also studying mathematics at the university in Martil, Abdoulaye was practically fluent in dārija. I had been told this by mutual friends of ours, and this fluency was on full display when, during

our interview at a cafe, two different Moroccans friends passed by and casually chatted him up in perfect dārija.

Abdoulaye's interest in learning dārija did not emerge from an inability to communicate in another language. Unlike some sub-Saharan immigrants who struggle in French, Abdoulaye was a fluent francophone. As with Yannick, he had arrived on a scholarship several years before, but he had stayed longer than intended partially because of unexpected health problems that had delayed his progress towards a degree. Similar to Yannick, Abdoulaye was not shy about sharing his experiences of racism, although he admitted that certain social interactions were eased by the fact that he was a practicing Muslim. Although he had originally arrived in Martil with a large delegation of other Guinean scholarship students, by the time we met nearly all of them had left—often without obtaining a degree. When they first arrived, he told me with a smile, it felt like Moroccans would invent a new racist epithet for them every few months: *ʿazziyy* (lit. my master),[92] *mīkā* (black plastic bag), ebola, or *zītūn* (black olives). If in a given week the Moroccan national soccer team won a match again a team from sub-Saharan Africa, Abdoulaye and his classmates would temporarily take on that nationality in the eyes of Moroccans. More often they were just referred to as Senegalese (*sinighālī*), similar to how many Moroccans would refer to all East Asian people as Chinese (*shinwī*)—much to the frustration of Japanese and Korean people I knew.

[92] While no one in Morocco was ever able to give me an etymology of the word *ʿazziyy*, according to *Le Dictionnaire Colin d'arabe dialectal marocain* (1994) the word is most likely an "ironic" usage of the phrase "my master" which probably dates to the period of Moulay Ismael (1645-1727). Interestingly, while the '*-iyy*' ending began as a first person possessive '*-ī*' (*ʿazzī*, master-my), it has now transformed into the similar sounding adjectival suffix '*-iyy*' (*ʿazziyy*, master-ish) with female and plural variations (*ʿazziyya, ʿazzāwa*).

Somehow Abdoulaye managed to learn dārija, and that changed everything. At first, he began by learning words here and there with the help of some Moroccan students who lived next to him in the university dormitory. He had built rapport with them through playing soccer together, and they subsequently became his ad hoc dārija tutors. As Abdoulaye explained to me, he felt that he needed to take a step towards Moroccans, that it was incumbent upon him to make an explicit first effort to integrate himself. Learning dārija was that step, but then the ball was in the Moroccans' court. Ultimately, he said, his gamble worked. When we met, he was married to a Muslim Moroccan woman, whose family had blessed their marriage. They lived together in an apartment above the woman's grandmother, who was very fond of Abdoulaye. In fact, as he told it, the entire neighborhood was fond of him, even if he did not always live like a Moroccan. In a serious manner, he explained to me that every weekend he would invite over a group of West African friends to cook lunch and watch soccer together—both men and women. They were loud, he told me, and they would stay up late. But people in the neighborhood accepted it, he insisted, because he had also made an effort to understand and adjust to them.

When I asked him if he could imagine himself living the rest of his life in Morocco, he said maybe. At the time, he was in a moment of potential transition. He had been accepted at a business school in France, but was having difficulties with his paperwork and was not sure if he would receive a visa in time. If he did not, he would have to forfeit his spot at the school. When I asked him if his goal was to move to Europe with his new wife, he admitted that he liked the idea, but said that he would also be fine with staying in Morocco. For that reason, he was simultaneously preparing paperwork to request Moroccan citizenship. When I asked him why, he explained that Moroccan citizenship would enable him to apply for a highly prized job as a civil

servant. Hearing this, I paused to think about whether I had ever come across a non-ethnic Moroccan civil servant. The answer was a definite no.

While it was becoming increasingly common for Moroccans to encounter sub-Saharan African immigrants like Yannick and Abdoulaye in their daily lives—in cafes, on the street, at work, or at university—it was also becoming increasingly common for Moroccans to see and hear such immigrants in Moroccan media, such as on public television. I first noticed this one evening while watching Ramadan television with my friend Hanan's family in Tétouan. As we sat on *sdādr* (banquettes) around the low living room table, covered in the remains of our *fṭūr* (fast breaking meal), a short ten-minute segment came on the television featuring an Ivorian woman who had come to Morocco for school, and then returned to her country to start a prosperous business. As I later learned, the show was actually a recurring daily segment on 2M. Each episode featured a different sub-Saharan African immigrant who had spent time in Morocco for education or for business, and then took the skills they had developed back to their country to make a change. Intrigued by the show, I tried to discuss it with Hanan's sister who was sitting next to me, but her low level of French made it difficult for her to understand the French of the Moroccan narrator let alone the accented French of the Ivorian woman being interviewed.

While much of the Moroccan media featuring sub-Saharan African voices was in French, I began to notice a small but growing presence of sub-Saharan African voices in the mediated dārija soundscape as well. One example was an episode of the popular TV show *Generation News* (2017) entitled "The Adjustment of Young Sub Saharan Africans in Morocco" (*Tāʾaqlom*

shabāb ifrīqiyā janūb al- ṣaḥarā' bil maghrib).[93] Hosted by the hip young Casablancan Oussama Benjelloun, *Generation News* was a weekly dārija-language talk show on the Tangier-based television station Medi1TV. This particular episode featured three guests: Tafsir, a Guinean doctoral student at Dar Al Hadith Al Hassania in Rabat (a university specialized in Islamic Studies) who had been in Morocco for ten years; a Ousmane, Senegalese B.A. student in engineering who had been living in Rabat for four years; and Kader, a Guinean dancer, singer and choreographer who had been living in Marrakech for over ten years.[94] Like Abdoulaye, all three of them were also fluent francophones, who had chosen for various reasons to add dārija to their linguistic repertoires.

Throughout the 30-minute show, Benjelloun asked the three guests questions about their particular lives in Morocco and what they liked (or did not like) about Moroccans. He also showed them (and viewers) a "zapping" featuring short clips from a variety of Moroccan TV shows in which African immigrants like them had been interviewed in fuṣḥa and dārija and talked about their experiences living in Morocco. When Benjelloun asked the guests what they thought about the clips, Tafsir responded by saying that the clips showed that sub-Saharan Africans (*al-afāriqa janūb al-ṣaḥarā'*) were getting used to Morocco (*bdaū kaywallafū al-maghrib*), not just through daily life but through language (*hād al-walfa māshī min ghīr al-ʾaysh, walakin min hayth al-lugha*). Moreover, he pointed out that now people were speaking as if they were Moroccans (*nās kāyhadrū wa kāʾannahom mghāriba*). Then, with a wink he added,

> What we want now is for Moroccans to make an effort to learn some of the African languages that are wide-spread so that there is integration (*takāmul*), because this dārija

[93] *Generation News* has had several shows on similar topics, such as "The Radiance of Moroccans in the Countries of sub-Saharan Africa" and "Foreigners and Integration in Moroccan Society," which featured a panel of non-native dārija speakers from Senegal, Romania, and France.

[94] Kader was the choreographer for the video "Do It Again" by the Chemical Brothers.

> that we learned isn't easy, we learned it to live with you, and if we went to a different country, we're not going to speak in it, not like with Arabic, we're going to leave it here and go. But we made an effort to assimilate (*ḥawalnā bāsh nandāmijū*) into society, and that's important.[95]

Later in the show, Kader picked up on this thread by emphasizing that:

> Al-hamdolah, we're living in a transitional period thanks to his majesty the King Mohammed VI who is currently making an enormous effort, and inshallah future generations and even generations now will understand this effort that is being done for African integration (*l'intégration africain*). It's something that's important. And us, we are the ambassadors today of this African integration, and inshallah people will see that integration in possible. We are the proof today, we're living in Morocco and we speak dārija. There are Moroccans living in Guinea, you have to see them, they speak in Susu and in Wolof, they exist, and African integration exists...like with this show… and inchallah this is just the beginning.[96]

As Benjelloun subsequently pointed out, that particular moment was less of a beginning and more of a continuation. Displaying a recent headline from a French-language newspaper, Benjelloun noted that in comparison to 1994 when there were only 1,040 African students in Morocco, as of 2017 the number had jumped to 16,000.

While these examples attest to the increased presence of sub-Saharan African voices—particularly in dārija—within the Moroccan linguistic soundscape, shows such as these were moments in which immigrants served as objects of discussion for a Moroccan audience (as

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[95] Dābā llī bghīnā min maghāriba ʻāwtānī homā yiḥawilū ʻmaʻnā yitaʻallimū baʻḍ al-lughāt al-ifrīqiyya llī homā muntashir bāsh yikūn takāmūl, ḥīt hād al-dārija hādī llī taʻallimnāhā māshī sāhla, taʻallimnā bāsh naʻīsh maʻāk, wa hādī, ilā mashīnā ilā duwal okhrā mā ghādīsh nhadrū bihā, māshī bḥāl ʻarabiyya, ghād nkhallīwhā hnā ghād nmchīw bḥālnā. walakin ḥnā ḥawālnā bāsh nandāmijū maʻ al-mujtamaʻ wa dāk shī mohim

[96] Al-ḥamdulillah *on est* ʻāyishīn f wāḥid *la période transitoire* wa hād shī *grâce à sa majesté le roi Mohammed VI qui est en train de faire* wāḥed *un travail énorme* wa inshā'allah *les générations* llī jāyīn wa hād *les générations* dyāl dābā yifihimū hād *l'effort* llī kāttadār dābā *pour l'intégration africain*, shī hājā llī hiya mohima. wa ḥnā *nous sommes les ambassadeurs* lyūma dyāl hād *l'intégration africain* wa iinshā'allah nās yishūfū billī rā *l'intégration elle est possible, on est la preuve aujourd'hui* rā ḥnā ʻāyishīn fīl maghrib kānhaderū bil-dārija, kāynīn maghāriba ʻāyishīn fil ghīniyā, rā khāskom tshūfūhom, kāyhaderū bi-sousou wa lū bi-wolof, donc kāynīn, rā kāyn hād *l'intégration africain, le fait*, bḥāl hād al-bernāmej tā howā *il mets son lumière ça crée vraiment vraiment vraiment quelque chose un [?]* ʻind nās wa hād shī inshā'allah ghīr al-bidāya.

opposed to proper addressees) or were envisioned simply as "guests" within the Moroccan linguistic sphere (as opposed to equal co-inhabitants). Despite the growing numbers of diverse sub-Saharan residents in Morocco, and their increasing audibility in the dārija public sphere, the assumption on the part of most Moroccans that dārija was a private language still resulted in exclusionary and arguably racist linguistic practices. While I was in Casablanca, for example, I would often hear stories from both Moroccan and sub-Saharan friends that would go as follows: a sub-Saharan immigrant gets into a shared taxi with Moroccans. The Moroccans start talking about him disrespectfully in dārija, presuming that he cannot not understand. The punchline: he can in fact speak dārija and understood everything they said about him.

What possibilities existed for imagining sub-Saharan Africans as co-inhabitants of both Morocco and dārija? What might a public dārija look or sound like? In the final section, I explore these questions by turning to two moments in my fieldwork in which I observed attempts to tangibly shift linguistic sensibilities and conventional modes of addressivity. The first case, an antiracism campaign, offers a performative proposal for a kind of inclusive dārija public, and the second case offers an example of one individual—a comedian—trying to bring such a public into being.

4. A Public Dārija?

4.1 The Māsmītīsh ʿAzziyy Campaign

Less than three months into the 2014 regularization process for immigrants, a collective of eleven NGOs under the name Papers for All (*Papiers pour tous*) banded together to launch a national campaign to combat "ordinary racism" (*le racisme ordinaire*) in Morocco. The campaign was launched on Friday, March 21st, the United Nations' International Day for the

Elimination of Racial Discrimination. “Regularization doesn't happen without integration,” explained one of the activists coordinating the collective, “it's a matter of contributing to a better integration of people who will be regularized and attracting the attention of public opinion, the media, and decision makers to the incipient racism in Morocco” (cited in Rerhaye 2014). This antiracism campaign itself was born out of a perceived fear on the part of several NGOs that the King’s regularization initiative would stoke an increase in racism in the country aimed at sub-Saharan Africans. Their desire was to preempt it before it began, to encourage a social dialogue about race and racism in Morocco as early as possible through a *campagne de sensibilisation* (awareness campaign).

While the campaign involved several initiatives, it gained notoriety through its poster which became a controversial presence in Moroccan cities and online, where it circulated extensively (Figure 8). The poster featured a close-up portrait of a sub-Saharan African man in a black beanie and a plaid shirt. In the lower right-hand corner was a large circle with the slogan “My Name is Not Azzi.” In some posters, the slogan was in dārija (*māsmītīsh ʿazziyy*), in others in was in French (*Je ne m’appelle pas Azzi*). But both versions of the poster included the dārija word ‘azzi.

While the referents of this word were clear—dark-skinned people, Moroccan and foreign alike—the meaning of the word and its translation were highly contested. Most of the Americans I knew living in Morocco insisted that the word *ʿazziyy* was the equivalent of the n-word in American English (see Bartholomew 2016), even while many Moroccans—including dark-skinned Moroccans—were hesitant about dismissing the word as inherently derogatory. In the press, a similar hesitancy over the term’s true valence manifested itself in a wide array of translations. Moroccan and French newspapers, for example, variably translated *ʿazziyy* into

Figure 9: French and dārija posters from the "My Name Is Not Azzi" campaign

French as "noir" ("Migrants et étrangers 2014), "nègre" (Midech 2006; Yata 2014), "négro" ("Une campagne transmaghrébine"), and "basané" (Harit 2014); and into fuṣḥa as the more neutral "aswad," literally "black" (al-Kashouri 2014; Amzir 2014). Some Francophone journalists chose not to translate it at all ("'Papiers pour tous' lance" 2014; al-Ashraf 2014; Rerhaye 2014)

My interest here is not to make an argument for a "correct" translation of *ʿazziyy*. Instead, I want to point to the very simple fact that the antiracism campaign and much of the debate it incited all revolved around one word, which was a word in dārija. Even though the poster campaign was nominally bilingual, the word *ʿazziyy* managed to slide untranslated from the dārija version of the campaign (*māsmītīsh ʿazziyy*) into the French version (*Je ne m'appelle pas Azzi*), which transliterated the word instead of translating it. The fact that the French version of the campaign was "Je ne m'appelle pas *Azzi*" as opposed to, for example, "Je ne m'appelle pas *le Noir*" or "Je ne m'appelle pas *Nègre*," resulted in the campaign centering itself, wittingly or not,

around the word *ʿazziyy* and by extension around dārija itself. This linguistic slippage tacitly drew a connection between Moroccan racism and dārija.

Yet in pointing to dārija as part of the problem, the campaign was also identifying dārija as a key site for intervention, a potential part of the solution. On the one hand, the presence of the dārija word within the French-language slogan 'Je ne m'appelle pas Azzi' seemed to single out dārija as insular. On the other hand, the dārija version of the slogan, '*māsmītīsh ʿazziyy*', performatively instantiated precisely what the campaign wanted dārija to become: 1) an effective vehicle for speaking out about problems in Moroccan society; and 2) a more inclusive language with space for non-native voices, a language not tethered to ethnic Moroccan bodies.

The first proposition was not particularly radical. In the wake of the 2003 Casablanca bombings, an anti-terrorist campaign in dārija (*Mā tqīsh blādī*, Hands Off My Country) performed this same proposition: that dārija could and should be used as a vehicle for national societal reform (Caubet 2008). It was the second proposition that was more radical: the idea that dārija should be reimagined as a public language available to and representative of anyone—including the sub-Saharan man featured on the poster. By performing dārija as a public language (Woolard 2016), the campaign's posters radically attempted to loosen the imagined link between ethnic identity and language, between Moroccan bodies and dārija, as part of a larger project of anti-racism.

The campaign poster—and its provocative slogan—interpellated Moroccan viewers to reimagine and re-hear dārija as a public language similar to how they imagined French or English, a language "able to represent and be used equally by everyone precisely because [it belonged] to no-one-in-particular" (25). In this inaugural speech act, the man on the poster

transcended the role of a "guest" in Morocco by insisting *in dārija* that the word *ʿazziyy* had no place within the shared dārija soundscape.

4.2 Cosmopolitan Dārija Comedy

What I want to end on is a brief account of a situation in which I did see a kind of shared dārija emerge, the kind that the My Name is Not Azzi campaign was trying to incite, cultivate, and spread. An example of a truly public dārija.

During my fieldwork in Casablanca, I happened to attend a popular open mic night that featured live music, slam poetry, and stand-up comedy in a host of languages: French, English, fuṣḥā, and dārija. One of the headliners for the night was an amateur comedian named Saad aka "Marockan Guy," who wore a signature red Fez with matching red shoes and described his comedy as "sparkling Franco-Darija humor" (*humour Franco-Darija pétillant*). While some of his sketches were in French with sprinklings of dārija here and there, others were the reverse: primarily in dārija with bits of French mixed in. That night, his main dārija sketch focused on his experience working in one of Morocco's ubiquitous call centers, which were populated by a combination of young middle-class Moroccans, as well as large numbers of francophone immigrants from West Africa, particularly from Senegal. Speaking to the audience in dārija, Saad explained that when his Senegalese colleagues were at work, they would talk on the phone with customers in an incredibly eloquent Parisian French. But magically, once they left work, that Parisian French would disappear and these same colleagues would begin talking amongst themselves in a fast-paced combination of Wolof and heavily accented French.

But Saad was not content with simply joking about his colleagues in the third person; he actually impersonated them. At first he did this by imitating their particular form of French-

Wolof code-switching when talking amongst themselves as they smoked by the office door. But then Saad began to imitate how one Senegalese colleague in particular would often talk on the phone after work. At this point in the sketch, Saad began pacing around the stage, chest puffed up and elbow high in the air as if talking on the phone, repeating "Waw! Waw! Waw!" to his imaginary interlocutor. Then he turned to the audience and said in dārija, "For the longest time I couldn't figure out what 'waw' meant, and then I realized that it just meant 'yes' ('*oui*')!"

As he dropped this punchline, I could not help but notice a handful of sub-Saharan Africans in the audience who burst into riotous laughter. One woman in the group nearly fell out of her seat laughing, as Saad continued to pace around the stage on his imaginary phone saying "Waw! Waw! Waw!" At the end of the sketch, Saad made a point of saying in French that this was all just humor and that he hoped it had not "vexed" any of his "brothers" in the audience. Still laughing, the group yelled back "Noooo!" To which Saad responded in dārija saying good, he was happy to hear that... but ultimately he didn't give a shit (bada boom!).

I interviewed Saad a few weeks later, and in our conversation he emphasized that before becoming a comedian he had worked extensively with sub-Saharan Africans at call centers in Morocco, and had also spent several years as a child living in France and Belgium in heavily immigrant neighborhoods. As a result of those experiences, when he wrote his comedy sketches, he always envisioned other Africans as part of his audience—even for the bits that were primarily in dārija.

He did this, he told me, as part of a conscious effort to create a different kind of dārija humor, one that was more universal and less particularistic. He explained that the vast majority of humor in dārija was highly local and self-denigrating. It was premised on Moroccans making fun of Moroccans, particularly the figure of the ʿ*arrūbī*—the Moroccan country bumpkin—

Figure 10: Hassan el Fad playing the role of the ʿarrūbī in the television series L'Couple

epitomized by the country's most famous comedian Hassan el Fad (Figure 9). In contrast to el Fad's provincial dārija humor, Saad said that he was consciously striving to create a cosmopolitan dārija humor: humor that took neither Morocco nor ethnic Moroccans as its limits, and that was fully unburdened by the presumed provinciality of its chosen language.

5. Conclusion

During my interview with Saad, I could not help but be impressed by his vision of what we might call a public dārija. His sketches seemed to move dārija in the kinds of directions sought after by both language activists (Chapter 3) and dubbing studio executives (Chapter 4). Moreover, Saad effected this shift so effortlessly. His ultimate aim had less to do with explicit language politics than with a desire to innovate a new kind of stand-up that moved dārija-language comedy beyond an insular national paradigm, towards something more universal.

Almost as a byproduct, his performances ended up bringing into existence, even if ephemerally, a public dārija and a cosmopolitan Moroccan identity.

Yet in closing, it bears noting that the linguistic space Saad brought into being was not necessarily one of equality, even if it was shared. What enabled his dārija-language comedy to transcend the provincial was precisely its willingness to laugh with others, as well as at others. In other words, his comedy achieved a sort of cosmopolitanism by being indiscriminate in who it laughed at. His performance of dārija as a public language was achieved by contrasting dārija to Wolof—the Wolof of his Senegalese colleagues—which he performed as comparatively private, provincial, and in need of translation. Moroccan cosmopolitanism, and dārija's dārija-ness, were achieved not in isolation but at the expense of African others.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

> ...all societies that anthropologists study are being destroyed and remade by the forces that were unleashed by European imperialism and industrial capitalism… To say this is not to assert that the globe is socially homogeneous, or that non-European societies have lost their cultural "authenticity"... My point is a different one: that social and cultural variety everywhere increasingly responds to, and is managed by, categories brought into play by modern forces. If, as some anthropologists now put it, culture is everywhere invented, if invention always opens up the possibilities for difference, then it should also be clear that the conditions of invention are no longer what they once were
>
> — Talal Asad

This dissertation has traced the ways in which French colonialism in Morocco brought into play new categories and logics of language, and how these in turn have served to both constrain and inform postcolonial subjectivities well after declarations of independence. In the first section of the dissertation, I looked at the pedagogical reconceptualization of Arabic as a standard language during the protectorate (Chapter 2), and how a rhetoric of standard Arabic shaped both the language policies of post-independence Moroccan government as well as the oppositional politics of pro-dārija language activists (Chapter 3). In the second section, I turned towards my ethnographic data to look at how the fabrication of a standard dārija emerged in the unlikely space of a Casablanca dubbing studio, opening up fraught imaginaries of a disconcertingly anonymous public dārija (Chapter 4). In the final chapter, I then looked at how the notion of a public dārija was taken up and voiced by Morocco's growing West African immigrant population, challenging Moroccans to reimagine the dārija soundscape—and Moroccan national identity more broadly.

What has fascinated me about this search for a standard (or a new standard) is how it has simultaneously been a quest for a sort of Moroccan or Maghrebi universalism. In various drafts

of this dissertation, I framed this search for the universal in a more celebratory mode. Here, I thought, was a moment of real potential for a kind of third world internationalism that was believed to have died in Morocco in 1965 with the assassination of Mehdi Ben Barka. This notion of a standard (or public) dārija seemed to hold out both the promise of empowerment for Moroccans, as well as inclusion for Morocco's growing immigrant population. Perhaps naively, I thought that the conjunction of dārija language politics and the increasingly audibility of foreign voices in the dārija linguistic soundscape might result in the emergence of a universal Maghrebi subject in the North African Kingdom that ironically most lacked a history of imagining a universal "we."

Yet I have since been persuaded to adopt a more tragic sensibility about such a future. Where I once found myself writing in a more romantic narrative mode, I have since come to embrace the tragic (Neptune 2008). In doing so, I draw on the work of Scott (2004), himself drawing on Asad (2009). In his writing on revolutionary Haitian figure Toussaint L'Ouverture, Scott makes an argument for thinking of the postcolonial predicament in terms of the genre of tragedy. Tragedy, he suggests, has more potential and more traction in the particular political moment in which we now find ourselves—a moment that stands in contrast to the prior moment of anti-colonial nationalism which found traction in the romantic narrative accounts of power and resistance, and the kinds of questions they posed. In Scott's (2005) rereading of C.L.R. James' *Black Jacobins* not as romance but as tragedy, we find ourselves confronted with a very different and somewhat disconcerting figure of Toussaint. What makes him a tragic hero is the "choice" that he is confronted with, which is in fact not a choice at all, but rather two "sides of a single colonial modernity."

Drawing on Scott's provocations, this dissertation opens up the question of whether vernacular "revolutions" can in fact be revolutionary—or whether such an idea is inescapably entangled with a kind of romanticism which has lost its purchase in our current political moment. Despite the tendency to throw around the term revolution when talking about vernacular standardization in early modern Europe, within the context of (post)colonial modernity, I suggest that the "choice" to pursue vernacular standardization is less a choice than a tragic bind in which post-colonial subjects, such as Arabic-speaking Moroccans, necessarily find themselves.

By way of conclusion, I want to end by briefly looking at another revolutionary yet tragic figure of colonial modernity who is deeply associated with Francophone North Africa: Franz Fanon. While Fanon is well known as a theorist of colonialism and decolonization, within the context of North Africa he stands out for his efforts to radically rethink Algeria and the Maghreb as universal. As with Morocco's own bid at achieving universalism, my suggestion is that Fanon's (and Algeria's) bid at universalism was "tragic" as well as telling of the predicament or problem-space in which Morocco currently finds itself.

Back in the 1950s, at the height of the Algerian struggle for independence, Franz Fanon tried imagining and enacting through writing a new kind of Algerian identity, not one grounded in ethnic belonging, but rather in revolutionary ideals. Anyone who held fast to these ideals, he claimed, would be welcomed as part of a new Algerian nation. His struggle, in other words, was to loosen the connection between race, nationality, religion, and language in North Africa itself.

This inclusive "we, the Algerians" is easy to overlook in Fanon's writing, given the present state of affairs in Algeria and North Africa more broadly. Yet if one looks closely, this inclusive "we" is powerfully present, a revolutionary illocution, in *A Dying Colonialism* (1967, 32):

> What we Algerians want is to discover the man behind the colonizer; this man who is both the organizer and the victim of a system that has choked him and reduced him to silence. As for us, we have long since rehabilitated the Algerian colonized man. We have wrenched the Algerian man from a centuries-old and implacable oppression. We have risen to our feet and we are now moving forward. Who can settle us back in servitude? We want an Algeria open to all, in which every kind of genius may grow.

While it may not be obvious to the contemporary reader in Fanon's powerful introduction, the fact that this "we" is intended to be inclusive—to have the potential to be an open signifier—is evident by the end of his text which concludes with two testimonies from Algerian-born French citizens fighting with the Front de libération nationale. As one of them testifies in writing, after explaining his role in the resistance:

> It is as an Algerian that I have done all these things. I do not have the impression of having betrayed France. I am an Algerian, and like any Algerian I have fought and I continue to fight colonialism. As a conscious Algerian citizen, I felt I must take my place by the side of the patriots. This is what I have done. (178)

While this testimony is tucked away at the end of the text, I do not think its importance should be relegated to secondary. It is at the heart of Fanon's project. Yet such an inclusive "we" is currently difficult to imagine in any of the countries of the Maghreb. How many European, let alone French, citizens are currently requesting Moroccan citizenship and declaring themselves part of a Moroccan "we"? Such potentialities—lost potentialities—are difficult to imagine in the present.

While we might characterize Fanon's attempt as a failure, my suggestion is that we think of it more as a tragedy, in Scott's sense of the term. The attempt to declare an Algerian universalism was tragic because the decision happened within a context not of Algeria's choosing. It happened within a colonial problem-space in which the choice was to aspire to the same kind of universalism claimed by France, knowing that it would likely fail; or else to accept Algeria's status as colonial, peripheral, and particular. As Scott has argued, this 'choice' is not a choice at all, but rather two sides of a single colonial modernity.

It is with this experience of Fanon's and Algeria's tragic universalism in mind, an experience that is close to Morocco geographically and affectively, that I have framed this dissertation around a similar 'choice' about vernacular standardization in Morocco. The dissertation has sought to adopt a similar tragic sensibility in the face of much enthusiastic writing about a potential dārija revolution, a *révolution Dārija*.

Yasser Suleiman (2004, 94) once quipped that debates over vernacular standardization in the Arabic-speaking world "tended to be perpetuated ad nauseum in each generation, and, in the same generation, in a different location." This dissertation has attempted to think about why that is, and the conclusion seems to be that in Morocco such debates will not be going away anytime soon.

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