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INTRODUCTION

Several “modern” dialectological and linguistic research works (Brockelman 1910, De Lacy O’Leary 1925, to cite but a few) dealt with Arabic and its various dialectal forms. Some of them concentrated principally on the divergence that exists between the velar and the uvular stops /q/ and /g/ as they symbolize linguistic and sociolinguistic variables throughout which Arabic dialects are labelled as either urban=sedentary or Bedouin=rural (*cf.* Cantineau: 1960, Caubet: 1998 and 2004, Colin: 1948, Eid: 1990, Haeri: 1991, P. Marçais: 1957, W. Marçais: 1930, Owens: 2001, Palva: 1993 and 2009, Versteegh: 1997).

In the following sections, our paper tackles this topic from both a theoretical and a practical angles. The theory shows that the discrepancy between the two variables goes back to the very first years of Arabisation=standardisation and Bedouinisation=nomadisation of the various Arab tribes. It, then, describes the same processes in “modern times,” particularly during the XXth and XXIst centuries AD., in the Maghreb and the Middle-East.

The variables /q/ and /g/ are also dealt with, for they are most salient linguistic features, which split between urban=sedentary and rural=bedouin Arabic dialects. They also represent a “bifurcated variation” (Ibrahim: 1986), “diglossic variables” and “genderlect styles” (Haeri: 1991), “stigmatized forms” (Sallam: 1980), “stylistic variation” (Palva: 2009), and “power” *vs.* “solidarity” attitudes towards the speakers (Owens & Bani-Yasin: 1991).

The practical part endeavours to show that, through minimal pairs, the phonemic status of the velar stop /g/ is well attested in the local language variety. We illustrate with various examples the divergences between both variables. But, before developing the theoretical and practical parts, a short historical description of the Touat was found necessary to introduce the various dialects and speech communities involved in the study.

HISTORICAL GLIMPSE

The Touat was first inhabited by the Berber Zenetes and the Tuaregs. The former were rural sedentary, who lived in the hundreds of garden-oases (or Ksours) of the Sahara (Basset: 1937 & Laureano: 1991). Their principal harvest consisted of the dates and a few other crops such as barley, wheat, sorghum, and millet. The latter were referred to as the desert-roaming no-

mads, as the Sanhadja “Mulattamun” (the veiled) (Marçais: 1946), or as the “Moors” of Berber-Arab origin. They used to travel throughout the Sahara looking for pastures for their camels.

Both tribes spoke and still speak a variety of Tamazight: Zenete and Tamachek, respectively. These varieties of language are still in use in the Touat (Basset: 1941). They have lived cheek by jowl for centuries with the Arabs, and correspond to the “Berber substratum” (Heath: 2002) which impacts on the lexical, phonological, semantic and syntactic levels of Touat Spoken Arabic, henceforth TSA.

The Touat area is situated in the southernmost part of Algeria at about 1500 kilometres from the capital-city, Algiers. It is composed of rural people whose living depends principally on date-palms, camel- and sheep-rearing. Their origin goes back to the first Arab settlers who reached the Touat in the Xth c. AD., the Baramika (or Barmecides), the Guedoua, the Khnafsa, and the Meherza. They were followed by the Bani-Hilal and Bani-Sulaym (XIIth c. AD), who came from Upper Egypt and invaded the whole of North Africa. The Chorfas are the last Arab emigrants to settle on the Touat area (XVIth c. AD); they came from western Maghreb, actual Morocco.

Actually, the Touat is referred to as the Wilaya (district) of Adrar, having the city of Adrar as its capital and most important centre in the Timmi locality. After the independence of Algeria, the Touat witnessed several waves of Algerian immigrants who came to the south looking for jobs, security, and better standards of living, particularly during the “dark era” of terrorism in the 1990’s. Most “internal” migrants came from the North West (Oran, Tlemcen), the centre (Algiers, Béjaia, and Tizi-ouzou), and the East (Batna, and Sétif) of Algeria. They stand for “new social forces” (Miller: 2004 185) with both urban and rural sedentary backgrounds.

The presence of those migrants constitutes a threat to the pre-existing and long-established traditional social hierarchy or “Caste” system, *i.e.*: the Chorfas (the Nobles), the Mrabtines (the Marabouts), the Zouis (people of the Zawayas or holy shrines), the slaves, and finally the Hartani (free-born slaves) (Bouhania: 2007a ; 2008b). The new comers’ political and economic structures are based on a “class” system, which allows for the up-and-down-the-social ladder movements. Hence, any member of the society could have access to the highest spheres of the social structure through income, wealth, and education rather than descent and origin.

This movement of the population and of new models of settlement brought into contact various cultures and speech varieties. Their impact is felt in particular in the behaviour of the young generation as compared to that of the old ones, who are renowned for their Muslim-conservative ideology (Bouhania: 2007a). On the dialectal level, this contact is perceptible in the

speech of the youngsters who exert a pressure on the old rural-Bedouin language variety in favour of more standard=sedentary norms. They make use of an urban-sedentary form of speech, which is regarded as modern and “civilised.” For instance:

The old generation	The youngsters		Meaning
	Boys	girls	
gɑ:lli	qɑ:lli	gɑ:lli	he told me
ʔijji:h	wa:h/	ʔe:h	yes
maħædra~aqarbi:ʃ	ʒa:maʃ		mosque

The young people make use of [qɑ:lli] “he told me” which is the urban sedentary form found in Algiers, while the old people still use [gɑ:lli] which is a west Algerian “prestigious” Bedouin pronunciation widely spread in western and south-western Algeria. Yet, the boys and the girls have divergent tendencies; the boys prefer the sedentary pronunciation with “standard” [q]; whereas, the girls tend towards the locally prestigious surface realisation with velar [g].

As far as the word “yes” is concerned, the youngsters have two trends: either the “locally prestigious” west Algerian form [wa:h] or that of the capital-city Algiers [ʔe:h]. In this case, the girls have a reverse tendency: they prefer to make use of the sedentary *Algérois* term, while the boys have a preference for the west Algerian term.

The word for “mosque” is a proof that the north Algerian dialects have an influence on the local variety of speech. TSA substitutes [ʒa:maʃ] for the local terms [maħædra~aqarbi:ʃ], which are felt as too “rustic” or as symbols of backwardness by the young generation of TSA speakers, as well as by the northerners.

Interestingly, the local speech community does not have any particular sociolects or communal or religious markers associated with the nature and social rank of its constituent members. The Touat people speak nearly the same dialectal form, in spite of some idiosyncratic features such as the realisation of /θ/ as [s] and /ð/ as [z] by the inhabitants of Aoulef, south of Adrar, or the surface reflex of /x/ as [q] by inhabitants of Charef in the Gourara area. Those features refer to “regional” rather than to status or social class linguistic traits. (Lentin, 2002)

The next sections illustrate the phonological and lexical contrasts that characterise /q/ and /g/ in TSA (cf. Bouhania: 2002). First, we define both

phonemes from a dialectological and a sociolinguistic angle. Second, we use minimal pairs and lexical doublets to illustrate the lexical and phonological contrasts between the two variables.

THEORY AND LITERATURE

From a sociolinguistic viewpoint, Ibrahim (1986) calls this split a “bifurcated variation,” since it separates between “standard” and “prestige” variants. The former refers to a codified language variety; the latter is any other variety of language seen as a local “prestigious” means of communication. For Owens & Bani-Yasin (1991), the variation in the use of /q/ and /g/ relates to such sociological parameters as “power” and “solidarity.” They demonstrate that the uvular stop scores higher when dealing with “power” matters, whereas /g/ is well attested in questions dealing with “solidarity” issues (Owens: 2001, 448).

From another angle, Haeri considers /q/ and /g/ as “diglossic variables” (1991), for they exemplify phonological and lexical gaps between “standard or non-standard” and “prestige or non-prestige” language varieties. The divergence between them leads to the emergence of “stigmatized forms” (Salam: 1980) in Arabic language use.

Furthermore, Haeri (1991) interprets the use of /q/ as a marker of “genderlect styles.” According to the same author, Arab women use different socio-phonetic features to sound less “conservative” than men (2000 68). Women initiate both stylistic variation and change within the Arab speech communities. Their less frequent use of standard forms contravenes Labov’s variationist model (1966) that asserts that women, in the West, tend to use more standard forms than men. Arabic speaking communities prove the contrary. Labov admits that Arab speech communities do not substantiate his theory (1982), and correspond to the reverse of his arguments.

In Cairo & Amman, for instance, young and old Arab women prefer glottal stop /ʔ/ to uvular stop /q/ which is representative of a Classical Arabic (CA)/Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) “accent” (cf. Fisher & Jastrow: 1980 52; and Watson (2007 45) for the phonetic debuccalisation of /q/ as glottal [ʔ] through the promotion of a non-primary feature, “guttural”). In Bethlehem, Palestine, the use of the glottal stop by both men and women is a marker of communal or religious affiliations; it reflects a Christian affiliation. The use of the uvular stop refers to the Muslim Arabs. (Amara & Spolsky: 2001)

The glottal stop, which is “peculiar for Maghrebi Judeo-Arabic and other Muslim urban dialects” (Talmoudi: 1984 117) is restricted to aged women, since it is felt to be an effeminate way of speaking (Dendane: 1994; Iraqi-Sinaceur: 1998). Tlemcen women in western Algeria like better the glottal stop /ʔ/ to both /q/ and /g/. They categorize the uvular as “standard” (Dekkak: 1979) and the velar as “vulgar” (Hassaine: 1984). These women prefer a local pronunciation, which is, nevertheless, a stereotyped accent in Algeria.

Male speakers tend towards the use of velar [g], for it is “the variant of general prestige” (Owens: 2001 444; see also Bouhania: 2007b) in most Arabic dialects, and is a surface realisation of standard /q/ which receives a “favourable attitude” (Miller: 2004 195; and also Abdel-Jawad: 1986) on the part of the speech community. As such, we notice that the males shift towards a koineised linguistic form, [g], while the women prefer either a more localised sedentary /ʔ/, or a standard feature /q/.

Bani-Yasin & Owens (1987 29) make it clear that uvular /q/ is lexically conditioned,” and that it is found particularly in the speech of highly educated speakers (Sallam: 1980). As an instance of this fact, various learned speakers were recorded during several radio programmes from the local radio of Adrar (cf. Bouhania: 2008a). Their uses of the velar and uvular stops showed that the men persistently used the standard form /q/, while the women had a balanced use of both variables. This result is also reported in other studies carried out throughout the Arabic-speaking world (for instance in Abdel Jawad: 1986, Benrabah: 1994 and 1999, Caubet: 1998, etc.).

In the next lines, the discussion about urban=sedentary *vs.* rural=Bedouin dialects is brought forth. In particular, the stress is on “the unhelpful dichotomy of “urban” *vs.* “rural” (Britain: 2009), which, as a matter of fact constitutes a theoretical paradox in Arabic dialectology at the present time.

URBAN AND RURAL DIALECTS

In (Arabic) dialectology, the terms urban and rural seem to demarcate between two different types of language varieties, namely urban and rural dialects, which are systematically related to ways of life within or outside the city. The images these terms entail are well illustrated by David Britain: “In the popular imagination, cities were sites of diversity, conflict, contact, complexity, variation, change. Rural areas, by contrast, are portrayed as the in-

sular, the isolated, the static” (2009 227). Cities are, therefore, the locale *par excellence* of language contact, variety, and mixture; whereas, the villages, and the rural areas in general, are stable and conservative.

In situations of language-contact both in urban and rural contexts, however, the consequences are either *simplification* or *complexification* of the languages involved (Trudgill: 2009). Simplification and complexification do not involve the speakers’ abilities, intelligibility and understandings of their language varieties; these terms are mainly technical words which refer to the changes that occur to varieties of language at the syntactic and morphological levels. Yet, there is no clear-cut agreement among linguists and sociolinguists about the simplicity or the complexity effects of contact-induced change (Ferguson: 1971; Mühlhäusler: 1977; Milroy: 1992; Thomason: 2001 for the proponents of “contact-leads-to-simplification” view, in Trudgill: 2009 174).

In the literature, the opposing view is also widely stated in the words of such scholars as Nichols (1992), Trask (1999), and Aikhenvald (2002) who claim in favour of complexity in the areas characterized by “considerable diversity and contact” (Nichols: 1992, 192). Nichols adds that complexity is well obvious at the morphological level, as the languages in contact would exchange, *i.e.* “borrow,” grammatical and morphological categories from one another.

Trudgill (2009), on his part, argues that the outcome of contact-induced change depends on the types of contacts, as well as on the types of society and social structure. From another angle, many researchers claim that contact-induced change does also depend on the category of speakers: young or old. If the former “learn perfectly any language to which they are adequately exposed” (Trask: 1999 63; Trudgill: 2009 177), the latter are not.

In other words, change is towards *simplicity* in adults “short-term” language acquisition in contact situations, whilst complexity is a feature of “long-term, co-territorial contact situations which involve efficient childhood mutual bilingualism or trilingualism, etc.” (Trudgill: 2009 177). Kusters (2003 59), on the other hand, concludes that, in the case of Modern Arabic dialects compared to CA, simplicity characterises varieties “with a history of higher contact” (Trudgill: 2009 179).

Contact-induced change does also occur in the Arabic-speaking world, and leads to both simplification and complexity (cf. Owens: 1997 4) and Kusters (2003) for Nubi, Ingham (1994a:50) for Najdi Arabic, Caubet (1993) and Holes (1995 37) for Moroccan Arabic, and Heine & Kuteva (2005

151-52) for Maltese and Spanish Arabic). Simplification started as early as the first waves of Muslim Arab conquests of North Africa and the Middle East. It was a consequence of the contact between Arabic of the conquerors and the languages of the conquered people, which, subsequently, led to the loss of the local vernaculars and the shift towards that of the new settlers. For Kusters (2003), simplification in Arabic can be measured through the degree of development of the languages involved in the contact, the loss of grammatical (morphological) classes, and an increase in transparency.

Complexity is well illustrated by Maltese (Heine & Kuteva: 2005) and Central Asia Arabic (Versteegh: 1984 147; Ingham: 1994b). Maltese is, originally and linguistically, a Western Arabic variety of language. It underwent various influences from Sicilian and some other south Romance languages. Its complexity is found at the morphological level under the form of an indirect object marker for human definite direct objects (cf. Borg & Mifsud: 2002).

Central Asian Arabic experienced the influence of neighbouring languages such as Uzbek and Indo-Iranian. Its complexity is reflected in the new syntactic patterns added to the already existing Arabic ones:

— *relative clause + noun* next to original Arabic *noun + relative clause* (Owens: 2001 355)

— *possessor + possessed* next to Arabic *possessed + possessor* (*Ibid.*), and

— interrogative suffix *-mi* attached to verbs for question-formation (Ingham: 1994b)

Moreover, in the case of Arabic dialectal studies, the classification of the dialects as urban=sedentary vs. Bedouin=rural rests on the objectives and perspectives of the researchers themselves. Concerning this taxonomy, Palva (2006 and 2009) says:

The relevance of all linguistic classifications depends on the aim as well as the criteria applied. If the interest is purely synchronic, the classifications can be made on the basis of an adequate selection of synchronically well-documented linguistic variables for each dialect or group of dialects, without consideration of diachronic and extralinguistic criteria. If the interest is focused on cultural and historical points of view, diachronic and comparative data play a crucial role. (2009 17, note 3)

As an instance, the label “Bedouin” is “culturalist-oriented” (Miler: 2004) and does not denote linguistic features, only. It also refers to a nomadic life-style. Labelling a language variety “Bedouin” may suggest that its speakers are nomads. But the converse is true, for nowadays many former Arab

“Bedouins” have become sedentary people who live in cities, and still use the velar stop /g/ as part of their local phonologies (Oran in western Algeria, Baghdad in Iraq, and Sana’a in Yemen). This is referred to as Bedouinisation, and stands as the reverse process of urbanisation.

BEDOUINISATION AND URBANISATION

Bedouinisation=nomadisation started in the Arabian desert off the Syrian lands around 1200 BC at the moment when the Arabs created a new saddle to control their camels, and could use them to travel farther than their homelands. It is Bedouinisation = nomadisation which, according to Garbini (1984, in Versteegh: 2001 [1997]), gave birth to what is referred to nowadays as Arabic.

Bedouinisation=nomadisation of Arabic dialects is synonymous with “toughness” and “virility” both in the Maghreb and the Machrek (Miller: 2007); for some; it does also refer to “vulgarity” and “machismo” (Hassaine: 1984), or else to “toughness, manhood and masculinity” (Abdel-Jawed: 1981 176; Palva: 1994 466) which exemplify Bedouin males. In general, the Bedouin dialects are regarded as representative of “purity of origin and Arab tradition but also sometimes with backwardness and toughness” (Miller: 2004 181).

In the history of Arabic dialectology, it is widely accepted that Arabisation took place in urban and military centres then spread to the other areas (cf. Fück: 1959; Ferguson: 1959; Cohen: 1962, Blau: 1965; Versteegh: 1984; Miller: 2004). Those “early urban Arabic dialects are characterized by a number of features associated with koineization, simplification and innovation as opposed to Bedouin dialects, which are regarded as more conservative” (Miller: 2004 180)

Catherine Miller (2007 13) states that Bedouinisation increased considerably during the second part of the XXth c. AD., particularly in such old city-centres as Algiers, Baghdad, Fez, Casablanca, and Oran. Actually, modern urban Arabic dialects owe much to koineization, simplification and levelling, which allowed them to impose themselves as national and regional standards at the expense of many rural=Bedouin dialects. Yet, contemporary dialectal studies of Arabic and its varieties have shown that the latter processes are not unidirectional, that is towards the urban dialects, only. The reverse trend is also possible.

Throughout the Arabic-speaking world, many examples prove that koineization and levelling took place in rural=Bedouin dialects at the expense

of pre-existing urban forms in North Africa, the Gulf (Bahrain, for example), and the Middle-East (Iraq and Jordan, for instance), and led to the emergence of Urbanised Bedouin dialects. Koineization and levelling are restricted to some lexical and phonological features, which are the most salient markers (Abdel-Jawed: 1986; Palva: 1994; Sawaie: 1994). At the phonological level, the surface realisation of $q > g$ in an urban context—in Tlemcen (Dekkak: 1978 and Dendane: 1994); in Casablanca (Hachimi: 2007)—illustrates of the Bedouinisation of old Arabic urban=sedentary dialects.

Concerning the lexical level, Heikki Palva (2009:24) explains that “[a] comparison with urban dialects that display certain Bedouin features suggests that the first step in the Bedouinisation process probably is adopting separate lexical items associated with the rural sphere.” This fact is well illustrated with the numerous terms whose provenance is rural=Bedouin, and which are used in urban areas, such as [gadra] “pot,” [bəggɑːr] “cow driver,” and [ʃɒːg].

There are cases where the dialects used in the cities, in particular the capitals, tend towards those of the rural areas and become local prestigious regional or national standards (Miller: 2004 178). Some of these had Bedouin backgrounds; they have become prestigious sedentary language varieties. Others under the influence of interdialectal contacts, levelling and koineisation drop urban sedentary “standard” linguistic features in favour of rural “Bedouin” ones (Abu-Haidar: 1990; Abdel-Jawad: 1987; Holes: 1987).

In the Touat, the reality is that the local language variety has been in a prolonged contact with various north Algerian Arabic dialects for a long time; this is because of the “internal” migration of northerners towards the south. Some of them have Bedouin backgrounds (Oran, Saida, and Sidi-bel-Abbess) others come from sedentary urban milieus (Algiers, Constantine and Sétif, for instance). This has given birth to a “mixed dialect,” which is the consequence of two diverse phenomena: Bedouinisation and urbanisation. Yet, this topic is not the subject of the present paper, and may be dealt with in a further research study.

To conclude this part, the classification of Arabic dialects as urban=sedentary and rural=Bedouin varieties is not as sharp as it may seem. There are many areas in the Arab world where both types of dialects are found side by side, in particular in those long-established cities.

UVULAR STOP /q/

The standard phoneme /q/ is found in a large number of TSA words; at the surface level, it is phonetically realised in two different manners: as post-velar (uvular) plosive [q] and as velar plosive [g] (cf. Amayreh: 2003 for a description of the consonants of Arabic). According to Blanc (1960), the use of the uvular stop reports a “slight formalization by the use of classicisms in certain specific cases” (83). In other words, the use of “standard” /q/ in a dialectal stretch of speech may be perceived as a classicising feature.

The uvular /q/ has a distinguishing feature from other plain consonants: it has a secondary dorsal component, which consists of a retracted tongue dorsum similar to that of emphatic consonants (cf. Watson: 2007 43, and Bin-Muqbil: 2006 ii). Because of that, it belongs to what is referred to as the class of “pseudo-emphatics”, *i.e.* /q/, r, x, ʁ/ (Bouhadiba: 1989 97).

To measure to what extent /q/ and /g/ are lexicalised in TSA (following Altoma: 1969), a statistical comparison is done to show the frequency of occurrence of both the variables in local language variety (see Graph 1). The list is based on 100 CA items. Although not exhaustive, the results allow us to note that /g/ has a significant occurrence in TSA, as illustrated in table1 below.

graph n° 1: Frequency of use of /q/ and /g/ in TSA

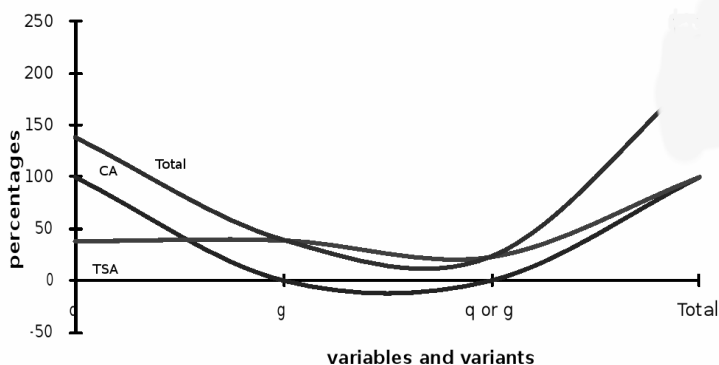


Table1: Frequency of Use of 100 words containing /q/ and/or /g/ in Touat Spoken Arabic

Words	percentages
words with /q/	38%
words with /g/	39%
words with either /q/ or /g/	23%
Total of CA words	100%

Most TSA words containing /q/ belong to the “cultural domain” of vocabulary. They are lexical borrowings from standard Arabic (CA/MSA) into the local variety of language. They exemplify lexical borrowing between a standard language and a non-standard dialect. In TSA, we can hear the following words:

[qɾɑ:] 'he learned'	[waqqɑɫ] 'he signed up'
[qɑ:ʔema] 'list'	[ʕɑqd] 'contract, certificate'
[qɑ:ʕa] 'class-room'	[waqt] 'time'
[qism] 'department, class'	[ʕɑqe:qa] 'traditional ceremony'
[qɒrʔæ:n] 'Koran'	[ħɒqmɑ] 'rights'

In TSA, certain words are phonetically realized with [q] and are particular to this local variety. Most of them are borrowed from Zenete, a variety of Tamazight. We seldom find them in other dialects of northern Algeria. Among these, we have:

Initial position	Medial position	Final position
[qammal] 'he raised'	[ɑmaqqu:s] 'dried animal dirt'	[tɑqtɑq] 'traditional meal'
[qannad] 'he sat down'	[ɑqarbi:ʃ] 'mosque'	[ta:q] 'never'
[qanni:t] 'the core of a palm tree'	[ɑqasri:] 'old vessel'	[zqa:q] 'streets'
[qanqan] 'he gathered, packed'	[aqbu:r] 'very old'	[tharraq marraq] 'idiomatic expression'
[qɑʃʃ] 'hay'	[ɑqsibru:] 'couscous made of barley'	[ħowwa:q] 'veil'
[qɑʃba] 'trunk of a palm'	[taqara:ft] 'cold liquid'	

tree' [qdam] 'soon'	[taqarbuʃt] 'palm tree'	
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In Touat, the young girls prefer to make use of velar stop /g/, more than the boys, as in:

The boys	The girls	gloss
[waʕʕa:h ma: tqu:lha:]	[waʕʕa:h ma: tgu:lha:]	'by God do not say it'
[fəssɔ:q]	[fəssɔ:g]	'in the market'
[tqadmi:]	[tgadmi:]	'come forth'
[qu:llijja:]	[gu:llijja:]	'tell me'

As already reported in other Arabic speaking communities, this phenomenon suggests that the young women are instigators of a language change. The reasons being that the women, who sometimes do not have access to the highest spheres of conservative societies, contrast with their fellow male counterparts through the easiest, immediate, and available means of communication: language.

Abdel-Jawad (1981) and Labov (1982; 1990) contend that women refuse “conservative” ideologies; therefore, they “innovate” their speech forms. Because they do not “know” (Haeri: 2000) the standard forms, since most of them do not go to school (Dekkak: 1986 15), they react to their social condition by “innovating” (Haeri: 2000 68) their use of language. This fact may be done through the use of either /q/ or /g/ in formal as well as informal situations.

VELAR STOP /g/

Most Maghrebian Arabic dialects contrast both on the phonetic and phonological levels between /q/ and /g/ (Cantineau: 1960). Much literature was and still is devoted to that controversy: whether these are two different pronunciations of the same phoneme or whether they are two different phonemes by themselves was, and still is, at the core of the discussions.

Though produced with the same manner of articulation (plosives), they are realised in distinctive places of articulation (velar and uvular, respec-

tively). Cantineau (1960) classified [g], the allophone, as an oral realisation of /q/ and as a sedentary feature. He also set a dialectological demarcation between the two sounds: one being characteristic of Maghreb sedentary languages, the other being characteristic of rural (Bedouin?) dialects. He says: “Les parlers maghrébins, tant de sédentaires que de nomades, ont en général, en face du qaf classique, deux phonèmes: un q vélaire sourd et un g post-palatal. [...] De là des doublets, des paires de mots, l'un ayant un q l'autre un g et s'opposant par le sens.” (Maghrebian dialects, sedentary as well as nomadic, generally have doublets, pairs of words, one having a q the other a g and opposed in meaning) (1960:70).

Marcel Cohen (1912) and David Cohen (1973) explain that the sound [g] pertains to words borrowed from the countryside, *i.e.* rural areas. For other scholars, the velar and uvular “sounds” create a discrepancy at the societal level, for /q/ is seen as representative of urban (sedentary) dialects; whereas, /g/ concerns the Bedouin ones (Boualem: 1990). Other linguists represent /g/ as “vulgar and non-literary” (Hassaine: 1984 162).

For Heikki Palva (1993 1), “[t]he most striking Bedouin marker was-and still is-the voiced /g/ reflex of *qaf*, a feature which serves as one of the most clear-cut Bedouin features in typological classification of Arabic dialects in general.” She adds: “in a classification based on linguistic contrasts, the voiced reflex of OA q is the most exclusive Bedouin feature” (2009 24). As a surface reflex of /q/, then, [g] characterises Arabic “Bedouin” dialects (cf. Abu-Haidar: 2004 2 and 2006a 222, and Holes: 1995 57 about the *qəl tu* and *gələt* dialects of Arabic used in southern Iraq, and which split between Bedouin and sedentary dialects). In TSA, we can find /g/ in all three positions, as in:

Initial position	Medial position	Final position
[gɑmla] ‘a louse’	[xarga] ‘a hole’	[ħrag] ‘he burnt’
[gʕad] ‘he sat down’	[lga] ‘he found’	[t.lag] ‘let go, imp’
[gbad] ‘he caught’	[ragba] ‘neck of a sheep’	[ʕp:g] ‘market’
[gɒʕra] ‘a hole’	[jəgdi:] ‘he lights fire’	[t.re:g] ‘road’

The /g/ variable is by far the most prominent in TSA. Words containing uvular /q/ are mainly literary borrowings taken from the standard language into the colloquial. The following table (reproducing that of Heath: 2002 143) confirms that velar /g/ is used to render classical terms in TSA:

CA/MSA words with /q/	TSA		Gloss
	[q]	[g]	
fawq	-	+	'over'
raqi:q	-	+	'thin'
qaṣi:r	-	+	'short'
qalb	-	+	'heart'
ṭari:q	-	+	'road'
qali:l	+	+	'few, a little'
ʔunq	-	+	'neck, nape'
laqa	-	+	'found'
jaqdir	-	+	'can'
qabaḏa	-	+	'caught'
waqafa	-	+	'stood'
qafala	+	-	'locked'
ṣaqf	+	-	'roof'
ʔaqraʔ	-	+	'bald'
ʔaqal	+	+	'less, fewer'
xalaqa	-	+	'be born'
ṣaraqa	+	-	'stole'
ḥaraqqa	-	+	'burnt'
qabr	+	-	'grave'
qallaba	-	+	'overturned'

As the table shows, /g/ has a more important distribution (70%) than /q/ which averages 30%. The uvular stop, then, has a low incidence on the dialect in matter of classicisms, or literary borrowings from the “cultural domain” (Abdel-Jawad: 1981 205). The /g/ variable, on the other hand, is found in words which constitute the basic vocabulary of the dialect or which refer to the less formal cultural domain. Following Holes (1987), we hold that there are three categories of words:

— those with /q/ whose provenance is Standard Arabic and which belong to the “cultural” domain: [qɾɑ: ja] “education, learning,” [qɔɾ ʔæ:n]

“Quran,” [ʃaɪd] “certificate,” [tɑqɒ:fɑ] “culture,” [ʃɒ:q] “market,” [barq] “lightning.”

— those with /g/ representing the “core items” (Holes: 1987 54; see also Palva: 2009 19 for “core items” with /q/ in the *qəltu* dialects), which belong to the everyday vocabulary of TSA and where /q/ never occurs, as in [gɪad] “sat down,” [gməh] wheat,” [xərga] “hole,” [lga] “he found,” [rfa:ga] “friends, company,” [sa:g] “he drove,” and [suwwa:g] “taxi-, truck-driver”.

— and finally those with /q/ or /g/ alternatively and having no semantic difference: [qɑ:l~gɑ:l] “he said,” [nɑ:qa~nɑ:ga] “she-camel,” and [lɪɒq~lɪfu:g] “above, on top of.”

In TSA, there are words that contain /g/, but which do not have any CA equivalents. These are for example: [garfa] “closet,” [gadħæ:n] “vessel for the milk,” [guninæ:t] “cooling ware,” [tga:zza] “clay place,” [tga:lla] “stalls,” [zamgarr] “he lost,” [tasgna] “earthenware to store butter,” [faggaɪ] “made someone nervous,” [ʃa:gra] “not good,” and [ju:gi] “polite, kind.” Velar /g/ is also found in words which may or may not have CA counterparts in TSA. They are phonetically realized with /g/ in local language variety. The use of /q/ instead of /g/ gives the word a miscellaneous pronunciation. For instance:

Pronounced with g	Mispronounced with q	CA equivalents	Gloss
drag	No equivalent	No equivalent	'He hid'
fuggara:t	fuqqara:t	faqa:qi:r	'Subterranean man-made irrigation conduits'
ga:f	No equivalent	No equivalent	'All'
ga:s	qa:s	No equivalent	'He threw'
ga:si:	qa:si:	qa:sin	'hard'
gedra	qədra	qidr	'pot'
gasba	qasba	qasaba	'rod'
gli:l	qli:l	qali:l	'little'
gɒfra	No equivalent	qa ɪr	'hole'
rfa:ga	rfa:qa	rufaqa:	'friends, mates'
taggar	No equivalent	No equivalent	'fruitless tree'
xarga	No equivalent	xirqun	'Excavation'

We also find /g/ in various foreign borrowings, such as in [gara:ʒ] “garage,” [grup] “group,” [gi:ʃi] “pay desk,” [gidrɔ:n] “tar,” [ri:ɡla] “ruler,” [brigadi] “military corporal,” [mri:ɡəl] “well done,” and [fri:ɡu] “fridge.”

MINIMAL PAIRS

In TSA, there is a contrast between Arabic words pronounced with /q/ and others realised with /g/. Some pairs of words have different meanings; others have overlapping semantic significance, and reveal ‘stylistic variation’ (cf. Palva: 2009 20). Some words are pronounced with both /q/ and /g/ without any semantic shift, that is the velar and uvular stops are in “free variation”.

Bouhadiba (1988) and Boualem (1990) give various examples of words where the use of /q/ or /g/ gives different meanings in the dialect of Oran. The same phenomenon is noticed in the dialect of Constantine where many doublets exist on the lexical level. These pairs of words have different senses depending on whether the velar or the uvular stop is used (Rahmouni: 1971). Rahmouni says: “words pronounced with [qaʔ] or with [gaʔ] and out of which there is a change in the meaning” (1971 36) (translation mine).

More than the lexical and phonological levels, the divergence between /q/ and /g/ reached the morphophonemic and semantic levels. Substituting one for the other gives new meanings to the words and expressions, such as in the following example:

[əssəggaj jasqi nna:s bəlma] “the water-carrier gives people water” (to drink) as compared to [əssəqqaʒ] “the wine pourer” and [jasqi] “he irrigates the land, the garden.” The adjective “*səggaj*” is a technical-term which belongs to the old traditional man-made subterranean water system of the Touat, known as the *Foggara*. It illustrates previous Bedouin-rural sedentary ways of life in the south of Algeria.

Starting from this, we can hypothesise that /g/ is not only an allophone or a reflex of /q/ (cf. Watson: 2007 [2002] 17 for Cairene and San’ani Arabic, and DeJong: 2004 155 for Southern Sinai Arabic dialects), but is also a phoneme by itself.

It is worth pointing out that when velar [g] is an allophone of uvular /q/, it carries a trace of the coarticulatory effect of the latter phoneme. This vestige is particularly noticed in the vowel /a/ surrounding velar stop /g/; it is realised

back around the area of Cardinal Vowel n° 5 (cf. De Jong: 2004 154 for a similar effect in the dialects of southern Sinai). As an example, the word [gɒlla] which original CA pronunciation is /qulla/ “jar,” contains a back vowel next to [g], whereas, in the final position /a/ is a short front vowel.

As Hyman puts it: “wherever we can establish a minimal pair, the two different sounds are phonetic manifestations of two different phonemes” (1975 61). In TSA, we find the following minimal pairs:

— Initial-position:

With /q/	With /g/
qɑ:bəl “he agrees”	gɑ:bəl “take care of”
qɑlb “heart of a palm tree”	gɑlb “heart”
qde:m “old”	gdi:m “rotten”
qre:b “relative”	gri:b “closer to”
qɒlla “jar”	galla “earthenware used in traditional cooking”
qɑ:di: “Cadi, jurist”	gɑ:di: “finished”
qɑrɣa “bottle”	garɣa “green vegetable”

— Medial-position:

With /q/	With /g/
ɬɑqba “fate, destiny”	ɬagba “slope”
rɑqba “man”	ragba “neck”
warqa “piece of paper”	warga “leaf”
ɬɑqd “certificate”	ɬagd “necklace, knot”
rfa:qa “company”	rfa:ga “friends”
daqdaq “knocked”	dagdag “destroyed, crushed”
ɬɑqrab “watch hand”	ɬagrab “scorpion”
fuqara: “poor”	fugga:ra “subterranean irriga-

With /q/	With /g/
ʕqi : qa “traditional ceremony”	tion conduit ʕgi : ga “jewel”

— Final-position:

With /q/	With /g/
xlaq “created”	xlag “appeared, was produced”
ʕarq “origin”	ʕarg “erg, sand dune”
ʔabbaq “packed”	ʔabbag “get lost’ imp”
nʔe : q “I am able to”	nʔe : g “I support, I bear”
ʔa : qa “power, electricity”	ʔa : ga “ability”
ʕnaq “hanged”	ʕnag “boasted”
sqall “beat someone”	sgall “painted”
ʕa : q “who abandons his parents”	ʕa : g “animal dirt”

If these examples prove anything, they prove that the velar stop /g/ is not just an allophonic realisation of uvular /q/. But it is a phoneme on itself.

CONCLUSION

The phonological contrast between /q/ and /g/ makes of TSA a typical sedentary Bedouin variety of language on its route towards urbanisation. Since the Muslim conquests of what will be called the Maghreb, many Arab tribes reached and settled on the Touat area well before the coming of the Bani-Hilal. Among those pre-Hillalian tribes were the Guedoua and the Baramika (or Barmecides) who came principally from Iraq to the Touat during the VIIIth c. AD. It is already mentioned in the literature about Arabic linguistics that Iraqi Arabic is made up of several Bedouin language varieties (cf. Altoma: 1969).

In the Xth and XIth centuries AD, *i.e.* in the second and third waves, other Arab tribes reached the Touat, among which the Bani-Hilal and the Bani-Su-

laim. Both were “Bedouin.” Their Arabic variety of language was not sedentary, and was characterised by the use of velar /g/. As such, one can hypothesise that the discrepancy regarding /q/ and /g/ in the Touat is the result of the presence of pre-Hilali (urban and rural) and Hilali (Bedouin) tribes on the same area.

With the advent of independence from colonial France, the compulsory system of education, and “Arabisation” changed the linguistic trends of TSA speakers. For some of them, the use of /q/ is symbolic of standard and educated norms; whereas, for others the use of /g/ is a sign of local and prestigious norms; it is seen as the marker of a Bedouin “toughness” and pure origin.

The important conclusion one can draw out of this study is that TSA is becoming a “mixed dialect” under the influence of various north Algerian sedentary (urban and rural) and Bedouin (rural) dialects present on the area. Whether TSA is undergoing Bedouinisation or urbanisation was not the concern of the present paper. It needs a more detailed research to be well attested in this local language variety.

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