Arabic as a Minority Language

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Contributions to the Sociology of Language

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Editor
Joshua A. Fishman

Mouton de Gruyter
Berlin · New York

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Mouton de Gruyter
Berlin · New York 2000

for Jocelyne

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Abbreviations

1	first person	Ko	Kotoko
2	second person	M	masculine
3	third person	Ma	Maᶜlula
AA	Algerian Arabic	Mo	Moroccan
AfA	Afghanistan Arabic	MA	Moroccan Arabic
AGR	agreement	MP	medio-passive/reciprocal
AOR	aorist	N	nucleus
Ar	Arabic	nA	native Arabic
ASP	aspect	NA	Nigerian Arabic
B	Baxᶜa	NEG	negative
Be	Berber	O	onset
C	consonant	OA	Old Arabic
CA	Classical Arabic	PF	perfect
Cd	coda	PL	plural
Co	common	PP	prepositional phrase
COMP	complementizer	POSS	possessive
CP	complementizer phrase	Prs	Persian
D	Dutch	Psht	Pashto
DEF	definite	PRT	participle
DEM	demonstrative	R	rhyme
E	English	REL	relative clause marker
EMPH	emphatic	S	syllable
EXIST	existential	SA	Standard Arabic
F	feminine	SG	singular
Fr	French	T	Turkish
Fu	Fulfulde		
GEN	genitive		
H	Hausa		
HAB	habitual		
Heb	Hebrew		
IMP	imperative		
IND	indicative		
INDEF	indefinite article		
INF	infinitive		
IPF	imperfect		
J	Jubbᶜadin		
K	Kanuri		

Introduction

Jonathan Owens

1. Minority and dominant languages[*]

The notion of a minority language, like all social constructs, is built of several and varying constituent elements. In this section I consider some of the primary components in general terms, with only occasional reference to Arabic, which I will elaborate on in the following five sections.

A basic consideration in the definition of minority language is demography. Minority languages are those whose speakers are fewer than those of another group(s), within a defined area. On the basis of size alone de Vries (1990: 58) briefly points out that in Cameroon the largest language, Fang, is itself a minority (19% of the population) in the country.

Demography alone, however, is rarely a sufficient reason for classifying a language as a minority one.[1] For some writers the socio-political component is ultimately the criterial one: minority languages are those which a given population perceives to be minority ones. An extreme view is found in Wardhaugh (1987: 29), who accords the rubric "minority language" only to those languages whose speakers, the linguistic minority, feel their language as threatened. This view reflects a discourse, established about 25 years ago, built around the linguistic minorities of Europe. Speakers of languages such as Welsh and Breton, seeing their numbers declining, reacted to the threat of extinction with political and social countermeasures. The danger of linking definitions of minority language too strongly to political parameters is that it tends to mask a Euro- or western-centrism. Languages are viewed in terms of the overarching institutions in which they are embedded and the laws which recognize, or fail to recognize them. By these measures many languages in the world, arguably many in Africa for example, but also some varieties of Arabic (see 2.2), fall outside the traditional discourse on minority languages, if only because the political and legal institutions of the states within which they exist are themselves too weak to be a significant factor in defining languages.[2]

Allardt (1984: 201) provides a different frame of reference in proposing four characteristics of minority language groups in terms of ethno-social parameters:

- self-categorization
- common descent
- distinctive linguistic, cultural or historical traits related to language
- social organization of the interaction of language groups in such a fashion that the group becomes placed in a minority position

These are useful criteria in that they are fashioned in terms of ethnic groups and therefore potentially of universal application. Allardt, however, holds that all four conditions have to obtain for the recognition of a language minority (1984: 201).[3] Examples, abound, however where these criteria do not coincide, or where groups traditionally recognized as minority ones do not fulfill all of the criteria. Neither the Nubi (see section 5) nor the Mbugu (Mous 1997: 196) in East Africa, for instance claim a common ancestral descent though in the other three respects they qualify as a linguistic minority. The Arabic speakers in Turkey described by Arnold in this volume do not claim a common descent, and are characterized by prominent religious differences (Christian vs. Muslim (Sunni vs. Alawaite),[4] yet in their use of Arabic they have in common the last two criteria. In this latter case it is the political status (or non-status in this instance) imposed by the Turkish state on Arabic and other minority languages which has converted these peoples into a linguistic minority (see previous paragraph). The typology furthermore does not deal with those cases where, in the eyes of the ethnic groups themselves, the criteria are fulfilled, but in the eyes of the linguist, not. Such is the case, for example with the Terik people of western Kenya. They see both themselves and their language as separate from that of their larger easterly neighbors, the Nandi, though there are few linguistic traits separating the two.[5]

The last characteristic in Allardt's list is perhaps both the most interesting and the most problematic. Its basis is the differentiation of language into functional domains. These domains are implicitly differentiated in terms of social and political prestige, with the public sphere (commercial transactions, education, media) being given a higher value than the private (home, relations between friends). Linguistic minorities are generally marked by the fact that they use their own language in the private, the dominant language in the public domain. In this context it is sometimes observed that a language can be spoken by a demographic majority yet still be considered a minority language. Paraguay provides a paradigmatic example here, where Spanish, though spoken by a relatively small minority

as a native language, is often considered the majority language, Guarani the demographically largest the minority (Wardhaugh 1987: 31).

Such a conclusion reflects the tendency among many sociolinguists, when demographic and socio-political criteria are at variance, to accord the higher status to the socio-politically dominant.[6] Note that Allardt's set of four factors gives no recognition to an independent demographic variable. This, however, is clearly a matter of perspective. Synchronic investigation, which sociolinguistics usually is, concentrates on the relative institutionalized support a given language has and bestows prestige status on the one(s) with the greatest degree of support. These are frequently either languages of a demographic minority, or even languages which are the mother tongue of no groups anywhere (e.g. Medieval Latin). In the long term, however, demographic dominance is generally criterial. Kahane and Kahane (1979) have demonstrated this on the basis of former European prestige languages. The language of prestige, when it is not the native language, will endure only so long as an appropriate socio-political scaffolding – the Kahanes delimit five relevant components – exists.

The discussion thus far may be typologized as follows, using the two binary parameters demography and prestige.

Table 1. A minority language – dominant language paradigm

	minority prestige	vernacular	minority	dominant
Prestige[7]	+	–	–	+
Demography	–	+	–	+
examples:	Standard Arabic	native Arabic	AfA	Maltese
	Algerian French	French	French	French
		(medieval)	(Maine)	(France)

Prestige is measured in terms of institutional support which a language receives, choice of language in inter-communal exchanges, and various other factors. The clearest categories in the typology are what I have simply termed "minority" and "dominant" languages, the two rightmost columns. Afghanistan Arabic (AfA) is neither a language of general prestige in Afghanistan, and it is spoken natively by a very small number of speakers (see Kieffer this volume and 2.1 below), hence a "minority" language. Maltese, on the other hand, is the native language of most inhabitants of Malta and it is well supported institutionally (e.g. taught in school, national language). The other two cells in the typology are a larger definitional challenge, as implied by their mixed "+" and "–" attributes.[8] I will suggest below (3.4) that native Arabic (i.e. the Arabic dialects) may be considered a

vernacular language, by which in this context is understood a language which has little or no institutional support, but which is spoken natively by a demographic majority. Standard Arabic, on the other hand, is not a native language, but is supported institutionally. The French examples[9] are cited to underline the fact that the two parameters must always be considered relative to a particular world. In Algeria, French is a minority prestige language (see Boumans and Caubet, this volume). In late Medieval and early Renaissance Europe, French within the boundaries of present-day France was a vernacular language; in the American state of Maine French is both spoken by a demographic minority, and the object of little institutional support, hence a minority language, while in present-day France it is a dominant language.

The point of such a typology is not so much to pigeon-hole languages into a simple schema, but rather to provide a framework for understanding language genesis. A crucial and simple measurement which is particularly relevant in the context of the present volume is whether (and of course, under what conditions) a language or language variety is transmitted from one generation to another. For two categories of languages in Table 1 such transmission is unproblematic in the sense that it occurs in the initial stages of socialization. These are the dominant and vernacular columns. For the other two there are potential problems, though of a different order. For the minority language column, should there exist a situation where bilingualism is established early in the life of individuals, and where the dominant language intrudes into familial and informal domains, there exists the potential for rapid language shift (de Swaan 1998: 120). For the prestige minority language the work of the Kahane's cited above defines the issue. Being a non-native language, as soon as the socio-political and symbolic support for the language is withdrawn, or if a "stronger" prestige language confronts it, its demise may be quick.

Note that within the parameters set by Table 1, the notion of minority language is expanded to include both the demographic and functional distribution of a language or language variety.[10] It might be objected, before proceeding to the last topic of this section, that opening the notion of minoritiness to prestige languages risks expanding the framework to the point of allowing any language to be defined as a minority one.[11] If they are, as here, considered minority because of functional restrictedness, it implies that there can be minority languages without there necessarily being a group of native speakers to represent them, as it were, minority languages without a linguistic minority.[12]

The issues lurking behind this position are too large to deal with adequately here. I will mention only two points in defense of the current characterization. The first I assume to be relatively uncontroversial, namely that identifying a linguistic minority does not imply that the minority language of the group needs to be a native one. When Star Trek fans speak Klingonese (TlhIngan Hol) they help create an in-group identity with a non-native language. Horvath and Wexler (1994) argue that a non-native, genetically unique variety forms the basis of modern Hebrew. If today spoken Hebrew is a dominant language in Israel, in its late nineteenth-century history this creation was not even a native one.

The second problem derives from intuitive or traditional notions of prestige and minoritiness. Prestige does in some sense imply "dominant", hence the anomalous, if not oxymoronic quality of a notion like "prestige minority". The perspective which I am assuming here can be elucidated with the help of work on threshholds and language shift (e.g. Grin 1993). This work assumes as primitives two variables, the number of people who speak a language (termed "m") and the percentage of time it is spoken (= b, presumably, written as well; a category "used" is needed here). Typically, a language may not be used at all times, but rather distributed into concentrations of activity or functions. The product $m \times b$ yields a mathematical value by which, theoretically, the degree to which competing languages are used can be compared. It is very likely that by this measure French in Algeria and Standard Arabic in Arabic countries generally are used to a far lesser degree than native varieties of Arabic, and hence in the sense of degree of use may be designated minority.[13] The qualification "prestige" added here gives recognition to their special social status, however.

A final point to note in the present discussion is that a linguistic minority is very often bi- or multilingual. Indeed, Allardt's fourth point above presupposes such a state of affairs. Generally the dominant language group is not bilingual in the language of the minority, a situation which may be represented as follows, using the languages which are found for instance in Algeria.

Table 2. Language distribution relative to ethnic groups

ethnic group	language acquisition status	
	native	second
Kabylia[14]	Berber	Arabic
Arab	Arabic	–

Berber is the minority language, though in a sense Arabic is as well, since it is used by a Berber-speaking minority group. Berber-speaking ethnic groups such as the Kabylia may be marked linguistically by their use of their native language, by Arabic, to the extent that it deviates from local Arab norms, and by their combined use of the two in codeswitching.

In the following three sections I will expand the discussion of the above points with particular reference to Arabic. In section 2 Arabic ethnic minorities are introduced, and in section 3 Arabic as a prestige minority is discussed, with particular, though not exclusive, reference to its use outside of the Arabic world. In part 4 non-Arabic-speaking minorities are treated. In section 5 the extreme case of the formation of Creole languages and minority status will be discussed and in the final section, 6, the papers in this volume are introduced.

2. Arab ethnic minorities and Arabic

The perspective which has been given the most attention, and therefore is the easiest to summarize, is Arabic as used by Arabic ethnic minorities. Indeed, in his recent synoptical treatment of Arabic, Versteegh (1997: 226 ff.) devotes an entire chapter to Arabic as a minority language, restricted entirely to the use of Arabic by ethnic Arabs.

All around the fringes of the present-day Arabic world are or were found enclaves of Arabic-speaking peoples who identify themselves as "Arabs". The following lists the geographical spread of these minorities, along with representative (and far from exhaustive) references to the native Arabic found in them. The list moves roughly from East to West and North to South and may conveniently be divided into three categories, "old" (and still surviving), "extinct" (and old), and "migrant" (see below).

Old
Uzbekistan, Tadjekistan (Fischer 1961, Versteegh 1984-86, Dereli 1997)
Afghanistan (Kieffer 1981, Ingham 1994)
Iran: Khuzistan, Persian Gulf coast (Ingham 1973), Khorasan (eastern Iran, Ulrich Seeger p.c.)
Turkey: Anatolia (Jastrow 1978); Antioch/Hatay (Arnold, this volume)
Israel (Kinberg and Talmon 1994, Amara 1995)
Cyprus (Borg 1985)
Chad (Roth 1977, Pommerol 1997)
Nigeria (Owens 1993)
Cameroon (Zeltner and Fournier 1971, Zeltner and Tourneux 1986)

Mali (Heath, p.c.)

Extinct
Daghestan (? Zelkina, this volume)
Sicily (Agius 1996)
Spain (Corriente 1977)
Zanzibar (Reinhardt 1894)

Migrant
Europe (Aissati 1996, Tilmatine 1997)
North America (Rouchdy 1992)
Australia
South America

Among both the old and extinct varieties the migrations which brought Arabic to these regions are by and large coextensive with various movements which brought Arabs to their better-known locations within what today is known as the Arab world. It is, arguably, only in Antioch that an Arabic-speaking minority emerged as a result of redrawing colonial boundaries, when, in the course of Syrian independence negotiations, the province of Hatay was effectively ceded by France to Turkey immediately before the Second World War. Otherwise, Arabs had reached the Lake Chad area (Chad, Cameroon and Nigeria) by 1400, as part of the same movement which brought them into the Sudan. The Arabs established themselves in Turkey as early as the seventh century, as part of the migration into northern Iraq and Syria,[15] and the Arabs of Central Asia go back to the eighth and ninth centuries (Kieffer, this volume). The linguistic reflexes of these various dialects directly encode this historical differentiation. The Arabic of Nigeria is most closely related to that of the regions to the East (Cameroon, Chad, The Sudan), and southern Egypt (Owens 1993). The Arabic of Mali is essentially the same as that of the Hassaniya of Mauritania to the North (Heath, p.c.), while Reinhardt's description of Zanzibari Arabic (1894) has equally been used as representative of Omani Arabic of the nineteenth century, as the Arab rulers of Zanzibar settled there from Oman. As Arnold in this volume notes, the Arabic dialects of Antioch are all "continuations" of those found in neighboring Syria, and the Arabic of Khuzistan and the Persian Gulf coast in SW Iran belongs to the same general dialect type found in southern Iraq.[16]

Even where it appears that minority status, often coupled with isolation from an Arabic homeland, has led to a certain degree of structural influence

on the variety, the specific historical affinity of the dialect remains. In Cypriot Arabic, for instance, Borg (1985: 152) suggests that the phonology has been considerably influenced by Greek. Although he does attribute certain simplificatory tendencies such as a reduction in productive plural patterns (121) directly to contact with Greek, one can suspect that isolation from an Arabic homeland since approximately the twelfth century has been a contributory factor here as well. Nonetheless, Borg convincingly shows that present-day structural characteristics of the dialect are explicable in terms of an origin in an Arabic homeland located along the northeastern Mediterranean coast and its hinterland (1985: 154 ff.).

The Arabic language as a mother tongue had by and large reached its present geographical spread by about 1500, the last significant expansion being the intrusion of Arabs into the Lake Chad region, starting in about 1400. Beginning in the late nineteenth century Arabs began emigrating throughout the world, a process which continues today. Significant Arabic-speaking minorities have thus emerged in North and South America, Australia, and Europe. These fall within the terms of what sometimes are termed migrant or immigrant, as opposed to indigenous minorities (see e.g. Anderson 1990 for differentiated typology and 2.2 below).

The list above is probably non-exhaustive, though I do not have detailed information on further Arabic-speaking communities. Simeone-Senelle in the conference on Arabic dialectology held in Malta (1998) reported on Arabic speakers in Eritrea and I personally know Arabs living in Nigeria (Shuwa Arabs) who grew up in Bangui in the Central African Republic. Arab traders from the Sudan, Chad, and Nigeria have spread throughout Central Africa (Central African Republic, Cameroon, probably the two Congos) and established settlements in these countries, particularly in urban centers. These latter migrations though relatively recent, appear to have the makings of permanence in these countries.

For classificatory purposes a much more problematic case involves the Sudan, and perhaps Mauritania. While Arabic in the Sudan is the largest native language, in terms of the absolute number of native speakers perhaps even spoken by a majority of the population, it never became strongly established as a native language in the southern part of that country (see section 5 below). The reasons behind this are manifold and cannot be gone into here, though it is safe to say that in the southern Sudan, a geographic area larger than Syria, native Arabic is a minority language. Orientating the present classification of ethnic minority in terms of political boundaries does not allow one to call native Arabic a minority language in the southern

Sudan. Taking into account the social, cultural, political and historical situation in the South argues strongly for doing so, however. Similar considerations might apply to southern Mauritania, along the Senegal border, though the situation there is less well researched.

Chad represents what I believe be to a unique configuration in lands where Arabic is spoken. As a native language it is relatively small. Pommerol (1997: 63) estimates the number of such speakers at 560,000, or 8% of the total population of the country (c. 6 million). At the same time it serves as an inter-ethnic koine throughout much of the middle and southern parts of Chad. Up to 40% of the population, according to Pommerol, can use the language in some form for vehicular purposes (1997: 62). As an ethnic minority language, but probably also the most important koine, it occupies two distinct sociolinguistic niches (see n. 8).

2.1. Old minorities and the history of Arabic

Given the very differentiated histories of the old Arabic minorities, and the fact that minority status alone does not operate as an independent variable in determining linguistic change (see above), it is not to be expected that minority Arabic would exhibit common and unique structural traits. Nonetheless, the dialects of these older Arab minorities may be of special interest in regard to the interpretation of the history of Arabic. One reflex of this is the retention of "archaisms". Existing as they do on the fringes of the cultural influences emanating from the historical centers, these Sprachinseln may retain archaisms lost in more central regions. In contrast to such centers as Cairo and Damascus, the feminine plural, for example, is maintained in the spoken Arabic of Nigeria, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and in many parts of Turkey. More interesting than a typological listings of features, however, is their potential contribution to the reconstruction of Arabic linguistic history.[17] For instance, the following isoglosses shared between Nigerian Arabic and Afghanistan Arabic, the Arabic dialects geographically most distant from each other, argues for a common origin. The six mentioned here are significant because they are uncommon, though not unattested, in other regions of the Arabic-speaking world.

(1) Shared isoglosses between two minority dialects
(a) $\theta \rightarrow s$ AfA *saloos* '3', *saʕlab* 'fox' (Ingham 1994: 112), NA *salaasa* '3'
This is a completely regular correspondence.
(b) *-ki* 2fsg object suffix, *beet-ki* 'your house F'

Invariably *-ki* (a feature attested very sporadically in other areas, such as Egyptian oases).

(c) *-in* or *-an* marker of noun modification (Ingham 1994: 109)

AfA   *min   qawm-in   ʕarab*
      from   people-in   Arab   'from Arabs'

NA   *min   naadim   abu   bagarat-an   waade*
      from   person   having   cow-an   one
      'from a person with one cow'

This is probably cognate with, though certainly not derived from, the tanwin of Classical Arabic.

(d) Imperfect modal (?) prefixes (Ingham 1994: 110)

SG		PL	SG	PL
AfA			NA	
1	*m-a-γdi*	*m-u-γdi*	*b-aktub*	*n-aktub*
2 M	*t-u-γdi*		*t-aktub*	
F	*t-u-γdi*		*t-aktubi*	
3 M	*m-uγdi*	*m-u-γd-uun*	*b-uktub*	*b-u-ktub-u*
F	*t-u-γdi*	*m-u-γd-in*	*t-aktub*	*b-u-ktub-an*
'I go' etc.			'I write' etc.	

The point of identity here is that a modal prefix, either *m-* (AfA), or *b-* (Nigerian Arabic) normally does not occur before the *t-* or *n-* imperfect prefixes.[18] These are the only two dialects known to me where precisely this distribution of modal prefixes occurs.

(e) Doubled verbs: *lamma* 'collect', with final *-a*.

These isoglosses can be accounted for by four distinctive factors: (1) parallel, independent development, (2) mutual contact with each other, (3) contact with a leveling, intermediate variety, either a dialect or Standard Arabic, or (4) common origin. Given their highly specific, and within the terms of Arabic dialectology, unusual quality, the first alternative is unlikely, while geographical separation precludes the second. The fact that intervening varieties of Arabic do not, by and large, exhibit these traits equally precludes the third, as does the virtually non-existent status of Standard Arabic as a language of everyday communication in Afghanistan and northeast Nigeria. This leaves the fourth as the only plausible explanation. Note that this common origin can be assumed to date from the earliest period of the Arab migrations out of the Arabian peninsula and adjoining

areas in the seventh or eighth centuries. This makes the common, recon-
structible ancestor of this variety as old, in absolute time, as the Classical
language itself, a state of affairs which may lead to a rethinking (if not
discarding) of the traditional Arabicist notions of Old and Neo-Arabic
(Owens 1998c).

2.2. The fate of Arabic-speaking minorities

Parallel to the same question which will be touched upon in the next two
sections, it may be asked what the fate of these Arabic-speaking Arab
minorities is. Roughly speaking, the situation in Africa is the mirror image
of that in Central Asia and Cyprus. In Cameroon and Nigeria ethnic Arabs
and Arabic are holding their own, and in fact in Nigeria had been able to
gain a certain ethno-political profile due to the fact that the wife of the
former leader of Nigeria was a Shuwa Arab.[19] In Chad, Arabic is
increasingly the lingua franca of the entire country (Pommerol 1997).
Similarly the Arab community in Mali, though relatively small, is well
established.[20] In Asia, on the other hand, the Arabic-speaking communities
are generally receding. In Turkey, a region where one might expect them to
be able to maintain their language given their common border with Arabic-
speaking regions, Arabic (along with other minority languages) is
suppressed by a government policy which gives recognition only to Turkish.
Whereas in Turkey Arabic is threatened by overt political policy, in
Afghanistan it is under pressure from other factors. Despite being a small
population, rural Arabs appear to be able to maintain an Arabic (Qoreysh)
identity and language,[21] though they are increasingly threatened by
emigration to urban areas, where their language is quickly lost (Kieffer
1981: 189). In Uzbekistan as well their numbers are declining.[22] The small
Arabic-speaking community in Cyprus is probably in danger of disap-
pearing, though by ethnic absorption rather than political fiat. Outside of
Africa, it is only in Israel and Khuzistan where the existence of Arabic in a
minority context is not threatened.

    There are few comprehensive studies of Arabic among the recent migrant
populations, though trends are emerging. In the USA in particular it appears
that Arabic tends to go the way of most immigrant languages, namely to
gradually die out among the second and third generations of immigrants
(Rouchdy 1992). In Europe, on the other hand, the process is more
complicated, which is to say that Arabic does not necessarily show the rapid
generational demise attested in the USA. There are various reasons for this.
First of all, there are probably more Arab immigrants to Europe, simply

because Europe and Arabic-speaking countries are in close proximity, and in the case of France in particular, a number share a colonial history. It is thus easier for Arabs to maintain ties to the homeland. Immigration policies may hinder integration into European societies, reducing the motivation of Arabs to give up their language, and at the same time educational policies adopted in various European countries[23] may also encourage their maintenance. It is only recently that the language of Arab minorities in Europe has become the object of intensive investigation,[24] and in these studies it is emerging (e.g. Extra 1997: 41 ff.) that a differentiated spectrum of devel-opments ranging from relatively rapid language shift out of Arabic to maintenance over generations is attested.

3. Arabic as a functional minority language

3.1. Arabic, language of the Qur?aan

Arabic is institutionalized as the language of Islam through two historical events. First, the *Qur?aan* was revealed in Arabic. As the word of God, this document is, in theory at least, untranslatable and so Muslims must know Arabic to know their Holy Book (see Wansbrough 1977: 85ff. for still relevant overview of linguistic and exegetical issues).[25] Secondly, in the early days of the Islamic conquests, Arabic established itself as the language of state and culture, and particularly from the period of Abbasid rule, begun in Baghdad in 750, a huge amount of written literature covering all aspects of the then known world of science, culture and literature, was composed in Arabic.

From its very beginnings one may assume, statistics will never be forthcoming, written Arabic was mastered by a relatively small part of the Islamic populations, and from the very origin of Classical Arabic a diglossic relation (see 3.4) existed in which the language of everyday communication was not the Classical language. For the non-Arab Muslims it was a foreign tongue. Classical Arabic is thus a language whose prestige is institutionalized in Islamic culture, but which lacks a base of native speakers. Outside of the Arabic world it generally has been and is a minority language, in the sense that its primary legitimization is through its strong association with limited functional domains. In terms of the typology of Table 1 it is a prestige minority language.

In section 1 above various problems were outlined concerning the difficulty in defining what a minority language and language minority are.

The problem is only compounded in trying to apply these concepts to Islamic societies stretching from Morocco to Indonesia, with different situations obtaining at different times in their history. It will therefore suffice here to outline three broad domains where Arabic is or has been employed in non-Arab societies, without attempting to classify or typologize in detail.

3.1.1. Cultural writings

At its peak Islamic culture produced a wealth of creative, often brilliant writings on a vast array of cultural and scientific topics. Many, if not the majority, of the thinkers did not have Arabic as their native language, and often they lived in non-native-Arabic speaking environments. Non-Arabic minorities within Arabic countries, Jewish writers like Maimonides for instance, generally wrote in Arabic.[26] For the study of history in Islamic Africa, prior to the nineteenth century the majority of the documents are written in Arabic. My colleague Roman Loimeier (Loimeier 1997) summarized the thematic domains of the Arabic writings of the Central Sudan, roughly Chad and northern Nigeria, with subjects ranging from poetry to koranic exegesis to history (see Hunwick 1995 for summary). In the fifteenth century 23 documents have been catalogued, in the sixteenth 13 and in the seventeenth 29. It should also be mentioned that within the fabric of Islamic societies, not the least importance attaches to the *Qur ?aan* as a source of magical efficacy (see e.g. Wilks 1975).

3.1.2. Language of state and commerce

Writing within and between Islamic states was generally carried out in Arabic, so very frequently the oldest documentary sources for various parts of Africa are in Arabic. The first mention of Arabs in the Lake Chad region (1391) for instance is attested in a letter from the king of Kanem to the Mameluke ruler of Egypt. In the nineteenth century the king of Bornu, a Kanembu, carried out an extensive exchange of letters in Arabic with his adversary in Sokoto (Northwest Nigeria), Ahmadu Bello, a Fulani. An important source for the interpretation of the history of both West and East Africa are king lists and chronicles of various kinds written in Arabic (e.g. Rotter 1976, Lange 1977, Ibriszimow 1996). As Zelkina notes in this volume, local historical chronicles appeared as early as the twelfth century in Daghestan.

3.1.3. Koranic institutions

The *Qur?aan* is the document par excellence of Islam, not only the embo-
diment of Islam itself, but also the foundation of Islamic law and a point of
orientation for many of the Islamic sciences. Traditional Islamic education
begins, therefore, with the study of the *Qur?aan*. Koranic schools, known
variously as *kuttaab, xalwa, sangaaya, msiid,* and *madrasa*[27] are remar-
kably uniform in their curriculum, concentrating in their initial stages on the
memorization of the *Qur?aan*, both orally and in writing. Thereafter
attention turns to the Islamic sciences, including grammar, law, *hadiith*, and
the life of the Prophet. Whereas in the initial study of the *Qur?aan* rote
learning is prescribed, in the advanced stages a working knowledge of
Arabic itself is necessary. In an historical perspective the Islamic sciences
are generally cru-cial for the spread of Arabic. The pattern Zelkina (this
volume) describes for Daghestan is typical for the spread of Arabic gene-
rally in non-Arabic Islamic communities, namely that the first Arabic
writings to be introduced are copies of, or modelled on those of the extant
corpus of the Islamic sciences.

3.2. Extra-Arabic influence

The institutionalized presence of Arabic-medium functions in non-Arabic
speaking societies leaves its mark outside of Arabic in two main ways,
through loanwords[28] and the use of the Arabic alphabet for the local
languages.

3.2.1. Loanwords

A spinoff of the widespread use of Arabic outside of Arabic speaking
regions is the presence of Arabic loanwords. These are particularly asso-
ciated with languages whose speakers have an Islamic background. For
Hausa, for example, a language which until very recently has never been in
direct contact with Arabic-speaking regions, Baldi (1990) has identified
1,245 Hausa words which indirectly or directly derive from Arabic. Often
the religious and legal domains dominate,[29] though there is a great deal of
variability from language to language, reflecting the differential nature of
contact with Arabic. Swahili, for instance, displays a wide dispersion of
semantic domains for Arabic loans (Zawawi 1979), reflecting the fact that
an Arab population from Oman who were (probably) bilingual in Swahili
and Arabic were responsible for the introduction of many loanwords.[30] Of
course, in many instances the presence of Arabic loanwords does not imply

a direct contact with native Arabic speakers or even with Arabic itself in any form. In the case of Hausa, for example, it may be assumed that many words ultimately of Arabic origin come via Kanuri, a people among whom Islam was established (as early as AD 1,000) well before those in the Hausa-speaking areas (see e.g. Wexler 1980 for discussion). In this indirect way words of Arabic origin have spread far beyond the borders of Islam (Knappert 1970).

   In non-Arabic Islamic countries words of Arabic origin often subsist in two guises, a form more or less integrated in the host language as loanwords and a form used in Islamic religious ritual. Discussing Arabic in China, Wexler (1976: 51) distinguishes between "whole" and "merged" Chinese Arabic. The first guise appears for instance in prayer and is closer to the Arabic norm (e.g. *ʔalqurʔaan*), whereas the second is used in normal conversation and exhibits a greater adaptation to the local language (*kurʔân* or *kurʔâni*). Further typological aspects of the status of loanwords are sum-marized in Wexler's contribution to this volume.

3.2.2. Arabic alphabet

Inevitably the spread of the *Qurʔaan* and Islam favored the spread of the Arabic script in which it was embodied. Throughout the fringes of the Arabic-speaking world the Arabic script was adopted to local languages. In West Africa the *ajami* script was adopted to Kanuri in the seventeenth century, in East Africa Swahili was written in the Arabic script by the late eighteenth. Persian was among the first languages to be written in Arabic script,[31] and thereafter a number of languages of Central Asia (Turkey, Caucasian languages), the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia were written in Arabic (see Kaye 1995).[32]

3.3. The fate of a functional minority language

The existence of Arabic outside of the Arabic-speaking world has largely been legitimicized through its association with Islam. Through this asso-ciation it moved into political, cultural and educational realms tangential to the core religious domains. In some areas, Islamic Africa for example, it was the only literary vehicle until fairly recent times. Arabic was thus a language of prestige. Like other languages of prestige, however (see section 1 above), it is beholden to the vagaries of the cultural and political climate which support it. Prestige status does not guarantee it immortality, and its association with Islam is both a strength and a weakness.

Prestige status does not even guarantee that it will be seriously learned by a given population. Musa (1989: 105) notes, for instance, that the reason Bengali Muslims generally do not learn Arabic, is that although they believe they will speak Arabic in the afterlife, God will make them speak it when they get there.[33] Its close association with Islam may limit or further its spread in one way or another. Wexler (1989), for instance, notes that Dungan, a Mandarin Chinese variety spoken inter alia in Kazakhstan, has both Islamic and non-Islamic members in its community. The Dungan Muslims are more apt to accept words of Persian/Arabic origin (mediated often via Turkish) than are non-Muslims. The Hindi/Urdu divide provides an institutionalized example of the importance of the sectarian association. Hindi uses the Devanagari script and has borrowed heavily from Sanskrit while Urdu, essentially the "same" language, is written in the Arabic script and is dominated by loanwords from Islamic languages, Arabic being the ultimate source (Kaye 1997). Hindi, of course, is the variety used dominantly in Hindu India, Urdu the variety in Islamic Pakistan.

Perhaps the most striking instance of the contingency of Arabic in a prestige minority position is that of Turkey.[34] Until the beginning of this century Turkish was written in the Arabic script, and heavily imbued with Arabic loanwords. Indeed, Bittner, writing in 1900, speaks of a "loanword mania" ("Fremdwörtermanie") in Turkish, with Arabic and Persian being the main donors languages. As part of Atatürk's deislamicization, westernization and educational policies, first the Arabic script was proscribed, and soon thereafter words of Arabic origin (Zürcher 1985: 84, Perry 1985).[35] The same purifying factors which motivated the Turkish nationalists touched Persian as well, though to a lesser degree. In Iran, whereas Arabic loanwords were replaced, the script remained, and loanwords were tolerated to a far larger degree than in Turkey (Karimi-Hakkak 1989). Zelkina's contribution in this volume details the ebb and flow of the language in non-Arabic Islamic Daghestan over a period of more than 1,000 years.

Associations drawn recently between Arabic and Islam within the context of language rights further underscore both the close link, but also the dependency of Arabic on the institution of Islam. Abdussalam (1998), writing implicitly from the perspective of non-Arab Muslims, suggests that access to Arabic should be a right for all Muslims, a lack of knowledge of Arabic being a threat to their Islamic identity (1998: 58).

Measured in functional domains, one would judge Arabic to have regressed outside of the Arabic world over the last few hundred years. Today,

throughout Islamic Africa, for instance, it is the Latin script which, to the extent that they are standardized, African languages are written in. Even in strongly Islamic Somalia, it was the Latin script which triumphed in the orthography debate of the 1960's and early 1970's.[36] New loanwords, of course, are more likely to come from European languages than from Arabic.

This is not to say that Arabic is a dying variety in these regions, or that countermeasures aren't undertaken to reverse the trend. There will continue to be an Islamic core, whose learned members are well versed in Arabic. Nigeria in the 1980's and 1990's saw the rise of Islamiyya schools, which may be thought of as Islamic mission schools, most of which, in principle at least, have Arabic as their medium of instruction. Meuleman (1994: 25 ff.) reports on an apparently growing interest in Arabic in Indonesia and recently the Arabic script was considered for, though has not been given, official status in a number of Caucasus regions. Here and elsewhere, however, to the extent that Arabic remains largely associated with Islam, the degree of its use will be dependent on the socio-political mood pertaining to Islam.

3.4. Dialects, diglossia and minority status

The categories minority/dominant may equally be applicable to varieties of a single language. Concerning spoken Arabic, Holes (1987) documenting the ʕArab/Baḥarna dialects in Bahrain and Abd-el Jawad (1981) describing Arabic language use in Amman among Jordanians, Palestinians, urbanites and ruralites, implictly or explicitly deal with the symbolic dominance associated with each of the different Arabic dialects. In Bahrain, for instance, by a number of measures of usage the dominant dialect is that of the politically dominant demographic minority, the ʕArab.

The dichotomy Standard Arabic/native Arabic may itself be analyzed in such terms. Simpson (1981: 235) summarizes a number of characteristics typical of minority languages, including the following.

Minority languages are:
- limited to certain domains
- not standardized
- borrow extensively from the dominant language
- limited in their institutional resources
- considered deficient
- live in the shadow of the culturally dominant language

Speaking in terms of "minority variety" rather than "minority language", it is clear that the native Arabic dialects, fulfilling all of the criteria on the list, are in a minority status vis a vis Standard Arabic. Reformulating the relation between Standard and dialect in this form, rather than in terms of diglossia, is of more than academic interest. Whereas diglossia is a descriptive label summarizing a set of attitudes towards and domains of use of languages or varieties of the same language, identifying a variety as a minority one potentially sets it within a socio-political framework in which conflicts between the varieties and their resolution may be given expression. It might be objected that such a perspective is inappropriate in the case of the Standard Arabic/native Arabic opposition, as there is no constituency within the Arab world which identifies native Arabic as their own language. Nonetheless, the need to recognize native Arabic as a legitimate variety has been admitted explicitly or implicitly in particular by academics and educators (e.g. Ibrahim 1983; see also Youssi 1995: 41, Benrabah 1993, Laroussi 1993).

4. Non-Arabic minorities and Arabic[37]

In this section I list perfunctorily Arabic countries with sizeable indigenous (i.e. not immigrant) minorities (see Zaborski 1997).[38] I will touch on some linguistic issues associated with this category of languages in section 6, only noting here that within the context of the present volume such minorities are of interest to the study of Arabic in three ways. First, the Arabic of non-Arab minorities may differ significantly from native Arabic structurally (with the implication of a causal relationship). Secondly, these languages might themselves be decisively influenced by Arabic in some way, again with the implication of a causal relationship due to minority status (see Arnold on western Aramaic in Syria and Maas for Arabic influence on Berber, this volume). Thirdly, the Arabic of the contact region may itself be influenced by the non-Arabic minority languages (see e.g. Arnold, this volume on Aramaic substrate in Syrian Arabic and Owens 1996 on semantic "substrate" in the Sudanese dialect area).

Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco: Berber
Egypt: Berber, Nubian (Rouchdy 1991)
Libya: Berber, Teda, Kanuri[39]
Mauritania: Berber, Wolof, Fulfulde (Peul), Soninke
Sudan: more than 30 languages, too many to list (see e.g. Tucker and Bryan, 1966)

Oman, Yemen: Six modern South Arabic languages (Simeone-Senelle 1997)
Syria: Aramaic (Jastrow 1997), Kurdish
Iraq: Aramaic (Jastrow 1997), Kurdish

Historically speaking minority languages in Arabic countries generally are receding.[40] However, on the whole they have not been so systematically repressed, as say Arabic in Turkey, and at present the status of the languages differs markedly from country to country and language to language. Aramaic in Syria, for instance, is well-tolerated. The modern South Arabic languages are small, and half of them (Baṭhari, Ḥarsuusi, Hobyoot) well on the way to dying out. Little has been published on the socio-political background of this phenomenon, however. Arabic has been encroaching slowly on African languages in the Sudan over a long period of time (see e.g. Bechhaus-Gerst 1996: 24 on Nubian in the northern Sudan). Recently, overt Arabicization policies there have speeded up the process, simultaneously politicizing and exacerbating language contact issues in the Sudan (Nyombe 1997). Similarly, in Mauritania Arabicization policies have been met with resistence from speakers of African languages.

The presence of minority languages in Arabic countries may help throw into relief socio-political aspects of Arabic, which otherwise engender little public debate. In Algeria and Morocco the minority language Berber in recent years has been instrumental in provoking a serious debate, not least among North African academics, about language policy. The presence of a large Berber-speaking minority has served to dissociate native Arabic from Standard Arabic: if Berber is the native language of one part of the population, then native Arabic (dialect) is the native language of the other. Standard Arabic stands exposed as an artifact of national language policy (see e.g. articles in Laroussi, 1993a and 1997, Brahimi and Owens, this volume).

5. Minority language and the formation of new languages

In extreme socio-political circumstances, minority status may lead to the genesis of new languages. Creole languages, including Creole Arabic, are a case in point. Today (mutually-intelligible) forms of Creole Arabic are spoken in Uganda and Kenya, where it is know as "Nubi", and in the southern Sudan and increasingly in urban areas of northern Sudan, where it is frequently called "Juba Arabic". In addition, pidginized forms of Arabic are spoken in Chad.

Leaving aside questions of genetic classification (Thomason and Kaufman 1988, Horvath and Wexler 1994, Owens 1996), it may safely be assumed that the modern Arabic Creoles are not a form of Arabic: they are not mutually intelligible with Arabic, and are structurally quite different from it.[41]

In terms of the present discussion, the origin of the language in the second half of the nineteenth century in the southern Sudan is of crucial interest. In a process reminiscent of standard models of Creole language development, I have argued (1997) that a Pidgin/Creole Arabic developed in the trading camps of the southern Sudan precisely because Arabic (i.e. spoken colloquial) was a minority language in the southern Sudan, and that for various reasons access to standard colloquial Arabic was impossible for the southern Sudanese. Both demographic and socio-political factors were decisive in this process. In terms of population, the relatively small number of Arabic speakers who could serve as a model for new language learners hindered the spread of a normal Arabic "dialect". At the same time the social distance between the Arabic-speaking dominant class and the multilingual southerners was such as to preclude the intimate contact necessary for the transmission of a normal[42] form of Arabic. The fact that Arabic nonetheless served as the lexifier language is probably due to two factors. First of all, the multilingual and relatively unstratified southern population needed a common language of communication and secondly, Arabic, being the language of the dominant merchant, military and administrative class was the most viable alternative.[43] The emergence of Creole Arabic in the southern Sudan is thus an expression both of the minority demographic status of spoken Arabic, and its association with a dominant, though inaccessible, social group.

6. Arabic and non-Arabic minority languages in a minority context

A number of the papers in this collection were presented at the colloquium "Arabic as a Minority Language" held in Bayreuth in October, 1996.[44] The focus was to investigate the question how, if at all, minority status had an effect on the language structure. Thus most of the papers are descriptively orientated and do not deal extensively with general themes of minoritiness, and only indirectly with the political and cultural dimensions of the subject. This focus was deliberately recommended under the suspicion that to discuss language in a minority context at all one needs first to know what its linguistic properties are.

There are three papers with an historical basis. Ferrando describes the Arabic of Mozarabs of Toledo, an Arabic-speaking Christian minority who continued to use Arabic for nearly two hundred years after the reconquest of the city by Christians in 1085. Written Arabic from the past, with the rare exception, represents either Standard Arabic or Middle Arabic (Blau 1988), a form which has Standard Arabic as its unrealized ideal. This is the language of Ferrando's texts. What is significant about it is that until its demise in the mid 13th century, the language maintained a considerable uniformity. Its end was abrupt, as it were minority status not affecting form. Ferrando further suggests that Arabic declined as a spoken language before it was lost as a written one among the Mozarabs. This process recalls the Kahanes' historical typology (see section 1), in which they point out that a language without native speakers[45] is a weakened one.

Wexler takes a very different tact. His perspective is not so much the structure of Arabic among minority groups, as the symbolism which Arabic carries. The contingent relationship between Arabic and Islam comes to the fore in his treatment of Arabic among Spanish Sephardic Jews between c. 1000-1500, and contemporary Balkan gypsies, both non-Muslim groups. Both, he argues, used or use Arabic in one form or another to establish in-group identities. His contention (for further on which, see Wexler 1996: 154 ff.) that the Judeo-Ibero Romance of the Jewish Spanish (post 1492) diaspora is essentially a relexified Judeo-Arabic, an interesting if controversial proposal, alerts the reader to the interplay between dominant and minority languages. If in this case the relexification of Arabic took place under the influence of a dominant (diaspora) Spanish, one could equally look for the reverse happening among non-Arabic languages in Arabic lands (see section 4 above).

Zelkina's contribution, drawing inter alia on the not inconsiderable Russian research material on the subject, traces the history of the Arabic language in the north Caucasus region of Daghestan. First introduced into the region by conquering Arab forces in the seventh century, the language witnessed its greatest fluorescence in relatively recent times, beginning in the seventeenth century. Previously limited to a relatively small elite, and largely confined to the traditional domains of religion and the Islamic sciences, the language became ever more involved in the daily life of Daghestan, in the form of historical treatises, poetry treating local events and personages, and decorative inscriptions. A pinnacle was reached in the mid-nineteenth century when the language served as the official language of the North Caucasian Imamate. Here, apparently for the first time, Arabic

was widely used as a spoken as well as a written medium. As Zelkina points out at the beginning of her essay, the Caucasus straddle the border between a Christian North and Islamic South, and when the Imamate gave way to northern dominance, first Czarist, later Bolshevik Russia, the fate of Arabic again turned. While Arabic continued to flourish in the early part of the century, by 1925 it fell victim to a Bolshevik policy which condemned it as representing a backward, conservative tradition. Repressed, it quickly lost its former vitality, though did not die out completely.

Zelkina's contribution underlines the enduring relation between the Arabic language and Islamic culture, but in a way which suggests that the prominence of the language is a barometer for the broader social and political climate. The fact that the barometric extremes are separated chronologically by less than 75 years testifies to the close dependence of Arabic on social and political factors in non-Arabic Islamic societies. In Bolshevik Daghestan the use of Arabic was, for ideological reasons, virtually outlawed, whereas in the North Caucasus Imamate Arabic served as an important symbol of state. Other periods witness a less extreme movement hovering around a median defined by religious legitimization.

A second set of papers treats Arabic spoken by ethnic minorities. Codeswitching is a domain *par excellence* for the definition of status relations between languages and linguistic groups. Caubet and Boumans point out in their article that the phenomenon of codeswitching becomes institutionalized in oral repertoires when speakers of a minority language begin incorporating elements (particularly "content" words) of the dominant language within a matrix set by their own minority variety for conversation between themselves. In this view to function as a matrix language in a codeswitching context is a litmus test for minority status. Their comparative data comes from Dutch/Moroccan Arabic switching in Holland and French/Algerian Arabic in Algiers. Despite the contrasting socio-demographic contexts – French in Algeria is a prestige minority language, Dutch a dominant one – the structure of codeswitching is very similar. The paper is furthermore notable for the Monolingual Structure Approach to the description of codeswitching developed by Boumans. Boumans argues that the finite clause, defined by the finite verb, rather than a larger syntactic construct, is the largest basic unit of codeswitching, and that codeswitching involves the insertion of an embedded language into this matrix.

Kieffer's contribution is based on an analysis of texts from one of the least documented of Arabic dialects, that of Afghanistan. Other than Ingham (1994, cited in 2.1 above), there is no substantial documentation of this

variety. The texts display graphically in which domains minority status has impinged on inherited Arabic structures, the lexical and syntactic domains being particularly influenced by areal features. These texts should be viewed in a larger dialectal and linguistic context. In terms of Arabic dialectology, there appears to be a complex of old (i.e. settled in the 8th century) and nearly extinct dialects in Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, eastern Iran (Khorasan) which share a set of distinctive features. While largely maintaining their morphology and basic phonological structure (with a certain amount of contact-induced change), they have undergone considerable syntactic influence from stratal languages including a shift to SOV sentence structure (Versteegh 1984), the existence of a Persian-like genitive along with the Arabic *idafa*, both possessed-possessor (as in Arabic) and $Pssr_1$-Pssd-pro_1 (as in Turkish) genitive orders (Versteegh 1984-6: 449), compound noun phrases marked by a possessive pronoun only on the final noun of the phrase, a partial restructuring of the reference system (see Ingham 1994: 110), and postpositions alongside inherited prepositions, among others. Lexical and semantic (e.g. calquing) influence is particularly marked. Kieffer's texts exemplify many of these points.[46] This influence from Persian and Turkic has been so great that Kieffer suggests that Afghanistan Arabic may belong to the class of mixed languages (see Bakker and Mous 1994). To follow up this suggestion further, it is remarkable that while the morphology is basically of Arabic origin (see 2.1 above), the syntax has been greatly influenced by Persian and Turkish. Note in passing that far from evincing a simplified grammatical form of Arabic, the varieties embodied in Kieffer's texts are complex in the sense that they incorporate rules with different genetic origins.

   It is an interesting question to pose, why these minority varieties have undergone such strong influence from neighboring languages, whereas the minority varieties in the Lake Chad area (see below) have not. On prima facie grounds four factors may be mentioned. These include a consideration of historical factors – the Central Asian varieties have been in a minority status for a longer period of time; demographic – their numbers are far smaller; geographical – they have been effectively cut off from majority Arabic-speaking areas; and socio-political – Arabs in the Lake Chad area have dominated the important economic niche of cattle rearing, and have (for various reasons) maintained a stable symbiotic relationship with the dominant groups (Kanuri, Bagirmi, etc.). An explicit research design investigating the differential influence from other languages on these varieties

would be of considerable interest to the theory of language contact and change.

It is striking that Arabicists have contributed very little to two interesting, and in recent years often debated areas of contact linguistics, creole languages and mixed languages. This is surprising, because Arabic is one of the few languages in the world which, besides a relatively uniform native variety (the "dialect"), has given rise to both creole varieties (section 5 above) and, arguably, mixed languages.[47] A refreshing exception to this neglect is found in the work of Versteegh (1984-6) who explicitly relates the Central Asian case to creolization and "untutored and unnatural language learning" (1984-6: 451). Even a brief comparison of Creole Nubi and Central Asian Arabic, however (which I will not carry out here), reveals significant differences: whereas Central Asian Arabic has largely retained most basic elements of Arabic morphology, in Nubi most have been lost, and where Central Asian Arabic has acquired non-Arabic syntactic matrices, it has, as Versteegh observes, often been done via a fairly transparent adaptation of Arabic structures to Persian/Turkish ones (see n. 58 in Kieffer's article). The origin of many Nubi structures, on the other hand, is opaque and often open to speculation (Owens 1990, 1997). In any case, within the context of the present volume, it is apparent that minority status has had profound and, a point I would emphasize, diffe-rentiated effects on one and the same "language".

Talmon's paper sets out in broad terms the status and forms of Arabic in Israel. The link between language and politics is apparent in various ways. The abandonment of Judaeo-Arabic by Jewish native speakers of this language after the formation of Israel, the influence of Hebrew on spoken Arabic, and the existence of countervailing tendencies both inhibiting and promoting the emergence of a spoken Arabic koine may all be directly related to the status of Arabic as minority language in Israel.

Two papers deal with Nigerian Arabic. The first illustrates the fact that minority status by no means implies restriction in function. Owens and Hassan describe the secret language of Arabic-speaking koranic school students in Borno, in which their native Arabic serves as the matrix language model. Here the Arabic-speaking language community has vitality enough to engender new forms of Arabic. It may be noted that the secret koranic language is frowned upon by elder scholars, who remark that it is a misuse of the Holy Book. To what extent the survival (assuming it to have had its origins elsewhere) of this type of discourse outside of the Arabic-

speaking world is due to its separation from mainstream Islamic educational practices is a question which can be kept in mind for further research.

The fact that a matrix language is even more evident here than it is in Bouman and Caubet's study of codeswitching, underlines the idea that one function of codeswitching is the creation of an in-group social identity. The basic language, the matrix, (usually, a native one) is manipulated in such a way as to make it unintelligible to outsiders. Which other groups this linguistic instrument sets codeswitchers apart from, and in what ways, requires greater attention. At the same time, there are significant structural difference in the nature of the relation between the matrix/embedded language in the two cases. The *waris* secret language is largely a simple replacement of forms, with no change in underlying semantic values to the matrix language. Adding little that is referentially new, the "meaning" of the secret language is co-terminous with its social function. The matrix language in codeswitching, on the other hand, functions as a frame allowing, inter alia, the importation of an open-ended number of lexemes, many representing new concepts, from other languages into the matrix.

A second contribution on Nigerian Arabic is based on the analysis of a spoken corpus of approximately 500,000 words. Nigerian Arabic is relatively uninfluenced by local languages at the phonological, morphological and syntactic levels. Loanwords, however, are typically a domain favored by language contact (3.2.1). In quantitative, token-based terms it appears that even in this linguistic area Nigerian Arabic has undergone relatively little outside influence. At the same time, the study shows that use of loanwords is sensitive to the social identity of the speaker and the context in which he or she is speaking, suggesting that the degree to which the language will be influenced by them in the future will be dependent on the nature of the multilingual contacts among Nigerian Arabs. In this context it is interesting to note that influence from Standard Arabic is largely restricted to a very specific group of Arabs (those who have studied Standard Arabic in school and university). Here Nigerian Arabic, and in this respect it is probably typical of Arabic outside of the Arab cultural sphere, contrasts sharply with developments in the Arabic world where Standard Arabic is having a large impact on the spoken language.

A final set of papers deals with comparative topics of different sorts. Arnold's contribution examines the fate of two minority varieties, Aramaic in Syria and Arabic in the province of Hatay in Turkey (see Maps 2, 6, 7). Given that the histories of the two minorities are very different – Aramaic has been in a minority status for something in the range of 1,000 years,

Arabic in Hatay for barely 60 – direct parallels are not prominent. In both cases, however, reflexes of minority status are in evidence, underlining a general correlation between language form and socio-political environment. The situation in Hatay is reminiscent in certain ways of that in north-east Nigeria (Owens 1998b) in the sense that minority status tends to favor the maintenance of dialect diversity, a diversity very much in evidence in Arnold's description. Where dialect differences are associated with well-profiled socio-political groupings, the dialect of the dominant group will serve to one degree or another as a prestige target variety (e.g. the "madani" dialect in Amman, Abd-el Jawad 1981, or the ʕArab phonology in Bahrain, Holes (1987). In Hatay province Arabic in general is banished from inter-communal forums in favor of Turkish, so despite an often cleanly-contoured association between sectarian group and dialect, there is little opportunity for communal-wide norms to develop. Further like the Nigerian situation, dialect shifts and mixed dialects may arise in local contexts but do not generalize beyond these. Especially noteworthy is Arnold's observation that speakers of the different Arabic dialects in Hatay speak Turkish to communicate between themselves. While structural difference certainly plays a role in this practice, in other inter-group communication situations marked by comparable dialect differences (e.g. the ʕArab/Baharna in Bahrain) an Arabic-based norm is used. Such contrasts in communication convention involving the "same" language graphically illustrate the extent to which language practice is dependent on socio-political context.

In the case of Aramaic in Syria an analogous dialect differentiation is attested between the three Aramaic-speaking villages, and for similar reasons the limitation of inter-Aramaic contact in favor of, in this case an Arabic lingua franca tends to maintain the differences. Arnold's description is perhaps more notable for other reasons, however. Particularly remarkable is the extent to which Syrian Aramaic has developed and to some degree kept fixed strategies for the incorporation and Aramaicization of loan material from Arabic, strategies which in some cases go back to early Aramaic-Arabic contact. Although the community is small, the adaptations recall routines attested in a "vernacular" language such as Moroccan Arabic for integrating loanwords (Heath 1989). This does not imply that the dominant Arabic environment does not have a significant effect on Aramaic. Paradoxically perhaps, it is a dominance which leaves inherited features in place. In all older stages of Aramaic the verb system is very similar to the Arabic one. The modern Syrian Aramaic verb has in part maintained a system comparable to Arabic (prefixal subjunctive, suffixal perfect, with

similar person markers). This contrasts with eastern Aramaic which largely developed outside of Arabic-dominated regions (in dominantly Persian, Turkish, Kurdish-speaking areas), where the verbal system has undergone radical restructuring, in particular loosing the perfect-imperfect contrast based on ablaut changes and prefixing or suffixing conjugations. This situation throws into relief terminology such as "archaic" and "innovative". In language-contact terms, both eastern and western (Syrian) are influenced by dominant languages, though in the one case this influence favored (apparently, for reasons still to be determined) profound verbal restructuring whereas in the other it favored the maintenance of original forms, hence its archaic-like character. Note that one cannot speak here of Arabic being a conservative or hindering force on Syrian Aramaic, as implied by Correll (cited by Arnold in this volume, n. 12), as there nowhere exists a modern Aramaic variety outside the pale of a dominant language by which a "natural" development can be measured.[48]

Brahimi looks at Arabic out of the perspective of a non-Arabic minority language. Berbers have been in contact with a dominant Arabic culture and language since the seventh century. The influence of Arabic on Berber is reflected in the quantity of loanwords in a spoken corpus of Algerian Berber, where Brahimi observes that on a token count the degree of loaning into Berber from Arabic is on a far more massive scale than that attested in other comparable studies. At the same time, Arabic morphological and syntactic influence has not been so striking. Her paper documents a relatively recent development whereby loanwords from Standard Arabic are now entering Berber directly via bilingual Berbers, rather than via Algerian Arabic. In this regard, and bearing in mind the contingent nature of Standard Arabic loanwords attested in other situations (see 3.3), it is notable that educated Berbers are highly cognizant of the presence of loans from Arabic. Given the politicized nature of language and language policy in North Africa (see Brahimi and Owens, this volume), it will be interesting to see whether such words ever become "embroiled" in questions about Berber language purism.

Maas' contribution takes as its starting point the observation that dominated languages, being neglected species and leading a life outside of the limelight of planning and standardization will develop in ways peculiar to the environment they live in. The native Arabic (*daariʒa*) of Morocco and Moroccan Berber are two such varieties. Long years of contact have left their mark on these varieties such that they have developed isometric structures so that Maas speaks of the development of a single linguistic

entity, namely "Moroccan". This contribution is exploratory and typo-
logically orientated rather than definitive and based on a comparative
perspective which, Maas observes, is necessary to follow his thesis through
to its end. Nonetheless, based on phonological and verbal morphological
comparisons between Moroccan Arabic and Berber the relevant categories
are clearly delineated. Moroccan Arabic is seen as diverging from other
varieties of spoken Arabic and converging towards Berber. This conver-
gence may be due to two basic factors. First, the historical accident that
distantly-related Afroasiatic relatives found themselves united in North
Africa, meant that certain common ur-structures were already in place.
Secondly, contact-induced influence has mutually influenced the two
varieties. Significantly, while allowing for a degree of substratal influence
from Berber, Maas sees Arabic as having an important influence on Berber,
particularly in the verbal structure.

Maas' contribution suggests two hypotheses. On the one hand,
languages lacking institutionalized prestige will be subject to a greater
degree of change than those with such support. The divergence of the
Moroccan from other varieties of Arabic *daariʒa* is seen in these terms. On
the other hand, in relation to languages with which it shares a dominated
status, in this case Berber, the dominant/minority dichotomy is neutralized
in favor of a larger entity, Moroccan. Enticing though such hypotheses may
be, proving them requires mustering detailed historical, comparative,
dialectological and sociolinguistic data. Assuming and testing such a model
will prove fruitful in investigating the dynamics of language change in
Morocco.

The only paper dealing specifically with attitudes about language is that
by Brahimi and Owens, comparing attitudes towards Arabic in Nigeria
(Kanuri in Borno) and Algeria. Not surprisingly, given its general con-
ceptual framework and its questionnaire-based methodology, this is per-
haps the paper in which the general considerations of minority language and
language minority discussed in section 1 above are most transparent. Within
the parameters discussed in section 1, it is shown that "Arabic" has very
different social meanings in Nigeria and Algeria. Whereas in Algeria it is the
political value which is most prominent, attitudes towards Arabic
correlating with an ethnically-based politics reminiscent of Ross' (1979)
ethnic mobilization (see n. 2), in Nigeria the religious value is basic, Arabic
being an integral, though restricted part of Kanuri culture, associated with
Islam. The contrastive symbolic value of Arabic in these two situations re-
capitulates in certain ways the diachronic fate of Arabic in Daghestan, as

described in Zelkina's contribution. Arabic in Daghestan witnessed periods of politicization (e.g. the North Caucasus Imamate and subsequent repression in the Bolshevik era) and of "religiousization" (e.g. medieval period).

The current collection has an avowed empirical focus. Being to our knowledge the first volume devoted exclusively to Arabic as a minority language, a description of case studies serves to define and exemplify in a concrete way the range of issues which may be treated in such a perspective. It should not be lost sight of, however, that a number of concepts are introduced which will have general applicability in the study of Arabic and beyond, such notions as "Islamic languages" (Wexler), "Community language vs. Superimposed language" (Boumans and Caubet), "languages of conflict and consensus" (Brahimi and Owens), the Monolingual Structure Approach to codeswitching (Boumans), "Moroccan", a composite areal variety (Maas), and the "bilingual's principle of least differentiation" (Owens), to mention but a few.

By any measure, geographical extension, number of native speakers, political importance, or existence of a literary and cultural tradition, Arabic is one of the great languages of the world. Greatness implies dominance and, to the untutored observer, may mask the many individual contexts where Arabic is in one sense or another a minority language. The coverage of material in this volume aims not to be comprehensive, but rather to introduce the reader to a wide range of topics in Arabic linguistics which can be looked at within a nuanced framework of minority language issues. A framework around a picture whose exact size and many of whose details are not yet known can only be provisional; however, this is better, one hopes, than no framework at all.

Map 1. Arabic ethnic minorities
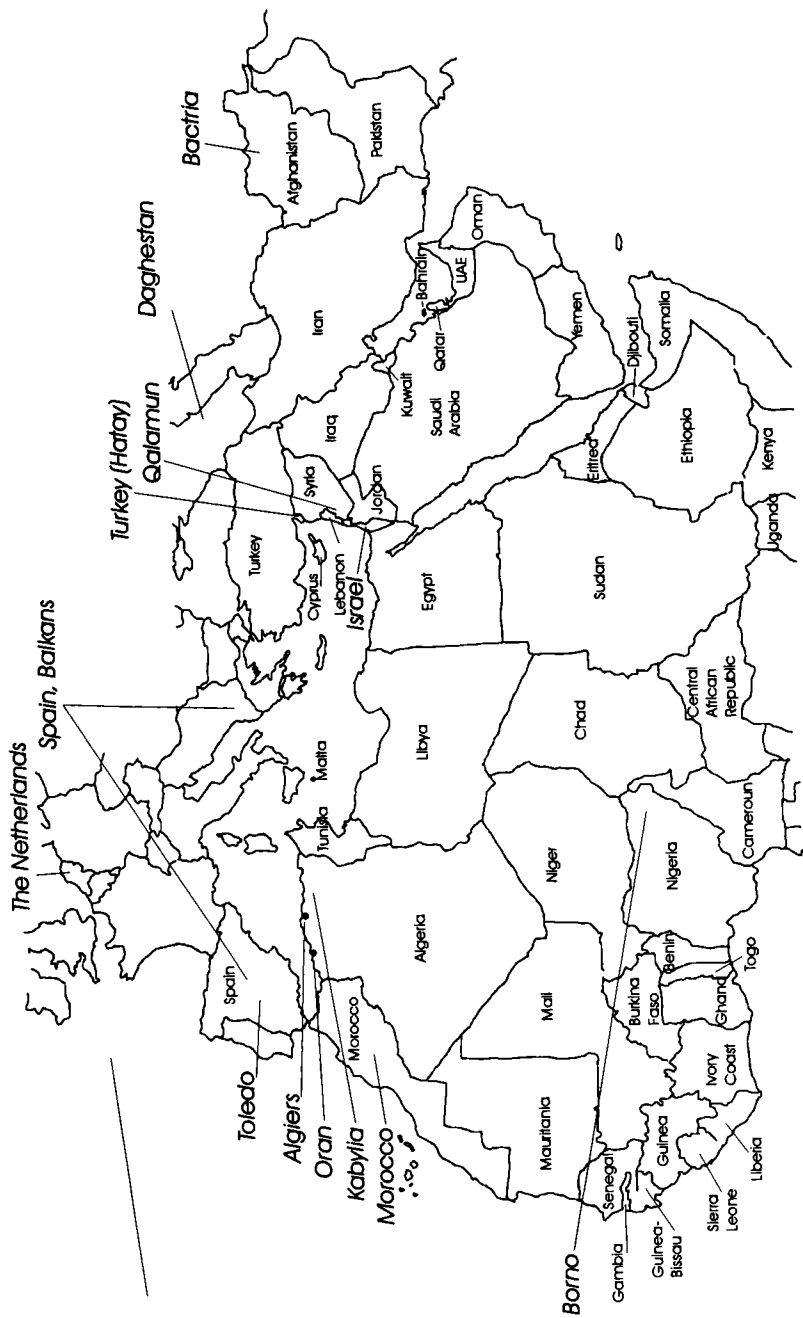
Map 2. Case studies in the current collection

Notes

*   I would like to thank Dominique Caubet, Louis Boumans, Fadila Brahimi, Utz Maas, Werner Arnold, Paul Wexler and Pierre Larcher for their critical remarks and bibliographical suggestions on this chapter. I would additionally like to thank Dominique Caubet for her assistance in resolving a number of special problems. I am indebted to two anonymous readers for suggesting a number of improvements.

1.   Of course, the assumption that one can define a language purely demographically, purely in terms of the number of its native speakers, is itself a convenient fiction. Such questions as bilingualism (what is a native language?) and the dialect – language continuum ultimately require the linguist's imposition of labels.

2.   Thus Ross (1979), developing a model describing stages by which ethnicity becomes politicized, sees a close link between minority language and ethnicity only at the stage of ethnic mobilization, the third step in his four stage typology. In this view the concept of language minority itself presupposes an explicit politicization of the group which uses the language.

3.   Allardt qualifies this as follows: "What can be said is that, in a language minority, at least some members are connected to the group by each of the basic criteria" (1984: 202). Even allowing for these and other qualifications which Allardt offers, counterexamples, such as with the Nubi, are readily available.

4.   Arnold (p.c.) reports that of the various sectarian groups in Antioch who speak Arabic as their mother tongue, only the Jews give a high prominence to common descent as a criterial ethnic trait. Paradoxically, in terms of Allardt's criteria, and in contrast to the other three sectarian groups, they do not identify themselves as "Arabs", however.

5.   I am indebted to my colleague Franz Rottland for this information (p.c. and Rottland 1982: 24). The Terik clearly do have a different origin from the Nandi, though now speak essentially the same language.

6.   Though no hard and fast rule can be claimed here. Allardt (1984: 197) points out that in Switzerland, neither the language of greatest prestige, French, nor the demographically dominant language, German, are differentiated along the minority/dominant axis. Similarly, Woolard (1985) would consider Catalan a minority language, though in Catalonia Catalans are not a politically dominated people.

7.   The basic division between prestige and demography is intended to reflect the fundamental dichotomy between language as cogntive object and language as social object. The former is represented by the demography variable. It is a given that everyone will learn a language, that every individual will be represented by at least one language. The latter is represented by the prestige variable (subsuming concepts like 'status' and "institutionalization"). Which language is learned, when, to what degree, under what circumstances, etc. are social variables.

8. Of course all of the cells are potentially ambiguous or in need of greater specification when more cases are considered. The typology does not, for example, self-evidently accommodate the case of Arabic in Chad, where it is both a minority language, and an inter-ethnic koine, in which latter function it is in some sense a dominant language. See also n. 12 below.

9. I would like to thank Dr. Jaochim Christl of Bayreuth University for the French information.

10. The rise, maintenance, transmission and death of a prestige minority language will differ considerably from the "life cycle" of a minority language. As a form of language, however, it may be studied and classified within general linguistic categories.

11. I am indebted to Louis Boumans for particular discussion of this point. He suggests that language for special purposes (liturgical, cultural, instrumental) falls outside of the minority/dominant paradigm.

12. In some instances it is plausible to discern an historical progression whereby speakers of a once dominant language lost their dominance, and eventually gave up the language altogether, the superseding group maintaining this language, however, as a prestige one. Such is the case with Sumerian, whose speakers, politically dominant in Mesopotamia from c. 3100-2500, were superseded by Akkadian speakers, who continued, however, to use Sumerian (along with Akkadian) as an administrative language. Sumerian continued to be written until the first century AD, though it had lost its native speakers by 2,000-1,500 BC. Sumerian, which in its "Akkadian phase", may be termed a "relic prestige minority language" since it apparently owed its prestige status to the fact of its being the first written language on the scene, would exemplify a language which devolved from being a dominant language (in the terms of Table 1), to a minority prestige language in two steps. Its speakers first became a minority group, then the native language was lost altogether. Looking at this evolution in incremental terms helps one to see the logic of not requiring that minority languages be native languages. Sumerian in its final stages is simply a prestige minority language without native speakers.

    Ferrando (this volume) describes a situation where written Arabic, though increasingly resting on an attenuated base of native speakers, continued to be a vibrant language for a period of over 100 years after the Christian conquest of Toledo in 1085. In this case it apparently dominated the written medium until replaced in this domain by Castilian.

13. Admittedly, as Utz Maas emphasizes (p.c.) the issue is exacerbated by the question of medium, spoken vs. written language. I assume that an abstract category 'language' ultimately subsumes this dichotomy.

14. "Berber" as an ethnic label is not a simple one to define. Caubet (p.c.) asserts that Berber as an ethnic category does not exist in North Africa, though in her questionnaire, Brahimi (see Brahimi and Owens, this volume) was able to get consistent responses to questions asking about "Berber" identificatory characteristics. Kabylia is the area around Tizi Ouzou, SE of Algiers, and may also serve as an ethnic label for Berber speakers in that region. As the discussion in Mettouchi

(1993) indicates, however, both "Berber" and "Kabylia" are terms whose ethnic content may vary from context to context.

15. Though in common with other early Arabic migration patterns, Arabic was first established in urban centers, only later in rural areas. Aramaic was still widely spoken in rural areas of Syria, for instance, into the fourteenth century (Behnstedt and Arnold 1993).

16. The extinct dialects of Spain (Andalusia) do not self-evidently reflect modern Magrebinian Arabic. It may be assumed that they are related to earlier varieties existent in North Africa, though the question awaits a fuller treatment of comparative Arabic grammar. As the discussion in section 2.1 indicates, the Arabic of Central Asia also reflects linguistic relationships from an earlier dialectal world.

17. This opportunity can be taken to correct a recent representation of the special interest of the "peripheral" dialects for Arabic language history and dialectology. Kaye and Rosenhouse (1997: 263) state that the peripheral dialects are "...more divergent than the mainstream Middle Eastern or North African dialects". It is unclear what they diverge from, however. There are good grounds for arguing that North African Arabic is more different from, say, Cairene Arabic than is the "peripheral" Nigerian Arabic (Owens 1993).

18. Ingham reports that the *m-* never occurs in the 1PL and can only occur before a *t-* prefix if the verb stem begins with CV-. In the texts in Dereli (1997, Uzbekistan Arabic) there are no examples I believe of *m-* before a second person imperfect, and only a small number before 3FSG *t-*. Most 3FSG imperfects have simply *t-*, even in non-subjunctive contexts.

19. Concrete effects are visible. In 1997 the small village which is the home of the former president's wife, located in a predominately Arabic-speaking area about 30 kilometers north of Maiduguri, was made seat of a local government area which includes half of Maiduguri, the largest city in Borno.

20. Heath (p.c.) states that Arabic-speakers are proportionally largest in the northern part of the country, while in Timbuctoo they constitute about 10% of the population.

21. Defining the cultural underpinnings of language maintenance is a large task. Arabic, in any case, offers examples of maintenance and shift in a number of socio-political contexts.

22. About 1,000 speakers (Kees Versteegh, p.c.). Reliable contemporary figures are apparently not available for either Uzbekistan or Tadjekistan (Dereli 1997: 12).

23. E.g. "enseignement de la culture d'origine" described in various articles in Tilmatine, 1997.

24. Thus in fairly recent summaries of linguistic minorities in Europe (e.g. Stevens 1978), Arabic speakers are not included at all. Similarly Arabic (and other non-European languages) is lacking from Hinderling and Eichinger's (1996) treatment of linguistic minorities in central Europe, though these authors essentially limit their summary to endogenous minorities, for instance those which emerged in the wake of realignments of state boundaries.

25. It is perhaps a short step from the conception of Arabic, language of a holy book, to Arabic, a holy language. Classical interpreters did not take such a step, however, and it is a misrepresentation to call it "sacred" (as, e.g. McConnell 1991: 70).
26. It has been suggested (Blau 1988: 21) that non-Muslim writers are more prone to using Middle Arabic, a not quite standard Arabic, than are Muslims. No systematic study of the matter has been made, so far as I know.
27. In Meuleman's (1994: 22) brief description of the *pesantren* Islamic schools in Indonesia it appears that the schools begin immediately with a full-scale introduction to the various Islamic sciences, which would distinguish the curriculum from the koranic schools.
28. Influence in syntactic and morphological domains is not, in principle, excluded, though it appears that Classical or Standard Arabic at least have tended not to have had a strong impact on the languages they are in contact with.
29. Labatut (1984), for instance, identifies 335 certain loans from Arabic in the Fulfulde of northern Cameroon, slightly more than a third of which (120) pertain to the religious and legal domains. Dumestre (1984: 18) shows that in Bambara Arabic loanwords in the religious domain show a lesser degree of phonological integration in the Bambara phonological structure than do those from the non-religious (commercial, intellectual, writing).
30. Basing her data on Johnson's (1939) dictionary of Swahili, Zawawi (1979: 37) gives the following statistics. Words of non-Bantu origin (N = 3,006) account for just under half of the stems, of which 80.9% (2,534) are ultimately from Arabic.
31. Charles Kieffer (p.c.), citing information from Prof. Djafar Moinfar, states that the oldest extant Persian manuscript known which was written with the Arabic script dates from 447/1054. The original of this work was written about 100 years earlier.
32. See Wexler, this volume, n. 1 for the notion of Islamic languages (other than Arabic).
33. Cf. the different conclusion reached by many Kanuri Muslims in Nigeria (Owens 1995). An often cited reason for the preference of learning Arabic over English was that whereas English was useful in the temporal life, Arabic would come in handy in both the here and now and in the eternal.
34. Here we have a variant on the disappearance of prestige languages, as described by Kahane and Kahane (discussed in section 1 above). It is not so much Arabic itself, but rather its lexial and orthographic manifestations in the new, popular language which are proscribed.
35. Perspicaciously, Bittner (1900: 19) had already detected a reduction in loanword usage in written Turkish, a development which he approvingly related to the influence of western stylistic precepts.
36. See Laitin 1977, chapter 4 for background discussion. Arabic is not the only script which has problems expanding outside of a circumscribed cultural domain. The Ethiopic script, for instance, is today largely restricted to Amharic, Tigrinya and Afar, more for socio-political reasons than for orthographic necessity (Boor and Tamrat 1996).

37. I list only indigenous minorities, or migrant minorities who have lived in the country for at least two centuries.
38. Most Arabic countries have considerable recent immigrant populations, the largest being the foreign workers in the Gulf states and Saudi Arabia, where they sometimes outnumber the Arab indigenes themselves.
39. The original center of Kanuri culture and political influence stretched between southern Libya (e.g. Marzuq) and Lake Chad. Norbert Cyffer, a Kanuri specialist reports (p.c.) that there are probably Kanuri speakers in the Fezzan today. There may also be speakers of Zaghawa in southeastern Libya.
40. A number have died out, for e.g. Coptic in Egypt (Rubenson 1996). I do not provide a list of this class of languages.
41. Mysteriously, Kaye and Rosenhouse (1997: 263), without qualification, consider Nubi and Juba Arabic to be dialects of Arabic.
42. I use "normal" in the sense of Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 10). Normal forms of spoken Arabic, those which have been transmitted from generation to generation for well over a thousand years, are customarily referred to as "dialects". By implication, Creole Arabic is an "abnormal" form of Arabic. Normal and abnormal in this context are descriptive terms, which have no necessary implicational links to questions of genetic relationship.
43. In contrast, for example, to the development of Kituba, Lingala and Sango, as argued for by Samarin (1982, 1991), where an intermediary group of outsiders, the West African administrators and soldiers who were the largest part of the French and Belgian colonizing forces, are argued to be responsible for the creation of these Creoles. The West Africans probably themselves did not have a good enough command of French to manipulate it in a way which could create an expanded Creole, whereas they probably had relatively few inhibitions in communication with the peoples of Zaire River basin in a form of their local languages. Among the non-indigenes in the southern Sudan were a relatively large number of Nile Nubians, who potentially would have played a role parallel to the West Africans in the Congo River basin. However, given the tradition of using Arabic in the Egyptian army, and given the widespread (though not universal) use of Arabic in the northern Sudan in the nineteenth century, it is likely that the Nubians themselves would have been as conversant in normal Arabic as the northern Arabs themselves.
    It appears that the speakers of the emerging creole in the southern Sudan saw themselves as a privileged class, intermediary between the local population and the ruling northerners. One may therefore speculate that the creole itself became a symbols of positive group vitality.
44. Thanks here to the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft via their support for SFB 214 "Identity in Africa", under whose auspices the colloquium was held.
45. Here, of course, one has to collapse two different varieties of Arabic into one conceptual whole.
46. The high degree of stratal influence on surviving Central Asian varieties lends credence to the description of a living Arabic dialect surviving in Daghestan into the