Contact, Restucturing, & Decreolization: The Case of Tunisian Arabic
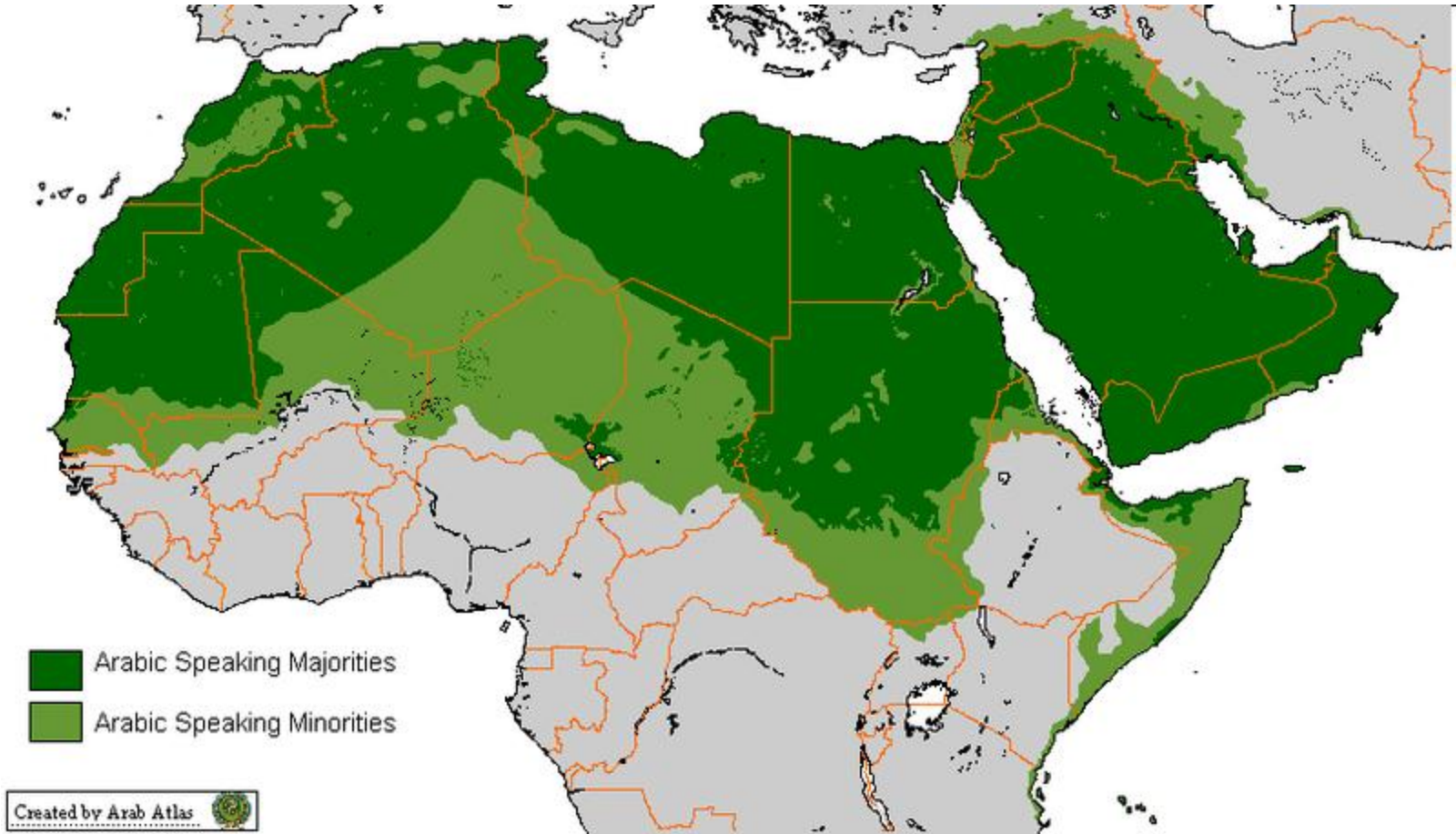
Thomas A. Leddy-Cecere
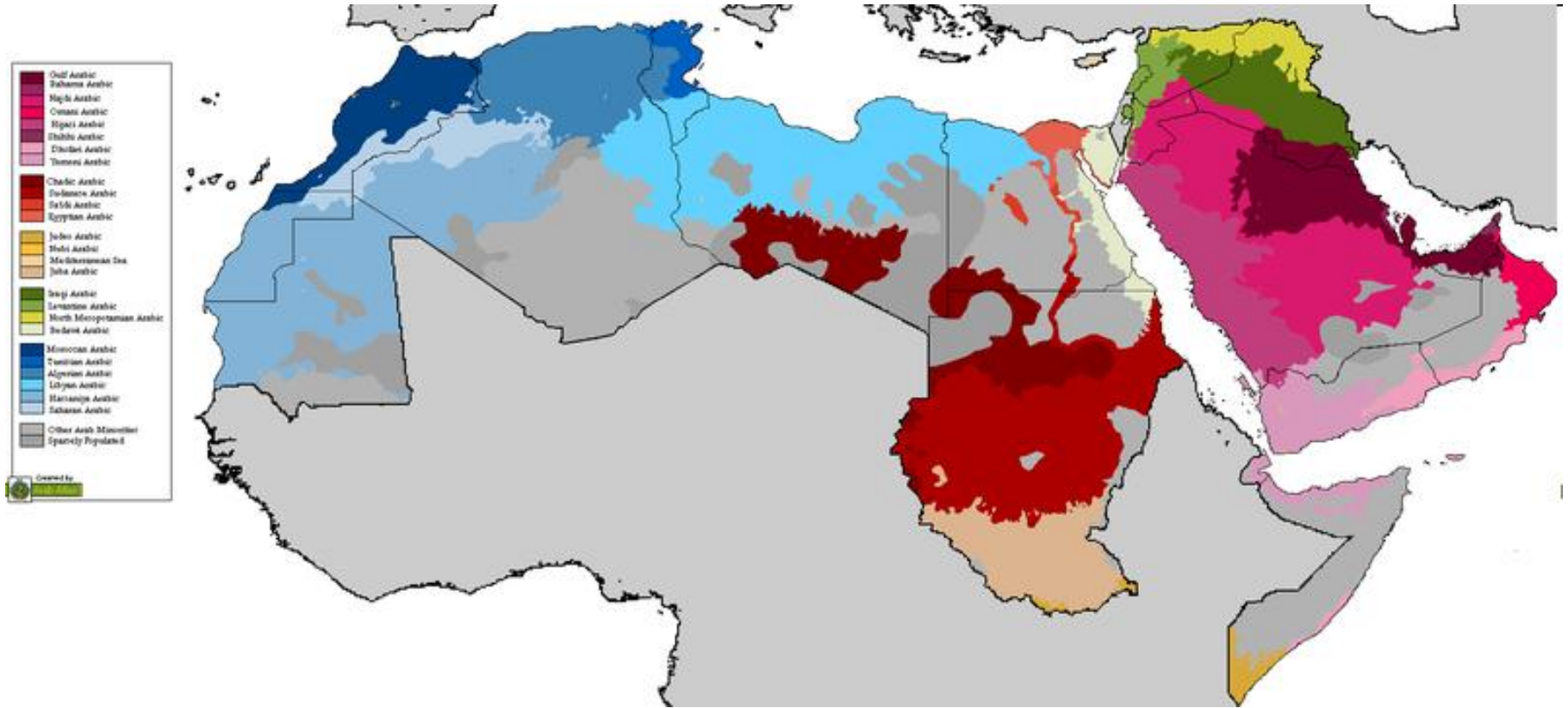
January 14, 2011

The Arabophone World

Arabic Speaking Majorities

Arabic Speaking Minorities

Created by Arab Atlas

(Wikipedia)

The Arabophone World

(Wikipedia)

Dialectal Variation

- Arabic dialects demonstrate three major types of variation:
  - Geographical
  - Social
  - Chronological

Genitive Exponents	
māl	ihnīn
geyy	ntāʻ
ḏēl	žna
līl	eddi
tabaʻ	dyāl
šīt	ta
mtāʻ	hūl
šuġl	allīl
tél	haqq
šáyt	bitāʻ
ḥagg	hana
bətāʻ	hīl

(Versteegh, 1984)

Language Restructuring:

- Sudden, large-scale adult L2A results in a language variety radically altered from its original form

- These alterations overwhelmingly occur along specific, predictable trajectories

Pidginization & Creolization: The Case of Arabic
Kees Versteegh (1984)

- From 632 A.D., Arabs speaking Old Arabic dialects spread across the Middle East and N. Africa.

- A small but prestigious Arab elite suddenly came to rule over a linguistically diverse non-Arab populace.

- This setting resulted in a creolized Arabic used across the newly formed Arab-Islamic world, laying the foundation for the New Arabic type.

- Further migration of OAr.-speaking Bedouins from the Arabian Peninsula initiated a process of decreolization, by which the Arabic creole began to once again resemble the OAr. norm in certain respects.

Pidginization & Creolization: The Case of Arabic
Kees Versteegh (1984)

- Strengths:
  - Explains parallel yet independent regional variation
  - Explains sedentary/Bedouin dichotomy
  - Accounts for sharp break between OAr. and NAr.

- Weaknesses:
  - Argument deals only with generalities, ignores details
  - Lack of supporting data

Pidginization & Creolization: The Case of Arabic
Kees Versteegh (1984)

- Strengths:
  - Explains parallel yet independent regional variation
  - Ex
  - Ac

Re-examine Versteegh's hypothesis employing a smaller scope and a higher degree of detail.

- Weaknesses:
  - Argument deals only with generalities, ignores details
  - Lack of supporting data

Four Steps

1) Select a particular dialect area on which to focus

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4) Interpret results in light of socio-historical context

Step 1: The Dialects

Step 2: "Creoleness"

- Phonology:
  - Sound changes occur in particular types
  - Changes occur in sound series not shared between substrate and superstrate languages

Step 2: "Creoleness"

Series	Orthography	Transcription
Interdental	ث	θ
	ذ	ð
	ظ	ḏ̣
Uvular	ق	ɢ
	خ	χ
	غ	ʁ
Pharyngeal	ح	ħ
	ع	ʕ
Pharyngealized	ط	ḍ
	ظ	ḏ̣
	ص	ṣ
Glottal	ء	ʔ
	ه	h
Lateral	ض	ɮ

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Step 2: "Creoleness"

- Morphosyntax:
  - Verbal:
    - Bare verb forms
    - Preverbal TMA marking
    - Serial verb constructions
    - Discontinuous negation
    - Lack of marked passive
    - SVO word order
  - Nominal:
    - Lack of case, number or gender marking
    - 3-way determiner distinction
    - Possessive juxtaposition or analytical genitive
    - Relative pronoun

Step 2: "Creoleness"

- Lexicosemantics:
  - Bimorphemic question words
  - Reduced pronominal distinctions
  - Formation of novel pronoun paradigms

Step 3: Results

Phonology

Series		OAr.	Sūsi	J-T	Mlt.
Interdental	ث	θ	θ	t	t
	ذ	ð	ð	d	d
	ظ	ḍ̣	ḍ̣	ḍ	d
Uvular	ق	ɢ	g, q~k	q	ʔ
	خ	χ	χ	x	ħ
	غ	ʁ	ʁ	ɣ	Ø
Pharyngeal	ح	ħ	ħ	ħ	ħ
	ع	ʕ	ʕ	ʕ	Ø
Pharyngealized	ظ	ḍ̣	ḍ̣	ḍ	d
	ص	ṣ	ṣ	ṣ	s
Glottal	ه	h	h	Ø	Ø

Step 3: Results

Phonology

Series		OAr.	Sūsi	J-T	Mlt.
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	ذ	ð	ð	d	d
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	خ	χ	χ	x	ħ
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Pharyngeal	ح	ħ	ħ	ħ	ħ
	ع	ʕ	ʕ	ʕ	Ø
Pharyngealized	ظ	ḏ̣	ḏ̣	ḍ	d
	ص	ṣ	ṣ	ṣ	s
Glottal	ه	h	h	Ø	Ø

Step 3: Results

Morphosyntax

Feature	Maltese	J-T	Sūsi
Bare verb forms	gray	gray	gray
Preverbal TMA	black	black	gray
Discontinuous Negation	black	black	black
Serial Verbs	black	gray	white
Lack of Marked Passive	black	gray	gray
SVO word order	black	black	black
Lack of Nominal Inflection	gray	gray	gray
Three-Determiner System	black	gray	white
Analytical Genitive	black	black	black
Relative Pronoun	black	gray	gray

Step 3: Results

Morphosyntax

Preverbal TMA Particles

[anterior]+[irrealis]+[nonpunctual]+verb

Particle	Sūsi	Judeo-Tunisian	Maltese
anterior	*ka:n* *	*kä:n* *	*kien* *
irrealis	*ba:š*	*mä:š*	*ser*
nonpunctual	*qa:ʕəd* *	*qa:ʕəd* * ~ *qa*	*qed*

Step 3: Results

Morphosyntax

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anterior	*ka:n* *	*kä:n* *	*kien* *
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nonpunctual			*ed*

Juba Arabic	Decreolized JA
gum	*gam* *

(Miller, 2007)

Step 3: Results

Morphosyntax

Feature	Maltese	J-T	Sūsi
Bare verb forms			
Preverbal TAM			
Discontinuous Negation			
Serial Verbs			
Lack of Marked Passive			
SVO word order			
Lack of Nominal Inflection			
Three-Determiner System			
Analytical Genitive			
Relative Pronoun			

Step 3: Results

Lexicosemantics

Feature	Maltese	J-T	Sūsi
Bimorphemic Interrogatives	██	██	██
Reduced Pronominal System	██	██	██
Pron. Paradigm Formation	██		

Step 3: Results

Lexicosemantics

	OAr.	Maltese	J-T	Sūsi
'what (n.)'	*mā*	*xi*	*äšnu:wä*	*ʃnuwwɛ:*
'what (v.)'	*māðā*	*--*	*äš*	*əʃ*
'who'	*man*	*min*	*äšku:n*	*ʃku:n*
'when'	*matā*	*meta*	*wåqtä:š*	*waqtɛ:ʃ*
'where'	*ʔayna*	*fejn*	*wä:yən ~ fä:yən*	*wi:n ~ fi:n*
'from where'	*--*	*mnejn*	*mnä:yən*	*mni:n*
'to where'	*--*	*(lejn)*	*lä:yən*	*lwi:n*
'why'	*limāðā*	*għaliex*	*ʕlä:š ~ lä:š*	*ʕlɛ:ʃ*
'how'	*kayfa*	*kif*	*kifä:š*	*kifɛ:ʃ*
'how much/many'	*kam*	*kemm*	*qɑddä:š*	*qɑddɛ:ʃ*
'which'	*ʔayy*	*liema*	*ä:mä*	*ɛ:nɛ*

Step 3: Results

Lexicosemantics

	OAr.	Maltese	J-T	Sūsi
'what (n.)'	*mā*	*xi*	*äšnu:wä*	*ʃnuwwɛ:*
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'who'	*man*	*min*	*äšku:n*	*ʃku:n*
'when'	*matā*	*meta*	*wåqtä:š*	*waqtɛ:ʃ*
'where'	*ʔayna*	*fejn*	*wä:yən ~ fä:yən*	*wi:n ~ fi:n*
'from where'	--	*mnejn*	*mnä:yən*	*mni:n*
'to where'	--	*(lejn)*	*lä:yən*	*lwi:n*
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'how much/many'	*kam*	*kemm*	*qɑddä:š*	*qɑddɛ:ʃ*
'which'	*ʔayy*	*liema*	*ä:mä*	*ɛ:nɛ*

Step 3: Results

Feature	Maltese	J-T	Sūsi
Treatment of Interdentals	■	■	□
Treatment of Uvulars	■	■	▨
Treatment of Pharyngeals	■	□	□
Treatment of Phar. Consonants	■	□	□
Treatment of Glottals	■	■	□
Bare verb forms	▨	▨	▨
Preverbal TAM	■	■	▨
Discontinuous Negation	■	■	■
Serial Verbs	■	▨	□
Lack of Marked Passive	■	▨	▨
SVO word order	■	■	■
Lack of Nominal Inflection	▨	▨	▨
Three-Determiner System	■	▨	□
Analytical Genitive	■	■	■
Relative Pronoun	■	▨	▨
Bimorphemic Interrogatives	▨	■	■
Reduced Pronominal System	■	■	■
Pron. Paradigm Formation	■	□	□

Step 4: Interpretation

- Differentiation is clear:
  - Maltese most creole-like
  - Judeo-Tunisian less so
  - Sūsi least creole-like

- Directionality of evolution is *not* clear

Step 4: Interpretation

Two alternatives:

1) Proto-Tunisian was most like Sūsi; Judeo-Tunisian and Maltese creolized to differing extents

2) Proto-Tunisian was most like Maltese; Sūsi and Judeo-Tunisian decreolized to differing extents

Step 4: Interpretation

Two alternatives:

1) Proto-Tunisian was most like Sūsi; Judeo-Tunisian and Maltese creolized to differing extents

2) **Proto-Tunisian was most like Maltese; Sūsi and Judeo-Tunisian decreolized to differing extents**

Step 4: Interpretation

Historical Evidence:

- Tunisia following the Arab conquests was ripe for creole formation
    - Rapid takeover: begun 670 **A.D.**, complete by 700 (Abun-Nasr, 1987)
    - Small ruling elite: Arabs constituted <10% of pop., but controlled politics, religion, economy, education (Hourani, 1991)

Step 4: Interpretation

Pidginization → Creolization

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Pidginization → Creolization

# Step 4: Interpretation

Hillalian Invasion:

- Bedouin of the Banu Hillal tribe were dispatched by the Fatimids in 1050 to punish the Tunisian Zirids
- The invaders decimated all non-Arab populations and cultural elements they encountered
- Joined and enlarged the area's Arab population
- Exponentially advanced the Arabization of Tunisia
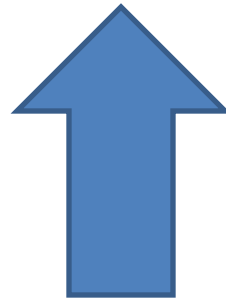
(Abun-Nasr, 1987)

Step 4: Interpretation

Decreolization Effects:

Sūsi
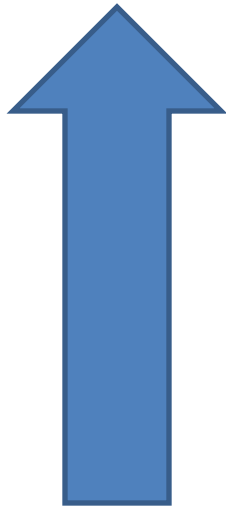
J-T

Mlt.

فلما جاء الإسلام وفارقوا الحجاز ... وخالطوا العجم تغيرت تلك الملكة بما ألقى إليها السمع من المستعربين ... وفسدت بما ألقي إليها ...

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