The dialect of the Druze of Jordan

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Abstract

The article provides the first empirically based description of the Druze dialect in Jordan. The description is based on the speech of twelve male and female adult native speakers and seven hours of recorded material. The research was conducted during 2019 and 2022 in two Druze towns in northern Jordan, namely Azraq and Umm al-Quṭṭēn. The article covers the basic grammar of the dialect, and lexis. The analysis shows that the Druze dialect of Jordan shares the bulk of its distinctive features with the Druze dialect of Ğabal al-ʿArab, while displaying some linguistic influence from neighbouring Jordanian Sedentary as well as Bedouin varieties. A transcribed and translated sample of the dialect is included.

Keywords: Druze, Jordan, Arabic, dialectology

0. Introduction[2]

The Druze of Jordan affiliate themselves to Bani Maʿrūf, who are originally from Ğabal al-ʿArab (or Ğabal ad-Drūz) in the heart of Ḥōrān. In public discourse they are usually simply called the Druze. Their major and first settlement in Jordan is the town of Azraq, 100 kilometres to the northeast of the capital city, Amman. A smaller settlement of Druze is in Umm al-Quṭṭēn, 70 kilometres north of Azraq. The size of the Druze community overall is estimated at 15,000, of whom 7,000 continue to live in Azraq; and 500 in

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Umm al-Quṭṭēn. The rest of the community are scattered in various urban centres, but mainly in or around the cities of Amman and Zarqa (see map).

Azraq is situated in the largest water basin in the northeastern desert, which bears the same name, Ḥawḍ al-ʾAzraq 'the Azraq basin'. The marshy lowland along the basin extends some 300 kilometres from Azraq to al-Ǧawf in northwest Saudi Arabia along Wādi s-Sirḥān.[3]

The first settled community of Druze in Jordan is dated to 1918 when 22 Druze families migrated to Azraq in search of safety and livelihood. Further migration of Druze families to Azraq followed in 1924. They first set home in the ruins of the town's Nabatean/Roman castle, locally known as al-Qaṣr 'the palace', which was expanded and renovated as a fortress by the Ayyubids in the 13th century, and later also used as such by the Ottomans. According to the community's elders whom we interviewed, the first Druze home to be constructed outside the walls of the Palace was in 1937.

Prior to becoming permanent residents in Azraq, the Druze of Ǧabal al-ʿArab regularly frequented the oasis of Azraq as pastureland for its temperate climate and availability of water in all seasons. Additionally, some Druze freedom fighters, most famous of whom was Sulṭān al-Aṭraš, sought refuge among the tribes of Jordan during their struggle against the French in Syria during the 1920s. Moreover, the very first Jordanian Prime Minister (Rašīd Ṭalīʿ), and the first Commander of the Armed Forces (Fuʾād Salīm) were both Druze. These historical events are often recalled by the community members with pride, as examples of the Druze's contributions to state building since the earliest days of the establishment of a central government in Jordan in 1921.

Over the years, Azraq has come to represent a hometown and a hub of the Druze community in Jordan as a whole, even though half of them now reside elsewhere. As such, community charity organisations that market, popularise and preserve Druze traditional artefacts, costumes and food products are housed in Azraq.

The Druze share Azraq with another migrant group, namely the Chechens whose presence in Jordan dates to 1901, and in Azraq to 1922.[4] The sole purpose of the relocation of some Chechens to Azraq in the first place was the availability of a suitable habitat for breeding buffalo, namely the Azraq oasis. The community's elders recall that 45 Chechen men arrived in Azraq in 1922. Following successful negotiations with the tribal leaders of Bani Ṣaxar and the Šaʿlān, who owned most of the land in and around Azraq, they were

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3   Wādi s-Sirḥān was formerly called Wādi al-ʾAzraq. It was renamed after the Sirḥān tribe who moved to the area from their original home in Ḥōrān in the 18th century following disputes with other tribes in the region (Peake 1958).

4   For details about the history of the Chechen community and their linguistic situation in Jordan, see Al-Wer (1999). Our ongoing research in Azraq also includes interviews with members of the Chechen and Bedouin communities within the town.

granted land at the southern end of the oasis. The Chechens were the first community to breed buffalo in Jordan, a skill that they also transferred to their neighbours on the northern side of the oasis, the Druze. Together, the Druze and the Chechen set up a community that initially relied on subsistence farming as a mode of production. During the 1940s, the Druze began to mine salt, and both communities became involved in this industry. According to the Druze elders, the Chechens were pivotal in introducing improvements to the traditional methods of salt production, which lightened the laborious task of purifying the produce. Until the late 1980s, salt mining remained the main profession and source of income for the town's residents. This source of livelihood was sadly brought to a halt as water from the Azraq oasis was pumped out to quench the thirst of the growing cities in the country, particularly Amman. Together with the unlawful digging of artesian wells in the region, the drastic reduction in the water volume in the oasis led to what is described as an ecological catastrophe.[5] As salt mining and buffalo breeding ceased, a considerable proportion of the town's population began to look for alternative sources of income elsewhere. At the same time, the construction of a fast road network in this part of the country, and the provision of institutions of higher education nearby have to some extent ameliorated living conditions as the town's workforce is now able to commute for work, rather than move out altogether.

The long-term cooperation between the Druze and Chechen communities has paved the way for social harmony and mutual respect, a situation that is normally conducive to linguistic accommodation, and the possibility of the emergence of a shared linguistic norm. This however does not seem to have happened; rather, the two communities speak different dialects. As explained in section 3 below, the dialect used by the Druze of Azraq continues to bear all the hallmarks of the Druze dialect in Syria while the Chechens use a koineised central Jordanian dialect, in addition to their native variety of Chechen.[6] In ongoing research we investigate the possible effects of factors such as residence within the town, schooling and endogamous marriage, which may have given rise to the diffuse linguistic situation found in Azraq.[7]

The Druze are organised in extended families. Endogamous marriage is the norm, which explains the high level of maintencance of the traditional dialect, even among the younger generation, as revealed by our research. They also continue to maintain close relations, including intermarriages, with

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5 See the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature website at:
   https://www.rscn.org.jo/#

6 The majority of the Jordanian Chechens continue to speak Chechen as a native language. The current generation are balanced bilinguals. In Azraq in particular, Chechen is the first language acquired by children; they learn Arabic when they start school.

7 On the notion of 'diffuse' linguistic situation, see Le Page (1980) and Le Page & Tabouret-Keller (1985)

their relatives, the Druze of Ğabal al-ʿArab in Syria. They are nonetheless fully integrated in the Jordanian society and participate in all activities at the national level, including standing for office in the parliament and serving in the cabinet.

Schooling is available locally. There are two secondary schools in the town, one in southern Azraq, or ʾAzraq aš-Šīšān 'Chechen Azraq', and another in northern Azraq, or ʾAzraq ad-Drūz, 'Druze Azraq', as they are known locally. Further education is sought at universities in the cities of Mafraq and Zarqa, or farther away in Irbid (far north) and Amman.

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1. The research in Azraq

We began research on the Druze dialect in Azraq in 2019. We visited the town several times before recording speakers in order to establish contacts among the local community. During this phase of the research, we interviewed four speakers from three families. Fieldwork was interrupted by the pandemic for nearly two years. We resumed fieldwork in 2022, interviewing three more speakers in Azraq, and five speakers in Umm al-Quṭṭēn. The description presented in this article is therefore based on the speech of 12 speakers. All speakers are adults: eight women and four men. In terms of age, they are distributed as follows: four speakers in their 70s, one in her 50s, three in their 40s, two in their 30s and two in their 20s. In total we collected approximately seven hours of recorded material.

We were introduced to the speakers through local contacts. The recordings were conducted during informal gatherings in the speakers' homes. The topics discussed were mostly centred around community matters (families, history, customs, and cuisine); the town (local elections, tourism, schools, charity organisations); and salt mining.

1.1 Previous work

Cantineau (1938) is the first study of the dialect of the Druze of Syria. His material was collected in the early thirties of the last century and the focus as was common in that period is on elements of phonology and morphology from a taxonomic perspective in order to situate this dialect in the context of Levantine Arabic. We shall return to this work below. One also finds Salonen's (1979) short article in which he investigates some linguistic features of the Druze of Lebanon. As far as the Golan Heights are concerned, Geva-Kleinberger (2011) is a published text in the dialect of the Druze of the village of ʿAyn Qinyi and Geva-Kleinberger (2012) studies lexical specificities in the dialect of Maždal Šams. The same author (GEVA-KLEINBERGER 2017) also

published two texts in the Druze dialect spoken in a village of Northern Galilea. Data on the Druze of Syria are also available in Behnstedt's (1997) linguistic atlas of Syria. Regarding the Druze dialect in Jordan, apart from Al-Khatib & Alzoubi (2009), which deals with issues related to dialect maintenance, no first-hand linguistic data based on original fieldwork has been collected. The present study aims at filling this void.

We will first discuss the most salient phonological, morphosyntactic and lexical features as well as addressing the elements of linguistic variation that we could record. Finally, we present a brief contrastive analysis with Cantineau's data and a text sample.

2. Dialectal features

2.1 Segmental and suprasegmental features
The most salient feature of the dialect of the Druze of Jordan, from a perceptual point of view, is the uvular realisation of etymological */q/. This uvular realisation was heard across the board and in all positions: *yā qalb-i* 'my dear', *mnəsqi* 'we water', *rəzəq* 'livelihood'.

As far as the three etymological interdentals are concerned, maintenance was observed in the vast majority of cases and in all positions. Voiceless */ṯ/ was recorded in: *ṯamāne* 'eight', *laṯme* 'veil', *kərrāṯ* 'leek'. Voiced */ḏ/ surfaces in: *ḏahab* 'gold', *ʾaḏān əš-šāyəb* 'şiş börek', *ʾəstāḏ* 'teacher'. As for velarized */ḍ/, it was noted in: *ḍēf* 'guest', *axḍar* 'green (m.)', *ḥəmmēḍ* 'sorrel'. Very few exceptions of non-interdental realisation of etymological */ṯ/ were recorded: *taman* 'price'. No occlusive realisations occurred in the case of etymological */ḏ/.

Etymological */ǧ/ was overwhelmingly recorded as fricative /ž/: *žabal* 'mountain', *ḥžār* 'stones', *nətfarraž* 'we have a look'. Instances of affricated reflexes occurred in: *ǧirān* 'neighbours', *mawǧudīn* 'present'.

As far as short vowels are concerned, it appears that the dialect discussed here exhibits a two-way distinction between /a/ and /ə/, the former being the reflex of etymological */a/ and the latter being the reflex of both */u/ and */i/. This is evidenced by the lack of contrast between *fəll* 'flee' (< *fill); and *fəll* 'Arabian jasmine' (< *full), and the fronted realisation of etymological */u/ in items such as *kəll* 'each, all' (< *kull) and *ʿərəs* 'wedding' (< *ʿurs).

The dialect of the Druze of Jordan also displays raising in the feminine ending -a (a.k.a. ʾimāla of the tāʾ marbūṭa) in non-emphatic and non-guttural contexts. The extent of this raising was recorded as far as [ɪ], although [e] seems to have slightly more currency: *ġurfi* 'room', *laḥmi* 'meat', *nayyi* 'raw' but *šaġle* 'thing', *zalame* 'man'. The variation between [e] and [ɪ] may be phonologically conditioned, which is a matter for future investigation using a larger pool of data. Examples of non-raised tokens in emphatic and guttural

contexts are *mnīḥa* 'good (f.)', *basīṭa* 'simple (f.)', *ḥāra* 'neighbourhood', *sabxa* 'sabkha'.

The variety considered here has five contrastive long vowels: /ā/ /ū /ī/ /ē/ and /ō/. /ā/ /ī/ and /ū/ continue their etymological counterparts whereas /ē/ and /ō/ continue the etymological diphthongs, respectively */ay/ and */aw/. Examples of monophthongised */aw/ and */ay/ are *ḥōḏ* 'pond' (< **ḥawḏˤ*) and *bēdar* 'salt pond' (< **baydar*). Long /ā/ raises to [æː] and [ɛː] (noted here {ǟ}) in neutral contexts: *sǟyli* 'flowing', *kǟno* 'they were', *iyyǟm* 'days'. Raising is inhibited in back contexts (emphatic and guttural): *dār* 'house', *ṣāṛo* 'they became', *mallaḥāt* 'saltern'. Etymological */ay/ in pre-tonic position is reduced to its initial segment: qaṣū́m 'achillea, yarrow' (< **qaysū́m*), zatū́n 'olive' (< **zaytūn*).

Prosodically, the dialect of the Druze of Jordan is clearly 'differential' (in Cantineau's terminology) in that short /a/, unlike /i/ and /u/ does not undergo elision in unstressed open syllables: *zálame* 'man', *máraqa* 'sauce', *báṣale* 'onion'.

Like most sedentary dialects of Jordan, stress does not move rightward when the third masculine singular pronoun attaches to a verb in the third feminine singular perfective: *qáddat-o* 'she cut it lengthwise' (***qaddát-o*).
Etymological bound pronouns starting with a */h/ (-ha and -hon) surface without initial */h/ although the underlying form still seemingly retains the segment, as evidenced by the behaviour of primary stress in such cases: **myabbsət-hon → myabbsə́t-on* 'she dried them', **taˤmət-ha → ṭaˤmā́t-a* 'its taste', **bi-ˤāfiyət-ha → b-ˤafiyə́t-a* 'in good health'. In dialects where */h/ disappeared altogether and even underlyingly, these words would have undergone resyllabification: *ṭáˤəmt-a* 'its taste'.

2.2 Morphosyntax

The inflexions in the perfective are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Perfective inflexions

	Pronouns	*fataḥ* 'he opened'	*šərəb* 'he drank'
1.sg.	ʾani	fataḥ(ə)t	šrəb(ə)t
2.sg.m.	ʾənta ~ ʾənte	fataḥ(ə)t	šrəb(ə)t
2.sg.f.	ʾənti	fataḥti	šrəbti
3.sg.m.	huwwe ~ huwwi	fataḥ	šərəb
3.sg.f.	hiyye	fataḥət ~ fatḥat	šərbət
1.pl.	naḥna	fataḥna	šrəb(ə)t
2.pl.	ʾənto	fataḥto	šrəbto
3.pl.	hənne	fataḥo	šərbo

Like other Levantine dialects, there are two stems in the perfective: $C_1aC_2aC_3$ and $C_1iC_2iC_3$. Due to the differentiality of the dialect (see above), the $C_1aC_2aC_3$ stem remains stable across the paradigm whereas the $C_1iC_2iC_3$ stem undergoes resyllabification because of the elision of */i/ in unstressed open syllables. Variation was recorded in the 3rd person feminine singular of the $C_1aC_2aC_3$ stem: *fataḥət* ~ *fatḥat* 'she opened'. The form *fatḥat* is in all likelihood borrowed from sedentary Jordanian (cf. Ḥōrāni and Central Sedentary Jordanian *fatḥat*). Another salient feature which brings the present variety more in line with what occurs in Northern Levantine is the /o/ vowel in the suffixes *-to* and *-o* unlike *-u* in the Southern Levant. As far as the independent pronouns are concerned, Jordanian Druze have first person singular *ʾani,* commonly found in the Ḥōrān, and first person plural *naḥna,* which is common in Syria and Lebanon (cf. Sedentary Jordanian *ʾiḥna*). The rest of the paradigm is similar to what is found in the Levant as a whole (see Table 1). The inflexions in the imperfective are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2. Imperfective inflexions

	Pronouns	*byəftaḥ* 'he opens'	*byəksər* 'he breaks'	*byəlqoṭ* 'he seizes'
1.sg.	*ʾani*	*bəftaḥ*	*bəksər*	*bəlqoṭ*
2.sg.m.	*ʾənta* ~ *ʾənte*	*btəftaḥ*	*btəksər*	*btə́lqoṭ*
2.sg.f.	*ʾənti*	*btəftaḥi*	*btə́kəsri*	*btələqṭi*
3.sg.m.	*huwwe* ~ *huwwi*	*byəftaḥ*	*byəksər*	*byəlqoṭ*
3.sg.f.	*hiyye*	*btəftaḥ*	*btəksər*	*btəlqoṭ*
1.pl.	*naḥna*	*mnəftaḥ*	*mnəksər*	*mnəlqoṭ*
2.pl.	*ʾənto*	*btəftaḥo*	*btə́kəsro*	*btlə́qṭo*
3.pl.	*hənne*	*byəftaḥo*	*byə́kəsro*	*byə́ləqṭo*

The imperfective stem has three possible vowels: /a/, /ə/ and /o/. High vowels are normally elided in unstressed open syllables. The peculiarity of the present dialect lies in the centralisation of the medial vowel when the stem is resyllabified: *bṭəlqoṭ* 'you/she seize(s)' vs. *btələqṭo* 'you (pl.) seize'. Centralisation is commonly found in Northern Levantine dialects (cf. Standard Lebanese *btəskon* 'you/she dwell(s)' vs. *btəsəkno* 'you (pl.) dwell'). The vowel of the prefix in the imperfective does not exhibit vowel harmony in medial /u/ verbs and remains /ə/ as in: *mnəhrom* 'we mince', *yəskon* 'he dwells', *nəxloṭ* 'we mix'. Sedentary Jordanian dialects usually have /u/ in this position. This vowel pattern is also reminiscent in nominal templates of the type *CvCCuC: *qərqom* 'curcuma', *fəlfol* 'pepper', *bərġol* 'cracked wheat'. The prefix of the third person masculine in the imperfective normally retains the

semi-vowel /y/ in closed syllables but drops it in open syllable. Thus, we get: *byəḥko* 'they talk'; but *biqūl* 'he says'. The semi-vowel is also retained in *byā̆xəḏ* 'he takes' and *byiži* 'he comes'. This pattern agrees with Northern Levantine. In contrast, traditional Jordanian dialects drop the semi-vowel in all positions in the imperfective (AL-WER 2014). The Jordanian pattern seems to have some influence on the Druze dialect as suggested by the following examples from our data, which show deletion of /y/: *mā biswā-š* 'it's useless', *bitfarraž* 'he looks at', *bitġayyar* 'it changes'. The irregular verb *ʾəža-byəži* 'to come' inflects as in Table 3.

Table 3. ʾəža-byəži inflexions

	Pronouns	*ʾəža* 'he came'	*byəži* 'he comes'
1.sg.	*ʾani*	*žīt*	*bəži*
2.sg.m.	*ʾənta ~ ʾənte*	*žīt*	*btəži*
2.sg.f.	*ʾənti*	*žīti*	*btəži*
3.sg.m.	*huwwe ~ huwwi*	*ʾəža*	*byəži*
3.sg.f.	*hiyye*	*ʾəžət*	*btəži*
1.pl.	*naḥna*	*žīna*	*mnəži*
2.pl.	*ʾənto*	*žīto*	*btəžo*
3.pl.	*hənne*	*ʾəžo*	*byəžo*

In the perfective, the paradigm exhibits a prothetic vowel in the third persons but not in the first and the second. Unlike Jordanian dialects in which a prothetic vowel also surfaces in the first and second persons (cf. Sedentary Jordanian *ʾiǧīt ~ ʾaǧīt*). In the imperfective, the prefix is short, unlike Sedentary Jordanian and other Southern Levantine varieties which normally display long /ī/ (*biǧi*, *btīǧi*, etc.). Table 4 shows the inflexions of the irregular verb *ʾakal-byā̆kəl.*

Table 4. Inflexions of the irregular verb ʾakal-byā̆kəl

	Pronouns	*ʾakal* 'he ate'	*byā̆kəl* 'he eats'
1.sg.	*ʾani*	*ʾakal(ə)t*	*bā̆kəl*
2.sg.m.	*ʾənta ~ ʾənte*	*ʾakal(ə)t*	*btā̆kəl*
2.sg.f.	*ʾənti*	*ʾakalti*	*btā̆kli*
3.sg.m.	*huwwe ~ huwwi*	*ʾakal*	*byā̆kəl*
3.sg.f.	*hiyye*	*ʾakalət*	*btā̆kəl*
1.pl.	*naḥna*	*ʾakalna*	*mnā̆kəl*
2.pl.	*ʾənto*	*ʾakalto*	*btā̆klo*
3.pl.	*hənne*	*ʾakalo*	*byā̆klo*

The verb *ʾaxaḏ-byā̈xəḏ* behaves in the same way. These two verbs inflect as in Northern Levantine in that a contrast is maintained between the 1ˢᵗ and the 3ʳᵈ person singular, unlike Sedentary Jordanian in which the contrast is neutralised: *bōkəl* 'I/he eat(s)'. The only peculiarity lies in the central quality of the medial vowel: *byā̈kəl* vs. Lebanese *byēkol*.[8]

As far as closed word classes are concerned, the recordings yielded a handful of peculiarities. The preposition *zayy* 'like, as' seems to freely alternate with *mət(ə)l*: *zayy šaʕb-i* 'like my people', *ʾəl-mara btəštəġəl mətl-a mətl əz-zalame* 'the woman works just as hard as the man'. The adverb *ʾəssa* has both a phasal 'yet' and a temporal reading 'now'. It is used alongside the phasal adverb *baʕad*: *ʾissa mā kənna-š nətlaʕ* 'we were still not going out', *ʾani kənt baʕad-ne məš xəlqāni* 'I wasn't born yet'. The dialect has two imperfect auxiliaries: *kā̈n* 'he was' and *baqa* 'he remained': *qabəl səntēn kənt təštəġəl bi-hā̈ḏa l-mašrūʕ* 'two years ago, you were working in this project', *ʾəl-bēdar ʕašar əmtār baqēna naʕmal-o b-xamsi* 'the salt pound would be ten meters long and we used to make it five'. The recordings also contain one instance of the adverb *ʕuqbā̈na* 'afterwards': *w-ʕuqbā̈na ṣāro stawṭano ḥabbo hä-l-ʾblā̈d u-stawṭano* 'afterwards, they loved this place and settled in'. A peculiarity arises with the interrogative *ayy(a)* augmented with bound pronouns: *iyyā̈-hon* 'which one of them' (Sedentary Jordanian *ayyāt-hum*). In this case, there is homophony with the pronominal object carrier *iyyā-* (cf. *zidī-l-a yyā̈-hon* 'put (f.) some more for her')

As far as negation patterns are concerned, the dialect of the Druze of Jordan agrees at first sight with what is observed in the Southern part of the Levant. Indeed, these dialects are characterised by the conditioned optionality of both initial *mā* and final *-š* as part of the bipartite negation found in many Arabic dialects. With verbs in the perfective, only the second element *-š* is optional: *mā kā̈n* 'he was not', *mā känū-š* 'they were not'. The same distribution occurs in the bare imperfective: *mā yištəġlo ~ mā yištaġalū-š* 'they do not work'. In the second persons of the bare imperfective, the first negator can also drop: *tinsāš* 'don't (sg) forget'; *tižūš* 'don't (pl) come'.

In the *b-* imperfective, either *mā* or *-š* can be omitted: *mā biḥabbū-(h)* 'they don't like him', *biswā-š* 'it is not worth, it is not suitable', *mā mnəqnā̈-š* 'we do not raise (animals)'.

In the realm of the verbal complex, the dialect exhibits much of the pan-Levantine auxiliaries and particles such as *badd-* 'want', *raḥ-* as a future marker, *ʕam ~ ʕamma* for progressive aspect. Examples are respectively: *ʕašīre badawiyye badd-a tətlaʕ ʕalē-hon* 'a Bedouin tribe wants to assault them', *raḥ-narža ʕ nəštəġəl* 'we will work again', *l-yōm ən-nās ʕam-tətʕab* 'these days, people are having difficult times', *ʕamma bətġəll* 'people are making provisions'.

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8   For an analysis of the conjugation of *ʾakal* and *ʾaxaḏ* in Jordanian dialects, AL-WER & AL-HAWAMDEH (In press).

2.3 Lexicon

As far as the lexicon is concerned, most of the items recorded are shared with other neighbouring dialects. Below is a list of lexical items, some of which are shared with other dialects in Jordan while others appear to be peculiar to the Druze dialect. Most of the peculiar items are names of plants, spices, dishes, and such food-related items; also garments, and formulaic expressions. We also noted apparent 'Bedouinisms' hardly in use even in the Bedouinised sedentary dialects of Jordan. One of these is the verb *daḥḥaq* 'to look' which is not used in Jordan but is reminiscent of Šāwi *daḥḥag* (also Dēr iz-Zōr *daḥḥaq*). Another salient item is *mən-qəbli* 'southwards', reminiscent of Bedouin *mən-ǧəbli* but, as is the case with *daḥḥaq*, with a Druze phonology.

Plants and spices: *ʿoṭərfān* 'rhubarb', *rašād* 'watercress', *žaʿdä ~ žʿēdt əṣ-ṣubyān* 'germander', *baʿṭarān* 'mugwort', *qaṭəf* 'atriplex, saltbush', *qurra* 'nasturtium', *žaržīr* 'arugula', *murmīr* 'sage', *muṛṛāṛ* 'knapweed', *xəbbēze* 'mallow', *mardakūš* 'oregano', *xzēmi* 'cleoma', *ḥəmmēḏ* 'sorrel', *qaṣūm* 'yarrow', *nafal* 'clover', *barsīm* 'alfalfa, lucerne'.

Dishes and other food-related items: *ʿaṣūṛa* 'chicory-like dish', *muġrabiyye* 'crushed wheat based dish with chick peas', *ʾaḏān əš-šāyəb* 'šiš barak (local form of ravioli)', *kiṯa* 'žamīd', *ʿmēša* 'crushed wheat based dish with kəšək', *ləzzaqiyāt* 'pancake shaped sweet', *šnīne* 'ayran' (salted yoghourt mixed with water), *zahra* 'cauliflower', *rašūf* 'lence based dish with crushed wheat and yoghurt'.

Miscellaneous: *ġād* 'far away', *naxəl* 'sieve', *bēdar* 'salt retention pond', *nəžər* 'mortar' (with metathesis < *ǧurn), *səna* 'year' (without raising of final -a), *ṭoriyye*, pl : *ṭawāre* 'hoe' (from Coptic *toori* 'hoe'), *šakke* 'upper piece of traditional Druze female headdress', *žəhāyəd* 'silver piece of the traditional Druze female headdress' », *šəwāləq* 'piece of traditional Druze female headdress'.

Bedouinisms: *ḥalāl* 'livestock', *daḥḥaqtī-hon* 'you (f.) saw them', *haraž* 'he said, he told', *mən-qəbli* 'to the south', *ġəlle* 'yield', *dāmər* 'traditional coat made of layers of cloth or wool fabric'.

3. Comparison with Cantineau's (1938) material

Cantineau investigated the dialect of the Druze of Ḥōrān in 1934 and 1936 and published the results of his study in 1938 (CANTINEAU 1938). In his conclusion, he noted that etymological */ǧ/ was mostly realised as a fricative /ž/, etymological */q/ is uvular, the three interdentals (*/ḏ/, */ṯ/ and */ḍ/) are maintained, both final -a and medial */ā/ are raised in plain context, */a/ in unstressed open syllable does not undergo elision, the third person plural autonomous pronoun is *hənne*, the second and third plural bound pronouns are *-kon* and *-hon*. Cantineau also noted the following adverbs: *hōn* 'here', *hōnīk* 'there', *mbērəh* 'yesterday' and *bukra* 'tomorrow'.

From a typological point of view, Cantineau characterises the dialect of the Druze of Ḥōrān as a 'parler sédentaire libano-syrien' which in modern terminology would be a Northern Levantine form of speech. On the whole, his material exhibits very few divergences from what we recorded in ʾAzraq and Umm əl-Qəṭṭēn in 2019 and 2022.

Some of the variation that occurs in our data seems to have been in place already in Cantineau's time such as the alternation between the affricated and the fricative reflex of etymological */ǧ/. He also noted two allomorphs for the third person feminine singular ending in the perfective of sound form I verbs: *qatal-at* 'she killed' vs. *rəkb-ət* 'she rode'. This distribution is clearly morphophonologically conditioned. Our data seem to confirm this distribution: *tarak-at* 'she left' vs. *kəbr-ət* 'she grew up'. For other stems, our data show that both allomorphs are in use irrespective of morphophonology. *kān-at* vs. *kān-ət* 'she was', *tžawwaz-at* vs. *tžawwaz-ət* 'she got married'. As far as the final -*ā* (< */ā/ and */āʾ/) is concerned, Cantineau recorded a conditioned raising in many items such as *ʾəntе* 'female', *naḥne* 'we', *nēsī-he* 'having forgotten her/it'. Our data indicate that this realisation has been completely levelled out: *naḥna* 'we', *fī-ha* 'in it', etc. Apart from this and a couple of 'jordanianisms' such as *fī-šš* 'there is not', *ʾiši* 'thing' and also mixed dialectal forms such as *hunne* 'they' (local *hənne* and Jordanian *humma*), the Druze dialect of Jordan remained very similar to the one spoken in the Syrian Ḥōrān.

4. Sample of speech

1. *kāno yištəġlo mā yištəġlo ġēr əl-məlḥāt b-əl-mələḥ b-əs-sabxa yištəġlo b-əs-sabxa hāḏa maṣdar ər-rəzəq. bətḏakkar štaġalt fī-yon la-hləkət baqa ʾawwal ʾiši fi-šš yibḥašo byāṛ yaʿmalo bayādər ʿalē-(h) nqul-l-o bēdar l-əl-mələḥ nṭayyn-o w-nədḥal-o b-əl-madḥale w-əndall nədḥal fī-(h) ta-yṣīr məṯl əs-sмənt law ḥaṭṭayna fī-(h) mayy mā btəšrab…*

1. [Our family] used to work in the saltworks only. It was their source of livelihood. I remember, I work in them till exhaustion. There was nothing back in the day. They used to dig wells and ponds that we call bēdar. We used to cover it with clay flatten it with a stone cylinder. We kept flattening it until it becomes like cement. Even when sprayed with water, it would remain waterproof.

2. *ʾe l-ḥūḏ ʾä naḥna nqul-l-o bēdar u-mnəsqi b-əd-dalu mnəndaḥ mn-əl-bīr mnəsqi b-əd-dalu mnaʿmal-l-o… b-əd-dalu baʿdēn əṭṭawwarat əš-šaġle šwäyy ṣāṛo yžībo mawaṭīr yibḥašo*

2. We would call the pond bēdar. We used to fill a bucket with water and pour it into the pond. Afterwards, things evolved and we started using engines to dig artesian

byāṛ ʾirtiwäziyye w-yibḥašo… baʿdēn ṭṭawwarna šwäyy ṣərna naʿmal ʾblāstik… l-bēdar əblāstik baʿdēn sakkarū-ha b-əl-marra…

wells and use plastic, until they closed it for good.

3. *yiǧo yištəro baqa ʾaṣfa mələḥ ʾənn-o b-əl-ʾAzraq. qal-l-ik əxsāṛa manžam ḏahab u-sakkarū-(h)… w-baqat balad siyäḥiyye l-mayy fī-ha l-ʿŌṛa mayyt əl-ʿŌṛa sāyli mayy təšrab mən-ha w-tʿabbi l-Baṣṣa kəll-a təmtəli… nəqna baqar nəqna xēl nəqna ʾažal-l-ak ḥamīr w-kəll-o yisraḥ b-əl-Baṣṣa ḥatta mā nəǧīb ʿalaf u-nḥoṭṭ nsarrəḥ b-əl-Baṣṣa w-unǧīb-on ʿala d-dāṛ u-nəḥləb-on yaʿni kəll ʾiši b-əl-… žuwwāt-na bass zarrīʿa baqū-š yizraʿo ʾissa ṣāṛo yizraʿo ṣāṛo yaʿmalo ʾawwal mā baqo yizraʿo s-sabxa w-əl-ṭarəš*

3. People used to come to Azraq and buy the purest salt. It's a pity, to shut down such a goldmine. It used be a touristic area, with the flowing spring of ʿŌṛa. We would drink from and it would also spill over to the whole area of Bassa. We used to raise cows and horses. We would also have donkeys. All these animals would pasture in the area of Bassa. We didn't need fodder. We would just put them in Bassa for pasture and bring them home to milk them. We only had a small cultivated plot. Agriculture wasn't widespread. Only recently did they start cultivating. Before, they only had saltworks and livestock.

4. *bass əṭ-ṭaḥīn baqa fī baqa… mətəl ha-l-ʾiyyäm hāḏ yiṭlaʿo ʿa-žabal əd-Drūz yižību qaməḥ u-ṭḥīn u-ḥammuṣ u-ʿadas u-yitbädalū-hon yibaddlo b-əl-mələḥ…. u-štaġalt b-əl-mallaḥāt… b-əd-dalu w-ʾəsqi l-bayādər mətl-e mətl ər-räǧəl mnədḥal mnədḥal ḥatta ʾaktar əmn-əz-zələm z-zalame yiṣīr yištəġəl-l-o šaġle barraniyye hēke… yənsəḥəb, l-mara btəštəġəl mətl-a mətl əz-zalame w-ᵘzyädi…*

4. (As for) flour, in this season, they used to go to Jabal El-Druze to bring wheat, flour, chickpeas, lentils and trade them for salt.

I used to work in the saltworks, fill the ponds with a bucket, just like a man. We would flatten, even more than men (because) they used to work outside. Women used to work as hard as men, even harder.

5. *mayy əmn-əl-bīr mənkətt ʿa-l-ḥūḏ əlli ʿamlīn-o bayādər yaʿne l-bēdar ʿašar əmṭāṛ baqēna naʿmal-o b-xamsi w-əs-sqi b-əd-dalu. ʾä naʿmal ḥōḏ əzġīr hēk u-ʾəl-o qanāṛ u-mən-ḥōḏ əl-ḥōḏ u-l-mayy təmši ʿala l-bayādər əlli naʿmal-ha ta-yəmtəli yiqtaʿ mələḥ nižīb ṭawāṛe naʿmal ṭawāṛe hä w-ʾmnəməlḥ-o w-ʾmnəržaʿ ənšīl-o nḥoṭṭ-o*

5. We used to pour water from the well into the pond. This pond would be 10 meters long. We used to make it five meters and pour water with the bucket. We used to dig a small pond with a corner from pond to pond. The water would flow to the saltponds until it gets full. (The water dries up) and the salt remains.

ʿa-l-mafraš u-nṭabbš-o w-ʾnnaššf-o la-yinšaf la-yinšaf yiṣīr əl-mələḥ nā̌šəf

We would bring hoes, take the salt out and spread it on a surface until the salt gets completely dry.

6. *baqa tižī-na ʿurbā̄n mən-Suriyya tā̄xəd ʾthamməl əžmā̄l. qawā̄fəl u-siyyaṛāt ṭəntēn ṯalā̄ṯe yižo yäxḏū-(h) yibiʿū-(h) hōn b-əl-ʾUrdun. ʾä ma-kǟn-š-fi ṭarīq ʾmʿabba ṭarīq ʾṭrābi nūṣal-ʾš ʿa-z-Zarqa w-ʿAmmā̄n ʾilla-ma naḥna kəll-na ṭrāb badd-na ḥ̌ammā̄m.*

6. Bedouins from Syria used to come to us to take the salt and carry it on camels. There would be either caravans or cars coming here to take the salt and sell it in Jordan. There was no paved road before, there was only a dirt road to Zarqa and Amman, there was so much dirt that we would always need a bath.

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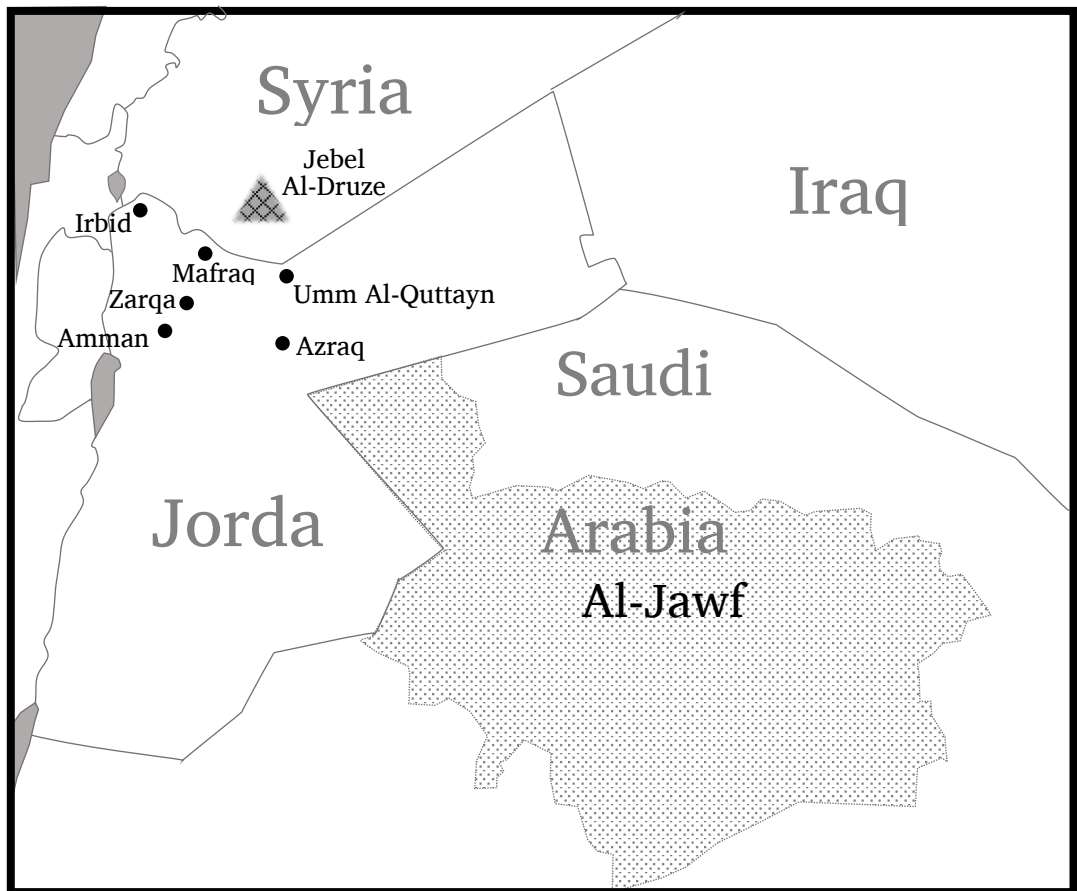
Figure 1 Map of Jordan and surrounding regions (courtesy of Michael A. Jones)