Dual naming as a mechanism to recognize multiple identities; Casablanca or Ad-Dār al-Bayḍā

Alasli Malak

AutoCarto 2020, the 23rd International Research Symposium on cartography and GIScience

الدار البيضاء

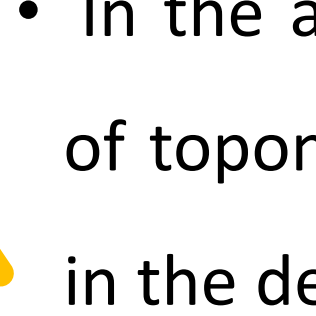## The linguistic situation in Morocco

❑ Moroccan Arabic (Darija), *the mother tongue ;*

❑ Standard/ Classic Arabic *(or Fusħa);*

❑ Tamazight, *the indigenous and oldest language in Morocco—commonly known as Berber;*

❑ French, *the former colonial language;*

❑ and to a lesser extent Spanish, *another former colonial language now restricted to some Northern and Southern parts of Morocco.*

Frequent Code switching

Casablanca
Ad-Dār al-Bayḍā

- Previously called Anfa, (Amazigh; hill).

- Tadart, (Amazigh; house, home, dwelling).

- In the 15th century, the Portuguese named it Casa Branca (white house).

- During the French protectorate in Morocco, the Spanish variant Casablanca remained.

- In 1755, it was renamed Ad-Dār al-Bayḍā by sultan Mohammed Ben Abdellah.

- Locally known as caza/darbida

- Language is a vector for the appropriation of territories in the practice of territorial re-compositions.

- Since the 1970s, a postcolonial policy of Arabization strived to replace French

- In the aftermath of the country's independence, the re-Arabization of toponymy gradually restored its lost place to the Arabic language in the designation of places and spaces.
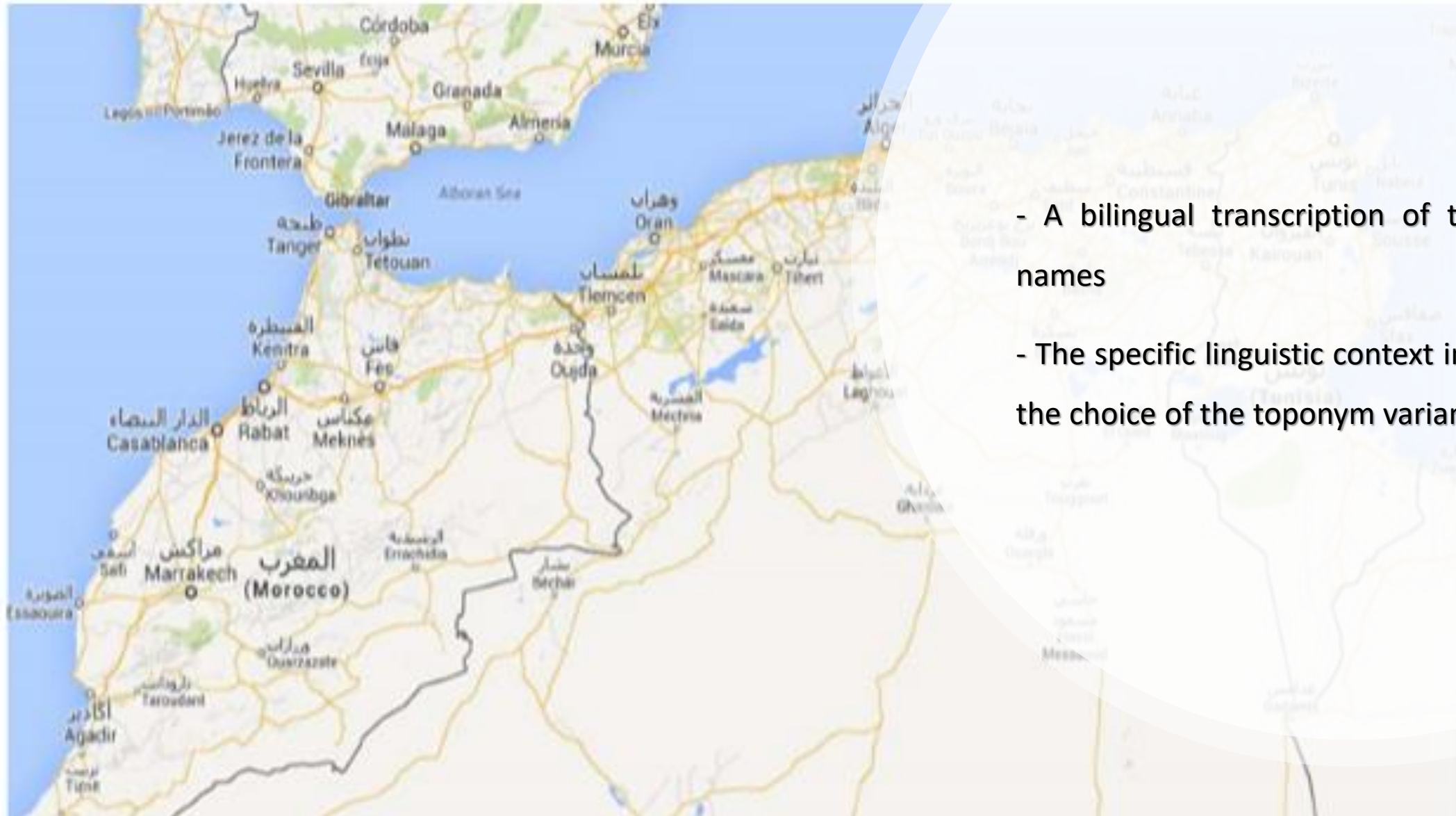
- A bilingual transcription of the place names

- The specific linguistic context influences the choice of the toponym variant.

Bilingual representation

This study uses mainly questionnaires in attempt to address the following aspects:

- The attitude towards the standardization of only one variant

- Variants and the city's cultural heritage and significance

- Standardization of only one variant and the accurate representation of the place.

- Dual naming as a reminder of the multiple place histories vs dual naming as a mere case of language difference

- Moroccans and the etymology of the variants

Results

Which variant best preserve the city's cultural heritage and identity?

Both variants 76,9%

6,7% other variants (Anfa)

Will keeping both variants facilitate the preservation of the cultural significance of the place name?

77,9% agreed

➢The written form of a place name approved by a State is deemed to be an 'official' name, in this case, both Casablanca and Ad-Dār al-Bayḍā.

➢The purpose of place names is primarily to provide unambiguous direction and reference in order to identify geographical entities.

➢Both are widely used with some local variations.

➢97,1% stated that they could facilely recognize the place in question

➢However, foreigners do not usually associate both variants to the same place.

Dual naming as official toponyms

- 4,8% showed their disapproval,
- 39,4% had neutral reactions,
- 55.8% agreed.

For; both variants are significant components of the city's history.

Against; can be hinged on notions of colonial exploration

➤Supporting Ad-Dār al-Bayḍā is motivated by

- the attempt to remove colonially allocated toponyms

  - in order to eliminate the links to colonial history from the landscape, map, and community.

➤Other respondents saw that it was in the interest of the community that the variant Casablanca be retained along with Ad-Dār al-Bayḍā.

- 'bidawa' / 'cazawa'

Thank you!

alaslima.ma@gmail.com

Department of Cartography and Geoinformatics

(ELTE) Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary