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PhD Thesis

AN ANALYSIS OF JORDANIAN
BEDOUIN RIDDLES FROM
THE BADIA REGION

Santiago de Compostela, 2023



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BADIA REGION**

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**PHD PROGRAMME IN ADVANCED ENGLISH STUDIES:
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AUTORIZACIÓN DO DIRECTOR/TITOR DA TESE

Dna. **JoDee Anderson McGuire**

En condición de: **Titora e directora**

Título da tese:

AN ANALYSIS OF JORDANIAN BEDOUIN RIDDLES FROM THE BADIA REGION

INFORMA:

Que a presente tese, correspóndase co traballo realizado por D. **ABDULATEEF SULEIMAN SALAMEH ALMARAYEH**, baixo a miña dirección e titorización, e autorizo a súa presentación, considerando que reúne os requisitos esixidos no Regulamento de Estudos de Doutoramento da USC, e que como directora e titora desta non incorre nas causes de abstención establecidas na Lei 40/2015.

En Lugo, 15 de Novembro de 2023

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AUTORIZACIÓN DO DIRECTOR/TITOR DA TESE

D. Jesús Varela Zapata

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DEDICATION

To my life coaches, my late beloved mother, my father, brothers, sisters, wife, children, and relatives; because I owe it all to you.

My recognition, gratitude, and appreciation to you all.

LIST OF ACRONYMS USED

BR	Bedouin Riddles
HPSG	Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar
JB	Jordanian Badia Region
JBR	Jordanian Bedouin Riddle
JRBR	Jordanian Bedouin Riddles from the Badia Region
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
MWA	Modern Written Arabi

EXTENDED SUMMARY IN ENGLISH

The present study, undertaken as part of the PhD Program in Advanced English Studies: Linguistics, Literature & Culture at the *Universidade de Santiago de Compostela*, seeks to account for and describe the Bedouin Riddle as found in Jordan. In order to do so, certain theoretical perspectives following those mainly proposed by Anglo-Saxon investigators from the fields of linguistics, cultural studies, literary and postcolonial studies, as well as those dealing with the riddle were used as a base for the development of the critical apparatus. In addition, other works published in English and Arabic have also been used to shed more light on the cultural and literary environment in Jordan, and, more specifically, that of the region of the Jordanian Badia. Furthermore, a corpus of Jordanian Bedouin Riddles from the specific geographical area of the Badia region has been presented. The significant advantage to this corpus is that it includes examples from more than one generation and, thus, provides a closer link to those who experienced true and personal interaction in the oral tradition.

This doctoral dissertation is divided into two sections. The first part of this study outlines certain cultural specifications that have been taken into consideration as well as the theoretical bases on which the study is based. Chapter 1 describes the more specific geographical region dealt with in this study and also provides a background into many cultural aspects of this region. Chapter 2 affords a theoretical background on previous research dedicated to the riddle, and, in addition, provides an

account of previous studies done on riddles in the Arabic world. Next, it presents some background on previous studies done in Jordan and offers the presentation of the Jordanian Bedouin Riddle from the Badia Region, or JRBR. Then a discussion of the formal structural features of JRBRs is undertaken. The concluding remarks offer some final comments about the end of the study at hand as well as research possibilities for the future.

More specifically, the first section of the study at hand makes use of certain concepts presented in the fields of linguistics, cultural studies, literary and postcolonial studies to provide a geographical and historical description of Jordan, or as it is officially called, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as an important component of the Islamic-Arab-Middle Eastern world. Arabic is the official language in Jordan where they speak the so-called Levant dialect and where the Islamic religion is considered the most widespread religion since over 97% of the population has been classified as Sunni Muslim. The most significant historical moments affecting Jordan before the emergence of the current state as well as the different stages that marked its modern development from the middle of the last century up until the current era have been related. Jordan is characterized by its diverse geographical environment which has contributed to determining the nature of the population and the lifestyle in each region. When referring specifically to the desert, most researchers agree that the term Bedouin refers to the nomadic Arab people who have historically inhabited the desert areas traveling with their herds in search of the grassland grazing areas in North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, and the Levant. In Arabic, *badawī* means the “desert dweller”, and is traditionally opposed with *ḥādir* or the term for sedentary people. We agree with the idea, as posited by Tamplin, that, currently, in Jordan, the majority of Arabs who define themselves as Bedouin descend from the nomadic Bedouins and prefer to live in one region. The image of the Bedouin being nomadic desert dwellers dates back centuries; however, there are not many tribes that still maintain property.

In the second part of the first section, the social lifestyle of the Bedouin life is presented and described. By analyzing their lifestyle and the JRBRs, the researcher is able to shed light many of the most

significant aspects of daily life so as to provide a realistic and detailed mental picture to the non-Bedouin as well as to identify a large part of the suffering that accompanies the Bedouin throughout their life. In this section the following concepts, their characteristics, and how they are used or implemented by the Bedouin are explained, the Bedouin tent, clothing, domesticated animals and livestock, wild animals, pleasant talk, honor, hospitality and generosity, and certain special social protocols.

These descriptions coincide with other literature published by Western orientalist that is believed to have contributed to changing the pattern of Western thought in a positive way as per the Arabs and the Bedouins, in particular in terms of women's rights and how Bedouin males deal with and treat the women around them. It is also true that Bedouins enjoy this way of relating to each other as part of their daily lives and are proud of this and of their cultural heritage in many aspects, like generosity and honor, along with the centuries old cultural and moral traditions that the Bedouin still adhere to today since they are proud of this material and cultural heritage from which they believe most of the cultures of the Arab societies throughout the Arab world have risen.

Like any society, Bedouin society is structured with a system that manages its affairs so that every individual, male or female, knows their duties and rights. This societal system together with the concepts of family, the role of women, the role of men, clan, tribe, sheikh, or "chief", tribal law, tribal judiciary, weapons, social relationships within the tribe, Bedouin folklore, stories, proverbs, poetry, music, dance and poetry are presented and explained. Finally, the difficulties that the Bedouins have suffered from the middle of the 20th century until now, such as travelling, political borders after World War II, and the growing political role of the current regime dominating the Jordanian arena, have been accounted for.

Next, in the second chapter this study turns again to the Anglo-Saxon theoretical base from cultural studies, and the linguistic perspective as a base for the history, characterization, and definition of the riddle. Along those lines, the significance of the oral literary tradition of the Anglo-Saxon riddle has been presented. This section

describes how the riddle has emerged as an elegant form of art and social interaction which is used to communicate a great amount of meaning in a few words; as such, riddles play a vital role in the speech and conversation traditions of any society. As questions, statements, or phrases, and even, at times, as poetic verses, riddles are intentionally worded in puzzling or misleading ways. They tend to be double-meaning or veiled-meaning statements in the form of descriptions that have been composed to make a person use his/her imaginative ingenuity to come up with the correct answer. Furthermore, since telling someone else a riddle is a way to play with language, it is rather common for children to learn how riddles work at an early age to the extent that riddles are included in the curricula of educational systems all over the world. As a unique language tool, the riddle can enhance the appeal of the language used and, thus, strengthen its communicative effect. In this way then, riddles represent a socio-cultural element in the general cultural knowledge that a society passes on to its members, especially its youth.

In addition, the riddling session has been described to involve the riddler or the person who narrates or performs the riddle. The riddle itself may contain diverse content to the extent that riddlers need to be well versed with the culture and general knowledge of the elements that make up their environment and of the world in general. The third element is the person who attempts to answer the riddle, or the riddlee, who must also share this common knowledge in order to respond appropriately.

The appearance and definition of the riddle as a universal element has been related with reference to one of the oldest models, the Sphinx riddle, which has been documented to exist in Mesopotamia, Ancient Egypt, Greece, and even in the Marshall Islands in the West. As well as to the idea that even today new riddles are regularly being formed just like any other type of literary work. As regards the definition put forth in the study at hand, it is posited that the structural definition is more significant than the cognitive definition or the definition based on content and style. The structural perspective has been shown to provide more a universal definition that can accommodate all the riddles from different regions and societies; moreover, it is very rare, perhaps almost

impossible, to find a riddle that does not contain a topic and a reply. Another meaningful consideration is that the structural definition is flexible and can be adjusted to different riddle categories. Finally, this study presents a more modern definition to be that a riddle is an oral or written genre that has different functions. It usually consists of one or more oppositional or non-oppositional descriptive elements for one or more stated or unstated topics. It may appear in poetic or prose formulas, and the referent is meant to be deciphered.

Certain classifications of the riddle have been presented and include, the true riddle, oral riddle, visual riddle, simple riddle for children, parody riddle, riddle that have been geographically classified, the neck riddle, the clever question, the arithmetic puzzle, the conundrum, the pictorial riddle, and the wisdom riddle among others. It has been found that the classification of the riddle is based on the content, the form (prose or poetic), the question, and the answer or reply format.

Next, the different functions of the riddle are presented and discussed. The functions of the riddle have been described to be varied, intentional, and non-intentional for all the participants who participate in the riddling process, i.e., the riddler and the riddlee(s). The idea that riddles may have a social, cultural, cognitive, educational, recreational, challenge, or even ritualistic function. At the same time, some riddles might function in different, almost contradictory, ways. That is to say, what is intended by the riddler may be treated as unintended by the riddlee. An example of this might occur when an “educational” function is posed from the side of the riddler as an attempt to know who is the cleverest in a certain group. The riddlee(s) will most likely solve the riddle as they actively participate in what, for them, is the “challenge” function. Moreover, riddles may provide good circumstances for those interested in studying the social, cultural, psychological, and even political situation of a given country or a specific society, even though the “recreational” function is the most obvious and familiar for many around the world.

Several international and Arab studies that deal specifically with the study of Arabic riddles have been identified; the most important studies were concentrated in the geographical area of Algeria and

Tunisia, where some of them were translated into other languages such as French and English. As per international studies written in Arabic, Algeria has been demonstrated to be the Arab country that invests the most in writing about the subject of riddles when compared to other Arab countries.

It was found that this area of research has not been taken into consideration as much in the Jordan, especially as regards form, linguistic composition, or a structural classification of the Jordanian riddle. These studies dealing with riddles that have plays on words, and how riddles are used as an intrinsic source of Arabic humor, or as for Jordanians to find common ground and be able to empathize with people who do not share their opinion are referenced.

Next, this study specifically considers the JRBR. First some background on the folklore of this geographical area is provided. Evidence of how riddles may be presented as poems and how they are used at gatherings as a means of popular entertainment, where the each riddler participating may attempt to produce more complicated riddles than the other riddlers presenting theirs.

After that, the study at hand analyzes the significant corpus of JRBRs presented so as to demonstrate that they contain the main elements of the narrative structure. Like any other narration, the JRBRs are integrated works that may contain the six essential elements in narrative structures. The narrator is the riddler; the audience, or the riddlees, receive this narration (by hearing or reading it). The event is the action being described, and it may include the characters, the place, and the time. However, while the first two elements are, without the slightest doubt, completely necessary since there is no riddle without a riddler and a riddlee, they are considered constant in any riddling process that takes place to achieve the goal of the riddle, which is to find a solution. The event is also necessary to provide context. However, the rest of the elements are what the riddler uses to build the ambiguity on which he/she creates the riddle. That is to say, what the riddler intentionally deletes from the riddle text or simply does not present to the audience makes the vagueness or uncertainty in meaning necessary for the riddlees to come up with an appropriate solution. Then, when the solution to the riddle has been provided, the elements

of the narrative discourse are again complete so that the meaning is clear and intact. In this way, the narrative elements included or not in the JRBRs presented here may also be deemed interesting for our descriptive study. However, a more in-depth analysis of a larger corpus is perhaps still needed to propose more formal final considerations.

Next this study analyzes certain cultural aspects that appear in this corpus in order to provide a more complete representation of JRBR. The key elements that appear have been described, the types of space included in the riddles have been analyzed and the most common elements referenced in the JRBRs have been provided. The author has also confirmed that JRBRs make up a major component of non-material Jordanian folklore, since the three conditions that Arab critics adhere to were found to apply, i.e., folk literature should be imitational oral literature, the author should be unknown, and it should be passed down to a certain degree from generation to the next.

Finally, the linguistic perspective of the structural theory proposed has been applied to the JRBRs that form part of our corpus and which appear first in their original Arabic Bedouin dialect and then with the English translations provided as a way to permit non-Arabic readers to observe the characteristics found and analyzed. The study has pointed out many of the characteristics of the JRBR, which were a mainstay for entering into the analysis of the riddles utilizing the structural theory adopted to do so. The author believes that analyzing the riddles culturally and socially greatly facilitates understanding for those interested in JRBR, whether Arabs or non-Arabs. When Georges and Dundes (1963) structural theory was applied to JRBRs it was found that Jordanian Bedouin riddles typically matched their use of this theory, and also the related extensions set out by Chyet (1988). The corpus has been characterized as being either prose or poetry. This was especially true for prose JRBRs which had a better fit than poetic JRBRs. On the other hand, samples of poetic JRBRs were found to represent the casual contradictory, inverse privational contradictory, and multiple descriptive elements.

In this way, the new formulas for JRBRs that were presented based on Chyet's method are: the Contrastive Oppositional Formula of the JRBR; the General Poetic Riddle Formula of the JRBR, the Riddle

Inside a Riddle Formula; and the Multiple Topic Formula. In addition, a new category has been posited; this category is made up of prose riddles that are differentiated according to the number of core topics in each riddle. The JRBRs in the corpus considered here have provided examples of riddles with no topic, riddles with a single topic, and riddles having two, three, and even four topics.

The main area of investigation in this study was the riddle which was initially taken as a common feature in all languages and societies, since the use of the riddle is directly related to both the language and the culture of the society itself. An idea of the importance of riddles, in general, to the area of folklore has been established with the example of JRBRs; this proposal has been found to relevant and, in the future, may be applied to this tradition in literature studies carried out on riddles written in other languages and from other geographical areas. Furthermore, this study has presented a significant corpus of JRBRs as well as their translation, as appears in the Appendix to this study, which may be published as in book format as a result of the translation study in English provided here, and this edition may be used for further research. An initial and straightforward idea of the capabilities and contributions that the Arabic language and its dialects can make to any global theory related to language and its characteristics has also been proposed. Furthermore, due to their sometimes very specific cultural weight, riddles are closely related to how individuals in these societies behave and interact. As such, it is posited that riddles should not be seen as merely a cultural luxury, something that is only meant to be enjoyed in terms of how well a riddler uses his or her imagination, or as fleeting entertainment but that they should be recognized for what they are: signs of deeper meaning in a given society that represent its history and how that culture was passed on to the next generations.

More specifically, this study has introduced the JRBR system based on the structuralist theory to a corpus of local riddles. In this way, it has shown that JRBR features can account for new categories of the riddle as an extension to the universality of the riddle occurring in all nations. In addition, this study has shown satisfactory results since new types of structural riddle formula have been developed as well as new classifications based on the number of topic present in JRBRs.

To conclude, the ideas included in the study at hand may help to form a transitional view of riddle aspects that could lead to new comprehensive research projects investigating in a more general sense, riddles from the English-speaking world, as well as, in a more particular one, other Arabic riddles of various sub-ethnicities in Jordan and the surrounding nations. This, in turn, might lead to the remapping of riddle groups with particular interests in colloquial Bedouin poetry. The Bedouins have their own methods when it comes to expressing themselves. They depend on older community members knowledge to determine how the riddle will be created and who will participate in the riddle exchange. Despite the drastic life changes they have undergone lately and, more often than not, without the same technology that others have grown accustomed to in today's world, their traditional way of doing things is still of great interest to many scholars. Since there do not seem to be enough studies published on the local, social knowledge of the Bedouin people from the South-east Badia region, it can be confirmed that the logical continuation of the study at hand is to research this subject. Furthermore, future investigations carried out would do well to focus on the local-literary genres, as well as certain factors related to the Bedouins' recognition of the variability of language.

EXTENDED SUMMARY IN GALICIAN

RESUMO EN GALEGO

O propósito do presente estudo, realizado no marco do Programa de Doutoramento en *Advanced English Studies: Linguistics, Literature & Culture*, da Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, é dar conta de e describir a adiviña, ou enigma beduíno, tal e como se atopa en Xordania. Para iso, utilízanse como base para o desenvolvemento do aparello crítico, certas perspectivas teóricas que principalmente seguen as propostas de investigadores anglosaxóns nos campos da lingüística, dos estudos culturais, dos estudos literarios pos-coloniais, e do estudo do enigma. Ademais, outros traballos de investigación publicados en inglés e árabe tamén se utilizaron para lanzar máis luz sobre a contorna cultural e literaria de Xordania e, máis concretamente, o da rexión xordana de Badia. Doutra banda, preséntase e abórdase un corpus de enigmas beduínos xordanos da área xeográfica da rexión de Badia. A vantaxe significativa deste corpus é que inclúe exemplos de máis dunha xeración e, por tanto, proporciona un vínculo máis próximo con aqueles que experimentaron unha interacción real e persoal na tradición oral.

Esta tese doutoral divídese en dúas seccións. Na primeira parte esbózanse certas especificacións culturais que se tiveron en conta, así como as bases teóricas sobre as que se sustenta o estudo. O capítulo 1 describe a rexión xeográfica máis específica que é obxecto de estudo, e tamén proporciona antecedentes sobre moitos dos aspectos culturais desta rexión. O capítulo 2 proporciona un marco teórico sobre as

investigacións previas dedicadas aos enigmas e, ademais, proporciona un relato dos estudos previos realizados sobre enigmas no mundo árabe. A continuación, presenta algúns antecedentes sobre estudos previos realizados en Xordania e ofrece a presentación do enigma beduíno xordano da rexión de Badia, ou JRBR. Logo leva a cabo unha discusión das características estruturais formais dos JRBR. As observacións finais ofrecen algúns comentarios sobre a conclusión do estudo en cuestión, así como as posibilidades de investigación para o futuro.

Máis especificamente, a primeira sección do presente estudo fai uso de certos conceptos presentados nos campos da lingüística, dos estudos culturais, dos estudos literarios e pos-coloniais para proporcionar unha descrición xeográfica e histórica de Xordania, ou como se lle chama oficialmente, o Reino Haxemita de Xordania, como un compoñente importante do mundo islámico-árabe de Oriente Medio. O árabe é o idioma oficial en Xordania onde se fala o chamado dialecto do Levante e onde a relixión islámica considérase a máis estendida xa que máis do 97% da poboación foi clasificada como musulmá sunnita.

Relátanse os momentos históricos máis significativos que afectaron a Xordania antes do xurdimento do estado actual, así como as diferentes etapas que marcaron o seu desenvolvemento moderno desde mediados do século pasado ata a época actual, xa que Xordania caracterízase pola súa diversa contorna xeográfica que contribuíu a determinar a natureza da poboación e o estilo de vida en cada rexión.

Ao referirse especificamente ao deserto, a maioría dos investigadores están de acordo en que o termo beduíno refírese ao pobo árabe nómade que historicamente habitou as áreas desérticas viaxando cos seus rabaños en busca das áreas de pastoreo de pasteiros no norte de África, a Península Arábiga, Iraq e o resto da rexión coñecida como Levante. En árabe, badawī significa o “habitante do deserto”, e tradicionalmente opónse a ḥāḍir ou o termo para persoas sedentarias. Concórdase coa idea exposta por Tamplin de que, actualmente, en Xordania, a maioría dos árabes que se definen como beduínos descendentes dos beduínos nómades e prefíren como lugar de residencia unha rexión concreta. A imaxe dos beduínos como habitantes nómades

do deserto remóntase a séculos atrás; con todo, non hai moitas tribos que aínda manteñan propiedades.

Na segunda parte da primeira sección, preséntase e describe o estilo de vida en sociedade dos beduínos. Ao analizar o seu estilo de vida e a adiviña xordana da rexión de Badia (JRBR), pódese lanzar luz sobre moitos dos aspectos máis significativos da vida diaria para brindar unha imaxe mental realista e detallada aos non beduínos, así como para identificar unha gran parte do sufrimento que acompaña ao beduíno ao longo da súa vida. Nesta sección explícanse os seguintes conceptos, as súas características e como son utilizados ou empregados polos beduínos: a tenda beduína, a vestimenta, os animais domésticos e o gando, os animais salvaxes, a charla agradable, a honra, a hospitalidade e a xenerosidade, e certas condicións e protocolos sociais especiais.

Estas descrições coinciden con outros traballos de investigación publicados por orientalistas occidentais e crese que contribuíron a cambiar o patrón de pensamento occidental de maneira positiva en relación cos árabes e os beduínos, en particular en termos dos dereitos das mulleres e como os homes beduínos tratan ás mulleres que os rodean. Tamén é certo que os beduínos gozan desta forma de relacionarse como parte da súa vida cotiá e están orgullosos diso e do seu patrimonio cultural en moitos aspectos, tales como a xenerosidade e a honra, xunto coas tradicións culturais e morais centenarias aos que aínda se adhiren hoxe en día. Este é un patrimonio material e cultural do que eles cren que xurdiron a maioría das culturas das sociedades en todo o mundo árabe.

Como calquera sociedade, a sociedade beduína está estruturada cun sistema que administra os seus asuntos de modo que cada individuo, home ou muller, coñeza os seus deberes e dereitos. Este sistema social xunto cos conceptos de familia, o papel da muller, o papel do home, o clan, a tribo, o sheikh ou “xefe”, a lei tribal, o poder xudicial tribal, armas, as relacións sociais dentro da tribo, o folclore beduíno, e as súas historias preséntanse en certos usos e manifestacións dos proverbios, a poesía, a música e a danza. Finalmente, tivéronse en conta as dificultades que sufriron os beduínos desde mediados do século XX ata o de agora, como as viaxes, as fronteiras políticas despois

da Segunda Guerra Mundial e o crecente papel político do réxime actual que domina á sociedade xordana.

A continuación, no segundo capítulo, este estudo recorre novamente á base teórica anglosaxoa desde os estudos culturais mais a perspectiva lingüística como base para a historia, caracterización e definición do enigma. Nesa liña, presentase a importancia da tradición literaria oral do enigma anglosaxón. Neste apartado observouse que os enigmas xurdiron como unha elegante forma de arte e interacción social que se utiliza para comunicar unha gran cantidade de significado en poucas palabras; como tal, os enigmas xogan un papel vital nas tradicións de fala e conversación de calquera sociedade. Como preguntas, afirmacións ou frases, e mesmo, ás veces, como versos poéticos, os enigmas redáctanse intencionalmente de maneira desconcertante ou enganosa. Tenden a ser declaracións de dobre sentido ou de sentido velado en forma de descrições que se compuxeron para facer que unha persoa empregue o seu enxeño imaxinativo para chegar á resposta correcta.

Ademais, dado que contarlle un enigma a outra persoa é unha forma de xogar coa linguaxe, é bastante común que os nenos aprendan como funcionan os enigmas a unha idade temperá, ata o punto de que os enigmas están incluídos nos plans de estudo dos sistemas educativos de todo o mundo. Como ferramenta lingüística única, o enigma pode aumentar o atractivo do idioma utilizado e, por tanto, fortalecer o seu efecto comunicativo. Desta forma, entón, os enigmas representan un elemento sociocultural do coñecemento cultural xeneral que unha sociedade transmite aos seus membros, especialmente á súa mocidade.

Doutra banda, describiuse o momento de contar un enigma, e como este involucra ao “riddler” ou a persoa que narra ou realiza o enigma. O enigma en si pode aportar contido diverso na medida en que os “riddlers”, ou narradores, deben estar ben versados na cultura e o coñecemento xeral dos elementos que compoñen a súa contorna e do mundo en xeral. O terceiro elemento é o “riddlee”, ou a persoa que tenta responder o enigma, quen tamén debe compartir este coñecemento común para responder adecuadamente.

A aparición e definición do enigma como elemento universal relacionouse con referencia a un dos modelos máis antigos, o enigma

da Esfinxe, do que se documentou a súa existencia en Mesopotamia, o Antigo Exipto, Grecia e mesmo nas Illas Marshall occidentais; así como á idea de que aínda hoxe en día vanse formando regularmente novos enigmas como calquera outro tipo de obra literaria. En canto á definición exposta no estudo que nos ocupa, expónse que a definición estrutural é máis significativa que a definición cognitiva ou a definición baseada no contido e o estilo. Demostrouse que a perspectiva estrutural proporciona unha definición máis universal que pode acomodar todos os enigmas de diferentes rexións e sociedades; ademais, é moi anormal, quizais case imposible, atopar un enigma que non conteña un tema e unha resposta. Outra consideración importante é que a definición estrutural é flexible e pódese axustar a diferentes categorías de enigmas. Finalmente, este estudo presenta unha definición máis moderna: unha adiviña ou enigma é un xénero oral ou escrito que ten diferentes funcións. Polo xeral, consta dun ou máis elementos descritivos opostos ou non opostos para un ou máis temas declarados ou non declarados. Pode aparecer en fórmulas poéticas ou en prosa, e o referente está destinado a ser descifrado.

Preséntanse certas clasificacións do enigma e inclúen, o enigma verdadeiro, o enigma oral, o enigma visual, o enigma simple para nenos, o enigma de parodia, o enigma clasificado xeograficamente, o enigma do pescozo, a pregunta astuta, o enigma aritmético, o enigma misterio, o enigma pictórico, e o enigma de sabedoría entre outros. Atopouse que a clasificación do enigma baséase no contido, a forma (prosa ou poética), a pregunta, e a resposta, ou o formato de resposta. A continuación, preséntanse e discútense as diferentes funcións do enigma. Describiuse que as funcións do enigma son variadas, intencionais, e non intencionais para todos os participantes que participan no proceso de enigma, é dicir, o “riddler” (narrador) e o (os) “riddlee(s)” (adiviñadores). Expónse a idea de que os enigmas poden ter unha función social, cultural, cognitiva, educativa, recreativa, desafiante ou mesmo ritual.

Ao mesmo tempo, viuse como algúns enigmas poden funcionar de modos diferentes, case contraditorios. É dicir, o que pretende o “riddler” (narrador) pode ser tratado como accidental polo “riddlee”, ou persoa que adiviña. Un exemplo disto podería ocorrer cando se expón

unha función “educativa” desde o lado do enigma como un intento de saber quen é o máis sagaz nun determinado grupo. O máis probable é que os “riddlee(s)”, ou adiviñadores, resolvan o enigma mentres participan activamente no que, para eles, é a función de “desafío”. Por outra banda, as adiviñas ou enigmas poden proporcionar boas circunstancias para aqueles interesados en estudar a situación social, cultural, psicolóxica e mesmo política dun país determinado ou unha sociedade específica, aínda que a función “recreativa” é a máis obvia e familiar para moitas persoas en todo o mundo.

Identificáronse certos estudos internacionais e árabes que se ocupan especificamente do estudo dos enigmas árabes. Dentro deste grupo, os estudos máis importantes concentráronse na área xeográfica que abrangue Alxeria e Tunes, onde algúns deles foron traducidos a outros idiomas como o francés e o inglés. Segundo estudos internacionais escritos en lingua árabe, Alxeria demostrou ser o país árabe que máis se ocupa de escribir sobre o tema das adiviñas en comparación con outros países da mesma contorna lingüística. Atopouse que esta área de investigación non se tivo tanto en conta en Xordania, especialmente no que respecta á forma, á composición lingüística ou á clasificación estrutural do enigma xordano. Faise referencia a estes estudos que tratan sobre adiviñas ou enigmas que se basean en crear xogos de palabras, e como estes enigmas se utilizan como unha fonte intrínseca do humor árabe, ou de modo que os xordanos atopen puntos en común e poidan sentir empatía con persoas que non comparten do todo a mesma opinión.

A continuación, este estudo considera especificamente a adiviña xordana da rexión de Badia (JRBR). En primeiro lugar, proporciónanse algúns antecedentes sobre o folclore desta zona xeográfica. Preséntase evidencia de como os enigmas poden narrarse en forma de poesía, e como se utilizan en reunións como un medio de entretemento popular, onde cada “riddler”, ou narrador, que participa pode tentar producir enigmas máis complicados que os outros narradores participantes.

Posteriormente, o estudo que nos ocupa analiza o valioso corpus de JRBR presentados para demostrar que conteñen os elementos principais da estrutura narrativa. Como calquera outra narración, os JRBR son obras integradas que poden conter os seis elementos

esenciais nas estruturas narrativas. O narrador é o “riddler”, mais o público, ou os “riddlees”, reciben esta narración (oíndoa ou léndoa). O evento é a actuación que se describe, e pode incluír os personaxes, o lugar e o tempo. Con todo, aínda que os dous primeiros elementos son, sen a menor dúbida, completamente necesarios xa que non hai enigma sen “riddler”, (narrador) e “riddlee” (adiviñador), considéranse constantes en calquera proceso de enigma que leve a cabo para lograr o obxectivo do enigma: atopar a solución máis adecuada. O evento tamén é necesario para proporcionar contexto. Con todo, o resto dos elementos son os que utiliza o “riddler” (narrador) para construír a ambigüidade sobre a que crea o enigma. É dicir, o que o “riddler” (narrador) elimina significados intencionalmente do texto do enigma, ou simplemente non o presenta ao seu público, e aumenta a vaguidade ou a incerteza no significado que son necesarias para que os “riddlees” (adiviñadores) teñan que empregar ao fondo para atopar a solución adecuada. Logo, cando se proporciona a solución ao enigma, os elementos do discurso narrativo vólvense completos para que o significado quede claro e intacto. Desta forma, os elementos narrativos incluídos, ou non, na adiviña xordana da rexión de Badia (JRBR) aquí recollidos tamén poden resultar de interese para o noso estudo descritivo. Con todo, talvez aínda se necesite unha análise máis profunda dun corpus máis amplo para propoñer consideracións finais máis formais.

A continuación, este estudo analiza certos aspectos culturais que aparecen neste corpus co fin de proporcionar unha representación máis completa de JRBR. Describíronse os elementos clave que aparecen, analizáronse os tipos de espazo incluídos nas adiviñas e achegouse unha descrición dos elementos máis comúns referenciados nos JRBR. O autor tamén confirmou que os JRBR constitúen un compoñente importante do folclore xordano non material, xa que se demostrou que se aplican as tres condicións ás que se adhíren os críticos árabes, é dicir: a literatura popular debe ser literatura oral de imitación, o autor debe ser descoñecido e debe transmitirse ata certo punto de xeración en xeración.

Finalmente, a perspectiva lingüística da teoría estrutural proposta aplicouse á adiviña xordana da rexión de Badia (JRBR) que forman

parte do noso corpus e que aparecen primeiro no seu dialecto beduíno árabe orixinal e logo coas traducións ao inglés proporcionadas como unha forma de permitir aos lectores non árabes observar as características atopadas. O estudo sinalou moitas das características do JRBR, que foron un pilar para entrar na análise dos enigmas utilizando a teoría estrutural adoptada para facelo. O autor cre que analizar os enigmas cultural e socialmente facilita enormemente a comprensión para os que se interesan polos JRBR, xa sexan árabes ou non.

Cando se aplicou a teoría estrutural de Georges e Dundes (1963) aos JRBR, atopouse que os enigmas beduínos xordanos xeralmente coincidían co uso desta teoría, e tamén coas extensións relacionadas que estableceu Chyet (1988). O corpus caracterizouse por ser prosa ou poesía, e o cumprimento destas condicións foi especialmente manifesto no caso dos JRBR en prosa que tiñan un mellor axuste que os JRBR poéticos. Doutra banda, probouse que as mostras de JRBR poéticas representan o contraditorio casual, o contraditorio privado inverso, e os elementos descritivos múltiples.

Deste xeito, en base ao método de Chyet, expónse catro novas fórmulas para os JRBR do corpus deste estudo, que son: a Contrastive Oppositional Formula of the JRBR, a General Poetic Riddle Formula of the JRBR, a Riddle Inside a Riddle Formula, e a Multiple Topic Formula. A iso súmase unha nova proposta de categoría que se compón de enigmas en prosa que son diferenciábeis segundo a cantidade de temas centrais en cada enigma. Os JRBR do corpus recolleito aquí proporcionaron exemplos de enigmas sen tema, enigmas cun só tema, e enigmas con dous, tres e mesmo catro temas.

O principal campo de estudo foi o enigma que inicialmente se tomou como un trazo común en todas as linguas e sociedades xa que o uso do enigma relacionase directamente tanto coa lingua como coa cultura da propia sociedade. De aí, o exemplo dos JRBR serviu para demostrar a importancia das adiviñas para o campo do folclore. Esta proposta resultou pertinente e, no futuro, poderá aplicarse a esta tradición nos estudos literarios realizados sobre adiviñas escritas noutras linguas, e doutras zonas xeográficas.

Ademais, este estudo presenta un valioso corpus significativo de JRBRs, así como a súa tradución, como aparece no Apéndice deste

estudo, que pode publicarse en formato de libro como resultado do estudo de tradución ao inglés que se proporciona aquí, e esta edición pode ser utilizada para futuras investigacións. Nesta liña, propónse a idea inicial e sinxela de demostrar as capacidades e contribucións que a lingua árabe, e os seus dialectos, logran facer con calquera teoría global relacionada coa lingua e as súas características. O principal campo de estudo foi o enigma que inicialmente se tomou como un trazo común en todas as linguas e sociedades xa que o uso do enigma relacionábase directamente tanto coa lingua como coa cultura da propia sociedade. De feito, debido ao seu peso cultural ás veces moi específico, os enigmas están estreitamente relacionados coa forma en que os individuos destas sociedades compórtanse e interactúan. Como tal, postúlase que os enigmas non deben verse como un mero luxo cultural, algo que só debe gozarse en termos do ben que un “riddler”, ou narrador, utiliza a súa imaxinación, ou como un entretemento fugaz, pero que deben ser recoñecidos polo que son: signos dun significado máis profundo dunha sociedade determinada que representan a súa historia e como esa cultura transmitiuse ás seguintes xeracións.

Máis concretamente, este estudo introduciu o sistema JRBR baseado na teoría do estruturalismo nun corpus de enigmas locais. Ademais, mostrou que as características de JRBR poden dar conta de novas categorías do enigma como unha extensión da universalidade do enigma que ocorre en todas as nacións. Doutra banda, este estudo presentou resultados satisfactorios xa que se desenvolveron novos tipos de fórmulas de enigmas estruturais e novas clasificacións baseadas no número de temas presentes nos JRBR.

Para concluír, as ideas incluídas no estudo en cuestión poden axudar a formar unha visión de transición dos aspectos dos enigmas que talvez condúzan a novos proxectos de investigación integrais que estuden, nun sentido máis xeral, os enigmas doutros países, (por exemplo, do mundo de fala inglesa), así como, nun máis particular, outros enigmas árabes de diversas sub-etnias en Xordania, ou nas nacións veciñas, o que podería conducir ao remapeo de grupos de enigmas con intereses particulares na poesía coloquial beduína xa que os beduíns teñen os seus propios métodos á hora de expresarse. Dependen do coñecemento dos membros maiores da comunidade para

determinar como se creará o enigma e quen participará no intercambio de enigmas. A pesar dos drásticos cambios de vida que sufriron ultimamente e, a maioría das veces, sen ter ao seu dispor a mesma tecnoloxía á que outros se afixeron no mundo actual, a súa forma tradicional de facer as cousas segue sendo de gran interese para moitos académicos. Dado que non parece haber suficientes estudos publicados sobre o coñecemento social local do pobo beduíno da rexión do sueste de Badia, débese afirmar que este estudo tería unha continuación lóxica desenvolvendo unha indagación sobre esta área anteriormente mencionada. Nun futuro traballo de investigación, faríase fincapé nos xéneros literarios locais, así como nos factores relacionados co recoñecemento dos beduínos sobre a variabilidade do idioma.

EXTENDED SUMMARY IN SPANISH

RESUMEN EN ESPAÑOL

El propósito de este estudio, realizado en el marco del Programa de Doctorado en *Advanced English Studies: Linguistics, Literature & Culture*, de la *Universidade de Santiago de Compostela*, es dar cuenta de y describir la adivinanza o el acertijo beduino tal como se encuentra en Jordania. Para ello, se utilizan como base para el desarrollo del aparato crítico, ciertas perspectivas teóricas que principalmente siguen las propuestas de investigadores anglosajones en los campos de la lingüística, los estudios culturales, los estudios literarios y poscoloniales, y del estudio del enigma. Además, otros trabajos de investigación publicados en inglés y árabe también se han utilizado para arrojar más luz sobre el entorno cultural y literario de Jordania y, más concretamente, el de la región jordana de Badia. Por otro lado, se presenta y se aborda un corpus de acertijos beduinos jordanos del área geográfica de la región de Badia. La ventaja significativa de este corpus es que incluye ejemplos de más de una generación y, por lo tanto, proporciona un vínculo más cercano con aquellos que experimentaron una interacción real y personal en la tradición oral.

Esta tesis doctoral se divide en dos secciones. En la primera parte se esbozan ciertas especificaciones culturales que se han tenido en cuenta, así como las bases teóricas sobre las que se sustenta el estudio. El capítulo 1 describe la región geográfica más específica que se trata y también proporciona antecedentes sobre muchos aspectos culturales de esta región. El capítulo 2 proporciona un marco teórico sobre investigaciones previas dedicadas a los acertijos y, además, proporciona un recuento de estudios previos realizados sobre acertijos

en el mundo árabe. A continuación, presenta algunos antecedentes sobre estudios previos realizados en Jordania y ofrece la presentación del acertijo beduino jordano de la región de Badia, o JRBR. Luego se lleva a cabo una discusión de las características estructurales formales de los JRBR. Las observaciones finales ofrecen algunos comentarios sobre el final del estudio en cuestión, así como las posibilidades de investigación para el futuro.

Más específicamente, la primera sección del presente estudio hace uso de los conceptos presentados en los campos de la lingüística, los estudios culturales, los estudios literarios y poscoloniales para proporcionar una descripción geográfica e histórica de Jordania, o como se le llama oficialmente, el Reino Hachemita de Jordania, como un componente importante del mundo islámico-árabe de Oriente Medio. El árabe es el idioma oficial en Jordania donde se habla el llamado dialecto del Levante y donde la religión islámica se considera la más extendida ya que más del 97% de la población ha sido clasificada como musulmana sunita.

Se relatan los momentos históricos más significativos que afectaron a Jordania antes del surgimiento del estado actual, así como las diferentes etapas que marcaron su desarrollo moderno desde mediados del siglo pasado hasta la época actual, ya que Jordania se caracteriza por su diverso entorno geográfico que ha contribuido a determinar la naturaleza de la población y el estilo de vida en cada región.

Al referirse específicamente al desierto, la mayoría de los investigadores están de acuerdo en que el término beduino se refiere al pueblo árabe nómada que históricamente ha habitado las áreas desérticas viajando con sus rebaños en busca de las áreas de pastoreo de pastizales en el norte de África, la Península Arábiga, Irak y el resto de la región conocida como Levante. En árabe, badawī significa el “habitante del desierto”, y tradicionalmente se opone a ḥāḍir o el término para personas sedentarias. Concuerda con la idea planteada por Tamplin de que, actualmente, en Jordania, la mayoría de los árabes que se definen como beduinos descienden de los beduinos nómadas y prefieren vivir en una sola región. La imagen de los beduinos como

habitantes nómadas del desierto se remonta a siglos atrás; sin embargo, no hay muchas tribus que aún mantengan propiedades.

En la segunda parte de la primera sección, se presenta y describe el estilo de vida en sociedad de los beduinos. Al analizar su estilo de vida y los JRBR, se puede arrojar luz sobre muchos de los aspectos más significativos de la vida diaria para brindar una imagen mental realista y detallada a los no beduinos, así como para identificar una gran parte del sufrimiento que acompaña al beduino a lo largo de su vida. En esta sección se explican los siguientes conceptos, sus características y cómo son utilizados o implementados por los beduinos: la tienda beduina, la vestimenta, los animales domésticos y el ganado, los animales salvajes, la charla agradable, el honor, la hospitalidad y la generosidad, y ciertas condiciones y protocolos sociales especiales.

Estas descripciones coinciden con otra literatura publicada por orientalistas occidentales y se cree que han contribuido a cambiar el patrón de pensamiento occidental de manera positiva en relación con los árabes y los beduinos, en particular en términos de los derechos de las mujeres y cómo los hombres beduinos tratan a las mujeres que los rodean. También es cierto que los beduinos disfrutaban de esta forma de relacionarse como parte de su vida cotidiana y están orgullosos de ello y de su patrimonio cultural en muchos aspectos, tales como la generosidad y el honor, junto con las tradiciones culturales y morales centenarias a las que aún se adhieren hoy en día. Este es un patrimonio material y cultural del que ellos creen que han surgido la mayoría de las culturas de las sociedades árabes en todo el mundo árabe.

Como cualquier sociedad, la sociedad beduina está estructurada con un sistema que administra sus asuntos de modo que cada individuo, hombre o mujer, conozca sus deberes y derechos. Este sistema social junto con los conceptos de familia, el papel de la mujer, el papel del hombre, el clan, la tribu, el jeque o “jefe”, la ley tribal, el poder judicial tribal, armas, las relaciones sociales dentro de la tribu, el folclore beduino, y sus historias se presentan en ciertos usos de los proverbios, la poesía, la música y la danza. Finalmente, se han tenido en cuenta las dificultades que han sufrido los beduinos desde mediados del siglo XX hasta ahora, como los viajes, las fronteras políticas después de la

Segunda Guerra Mundial y el creciente papel político del régimen actual que domina la sociedad jordana.

A continuación, en el segundo capítulo, este estudio recurre nuevamente a la base teórica anglosajona desde los estudios culturales, la perspectiva lingüística como base para la historia, caracterización y definición del enigma. En esa línea, se ha presentado la importancia de la tradición literaria oral del enigma anglosajón. En este apartado se ha observado que los acertijos han surgido como una elegante forma de arte e interacción social que se utiliza para comunicar una gran cantidad de significado en pocas palabras; como tal, los acertijos juegan un papel vital en las tradiciones de habla y conversación de cualquier sociedad. Como preguntas, afirmaciones o frases, e incluso, a veces, como versos poéticos, los acertijos se redactan intencionalmente de manera desconcertante o engañosa. Tienden a ser declaraciones de doble sentido o de sentido velado en forma de descripciones que se han compuesto para hacer que una persona emplee su ingenio imaginativo para llegar a la respuesta correcta.

Además, dado que contarle un acertijo a otra persona es una forma de jugar con el lenguaje, es bastante común que los niños aprendan cómo funcionan los acertijos a una edad temprana, hasta el punto de que los acertijos están incluidos en los planes de estudio de los sistemas educativos de todo el mundo. Como herramienta lingüística única, el acertijo puede aumentar el atractivo del idioma utilizado y, por lo tanto, fortalecer su efecto comunicativo. De esta forma, entonces, los acertijos representan un elemento sociocultural del conocimiento cultural general que una sociedad transmite a sus miembros, especialmente a su juventud.

Por otro lado, se ha descrito el momento de contar un acertijo, y como éste involucra al “riddler” o la persona que narra o realiza el acertijo. El acertijo en sí puede contener contenido diverso en la medida en que los “riddlers”, o narradores, deben estar bien versados en la cultura y el conocimiento general de los elementos que componen su entorno y del mundo en general. El tercer elemento es el “riddlee”, o la persona que intenta responder el acertijo, quien también debe compartir este conocimiento común para responder adecuadamente.

La aparición y definición del acertijo como elemento universal se ha relacionado con referencia a uno de los modelos más antiguos, el acertijo de la Esfinge, del que se ha documentado su existencia en Mesopotamia, el Antiguo Egipto, Grecia e incluso en las Islas Marshall occidentales: así como a la idea de que aún hoy en día se van formando regularmente nuevos acertijos como cualquier otro tipo de obra literaria. En cuanto a la definición planteada en el estudio que nos ocupa, se plantea que la definición estructural es más significativa que la definición cognitiva o la definición basada en el contenido y el estilo. Se ha demostrado que la perspectiva estructural proporciona una definición más universal que puede acomodar todos los acertijos de diferentes regiones y sociedades; además, es muy anormal, quizás casi imposible, encontrar un acertijo que no contenga un tema y una respuesta. Otra consideración importante es que la definición estructural es flexible y se puede ajustar a diferentes categorías de acertijos. Finalmente, este estudio presenta una definición más moderna: un acertijo es un género oral o escrito que tiene diferentes funciones. Por lo general, consta de uno o más elementos descriptivos opuestos o no opuestos para uno o más temas declarados o no declarados. Puede aparecer en fórmulas poéticas o en prosa, y el referente está destinado a ser descifrado.

Se han presentado ciertas clasificaciones del acertijo e incluyen, el acertijo verdadero, el acertijo oral, el acertijo visual, el acertijo simple para niños, el acertijo de parodia, el acertijo clasificado geográficamente, el acertijo del cuello, la pregunta astuta, el acertijo aritmético, el acertijo misterio, el acertijo pictórico, y el acertijo de sabiduría, entre otros. Se ha encontrado que la clasificación del acertijo se basa en el contenido, la forma (prosa o poética), la pregunta, y la respuesta, o el formato de respuesta. A continuación, se presentan y discuten las diferentes funciones de la adivinanza. Se ha descrito que las funciones del acertijo son variadas, intencionales y no intencionales para todos los participantes que participan en el proceso de acertijo, es decir, el “riddler” (narrador) y el(los) “riddlee(s)” (adivinadores). Se expone la idea de que los acertijos pueden tener una función social, cultural, cognitiva, educativa, recreativa, desafiante o incluso ritual.

Al mismo tiempo, se ha visto cómo algunos acertijos pueden funcionar de modos diferentes, casi contradictorios. Es decir, lo que pretende el “riddler” (narrador) puede ser tratado como accidental por el “riddlee”, o persona que adivina. Un ejemplo de esto podría ocurrir cuando se plantea una función "educativa" desde el lado del acertijo como un intento de saber quién es el más sagaz en un determinado grupo. Lo más probable es que los “riddlee(s)”, o adivinadores, resuelvan el acertijo mientras participan activamente en lo que, para ellos, es la función de “desafío”. Además, los acertijos pueden proporcionar buenas circunstancias para aquellos interesados en estudiar la situación social, cultural, psicológica e incluso política de un país determinado o una sociedad específica, aunque la función “recreativa” es la más obvia y familiar para muchas personas en todo el mundo.

Se han identificado ciertos estudios internacionales y árabes que se ocupan específicamente del estudio de los acertijos árabes. Dentro de este grupo, los estudios más importantes se concentraron en el área geográfica de Argelia y Túnez, donde algunos de ellos fueron traducidos a otros idiomas como el francés y el inglés. Según estudios internacionales escritos en árabe, Argelia ha demostrado ser el país árabe que más se ocupa de escribir sobre el tema de las adivinanzas en comparación con otros países árabes. Se encontró que esta área de investigación no se ha tenido tanto en cuenta en Jordania, especialmente en lo que respecta a la forma, la composición lingüística o la clasificación estructural del acertijo jordano. Se hace referencia a estos estudios que tratan sobre acertijos que tienen juegos de palabras, y cómo los acertijos se utilizan como una fuente intrínseca del humor árabe, o de modo que los jordanos encuentren puntos en común y puedan empatizar con personas que no comparten del todo la misma opinión.

A continuación, este estudio considera específicamente el JRBR. En primer lugar, se proporcionan algunos antecedentes sobre el folclore de esta zona geográfica. Se presenta evidencia de cómo los acertijos pueden narrarse en forma de poesía, y cómo se utilizan en reuniones como un medio de entretenimiento popular, donde cada “riddler”, o

narrador, que participa puede intentar producir acertijos más complicados que los otros narradores participantes.

Posteriormente, el estudio que nos ocupa analiza el valioso corpus de JRBR presentados para demostrar que contienen los elementos principales de la estructura narrativa. Como cualquier otra narración, los JRBR son obras integradas que pueden contener los seis elementos esenciales en las estructuras narrativas. El narrador es el “riddler”, la audiencia, o los “riddlees”, reciben esta narración (oyéndola o leyéndola). El evento es la actuación que se describe, y ésta puede incluir los personajes, el lugar y el tiempo. Sin embargo, si bien los dos primeros elementos son, sin la menor duda, completamente necesarios ya que no hay acertijo sin “riddler”, o narrador, y “riddlee”, o adivinador, se consideran constantes en cualquier proceso de acertijo que se lleve a cabo para lograr el objetivo del acertijo: encontrar la solución más adecuada. El evento también es necesario para proporcionar contexto. Sin embargo, el resto de los elementos son los que utiliza el “riddler” narrador para construir la ambigüedad sobre la que crea el acertijo. Es decir, lo que el “riddler”, o narrador, elimina intencionalmente del texto del acertijo, o simplemente no presenta a su público, aumenta la vaguedad o la incertidumbre en el significado que son necesarias para que los “riddlees”, o adivinadores, tengan que emplearse para encontrar la solución adecuada. Luego, cuando se ha proporcionado la solución al acertijo, los elementos del discurso narrativo se vuelven a completar para que el significado quede claro e intacto. De esta forma, los elementos narrativos incluidos o no en los JRBR aquí recogidos también pueden resultar de interés para nuestro estudio descriptivo. Sin embargo, tal vez aún se necesite un análisis más profundo de un corpus más amplio para proponer consideraciones finales más formales.

A continuación, este estudio analiza ciertos aspectos culturales que aparecen en este corpus con el fin de proporcionar una representación más completa de JRBR. Se han descrito los elementos clave que aparecen, se han analizado los tipos de espacio incluidos en las adivinanzas y se ha aportado una descripción de los elementos más comunes referenciados en los JRBR. El autor también ha confirmado que los JRBR constituyen un componente importante del folclore

jordano no material, ya que se ha demostrado que se aplican las tres condiciones a las que se adhieren los críticos árabes, es decir: la literatura popular debe ser literatura oral de imitación, el autor debe ser desconocido y debe transmitirse hasta cierto punto de generación en generación.

Finalmente, la teoría lingüística estructural propuesta se ha aplicado a los JRBR que forman parte de nuestro corpus y que aparecen primero en su dialecto beduino árabe original y luego con las traducciones al inglés proporcionadas como una forma de permitir a los lectores no árabes observar las características encontradas. El estudio ha señalado muchas de las características del JRBR, que fueron un pilar para entrar en el análisis de los acertijos utilizando la teoría estructural adoptada. El autor cree que analizar los acertijos cultural y socialmente facilita enormemente la comprensión para los que se interesan por los JRBR, ya sean árabes o no.

Cuando se aplicó la teoría estructural de Georges y Dundes (1963) a los JRBR, se encontró que los acertijos beduinos jordanos generalmente coincidían con el uso de esta teoría, y también con las extensiones relacionadas que estableció Chyet (1988). El corpus se ha caracterizado por ser prosa o poesía, y el cumplimiento de estas condiciones fue especialmente manifiesto en el caso de los JRBR en prosa que tenían un mejor ajuste que los JRBR poéticos. Por otro lado, se ha probado que las muestras de JRBR poéticas representan el contradictorio casual, el contradictorio privado inverso, y los elementos descriptivos múltiples.

De este modo, en base al método de Chyet, se plantean cuatro nuevas fórmulas para los JRBR del corpus de este estudio, que son: la Contrastive Oppositional Formula of the JRBR, la General Poetic Riddle Formula of the JRBR, la Riddle Inside a Riddle Formula y la Multiple Topic Formula. A ello se suma una nueva propuesta de categoría que se compone de acertijos en prosa que son diferenciables según la cantidad de temas centrales en cada acertijo. Los JRBR del corpus recogido aquí han proporcionado ejemplos de acertijos sin tema, acertijos con un solo tema, y acertijos con dos, tres e incluso cuatro temas.

El principal campo de estudio fue el acertijo que inicialmente se tomó como un rasgo común en todas las lenguas y sociedades ya que el uso del acertijo se relaciona directamente tanto con la lengua como con la cultura de la propia sociedad. De ahí, el ejemplo de los JRBR ha servido para demostrar la importancia de las adivinanzas para el área del folclore. Esta propuesta ha resultado pertinente y, en el futuro, podrá aplicarse a esta tradición en los estudios literarios realizados sobre adivinanzas escritas en otras lenguas, y de otras zonas geográficas. Además, este estudio ha presentado un valioso corpus significativo de JRBRs, así como su traducción, como aparece en el Apéndice de este estudio, que puede publicarse en formato de libro como resultado del estudio de traducción al inglés que se proporciona aquí, y esta edición puede ser utilizada para futuras investigaciones.

Asimismo, se ha propuesta la idea inicial y sencilla de demostrar las capacidades y contribuciones que la lengua árabe, y sus dialectos, logran hacer con cualquier teoría global relacionada con la lengua y sus características. De hecho, debido a su peso cultural a veces muy específico, los acertijos están estrechamente relacionados con la forma en que los individuos de estas sociedades se comportan e interactúan. Como tal, se postula que los acertijos no deben verse como un mero lujo cultural, algo que solo debe disfrutarse en términos de lo bien que un “riddler”, o narrador, utiliza su imaginación, o como un entretenimiento fugaz, pero que deben ser reconocidos por lo que son: signos de un significado más profundo de una sociedad determinada que representan su historia y cómo esa cultura se transmitió a las siguientes generaciones.

Más concretamente, este estudio ha introducido el sistema JRBR basado en la teoría del estructuralismo en un corpus de acertijos locales. Además, ha mostrado que las características de JRBR pueden dar cuenta de nuevas categorías del acertijo como una extensión de la universalidad del acertijo que ocurre en todas las naciones. Por otro lado, este estudio ha presentado resultados satisfactorios ya que se han desarrollado nuevos tipos de fórmulas de acertijos estructurales y nuevas clasificaciones basadas en el número de temas presentes en los JRBR.

Para concluir, las ideas incluidas en el estudio en cuestión pueden ayudar a formar una visión de transición de los aspectos de los acertijos que tal vez conduzcan a nuevos proyectos de investigación integrales que estudien, en un sentido más general, los acertijos de otros países, (por ejemplo, del mundo de habla inglesa), así como, en uno más particular, otros acertijos árabes de diversas sub-etnias en Jordania, o en las naciones vecinas, lo que podría conducir a la remapeo de grupos de acertijos con intereses particulares en la poesía coloquial beduina ya que los beduinos tienen sus propios métodos a la hora de expresarse. Dependen del conocimiento de los miembros mayores de la comunidad para determinar cómo se creará el acertijo y quién participará en el intercambio de acertijos. A pesar de los drásticos cambios de vida que han sufrido últimamente y, la mayoría de las veces, sin la misma tecnología a la que otros se han acostumbrado en el mundo actual, su forma tradicional de hacer las cosas sigue siendo de gran interés para muchos académicos. Dado que no parece haber suficientes estudios publicados sobre el conocimiento social local del pueblo beduino de la región del sureste de Badia, se debe afirmar que este estudio tendría una continuación lógica desarrollando una indagación sobre esta área antes mencionada. En un futuro trabajo de investigación, se haría hincapié en los géneros literarios locales, así como en los factores relacionados con el reconocimiento de los beduinos de la variabilidad del idioma.

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INTRODUCTION

The research and preparation of this doctoral dissertation was carried out in the PhD program in Advanced English Studies: Linguistics, Literature & Culture at the *Universidade de Santiago de Compostela*, Spain. This PhD program provides a well-structured foundation for the study at hand since the theoretical bases from the fields of linguistics, cultural studies, literary and postcolonial studies, and the more specific area of the riddle, were all topics that have, to a certain extent, prospered in English-speaking countries. Hence, the reading and investigation of these publications in these areas in English was necessary to be able to apply the findings to the designated topic here. As the title of this dissertation indicates, the study at hand seeks to make use of the theoretical perspectives mentioned above to present, analyze, classify, and discuss the Jordanian Bedouin riddle from the Badia region of Jordan.

First, reference will be made to the area of cultural studies. Emerging in the late 1950s and early 1960s in England and North America, this field of study has been widely acknowledged as a sphere of academic inquiry that investigates various socio-cultural practices and their impact on society and the human experience. The term cultural studies was first used in England to make reference to a new area of research that was interested in a more interdisciplinary approach to understanding the world in response to the limitations of certain more traditional disciplines like sociology, anthropology, and literature. Hence, this new approach focused on socio-cultural practices and their impact on society and politics, and emerged when several influential

scholars from different disciplines began to collaborate with each other so as to generate new ways of understanding as they adopted this new interdisciplinary approach to study cultural practices. It is the British literary critic and cultural scholar, Richard Hoggart, who has been credited with the first use of this term in a paper published in 1957 in which he examined the impact of the mass media, particularly popular culture, on the lives of working-class communities and argued that popular culture was an important aspect of these communities since it helped to shape their beliefs, values, aspirations, and cultural identities. Another important figure in this field is Stuart Hall. Hoggart, who had initially founded a postgraduate research institute in 1964, invited Hall to be the director of what went on to be the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), also known as the Birmingham School, a pioneering institution for this field in England. Hall contended that this area of study should remain an interdisciplinary field in order for it to properly consider how different practices, institutions and power structures shape and influence social and cultural life. Other CCCS scholars participated in innovative research about topics having to do with gender, race, ethnicity, and postcolonial studies, all of which began to have consequences in the understanding of how these identity categories were constructed through socio-cultural practices and, how these socio-cultural practices, in turn, reproduced or challenged certain structures of inequality.

The field of cultural studies became known as a distinct and influential area of study in the 1970s and 1980s in the United Kingdom and many believe this was due to the intellectual influence of the Birmingham School. During this time, the writings of Hoggart, E. P. Thompson, and Raymond Williams, among others, were key in leading others to study postmodernism and its impact on cultural, social, and political life. One example of this is *Resistance Through Rituals*, the 1976 text edited by Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson that examined the impact of resistance to mainstream cultural values and how that affected cultural practices and identities. These practices facilitated the construction of new cultural forms that transcend national borders and, thus, help to create new forms of hybrid cultural identities. Later, Paul Gilroy conducted research on how Black British identities were

constructed and put forth his idea that race and ethnicity were used to exclude Black people from the cultural and political life in Britain. Another important area of research is that dealing with how colonialism and imperialism have impacted cultural practices and how postcolonialism has shaped cultural identities. An example appeared in a book published by Homi Bhabha in 1994 which the idea of how colonialism and imperialism helped to create areas of cultural hybridism and how these cultural sites have had an important role in the articulation of postcolonial identities is discussed.

While this field was developing in England, it also expanded in other areas such as Australia, Canada, and the United States, where researchers adopted and acted upon various approaches and perspectives. For example, in Australia, this area has tended to focus on issues of national identity, multiculturalism, and indigenous cultures. Researchers in Canada have tended to engage more with studies about certain aspects of gender and postcolonialism. Meanwhile, in the United States, cultural studies have been greatly influenced by feminist studies, media studies, and critical race theory as well as the application of these theories to certain aspects of popular culture, digital culture, and media representations. Another area in which the field of cultural studies prospered was in Latin America. One example of this is Nestor García Canclini's research that examines how global cultural products are reinterpreted in local contexts and how local cultural practices are influenced by global cultural flows. This short review of cultural studies clearly demonstrates how this interdisciplinary concept has developed first in English-speaking countries and later in other countries. The promotion of this theoretical base is essential since examining how different cultural practices, institutions, and power structures shape and influence social and cultural life facilitates the observation of how they also forge certain identities.

In order to refer to these identities, one of the central themes of cultural studies is the analysis of popular culture, i.e., the cultural artifacts and practices that are widely consumed and enjoyed in a society. In this perspective, popular culture is not just a set of neutral expressions of creativity or entertainment, but rather it is a product of complex cultural and power processes that reflects that society. They

have also proposed that the consumption of popular culture is shaped by cultural norms, values, and expectations. Another central theme of cultural studies can be found in the oral traditions that are present in a given society. This point of view has emphasized the importance of studying oral traditions as a way to understand the cultural practices and beliefs of a community. The concept of orality, as developed by Walter Ong (1982) proposes that oral cultures have their own distinct characteristics which include memorization, repetition, and performance, which demonstrates that in these societies, knowledge may not be transmitted through the written text, but, in many cases, through the spoken word. In this sense, oral cultures are more dynamic and fluid since the knowledge presented is constantly shaped and reshaped during speech acts. Finally, many scholars have discussed how oral tradition is a crucial element of cultural heritage, especially in societies that have experienced a history of colonialism or cultural oppression (Vansina, 1965; Stannard, 1992; Weber, 2005; Lee, 2014).

In Chapter 1, this dissertation begins with an introduction into certain cultural aspects of the Jordanian Bedouin people group which, in turn, aid in the understanding of the cultural elements contained in the riddles in the corpus presented. By understanding this base and the particular way of life in the Badia region, it is easier to approach the riddles themselves. In addition, the cultural identities of the people involved in the riddling processes described in this dissertation become more evident.

Another significant research area for the study at hand is that of folklore which emerged as an academic term in the late 19th century. Many believe that the first use was that of William John Thoms in 1846. Thoms was a firm believer in the value of studying traditional beliefs and customs; he believed that by examining oral tradition, one could better understand how customs and beliefs are handed down from one generation to the next in a community. This area of investigation has become a branch of interdisciplinary studies that goes beyond the traditional study of customs and beliefs since it represents a way of understanding social behavior, culture, and the creative expression of people the world over.

It is true that in the early stages of the development of this research area, the discipline was more focused on collecting and preserving traditional cultural practices, stories, and beliefs. Folklorists were mainly interested in the idea that protecting oral literature and the performances of songs, dances, games, and other cultural practices carried out in a certain community was a positive step to retain and, in this way, keep alive the cultural activities that were an integral part of the communities they observed. Hence, the study of folklore began with a general concern for the preservation of traditional cultures and concentrated its interest on all aspects of folk culture, i.e., song, dance, social customs, language, religion, and traditions at the same time that it considered their historical antecedents and, even, their contemporary manifestations.

Scholars also seem to agree that many of these early folklorists believed that the main value of folklore resided in how it was so directly related to the traditional cultures of people groups and their worldviews. This was important for these researchers since they also felt that the forces of modernization and globalization could well be a threat to these conventional and established cultural practices. Over time, the study of folklore became a respected and distinct academic discipline that was considered to be part of a multidisciplinary field of study including anthropology, history, sociology, literature, linguistics, psychology, ethnography, and ethnomusicology. Furthermore, the study of folklore has been increasingly interested in the recording of folklore data and the use of technology to archive and disseminate this data, promoting public awareness and understanding of cultural customs and beliefs. In this study, using the perspectives set out by these researchers, the riddles in the corpus included here have also been recorded and preserved for the future. Thus, this rich area of knowledge becomes one that can be used by scholars who want to examine them, and even to compare them with certain texts from other areas around the world.

An important part of the research in the area of folklore was carried out on forms of oral literature, or ancient forms of literature that were not recorded in writing, but that were transmitted orally from one generation to another. Indeed, these oral traditions predate the written

word in many societies. Nonetheless, despite its importance, oral literature has been somewhat marginalized in academic circles until recently. In fact, it has received more attention, to a certain extent, in the last few years, particularly due to aforementioned field of cultural studies as mentioned above. The research carried out in this area has enabled scholars to understand oral literature as a dynamic, interactive, and evolving phenomenon. This field has recognized that oral literature is not fixed, but that it varies across time and space, depending on the cultural context in which it is created and consumed. Furthermore, the perspective of cultural studies also acknowledges that oral literature does not undergo a unidirectional process, but that it is shaped and molded by the social, political, and economical dynamics of the societies that produce it.

Participating in the activity of storytelling was, traditionally speaking, one of the main ways in which people entertained themselves, taught their children about their history, and passed on their cultural values; while doing all of this, they created their own cultural identity. Thus, storytelling represents an essential aspect of the oral literary tradition. A common way to make these stories more engaging is to use riddles. There exist many forms of riddles, i.e., puzzles, conundrums, or brainteasers and they may be constructed as cryptic statements, questions, or phrases. The riddle is often presented in a poetic format that employs imaginative and often surrealistic language, which is used intentionally in order to pose a challenge to the audience who is supposed to decipher and solve the riddle.

One of the main ways that the field of cultural studies has contributed to the study of oral literature is by analyzing the function that oral literature has in society. Many academics agree that oral literature serves various functions, depending on where it originates. One can illustrate this with the example of riddles. The function that a riddle has in a rural community in Africa might not coincide with the function of a riddle in an urban European setting. Cultural studies has also explored the meaning and symbolism of oral literature, the social context in which these texts emerge, and the social identities of the relationships that they create and uphold in communities. Understanding the implications of this has allowed previous researchers

to demonstrate that riddles are not only playful word games but are commonly filled with cultural significance and value and that when a people group from a certain culture participates in the riddling process, certain social identities and relationships are reinforced.

Riddles have been used since ancient times as a way to entertain, challenge, and educate. In many cultures, riddles were considered an important part of social interaction which has captured the attention of linguists, anthropologists, and folklorists. There exist many references to riddles in Ancient Greek literature. Indeed, over the centuries, scholars from various fields have developed theories about riddles, attempting to explain their cultural significance and the cognitive processes involved in solving them. Many scholars have commented on one of the earliest theories, put forth by Aristotle, who saw riddles as a form of metaphor, requiring the listener to make a connection between seemingly unrelated things. In addition, it has been demonstrated that in medieval Europe, riddles were often used as a form of courtly entertainment, and collections of riddles were compiled and circulated among the nobility. Perhaps one of the most famous of these collections is the Exeter Book, a manuscript dated to the 10th century, which contains over 90 riddles in Old English and represents the Anglo-Saxon culture. An ancient manuscript, the Exeter Book, is considered to be one of the four major codices of Old English literature, and contains a wealth of diverse material, including religious and secular poems, elegies, narrative texts, and a collection of riddles. Hence, this anthology of writings represents of the most important manuscripts in Anglo-Saxon studies. The Anglo-Saxon riddles included in this book are enigmatic literary devices used to describe everyday objects as well as natural phenomena and are expressed in metaphorical and descriptive language.

In Anglo-Saxon England, riddles were a popular form of entertainment. It is believed that in this society, riddling events often took place during social gatherings like feasts held in Mead halls, a type of longhouse used for gatherings. These riddles offer insights into their lives and beliefs and represent a notable aspect of Anglo-Saxon folklore. It seems that the base for studying the riddle in English stems from these texts. For this study, a short introduction about the riddles

in the Exeter book helps to lay out a certain foundation for the riddles in our corpus and how they, in turn, provide information about the lives and social activities of the people in the Jordanian Badia region.

The theoretical perspective from the area of structuralism is also significant for the work at hand. This theory focuses on perceiving and interpreting the underlying structures of human society and culture. Originating in the fields of linguistics and anthropology, this concept has been applied in various other disciplines, i.e., literary theory, sociology, and psychology. The fundamental premise of structuralism is that every aspect of culture, including language and social institutions, has a basic structure that can be singled out, analyzed, and assessed. Once these structures are understood, one can better comprehend the functioning of culture as a whole.

Structuralism was first introduced by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure in the late 19th century. Saussure's ideas dealt mainly with language and on how the structure of language shapes a people's understanding of the world around them. He claimed that language is not a simple collection of words and meanings, but that it is a complex system of signs that are interconnected and that only have meaning in relation to each other. To Saussure, this interconnectivity represents the structure of language. Thus, one of the significant concepts of structuralism is the belief that a people's behavior and actions are shaped by social structures and cultural patterns. In 1969, the French anthropologist Claude Lévi Strauss applied this idea in his analysis of social structures and cultural practices. Strauss analyzed kinship systems to better grasp how groups structured their idea of kinship and concluded that all societies are structured around a set of binary oppositions, i.e., male vs. female, or nature vs. culture. Strauss claimed that these oppositions are universal to the human being and reflect the ingrained structure of the human brain.

The idea of binary oppositions has continued to be a topic of great consideration. Nowadays some researchers still believe that they are fundamental structures of human thought, and as such are reflected in all aspects of culture, i.e., good vs. evil, and life vs. death. Several studies have suggested that binary oppositions are not merely simple dichotomies, but that they portray complex systems of meaning that

define how human beings understand the world around them. Other scholars have suggested that binary oppositions are not universal, but that they are culturally specific and, as such, reflect different cultural values and beliefs.

Another area of structuralism that is significant for this study has to do with the field of linguistics. Structural linguistics comprises an approach to language that highlights the underlying structures of language rather than individual words and their meanings. In this way, structural linguistics stresses the importance of the rules that govern the use of language, or grammar, over individual words. An illustration of this can easily be seen in the difference between the phrases “he is writing” and “he wrote” in which the same verbs have been conjugated in the present continuous and the past simple verb tenses in order to express very different meanings. This clearly shows that the rules which govern how people use language are more important than the individual meaning of the words themselves. One of the scholars involved in rethinking structural linguistics was Michel Foucault who rejected the more simplistic idea of language and highlighted that social structures reinforce and maintain power relations to the extent that they are often disguised as language and cultural practices. This critique of structuralism as well as others, led to the emergence of post-structuralism, an area that considers there is a need for more complex analyses that take into account the idea of individuals and individual subjectivity and how they help to shape cultural and social phenomena. In this dissertation, this structural linguistic point of view has been applied to the corpus of JRBRs presented; similarities between them and riddles from other areas has been found, as well as certain differences that help to establish their own structural and linguistic description.

Apart from grammar, structuralism was also applied to literature theory in the mid-20th century. Researchers who applied this perspective concentrated on the underlying structure of literary texts as well as on how these texts reflect deeper structures of culture. Many of them claim that literary texts are not simple representations of reality, but instead are complex systems of meaning that demonstrate deeper structures of culture. An illustration of this can be observed in a literary

text that employs binary oppositions such as good vs. evil to exemplify more profound cultural beliefs and values. This idea has also been utilized in the study of riddles since they can be analyzed as a system of meaning that represents deeper structures of a cultural system. Riddles use language to create meaning and have a specific structure that consists of a question or statement followed by a clue or hint and then the solution or answer is given. The first part sets up the problem to be solved, while the second part points the way to the correct answer. The answer is the solution to the problem that the riddle presents. The idea of problem vs. solution is in itself an example of a binary opposition. Moreover, the metaphors and figurative speech that appear in riddles is another example of opposition, i.e., literal vs figurative language. Furthermore, the riddle commonly involves a certain type of wordplay or pun, which can also be explained in the binary opposition of literal meaning vs. multiple meanings. In the study at hand the concept of the structuralist theoretical perspective emphasizing the underlying structures of human society and culture is applied to the corpus of JRBRs presented here. In this application, evidence of how the riddle reflects a deeper cultural understanding of the people group from this region is clearly observed.

Finally, this dissertation contributes to the field of postcolonial studies, since its focus is on non-Eurocentric cultures so as to mark their space in Western academia. Whether in North Africa, Mesopotamia, Arabia, or the Levant, the Bedouin experienced colonial dominance even though this culture in fact superseded that of the Europeans. In certain instances, Western cultural hegemony was based on literacy terms, i.e., well established European written traditions that tended to displace traditional native oral forms of expression. Although Arabic is a rich literary language and did not suffer the constraints of most African languages that were strictly enclosed in the oral tradition, the fact is that literacy rates among the Bedouin have perhaps not been as high as in other people groups and this has relegated them in scholarly production.

In this sense, the field of postcolonial studies has readdressed certain biases from the past. They have oriented Western philology towards cultural forms of non-Western regions. Therefore, although

this dissertation is written in English as a global language of culture that, along with French, is still largely used by scholars in Arabic institutions, it furthermore simultaneously addresses Arabic cultural tradition as well as Arabic itself.

In this sense, the Arab world owes much to primary sources such as the Quran (the Islamic Holy Book) and to documented historical Arabic manuscripts that have helped to preserve the classical written and oral structure of traditional Arabic. One specific example of this is the *Alfiyya of Ibn Malik* a book of Arabic grammar written in rhyme; this summary, as proposed by Jamal Al-Din Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Malik Al Taei Al-Jayani in the 13th century AD, consists of one thousand poetic verses about the syntax and morphology of the Arabic language. Until the current time, the impact of the high esteem bestowed upon Classical Arabic is still dominant in most written work and is still widely used in official speeches as well. Furthermore, due to the wide variation between Arabic dialects, it is also the only way for Arabic speakers to communicate with people who do not share the same regional dialect of Arabic. Nowadays, since the fields of postcolonial studies and cultural studies have fostered plurality and respect for native cultural manifestations, research projects like the one at hand are indeed merited.

By nurturing this project, the PhD program in Advanced English Studies: Linguistics, Literature & Culture at the *Universidade de Santiago de Compostela* participates in the wake of other prestigious institutions, such as the London School of Oriental and African Studies and their counterparts in Berlin or Paris. It seems only fitting that in institutions like these which were once founded to teach members of the colonial administration and their families now play an active role promoting the cultures of the former imperial territories. This dissertation has a multicultural ambition; by using English as the medium of expression it caters to an international audience while it provides access to research published in Arabic. At the same time, it is a base point for intercultural comparative studies.

OBJECTIVES

Next, the objectives of this study, and the research questions are laid out with reference to the specific topic of this dissertation: the Jordanian Bedouin Riddle of the Badia Region, or JRBR. Taking into consideration the previous discussions related to the study of the riddle with reference to cultural studies, folklore and structuralism, this doctoral dissertation seeks to fill a gap not yet accounted for by preceding studies, as well as to allow for a deeper understanding of the topic, since it is conducted on the specific Arabic-speaking community of the Bedouin of the Jordanian Badia region.

In it, one seeks to:

- 1) preserve the texts in the corpus presented here as elements of folklore that have great significance in the understanding of the beliefs and worldviews of this people group;
- 2) demonstrate that JRBRs are systematic and rule-governed, and that they have universal correlations and specific patterns that can be successfully explained by international theories proposed by previous scholars.;
- 3) publish this corpus as a way to provide an English translation of the riddles so that they can be more easily accessed by other researchers in the future;
- 4) draw attention to the JRBR as an oral literary and aesthetic genre. Much like participating in riddling exchanges in Bedouin societies, this genre itself is extremely popular, and, as such, represents a source of linguistic features generated during a human activity that has yet to be adequately studied;
- 5) reveal the universal link between different societies by applying the well-known theories from the structuralist perspective mentioned above to the Jordanian Bedouin Riddle of the Badia region, or JRBR;

6) serve as a referent for future analyses on the functions, form, and content of riddles in literary traditions in English-speaking and also in other non-English speaking countries; and

7) provide evidence of the variation between prose and poetic riddles which is carried out by applying the theoretical framework from a structuralist point of view.

Making use of this empirical perspective will help to answer the following research questions about the cultural implications on the level of cultural aspects and the linguistic structure present in JRBRs.

1. What cultural aspects and elements form part of JRBRs?
2. Using the structuralist framework, what features are found to exist in the widespread genre of JRBRs?
3. Are JRBRs universally linked to other riddles around the world?
4. What variations does the structuralist theory yield for JRBR prose and poetry riddles?

METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this doctoral dissertation, a corpus of data was gathered from Jordanian Bedouins living in the Badia region in the southeast Jordan. Native Arabic speaking females and males were asked to supply JRBRs that were familiar to them, especially those that would be beneficial for a cultural study, and those that were most related to the more traditional style of other people their age, and their ancestors. Although the age of the participants was not limited, all of them were adults with experience in the riddling process; some were even more experienced poets who are accustomed to interacting as participants in the more difficult level of riddle challenges.

The collection of riddles that was gathered and presented in the study at hand is of particular interest for two reasons. The first resides in the time frame itself since it is likely that the informants were able to evoke riddles going back to as far as the twentieth century or earlier. Secondly, and possibly even more crucially, these riddles are active artifacts of the speakers' pre-literate oral culture, and, in other words, represent oral-literary knowledge as observed from this oral component. They appear as an abundant quantity of literary diversity that originated from an illiterate people; furthermore, they are of special significance to the author since they are artifacts of his ancestors.

Once the riddles were collected, they were transcribed into Arabic. The structure of each example was studied to ascertain the components and order of each riddle. The topics and cultural elements present in the riddle were also analyzed and described. These texts were also translated into English.

One of the main difficulties in presenting this study was being able to provide an appropriate and adequate English translation of the original Arabic corpus. Due to the extreme linguistic, stylistic, and cultural gap between Arabic and English, one of the linguistic obstacles is achieving equivalence when interpreting the riddles between the two languages. Generally speaking, cultural and linguistic differences are considered to be the most problematic issues of translation, which is why the translator must be completely aware of the other culture, and, thus, able to understand the meaning of a specific cultural expressions.

Moreover, when translating local idioms associated with a particular society, there are cultural connotations that arise from the unique ecology found there, as well as the more characteristic religious traditions, social habits, concepts, and beliefs. To put it bluntly, to a great extent, the linguistic structure of JRBRs cannot be translated in an exact way into English. Since the local dialect of Arabic and the cultural circumstances of this area correlate quite firmly with the linguistic structures used, translating from one language to another while retaining all of the relevant linguistic features proves difficult. Therefore, it is the translator who must come up with an accurate rendering of the riddle and the reply. To do this he/she must be accustomed to many features of this specific social reality, both natural

and human-made ones, from which he/she will have to infer an appropriate explanation to any given riddle.

Because of the challenge to provide an appropriate meaning for non-Arabic speakers, and in order to avoid serious complications in the translation process, Dr. Mamdouh Al-Alenazy who is currently a Professor at Al-Hussein Bin Talal University in Jordan was selected to be the translator. This decision was taken for several reasons. Al-Alenazy studied linguistics at Newcastle University and HPSG-Syntax at Essex University. Prior to his time at Al Hussein Bin Talal University, he was an Assistant Professor at Sohar University in Oman. In addition, and perhaps, more importantly, Al-Alenazy belongs to a large, well-known Bedouin tribe in the Arabian Peninsula (Saudi Arabia and Kuwait), which lives in a wide extension of Jordan. All of these reasons, then, demonstrate that, to a great extent, Al-Alenazy is completely familiar with Bedouin terminology and its different meanings, as well as the traditions and customs which are adhered to in the Jordanian Badia. Hence, it was understood that Dr. Al-Alenazy would be able to provide appropriate and adequate translations on a scientific and social level for the JRBRs used in this study.

That being said, one must point out that the translations that resulted are as close as possible to the original text. Where it is not possible to translate word for word and still convey a certain meaning, the meaning itself has taken precedence. The English versions were not corrected per se for grammar so that their structure would more faithfully represent the original Arabic. Finally, it should be noted that poets sometimes fill a line with an irrelevant word or two, which is known as poetic license, for the sake of the rhyme or meter in the poem.

Generally speaking, each nation has its own traditional heritage that sustains its glories and character while it depicts its spiritual affairs, psychological interests, and its people. In fact, the cultural heritage of a certain people is a tremendous and rich treasure that preserves the culture, art, and history of a nation. First used to refer to the tangible property found in cultures, the term *cultural heritage* now refers to the tangible, intangible and natural culture of different communities. Thus, the beliefs, customs, traditions, and language(s) of each nation may be

recognized as ways of behavior that are often represented in certain, and at times, formal rules for operating in a particular cultural mood.

The present study seeks to account for and describe the Bedouin Riddle as found in Jordan. More particularly, due to the extreme global health issues that limited field research, a corpus of Jordanian Bedouin Riddles from the specific geographical area of the Badia region in Jordan is presented as Jordanian Bedouin Riddles from the Badia Region or JRBR. The significant advantage to this corpus is that it includes examples from more than one generation and, thus, provides a closer link to those who experienced true and personal interaction in the oral tradition.

Before discussing the classification of the JRBR, it is necessary to talk about some cultural aspects that will help to provide a more complete representation of them. Hence, this doctoral dissertation is divided into two sections. The first part of this study outlines certain cultural specifications that have been taken into consideration as well as the theoretical bases on which the study is based. More specifically, Chapter 1 describes the more specific geographical region dealt with in this study and also provides a background into many cultural aspects of this region. To begin, certain geographical, historical, and ethnic aspects are described, specifically the significant stages that the country went through until the establishment of the current Jordanian state that still affect the life of the Bedouin. Reference is also made to its important literary tradition as a way to confirm this written and documented legacy. Next, the homeland of the Bedouin is described starting with the “big home”, i.e., the desert itself, as well as the animal hair tent, or “small house”. Other aspects of their lifestyle like livestock and travel in the desert, among others, are also depicted as well as the tangible art of dressing that may differentiate the Bedouin from city dwellers; the intangible art found in their generosity, hospitality and poetry is also referenced. The social ordering of the Bedouin, and how it has affected their social structure and their political role in modern-day Jordan is also addressed.

Chapter 2 affords a theoretical background on previous research dedicated to the riddle, and, in addition, provides an account of previous studies done on riddles in the Arabic world. An overview of the

definition of the riddle is provided along with references to many of the significant texts related to riddles in the last few decades. Next, it presents some background on previous studies done in Jordan and offers the presentation of the Jordanian Bedouin Riddle from the Badia Region. The inclusion of the previous work carried out by Arab scholars is important. Contrary to what was expected, Jordan does not abound with analytical research on riddles which marks a disparity when compared to work undertaken in other Arabic speaking countries and the West. Next, the formal linguistic structural features of JRBRs are discussed. The concluding remarks offer some final comments about the study at hand as well as research possibilities for the future.

CHAPTER ONE: THE BEDOUIN IN JORDAN & BEDOUIN CULTURE

Jordan is one of the youngest nations in the region of Southwest Asia and occupies an area that was home to several ancient civilizations. As a natural border, the Jordan River separates Jordan from its neighbor, ancient Palestine which, just like Jordan, played a historical role in the events of the biblical era. Many ancient biblical civilizations occupied areas within the boundaries of Jordan, such as Edom, Moab, Gilead, as well as Petra “the red stone city”. Petra was, first, the capital of the Nabatean civilization and, later, of the Arabian Province of the Roman Empire known as Arabia Petraea.

Certain more recent events in the 20th century have played an important role in the political and social situation found in present day Jordan although, as will be made evident, it is nearly impossible to separate the past from the present. More specifically in this sense, during World War I, and after almost four centuries of Ottoman rule, Jordan was freed from the Turks in 1918 by the Hashemite Army which was supported by Britain and France. After World War I, Jordan was a British protectorate until it gained independence as a kingdom in 1946. The capital city, Amman, which received its name in the 13th century BC as the capital of the Ammonites, is now the largest city in the country. Known as the great city during Middle Eastern antiquity, Amman was renamed Philadelphia during the Macedonian invasion, a name the Romans kept when they conquered much of the Levant in 64 AD. Today, with over 4 million inhabitants, Amman serves as one of the main centers for commerce and transportation and is well-known as one of the major cultural and developmental capitals in the Arab world.

With respect to area, Jordan covers a territory of almost 90,000km², which, as a means of comparison, means that it is slightly smaller in size than European countries like Hungary or Portugal. It borders with Saudi Arabia to the south and southeast, with Iraq to the east, with Israel and the West Bank to the west and with Syria to the north. There are 26 kilometers of coastline on its border with the Gulf of Aqaba, its only port, in the southwest. Jordan is divided into three main physiographic areas (from west to east): the Jordan River, the Jordan Valley (the northwest part of the great East African Rift System), and from the mountains west of the Desert to the Desert itself. The desert region, covering more than four-fifths of Jordan, is mostly an extension of the Syrian Desert towards the Arabian Desert. The desert area in Jordan is varied with emerging sandstone outcrops in the south and part basalt and volcanic lava formations in the north. The highlands east of the Jordan River, where most people live, have an average height of 600–900 meters and rise to about 1,754 meters at Mount Ram, or *Jabal Ram*, as it is known in Arabic, the highest summit in the south. The western part is called the Jordan Valley, where the lowest natural point on the surface of the Earth drops to about 430 meters below sea level at the Dead Sea.

The climate in Jordan is varied and is Mediterranean in the west, with land that tends to be drier than other Mediterranean areas. In the east and south, there is a desert climate. One of the main factors affecting the climate is the proximity of the Mediterranean Sea. As for flora, the plants of Jordan fall into three different species: Mediterranean, semiarid grass-covered tree-less plains, and desert. In the highlands, the Mediterranean species prevail and there are thick shrubs and small trees. In the drier tree-less plain range to the east the most common species is that of artemisia or wormwood. The most common vegetation in this area is grass although there are a few isolated plants and trees, for instance lotus fruit and pistachio. In the desert, there is meager vegetation with plants and shrubs growing mainly in small depressions or along the sides of the valleys after the limited winter rains. Forests can only be found in Jordan in a small part of the country located in the rocky highlands. This flora allows for the presence of many types of fauna, such as: wild boar, ibex, wild goats,

hares, jackals, foxes, wildcats, hyenas, wolves, gazelles, mongoose, rodents, and even a few leopards. Golden eagles, vultures, pigeons, and partridges can be found as can lizards, centipedes, and scorpions.

As far as the human population is concerned, most of the people in Jordan are Arabs, mainly Jordanians and Palestinians, most likely because Jordan may be the only Arab nation that automatically grants citizenship to Palestinian refugees. There is also a notable minority of Bedouin. The latter group, also known as *Bedu* in Jordan, made up the largest indigenous people before the mass arrival of the Palestinians after the wars with Israel in 1948 and 1967. To date, the Jordanian Bedouin tribal system remains faithful to the Hashemite kingdom, which has ruled the country since the Arab revolt in 1923. There are also minority groups of Syrians who are refugees from the Syrian Civil War and Iraqis who took refuge in Jordan after the Persian Gulf and the Iraq War respectively. Finally, there are a small number of Circassians living in Armenian communities and Turkmen as well.

As per religion, the majority of the population, over 97% are Sunni Muslim. The rest of the population is mostly Christian. Of the latter, most conform to the Greek Orthodox doctrine, although there are also Greek Catholics, Catholics of the Byzantine ritual, Roman Catholics, a small group of Syrian Orthodox Patriarchates of Antioch and an even smaller group of Protestants. Most of the non-Arab Christians are Armenians and belong to either the Orthodox or the Catholic Church. There are also small groups of Druze and Baha'i followers.

Arabic is the official language in Jordan. The regional dialects which occur here are related to the Levantine variety of Arabic spoken in parts of Syria, Palestine, and Lebanon and, thus, mutually understandable. The educational system includes Modern Standard Arabic, very similar to Classical Arabic, which is notably different from the more colloquial, spoken language used in everyday life as happens all over the Arab world.

With respect to the cultural heritage of the Arabic language, the Arab world owes much to primary sources such as the Quran (the Islamic Holy Book) and to documented historical Arabic manuscripts that have helped to preserve the classical written and oral structure of traditional Arabic. One specific example of this is the *Alfiyya of Ibn*

Malik a book of Arabic grammar written in rhyme; this summary, as proposed by Jamal Al-Din Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Malik Al Taei Al-Jayani in the 13th century AD, consists of one thousand poetic verses about the syntax and morphology of the Arabic language. Until the current time, the impact of the high esteem bestowed upon Classical Arabic is still dominant in most written work and is still widely used in official speeches as well. Furthermore, due to the wide variation between Arabic dialects, it is also the only way for Arabic speakers to communicate with people who do not share the same regional dialect of Arabic. Hence, it is easy to see why, for many generations, researchers and scholars focused mainly on what Western scholars denominated Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) or Modern Written Arabic (MWA). These researchers soon realized how rich in folklore and culture literary texts in other dialects of Classical Arabic were. Unlike other Arab countries such as Egypt, the interest of Jordanian scholars in documenting their own cultural heritage and local literary texts seems to have been sparked somewhat later in the last decades of the 20th century. Although many reasons caused this delay, the most important one is most likely the overall poor, local economic conditions, as well as the resulting social instability, that developed because of the wars that ravaged the whole region, (i.e., WWI and the Arab-Israeli Wars).

First as a part of the Ottoman Empire, and then as a mandate of the United Kingdom, Jordan did not become an independent kingdom until 1946. The literary movements present in Jordan can be observed in three stages that reflect this historical transition: from 1921, the time of the Eastern Emirate, until the independence of 1946, from 1947 during the post-independence and the Jordanian-Palestinian interdependence phase until the six-day war in 1967, and from the Al-Naksa setback in 1967 to the present time.

The nature of Jordan's association with the Levant until the end of the Ottoman rule coupled with the power that the tribal conquests had on the relations between the tribes and the rural population in that area resulted in an absence of newspapers and magazines, and also in insufficient means to promote education or schools to teach Arabic. Hence, education was limited to the religious schools of Sheikhs whose

culture and curricula focused only on understanding mathematical calculations, memorizing the Quran, and writing Arabic calligraphy. The first Jordanian secondary school was established in 1923, two years after the arrival of Prince Abdullah I bin Al-Hussein and produced its first graduates in 1928. Nevertheless, the middle of this period saw an improvement in the development of literary works which focused mainly on Arab nationalism as regarded through the eyes of several well-known poets and writers, such as Mustafa Wahbi Al-Tal, known locally as Arar, Muhammad Abu Qhanema, and Husni Fareez among others.

The time after 1948, known as the post-Nakba period, which brought over 70,000 Palestinian refugees into the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, may perhaps also mark a certain turning point in Jordanian literature. The explosion in population triggered the addition of new schools which resulted in higher numbers of educated people, and, consequently, of university graduates. Most of the literary works at this time noticeably revolved around the Palestinian issue. Various academic and intellectual trends concerned with the characteristic mixture of Jordanian-Palestinian originated, and, in turn, contributed to the emergence of many writers, critics, and poets in the fields of the short story, novel, traditional poetry, and free verse. In his conclusion, Abdualrhman Abu Hani, references how the writers during this period significantly influenced the curricula of schools and universities and continued to do so until the beginning of the current century. Their literary works abounded in authentic Arab culture which combined the glories of the past with the spirit of the future (1979: 202-204). During the third stage, by focusing on groups of poetic and prose genres that belonged to different regions, e.g., Jordanian style or Palestinian character, scholars began to investigate a certain amount of literary works from the previous phase. In doing so, a new and more local interest in researching Jordanian forms of literature and the use of the Arabic language surfaced (Ya'qoob 2009: Vol.1: 1045-1317).

This world of scholarship might seem to be outside the realm of the Bedu, who by nature, live a simple life, and, generally speaking, avoid complications, since they are mostly interested in their livestock living far away in the desert, and may or may not know how to read and

write. However, the Bedouin environment was a rich field of studies for orientalists and some local researchers who paid great attention to the Bedu dialects, culture, and customs that, according to many scholars, might represent the lifestyle of human beings who have not been affected by the processes of modern civilization. These previous investigations studied Bedouin colloquial dialects, as well as their poetry, prose, proverbs, and folk tales. For instance, among the productive writers who became well known through the Jordanian media one can find the poets: Hekmat An-Nawasiyah, Habib Al-Zeyoudi, Ali Shaninat, Muhammad Al-Qaisi, and Ibrahim Nasrallah. As regards the Bedu story, one must refer to: Jamal Najji, Moas Al-Razzaz, Salem Al-Nahhas, Jalal Barjas, Hazza Al-Barari, Mafleh Al-Adwan, Samiha Khreis, Hashem Gharaibeh, Uday Madanat, and Mukhlid Barakat. In the field of heritage studies on Jordanian Bedouin literature, Rocks Al-Azizi, Yaqoub Al-Awdat (the masked Bedouin), and Abdel Halim Abbas stand out. While, finally, some of the scholars dedicated to studying the Bedouin dialect are: Fakhri Kawar, Mahmoud Al-Rihawi, and Badr Abdel-Haq (as referenced in Samer Qutami 1981: 6-8).

Due to the aforementioned climatic and geographical differences, the Jordanian landscape is divided into two basic areas, the desert region and the cultivated region, and each area enables a different lifestyle. Hence, Jordanians have traditionally settled in three major groups: Bedouin, or Bedu, nomadic tent-dwellers, rural residents, and urban residents. The Bedu nomadic tent-dwellers comprise around 10% of the population, and make their living in the desert, certain areas of the plains and in the mountainous highland area. This percentage used to be higher, but many have moved to urban areas. Indeed, it is said that around 30% of urban Jordanian residents can trace their ancestry to this nomadic Bedu group. Of the Bedouin nomadic tent-dwelling group, the eastern Bedu are mostly camel breeders and herders, while the Bedu in the west herd sheep and goats. Another part of them are semi-nomads, or people who adopt a nomadic existence during the summer months but return to their homes and lands when school is in session and crops need to be planted. Rural citizens, including small numbers of Bedu, form about 20% of the population. A normal living situation for them

consists of a group of houses with other essential buildings like a mosque and primary school and pastureland nearby. Depending on the size of the village there may also be a medical clinic, post office, a traditional farmer's market space and even a café. In these villages, the families tend to be closely related. This patriarchal system also depends on extended-family ties that help to govern their social relationships and tribal systems.

Around 70% of Jordanians reside in urban regions.¹ The main population centers are Amman, Irbid, and Al-Zarqā', although there are many smaller cities and towns which have hundreds of thousands of inhabitants. Unlike the villages, most towns have government and private schools, libraries, hospitals, banks, mosques, churches, as well as entertainment facilities. The capital city, Amman, and Al-Zarqā', and to a certain extent, Irbid, have more advanced urban characteristics than do the smaller towns.

Most scholars agree that the term Bedouin refers to the nomadic Arab people who have historically inhabited the desert areas traveling with their herds in search of the meadow in North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, and the Levant.² In Arabic, *badawī* means the “desert dweller”, and is traditionally opposed with *ḥāḍir* or the term for sedentary people. As referenced in Tamplin, currently, the majority of Arabs who define themselves as Bedu descend from the nomadic Bedouins and prefer to live in one region (2018:3). The image of the Bedouin being nomadic desert dwellers dates back centuries; however, there are not many tribes that still maintain property. As will be seen in the next section, the unique culture of the Bedu resulted from the agriculture shortage and the cruel circumstances undertaken to be able to inhabit the desert.

The Bedouin, or Bedu, are organized not only with a tribal structure, but also according to a more political and economic aspect that affects the social and cultural activities that take place both within the tribe's interactions as well as outside the tribe's affairs. Leybourne points out that although the Bedouins compose just a small percentage,

¹ See Donald P. Cole, 2003:251.

² Cross reference: Walter Dostal: 1967.

perhaps less than 10%, of the total population of Jordan, they have continued to play an essential role in the current affairs of this country (1993:34). The Bedu have presented their distinct roles in Jordan in an especially attractive model, and, consequently, their culture has also been embraced, to the extent that many Bedouin traditions and customs have spread widely throughout the Jordanian community. The Bedu of Jordan consider themselves to be the original source for Jordanian heritage and, thus, the backbone of Jordanian culture. Therefore, they are commonly recognized as being the “pureblooded” citizens of Jordan. The standard language of the Bedu in Jordan is usually Arabic; however, many non-Bedouins may have trouble understanding them because they not only have a distinct dialect, but they also tend to employ lexicon and certain phrases which form a part of their cultural background. In addition, many Bedu tend to dress in a style that is different from the social norms of the rest of society since these more traditional ways of dressing are better suited for their life in the desert.

It is generally understood that the Bedouins were the sole users and masters of all of the desert areas, before modern Jordan was established, and their strong emotional attachment to the desert can easily be observed. H.R.H. Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad bin Talal quotes a popular saying about the Bedu when he affirms that whether they are settled, semi-nomadic, or among the few remaining true Bedouins of Jordan, the desert represents who they are (1999:20). In describing this attachment, H.R.H Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad used the well-known saying, “تستطيع ان تُخرج البدوي من الصحراء لكن لا يمكنك اخراج الصحراء من قلب” or, you can take the Arab out of the desert, but you cannot take the desert out of the Arab³.

Indeed, most agree that the desert is the home of many Jordanians who descend from a pure Bedu heritage. Some of them even claim that the current state is but a temporary country, formed to “fence in” the life and liberty of the Bedouin people. During the time this study was undertaken, some of the Bedu were living in Badia, in the eastern, Al

³ Translation by the author.

Raqnb sector of Jordan. As a Bedu settlement, Badia has been characterized to be tribal, self-sustaining land that was received from the state as a means of support. This area is predominantly made up of arid and semiarid climates because of the lack of rainfall. Yet, in spite of the low levels of rainfall in Badia, it is still an important source of grazing for livestock breeders.

Perhaps since Badia is not close to metropolitan areas, the Bedu have been capable of maintaining their unique social values and norms. However, some say that several of the most prominent features in Arab society as a whole, and in particular, in Jordan, can be seen in their strongest form in the Bedu lifestyle. For instance, Bedouins are celebrated for their generosity and hospitality. In fact, an essential part of their creed, rooted in the cruelty of life in the desert, is that no visitor be turned away. Another example is the tribal structure of Arab society that is easily observed amongst the Bedu, where the clan is the center of their social life. In Bedu culture, a collection of small families together constitutes a clan (*qawm*), then a number of these clans make up a tribe or (*qabila*). In these clans and tribes, Bedouin values are passed down from one generation to the next based on their ancient code of honor which insists on absolute loyalty to the clan and tribe in order to warrant the survival of certain groups. Since the Bedu have remained in these areas, and thus lived for so long outside the dominant authority of the kingdom, they have adopted several specific social tribal laws to maintain order in their community. These laws include expulsion from the tribe and the necessity to stand firm in support of certain issues that are important for their survival and well-being.

Until the beginning of the 20th century, the Bedu in Jordan were nomadic, although certain tribes held the right to selective grazing regions. In the early 1940s, many factors, such as the increased controls implemented by the modern government, caused not a small number of young Bedu to enter the Jordanian army. In the last 40 years, those Bedu have become more settled, or “sedentary” and, at most, semi-nomadic. As a way to facilitate classification, movement with herds has become a factor in distinguishing nomads from sedentary people. Livingstone

addresses the regularity of most Bedouin movement as being based on distance, which might provide an ambiguous average for classification (1985:3-4). However, the very concept of movement is more complicated than it seems because it can mean the involvement of only the strongest family members, or it can also mean the involvement of the entire family. It is quite common for the younger family or clan members to form part of the group who carry out the movement, either in the preparations of the necessary arrangements for those who will follow, or in the preparations of the herd that will be in transit with a restricted number of shepherds.

Today, it is challenging to distinguish between nomadic and settled Bedu and it is even more complicated to draw the line between the settled Bedu and those who are more mobile in Jordan. Some scholars have suggested that physical conditions are what marks the difference between the settled and the nomadic groups. In any case, the Bedu used to behave differently, but today most of them no longer wander from place to place. Instead, they have tended to associate and mix with settled communities and, consequently, have adapted to this change. An example can be seen in the lifestyle of some nomadic Bedu women. Traditionally, these women would spend most of the day in and around their tents carrying out the specific duties and chores involved in caring for their homes, children, and herds. Part of these activities included collecting firewood and water which meant they interacted with the other women who lived nearby, which, in turn, helped to promote their social relationships. Once they left their nomadic lifestyle behind, many of these women no longer have to leave their homes, so they stay indoors for longer periods of time and do not enter into as much social interaction. This is said to have resulted in a reduction in social relationships and community ties.

A more general description of these changes was provided by Jabbūr and Conrad who identified and proposed three types of Bedu lifestyle today (1995:30-31). The first type is representative of the classical, pure, or mainly unmixed, group who are still mobile. Those who practice mobility wander through the Badia area searching for grazing land and water supplies for their herds. The second type, the semi-nomads, represents a group whose activities are half-way between

the original and more authentic nomadic lifestyle and the settled group. In Badia, the semi-nomads plant crops, especially barley and wheat, and take their herds of sheep and goats far and deep into the desert before turning back to their villages. However, this group of Bedu also consider themselves to be pure Bedu. Apart from the crops they plant, their most valuable financial activity is animal husbandry. Therefore, with pastoralism centered on sheep and goats, and some cultivation crops, even though they are semi-nomadic, their way of life is comparable to that of the nomadic Bedu. Obviously, there is also some variation in this group and a certain number of them are more settled, but the common factor seems to be that they have increasingly focused their attention on planting crops such as barley, yet they may still tend to some sheep and goats. The third type is the group who have stopped raising animals and have settled down completely; in fact, many of them have moved to urban areas.

While these three groups only vary in terms of how mobile they are and the number of animals in their herds, they all share similar habits in cultural values and traditions. Hence, the tribal association is still essential for all three groups since it provides them with several rights and advantages over the strategic resources found in their areas like land and professional opportunities.

1.1 LIFE IN THE DESERT

After presenting this initial idea of who the Jordanian Bedouin are, it is also necessary to discuss some of the more important aspects of their culture. Since these culture representations reflect the cultural heritage passed down from previous generations, in the case at hand, it has much to do with the nomadic lifestyle of the tribal groups in the geographical area referred to above. Indeed, making a living in the desert has resulted in many of the cultural aspects that are called for when humans must survive in such a hostile environment. One of the most important elements necessary for an itinerant community is their home which, in this case, is the Bedu tent.

The Quran describes the homes of the Bedouins, their furniture, and their belongings with the verse: “والله جعل لكم من جلود الأنعام بيوتاً” “تَسْتَخْفُونَهَا يَوْمَ ظَعْنِكُمْ وَيَوْمَ إِقَامَتِكُمْ وَمِنْ أَصْوَابِهَا وَأَوْبَارِهَا وَأَشْعَارِهَا أَثَاتٌ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَى حِينٍ”, which has been translated as:

It is Allah Who made your habitations homes of rest and quiet for you; and made for you, out of the skins of animals, (tents for) dwellings, which ye find so light (and handy) when ye travel and when ye stop (in your travels); and out of their wool, and their soft fibers (between wool and hair), and their hair, rich stuff and articles of convenience (to serve you) for a time (Alnahil Surah, verse 80).

Attia explains that the homes of the Bedu are tents which are hot in the summer and cold in the winter, and do not protect those who live inside against moisture and rain as they should (2004:1). In fact, heavy winds, which are not uncommon at certain times of the year, may hit the tents hard enough to shake them and even cause them to fall in on the heads of their owners. Nevertheless, despite their disadvantages, for thousands of years these tents have been the Bedouins' dwelling place and shelter. Their main utility is that they may be simply folded up when it becomes time to travel to a new place, and then, are just as easily installed when the family settles in. An environmental product imposed by the conditions in which the Bedu lives, these tents are made of camel and sheep wool, and in many cases, are furnished with handicrafts produced from these wools as well. These constructions are

made in a simple manner so that it is not complicated to dismantle them and move them around as the Bedouin themselves must wander from place to place in the desert in order to find water and pasture for their livestock. In the same way the furniture and other furnishings used in the Bedu tent are also simple in shape, easy to pack up and carry from place to place and, in this way, quite suitable for the Bedouin lifestyle.

Another important element to help protect the Bedu from the desert environment is their clothing. Traditionally, the clothing is made by the female members of each family unit during the day, while they are sheltered inside their tent. In this way, older females pass their traditions on to the younger ones. This may even lead to a sort of profession since in the carved, red city of Petra, in southern Jordan, many tourists look forward to the opportunity to purchase the handcrafted clothing depicting the Bedouin culture and history that is still sold there by the Bedu.

One of the most notable characteristics of Bedu attire, made of striped cotton and simple gabardine, is that it symbolizes the essential identity of the person who wears it. Each tribe has their own special colors which are used to embellish these handmade items of clothing with embroidery in simple but detailed patterns that allow others who can understand this system to easily recognize what tribe those who wear these clothes belong to; in this way, the clothing itself marks a person's tribal identity. There are other subtle differences as well; the garments of a married woman vary from those worn by a single woman. Social position may also be observed in that females of a higher social level often use linen. In addition, married females tend to wear red colors while older women and widows favor blue. There are also certain embroidered parts of other articles of clothing that are elaborate expressions of color that represent joy, and also symbolize the higher social positions held by certain tribe members. One special type of dress, called the *madriqa*, which has long, full sleeves that nearly reach the ground, is widely used in most of the tribes, particularly for wedding and Eid celebrations.

The clothing used by Bedouin males tends to be characterized by its simplicity. Many times, those who are familiar with Bedu traditions are able to distinguish the individuals belonging to the same family

because of how similar their clothing is. Males of all ages tend to wear the *thoab*, a one-piece garment that is loose-fitting, over *serwal* or loose, cotton trousers. This allows the air to circulate and does not restrict a person's movement when walking on the sand. It is a perfect match for the hot desert environment because this combination provides a double layer of cover that protects from the harsh sun and blowing sand. Most men cover their heads with a *shemagh* which is a headscarf tied in a certain way and held in place with an agal-rope, or headband. In addition to the benefit of protection from the sun, the head-covering and the headband are considered a symbol of status for males. Those who have passed puberty may wear them and will be considered to be individuals with an opinion that will be heard by older men. Other, usually younger, boys may walk about without a headscarf. Finally, Bedouins were known to wear camel leather shoes for their durability and ability to protect their feet from harm. As always, there are families who dress differently and are exceptions to these traditions.

Certain domesticated animals are another significant element of Bedu survival, as much for the material made from their skin and wool that allows for the tents and clothing discussed above, as for the food they provide. The camel, or the "desert ship" as it is called, is the most important and revered animal for the Bedouin. It is the means of transport without which desert life would be impossible, but it is also so much more. Camel hair is an excellent substance to use in the weaving of material for certain articles of clothing that protect the Bedu from the extreme heat and cold, as well as for the tents that protect the families from dust storms and desert predators. Indeed, the Bedu have exploited almost everything the camel produced: its meat, skin, suet and even its dung which is used to start a fire (Irwin: 2010).

The camel is also a popular figure in traditional stories that still circulate today. The al-Basus War is mentioned in pre-Islamic Arab history as a war that resulted in a perpetual cycle of revenge and ended up lasting for forty years, when one cousin's camel was slain by another cousin. In *Al-Mu'allaqāt*, the collection of seven pre-Islamic Arabic odes, poets often recite their poems by mentioning the camel first. They highlight the camel's beauty, its ability to carry heavy burdens, and the strength which enables it to travel long distances.

The Bedouins move around, sometimes deep into the desert, with their herds for many reasons, including searching for larger areas for their herds to graze. Camels can stay without a shepherd to tend to them for days and sometimes they are known to cross the border into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia without running into any people. The prevailing culture among the Bedu which comes from their religious traditions is that it is forbidden to consider the camel a wild animal, even if they are alone. Therefore, it is not permissible to take or slaughter it, even if its' shepherd is not with it. It is obvious that the Bedouin appreciate the camel since, as recorded by Al-Hilal, camels enjoy such great stature that many have names and titles mentioned in their poems and sung poetry (2018: 28-38). It suffices to point out that the camel is a source of identification for a tribe. The Arabs, in general, and the Bedu, in particular, put signs or nicks on the legs, and sometimes on the heads of their camels, which they call a "tag" as an indication that identifies this camel as belonging to a certain tribe. In addition, when slaughtering a camel on certain occasions, some tribes take this "tag" or the marking they made on the camel's skin so that they can hang it in their tent as a respected symbol.

The horse is surely next on the list of animals that are important for the Bedouin. Horses allow for a unique manner of rapid mobility and are consequently essential for this traditional pastoral lifestyle. Unlike camels, horses were mainly used during attacks and in warfare to give their riders incalculable advantages against their opponents (Burckhardt 1831:134). Nonetheless, not all Bedu kept horses. The breeding and ownership of Arabian horses has traditionally been a symbol of social distinction; therefore, the "noble" Bedouin clans were the ones who generally raised and maintained Arabian horses.

From an economically perspective, both Arabian camels and horses are central to the Bedu culture, and, as such, are vital for the cultural and social construction of Bedouin identity. As Lange has affirmed, many horse and camel owners, and especially those who are well-off enough to finance it, take care to breed their animals by paying special attention to their ancestral lineage so that the offspring these animals produce is of the purest quality possible. In this way, the owners' herds are distinguished because of the pure race lines, and the

family position tends to reflect this reputable prestige (2016: 39). An added advantage is that these purebred Arabian horses and camels are also in high demand in the upper spheres and, thus, are often acquired by members of royal families, gentility, and the upper class who place a good amount of importance on the outstanding pedigree and resulting genealogical features of this type of animal. In this way, the financial implications are patent.

Furthermore, the Jordanian Bedu conventionally rely on the livestock that form part of their pastoral way of life for their livelihood. Like camels, sheep and goats provide milk as a food source, as well as other products like their hair and wool that can be woven into rugs and tents, and their feces which are used to start and fuel fires. Bedouins use their animals in economical operations instead of cash, or they can also be used as an exchange, or additionally sold for slaughter. Among the other domesticated animals that are common, donkeys and mules have been used to transport cargo and plow fields, and chickens tend to be kept in cages near the tent for their eggs and meat (Degen 2009: 227). Finally, a type of dog called *salaq*, a kind of greyhound which is characterized by its' long legs and great endurance while chasing prey, has also been domesticated by the Bedouin. This breed is still common in Bedu homes, but it is quite unlike the perhaps similar looking hounds used for fun or racing at private tracks in the Gulf countries.

Many wild animals come in contact with the Bedouin during their day-to-day activity in the desert. One of them, the falcon, has traditionally been caught and trained to use in falconry in many nations of the Peninsula and Arabia. Falcons are caught during migration season, usually from the middle of September through April, and are classified according to their morphological appearance and colors (Zhan et al., 2015:1-9). In Bedu culture, the falcon has earned its respect as a hunter and has been harnessed and widely used in falconry since pre-Islamic Arabia in the Arabian Peninsula and the Levant area where Jordanian Bedu continue to transmit their knowledge of raising falcons and exploiting them for hunting to their children. In fact, one of the popular names for boys comes from the word for falcon, *saqr*. It is no coincidence that the falcon, and its specific characteristics, have a certain presence in Bedouin speech, sayings, and poems.

However, the most commonly mentioned wild animal found in Bedouin literature is perhaps the desert wolf, reflecting their deep appreciation for this creature. The wild wolf is considered to be a symbol of strength, courage, and freedom, even though it also represents one of the main threats to their flocks and livestock. The Bedu believe that the wolf is the only animal that eats merely what it hunts, and never eats carrion; hence, they believe the wolf to be a model of dignity and self-reliance. In addition, their beliefs go beyond the boundary of natural phenomena because the Bedouin also believe that the wolf is the only animal that the *jinn*, or spirits capable of assuming human or animal form and exercising supernatural influence over people, fear. In this sense, they see the wolf to be a symbol of strength and composure. However, Jennings-Bramley (1907:11) mentions some stories that reflect the bad reputation of the wolf in Bedu life, since the Bedouin do their best to protect the herd from the attacks of predators such as wolves and hyenas. In these instances, even though the wolf enjoys such a high status, preserving the Bedu livestock becomes the most essential thing, since this is crucial for these nomads whose own life depends on the life of their herd.

The concept of what is noble is surely reflected in the idea of honor and dignity that is commonly included in the description of the Bedouin who are distinguished by how they avoid insulting others as well as their absolute refusal to take orders from anyone except a paternal figure. Ibn Khaldun, known as one of the most important social scientists in the Arab world, has been recorded to say that the Bedu are among the most difficult people to control with rules and regulations as enforced by the authorities. This is surely true because the Bedouin rely on themselves to defend their community without asking for help from others even when, the areas where they live, due to the brutality of the desert region, are not even protected by walls or garrisons, as happens in cities (Mahjub: 2009:8). This circumstance might even cause a certain number of misunderstandings since any opinion that does not fit the cultural Bedouin norms is considered an insult, and this, as mentioned above, is not socially appropriate. The Bedu, like the wolf, enjoy the freedom found in the wide-open spaces of the vast desert. While this way of life has certain advantages, it also makes it hard to

comply with other social constructs and may be a reason, among others, for the higher unemployment rate of the Bedouin who do not live in cities.

Apart from this, another consequence is that Bedu often choose their words rather carefully when speaking. They will express many ideas and pleasantries that may make their listeners feel respected, even if what was uttered was not about or directed at them. Likewise, when speaking, the Bedouin tries to stay away from obscenity and from talking about things that have bad reputations. They even created a special tribal law⁴ regarding words and actions that bring insult to a person. In the Bedu culture, dignity is the way to deal with people and is a moral feeling that affects peoples' behavior negatively or positively.

This idea also ties into how the Bedouin conceives honor. This term has often been associated with a woman's honor, as in the female members of a family (mother, sister, wife, daughters and any other female relative). Any promise made to women, or to others about them, is kept in order to fulfill a person's moral obligation, but also out of the fear of being disgraced and, thus, developing a notorious reputation. Bedu solemnly take what people say about them into earnest consideration, particularly when it is formulated into poetic verses that spread quickly.

The harsh conditions of the desert are also evident in the high value that Bedouins place on hospitality and generosity. Among the Bedu, hospitality comes first before the other duties since honoring the guest is an original characteristic of desert dwellers. Indeed, it is one of the pillars of the customs and traditions that they have inherited for generations. Consequently, the guest has a significant social position in the Bedouin way of life. It is shameless for them to hesitate to offer the right of hospitality whenever any guest enters their homes. There is no doubt that hospitality is an authentic trait that distinguishes the Arabs from other nations (Sobh et al, 2012:3). Therefore, guests must have their right to hospitality when they enter the host's home, even if they are enemies. When referring to this custom, Sowan affirms that whoever enters the house will be provided security, especially if they

⁴ To be discussed in more detail below.

have partaken of food or drink; in this way, they may even find safety in the den of their enemy (1985:31).

This means that the socially appropriate generosity displayed by the Bedu is still one of the noble traits that they cling to and cherish. In these circumstances, no matter how late the hour, food is served to the guest as soon as possible; thus, the Bedouin are always ready for such visits. In honoring his guest with food and drink, the Bedu always apologizes for the amount and the kind of food served, even when there is more than enough food, and it is of high quality. Normally, camel milk and lamb or mutton are provided. It is socially appropriate for Bedouins to show humility in front of their guests; so, they will say things like, “excuse us for the shortcomings”. The apology complemented hospitality etiquette is expected so as to not embarrass the guests and to make sure that everyone’s behavior while eating is adequate. Normally, the guests are presented to those asked to sit at the table with the older family members. Noone will start eating until they are allowed to do so by the host who will mention Allah’s name, by saying “in the name of God” and will also welcome the guest and those in attendance.

Another protocol typical of Bedu hospitality is to talk with guests about what they like after understanding what that is. Sowan reports that “failure to entertain guests is a shameful act” (1985:114). Several other behaviors are considered to be unacceptable in front of guests. In this way, grumbling about time, poverty, or even disease, raising a person’s voice, getting angry, and even yawning or falling asleep are considered to be impolite behavior while guests are present.

There exists one specific symbol of generosity that is essentially always present when Bedu men get together: serving coffee. In fact, the Bedouin have special gatherings or *majlis*, also known as *diwaniya*, to drink coffee and exchange current news (Yamani, 2020:150). When guests are present, coffee is considered to be a symbol of generosity; while Alsarhan has affirmed that men seem to take pride in participating in these coffee rituals by drinking the coffee to manifest their masculinity since their participation indicates that they are aware and active in their role as members of the tribe and its cultural traditions (2017: 34).

Hence, preparing and serving coffee to guests is a highly respected social custom of the Bedouin. Furthermore, the protocols that are involved are generally similar among the different tribes. In this coffee ceremony, there are specific procedures for the unique coffee pots. The most important one is called *dallah*, or the coffee pot, and some hosts prefer to use special, more costly coffee pots that have been acquired abroad. During this ceremony, it is customary for the person who serves to pour the coffee for the guests while standing up. Before serving, the server will look to see who the guest or the eldest person is and start with that person since he should be the first to drink. The coffee pot should be secured in the left hand, while the coffee cup is held in the right hand. The server should not sit down until everyone has finished drinking their coffee. At times, the server will provide an additional cup of coffee for a guest who has not even finished drinking so as to help a guest who is too ashamed to ask for more and this is another illustration of how generous the desert people are. When a person shakes the coffee cup after drinking, it means that they have had enough. Finally, it is also customary for a person not to accept more than three cups of coffee (Hanauer, 1905:259-261).

This traditional coffee ceremony is very much present in everyday life since people engage in it as a way of carrying out many other types of social interaction in Bedu society. Asking for help, coming to an agreement on who will marry whom, requesting protection, and such, all start by putting the coffee cup on the ground and not drinking it until the tribal sheikh, or the host, agrees to the guest's demands. Hanauer has reported that finishing the coffee represents the guest's satisfaction. On the contrary, ignoring the guest's request is considered to be a great defect on the part of the host and one that he does not want to bear in front of his tribe (1905: 259-261). Yet, since their social interaction and survival depend on it, Bedouins normally respect all their cultural traditions so that impossible demands are not made in the first place.

It remains to be said that the sensitivity with which the Bedu deal with guests has been transmitted from generation to generation and this wisdom encourages them to do everything they can to serve their guests in the best possible way. Indeed, on many occasions, when meeting with older tribe members, the author has often heard this expression,

“If a guest comes, he is a prince. If he sits, he is a prisoner; and if he leaves, he is a poet”.⁵ In this cultural saying, there are three stages of dealing with guests. First, when guests arrive, a warm welcome is required. This welcome should include expressions of joy and appropriate clothing when the guests are received, much like what would happen at the reception of a person as important as a prince. Secondly, the guests must sit with their hosts. In this way, the guests show their respect for their place by paying attention to what their host says, and by participating in a seated position, since the guests will need to assume their place as requested by their host. And, at the same time, the guests must get permission from their host to ask for anything that they need, and, in this way, they are like prisoners. However, according to tradition, their host should fulfill any request, as long as it is possible to do so. All of this together means that the Bedu try to provide the best treatment for their guests. This may also be due to the fact that when the guests leave, no one can prevent them from talking about the reception they have received at their host home, and therefore, they are considered to be poets when they refer back to the treatment that they have been given.

⁵ Translation by the author.

1.2 SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

These strongly rooted cultural traditions also have to do with how the Bedu organize their social structure. Much like other people groups, the Bedouin society consists of internal sub-divisions that determine the nature of the tribal relationship between community members; moreover, they arrange their affairs so that there are certain references with specializations that vary according to the different issues that occur within the community.

The family makes up the nucleus of Bedouin social formation like all other human societies. The Bedu family is a patriarchal family, where the father is the head of the family, and, as such, his decisions are obeyed by all family members who live in the domestic unit, dwelling in his tent or tents. The family consists of the father, his wife, or wives, and their children. It is normal for this family group to consist of a husband, three or four wives, and seven to twenty kids. Married sons generally live near their parents, but each son manages his own household's finances separately, and also tends to live as an individual domestic unit, in his own tent or tents. In contrast, children who have not married usually stay with their mothers.

The position that each of these domestic units occupies in the tribe, and the rights that they retain, depend on how much money is made and how many men make up the family. The Bedouin are keen to have as many males as possible because they customarily consider the total number of male members to be a critical factor that, in turn, affects the pride and strength of each family within a clan and of the entire tribe itself when compared to other tribes. (Na'amneh et al., 2008:156-157). Due to polygamy and the extremely large families that result from this practice, the population of the Bedouin increases more than that of other inhabitants of Jordan. In this way, Bedu families continue to sustain what they believe to be their economic, educational, cultural, and religious duties.

Along those lines, it is important to discuss the role of the Bedu woman. Al-Dajani says that because of the nature of Bedouin life where the role of the man is distinguished since he is the one who protects the clan, wards off invaders or others who seek to harm the clan, and

generates the family's livelihood, the role of the woman is limited to housework and childcare. Nonetheless, she may perform preliminary economic work necessary to help sustain their livestock such as herding camels and sheep, milking them, and fetching water (2001:70-71). Moreover, in the desert conditions where the Bedu live, women are as important as men when it comes to courtesy and bravery. In this way, many of them carry the same moral values, seek refuge with men, honor guests when the men are absent, bear the work, troubles, and hardships, and even, if it becomes necessary, women may actively participate in an invasion.

Hence, following the Bedouin tradition, the woman is a symbol of honor and dignity. As mentioned above, women are highly respected and should never be transgressed or dishonored. Furr and Al-serhan discuss the Bedu "honor code", whereas the female should not be touched, nor encounter any harm whatsoever, no matter how much enmity and hatred exists between clans (2008:29). There is no stigma attached to a nobleman as appalling and dreadful as insulting, humiliating, or hitting a woman. This idea of honor and dignity is surely also related to the conservative view of the role of women characterized in Islam, and which, to a certain extent, continues today. Thus, Bedu women tend to adhere to their inherited customs. Especially those who still inhabit the desert areas where the traditional dress with its loose cloak and head covering that only allows a person to see their faces still reflects its conservative roots. This may contrast with other Bedouin women, as well as men, living in rural and urban areas who have tended to abandon this more traditional style.

Travelers from the West who have come in contact with the Bedouin tribes have also commented on the major role that Bedu women have in the political, economic, and social affairs of the tribe (Richard et al. (1996), Oppenheim (2007), Seabrook (2006), and Hess (2010), among others). They have also made reference to how a Bedu woman carries the status of *hormah*, meaning that she cannot be touched even if she is from an enemy tribe.

The Bedouin woman normally takes part in decisions that affect her about her marriage, or divorce, the affairs of her household, and those of her people and clan. If she does decide to accept a marriage

offer outside her tribe, she is aware of how this relationship will strengthen the trust that members of these tribes have for each other, as well as how alliances against other tribes may be formed as a result. The Bedouin man regards the woman as an asset who will help her family and tribe with increasing the population and, thus, with future tribal warriors. In this sense, she should not be dishonored, but must be kept safe as a well esteemed and be his respected wife at this level of the Bedu family.

At the next level, one can find the clan which, in Bedouin society, is considered to be a more absolute unit of social integration. It is said that the individual leaves the clan and then returns back to it. As such, it is almost the only social institution that exerts social pressure on individuals. This has to do very much with nomadic culture, the very nature of the Bedu life, which demands that everyone make an effort and pitch in for the survival of the entire clan.

Each clan has a boss, a *sheikh* who rules and manages its affairs. The sheikh, or the leader of the tribe, represents the highest rank of civil order and as such, whether in war or peace, every member of the tribe must follow his direction; thus, this figure might be similar to a head of state today. In this sense, what the sheik mandates is diligently obeyed by the other members of his clan as long as he looks after the clan's interests and heeds its affairs. The resulting organization works well because it is understood that the welfare of each and every individual benefits the clan's best interest and vice versa (Furr & Al-Serhan, 2008:3-22).

The tribe is a larger social system than the clan and consists of several clans who share a blood relation as cousins and who gather together to form a single tribe made up of a large number of clans. Usually, the tribe travels and lives in areas these Bedouin clans know well. This gathering of tribe members has its advantage in providing aid and assistance. In addition, it contributes to projecting their unity when seen by other tribes, which, in turn, helps to establish their reputation and, at the same time, demonstrate that they are ready to defend themselves against any danger to their lives or property. One of the very specific social situations that often arise from this type of tribal organization is the strong relations that are formed inside the tribe due

to consanguineous marriage, or the union between two individuals who are related as second cousins or closer. This type of arrangement occurs since a male cousin has the right to marry his own female cousin, even sometimes without consulting her first, although this is by no means a generalized practice and does not occur very frequently in Bedouin society nowadays, as already mentioned above. According to their tradition, consanguineous marriage does not contradict the value and position of a woman, because the Bedu believe that the male cousin will best preserve the female cousin's dignity and there is also the added benefit that the daughter will continue to live close to her parents where they can visit her daily and best take care of her. If she were to marry a member of another tribe, this type of daily contact would most likely not be possible.

This could also be considered to be an example of *assabeyah*, or tribalism. This term implies the idea that the human social group that makes up the tribe has a common concern for the survival of all of its members. Thus, there exist “tendencies to be loyal to and favorable toward one's own tribe”, at the same time that those that make the tribe are “less favorable toward other tribes” (Clark et al., 2019:5). When rivalries take place, tribalism is the reason why a man will be called to support his clan or tribe, and also why he will stand by his clan or tribe no matter what the outcome. This type of comprehensive, coercive force is a social phenomenon that exerts a great deal of control over the members of each tribe since a certain sort of nervousness towards other tribes leads to tribal cohesion in the Bedouin society. On the one hand, this type of complete unity is beneficial since every individual feels psychological and material security; yet, on the other, this behavior also isolates the tribe socially, psychologically, geographically, and in other vital aspects.

Apart from this initial coercive force, there also exists the phenomenon of tribal law. In Jordan, this type of law is still accepted in Jordanian society; hence, it carries a certain amount of power and status. This is partly due to the fact that the history of this law goes back to before Jordan was founded as a modern state. Before this happened, the Bedu were able to create a system of law that helped not only to regulate their lives, but also to resolve disputes between them. The

current state has not changed the tribal law pattern that characterizes Jordan, and the government authorities have approved Bedu tribal law and adopted its provisions.

The Bedouin judiciary deals with many issues and problems that may occur in the Bedu society. Furr and Al-Serhan state that “the tribal legal system does not impose either prison sentences or the death penalty” (2008:22). This is perhaps the main reason that many prefer to choose the Bedouin courts over the other legal options. Moreover, the tribal courts tend to hold trials very soon after an offense is carried out; therefore, the ruling is not delayed, as rulings tend to be in the standard courts. The Bedouin courts see their cases and deal with them in public; thus, everyone knows that the rights of the oppressed have taken into consideration, that they were not subject to insult or ridicule, nor referred to as being weak members of their social group. In all cases, it is necessary to arrange and coordinate with the official security authorities so that the trial judge’s ruling is effective and not open to discussion. The session is held in a Bedu tent with the presence of the two conflicting parties and a group of people who act as witnesses. The relatives of the judge play the role of the police in maintaining security and preventing any expected problems during the session to preserve the prestige of the judicial place (Furr, Ann, and Al-Serhan, 2008:18).

The casework and court decisions for violent crimes (i.e., murder) are often carried out in coordination with the official authorities, as long as the victim’s family members accept the tribal procedures and rulings. The judicial judgment is required to have witnesses as well as representatives for the local, official authorities. In many cases, honor issues are dealt with in the tribal courts due to the fear, as mentioned earlier, of what other people will say about those implicated; in this way, the trials are carried out in an expeditious manner and resolved rather quickly. Cases of theft, slander, insults (such as recalling past faults), and accusations without evidence are also commonly ruled on by the tribal judges. These cases may end with a sentence of cutting off part of the offender’s tongue or a part of the thief’s hand (in the absence of evidence, witnesses, or if a case was already considered previously). However, nowadays, tribal judges normally replace the penalty of the amputation of any part of the human body with a fee that is customary

among the members of the tribal judiciary. This is more than likely due to the fact that the Bedouins seek a reprisal on a more psychological, or emotional, level than on a materialistic one. Hence, when the accused is deemed innocent, it is also customary for the tribal judge to provide an additional legal court order that the person who has accused the other unjustly place a white flag in more than one place, for instance a well-known house, or a public and highly frequented commercial or meeting place, as a symbol that patently marks the innocence of the accused so that it is prominently seen by as many people as possible and, in this way, his / her reputation can be restored.

While each clan has its own *sheikh* as seen above, not all clans have their own judge. Judges must have a good reputation and must have demonstrated ethical attitudes that make people trust their judgment. Moreover, judges are divided into several sections according to the type of case: some of them specialize in cases of murder and honor (e.g., cases related to women), and some specialize in cases of quarrels and financial disputes. The legal capacity of the tribal judges has been granted to them with the protection of the authorities; they also have the capacity to judge as traditionally accepted in the clan, since this right is passed on from father to son. Consequently, tribal judges are officially recognized as capable of carrying out their judiciary duties as well as ruling on cessation of spousal rights. This tradition goes back many decades since the law of the tribal courts was issued in 1924, and then modified 12 years later. This law provided a list of the “tribes of Jordan which would submit to this jurisdiction” and granted the members of these tribes “the freedom to submit their cases to their traditional judges” in order to arrive at solutions to cases according to their own legal tradition (Sonbol, 2003:46-48).

After discussing the social structure of the Bedu, it is also necessary to present one of the sociologically interesting outcomes of this organization; that is to say the unique and vast folk culture that results from all of the circumstances in the harsh environment where they dwell deep in the desert, as described above. A proud people, the Bedouin are aware of the nomadic customs and traditions they have inherited from past generations and have even compared themselves with the settlers who are “bound to their mud houses, toiling

continually, like slaves”. In contrast, unlike those who have settled in one place, the itinerant Bedu is said to live by the sword. While this might seem to be merely a romantic notion, this concept goes much further, indeed it can be seen patently in the fact that, as indicated by Max Freiherr von Offenheim Arch-Brunelich, at times, Bedouins might seem to be afraid to go to the cities for fear that they will be forced to give up their weapons, which are a source of pride and dignity (2021: 80-83).

In desert conditions, the Bedouin rarely goes outdoors without a weapon. There are many reasons for him to do so, but the most obvious reason is to protect himself or his herd from predators. Usually, the Bedouin carries an *alshibiriya*, or a hand forged Bedu dagger, known as a *saif badawi*, which is small and can be easily concealed. When shepherding his herds at grazing areas, a Bedouin generally carries a firearm since he may spend several nights away from home. Thus, keeping their sword⁶, or other weapons with them, is a way for Bedouins to retain their honor.

As mentioned above when referring to Bedu Tribal Law, the example of how court sessions are held to restore honor and solve issues that deal with revenge, also demonstrates how valuable their dignity is to them. Since they are a people who have a high level of personal pride, they also demonstrate a specific reaction against any type of humiliation or self-mortification, which, according to their social code of conduct, must not be tolerated. Living in the desert provides Bedouins with an easy means to escape any situation in which they feel insulted, for example when they have a problem with a neighbor, or when they simply no longer feel comfortable where they are. Bedouins can simply pack their tent and leave, unlike the villagers or citizens who are tied to the property that they own and must keep quiet and try to live in peace even when their economical or housing conditions are not favorable. However, the Bedu understand that the protection that the sword provides also allows them to do this as they see fit. In this sense,

⁶⁶ White weapon is a term given to a spectrum of personal, manual, cold weapons utilized for attack and defense; sometimes, they are also used as a tool for killing. However, the term “white” does not refer to their specific color, although this idea may come from the color of the metallic blades that cut, in this way, white weapons are ones like spears and daggers. (Ali, 1971:3)

the sword exemplifies their idea of freedom and serves as a reminder of the time before the modern states were founded in Arabia and the Levant, when raids and tribal wars were common (Sowayan 1985:20).

In current times, even though there are not as many times when Bedouins publicly display the fact that they are carrying this type of traditional weapon, i.e., the sword, or, as many Arabs say, the white weapon, the sword is still considered to have great material and moral status. Thus, the symbol of the sword has remained present, even nowadays, in the Bedu councils, where they describe the brave among them with the cutting swords as a metaphor for the honorable deeds that certain men carry out. Furthermore, many Bedouins decorate their places of residence by hanging swords in a prominent place on the walls of their homes or in their tents.

As a general rule, due mainly to their geographical location, the Jordanian Bedu are not able to send their children, especially girls, to school. Thus, when compared to other areas and urban standards, the Bedouin youth might seem to be uneducated. However, this is far from true since the elder members of the Bedu domestic units motivate their offspring to endure difficulties as they face the challenges that come up in real-life. In this way, Bedouins are steeped in a copious world of oral culture consisting of sayings, riddles, poems, and tales which are committed to memory and verbally handed down from generation to generation, so that, like many other cultures having rich oral traditions, this orally produced and conveyed material has endured over hundreds, even thousands of years. Quite often it is transmitted in the form of rhymes and poetic verse which are easily remembered (Bitar, 2020:76).

Some well-known examples of mythology and folktales that are directly related to the Bedu culture is the poetry associated to Antar, or Antarah ibn Shaddad al-Absi. This sixth-century, pre-Islamic, Bedouin knight or, العنبري, ⁷ in Arabic, was famous for both his poetry and his bravery. One of the famous Arab poets from the pre-Islamic era, Antarah's name is connected to the ideas of courage and chivalry since he is looked upon as a good example of someone who was able to take

⁷ The Antarah tribe, or "Abs", as they were called, lived in the land of Najd in the Arabian Peninsula. The biography of Antarah is one of the examples still referred to today by many Arab councils in general and Bedu councils in particular.

back his freedom with his own hand. As an enslaved black servant, the courage that he showed when defending his tribe was what gained him his freedom. His chaste poetry which is said to refer to his cousin Abla is also well-known.

A collection of cherished poetry worth mentioning are the so-called “Hanging poems”, or Muallaqat, as compiled by Hammad al-Rawiya, because they represented the most wonderful example of what had been written in ancient Arabic poetry. They are said to have been written with gold water and hung on the curtains of the Kaaba Al-Haram Mosque in Mecca before the advent of Islam.⁸

Another important work is the Sirat Bani Hilal, or the Al-Sirah al-Hilaliyyah. Although it does not have a well-defined date of creation⁹, *سيرة بني هلال*, as it is called in Arabic, is an epic oral poem that narrates the wanderings of an important Bedouin clan through Arabia and North Africa deserts.

Along other lines, just like any other culture, the Bedouin culture is concerned with knowledge whether it be scientific, literary, artistic, or musical. Moreover, since their culture revolves around the vital issues that affect the lifestyle of nomadic wandering, any aspect that affects their livestock, tents, or the change of seasons is of utmost importance, as well as the events that take place in their societies. This means that everything that is communicated orally be it the news spreading through the community, the physiognomy of their geographical region, or any other new information related to archaeology, or even astrology is generally taken into consideration, especially with regard to how it affects their living conditions. Even so, nomadism and the movement and instability stemming from it have, to a certain extent, hindered the development scientific endeavors, especially in years past, although the existence of electronic means of information is helping to change this situation nowadays.

One of the most patent forms of culture is evidenced in the colloquial Arabic dialect that the Bedouin speak. Every dialect is

⁸ According to Abu Khalil, the name is said to represent how they are like precious contracts attached to the mind. They were so highly esteemed that they have been cared for and were copied with explanations. Since they usually began by mentioning the ruins and home of the poet's beloved, there were easy to memorize (1976:3).

⁹ For more details, see (Mukhlis, 1964: 22-322).

known to have specific features within a recognized geographic framework. Al-Sughayer affirms that the Bedouin dialects of Jordan make up the “Bedu dialect” (1990:31). According to Al-Sughayer, this dialect emerged as a result of nomadic movement from Arabia to the “Syrian desert” in the north. Today, the Arabic spoken in the Levant region, including Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan, is called the Levant dialect. Another researcher, Sakarna, has studied the Abbadi, well-known Jordanian tribes. He concludes that the term “Bedu dialect” is mistaken because it should have more than one category and notes that there are six different published works that investigate five Bedouin dialects in Jordan: the Hiwetat dialect, the Bani Hassan dialect, the Bduul dialect, the Al-Ajarma dialect, and the Al-Abadi dialects (1999:17). The varieties of Bedouin dialects are considered to be a circumstance that points to the fact that these dialects are alive and well and that they will last for many generations to come.

Scholars do tend to agree on the fact that the Bedouin have always excelled in conveying feelings when communicating face to face, as well as the fact that they have been able to develop very distinct names and adjectives with a high level of both expressiveness and explicitness¹⁰ (Uzayzī, 1981: 15-17). This is clearly demonstrated in the eloquent names that camels, horses, and even swords receive in Bedu poetry. Apart from that, the aphorisms, or effectively concise and well-phrased statements of truth and opinion that form part of the adages, proverbs, riddles, and stories that have been transmitted orally from one generation to the next by the Bedouin also function as a patent reminder of their accumulated wisdom and experience as a primary social group (Abrahams (1983: 45). In this discussion, Abrahams highlighted the nature of verbal traditions. He also says that riddles are

¹⁰ The Bedouins are Arabs in origin and ethnicity. They have been known for their eloquence since Islam. The Arabs in cities and villages used to send their young children to the desert to master the Arabic language from its origins because the Bedu in the desert did not mix with foreigners of non-Arabic origins, thus the integrity of their language. We refer here to the famous incident, which many Muslims know, of sending the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, when he was young, to the desert to learn eloquence. After the 19th century, Arabic Standard usage was more scarce compared to Arabic dialects. For the Bedouins, especially in Jordan, the dialect (through poetry and prose) is mostly intact from distortion, and many have even described it as being the closest to the classical Arabic language when compared to other local dialects.

a vital part of folklore; moreover, they represent inherited wisdom on a social, personal, and moral level.

As far as stories are concerned, most of them have to do with the traditional heroes of the Bedouin. These include the much-circulated poetic saga about Abla and Antarah based on the life of Antarah Ibn Shaddad al Absi who earned his reputation as a hero for fighting twenty warriors from another tribe who wanted to take the Bani Abs women hostage, used poetry to plead for his life before a king, and successfully completed all the almost impossible tasks imposed upon him so that he could marry his beloved Abla. Another well-known tale is about the story of Abu Zayd al-Hilali, an 11th century tribal leader and his treasured Alia. One aspect most of these stories have in common is that there have been many imaginative parts added onto the original stories told about these heroes. Other stories are told by animals as they narrate, provide judgement at times, and even preach sermons. All of these stories are enjoyed when they are shared as lessons in moral responsibility that help to motivate appropriate habits and behavior in a desert environment.

Finally, in this respect, it might be favorable to mention the testimony of Andrew Shryock, who, when summarizing the importance and beauty of the Arab story in the Jordanian Badia, commented that “someone should make a book or a TV series about this”, as referenced in Al-Sarisi (2011: 202). While Shryock was discussing stories like these, and more particularly, the story titled, “The Naked”, he added that the beauty of these stories is that they show our honorable features instead of concentrating on the bad ones. Thus, he believes that this Bedouin-style type of story would be highly demanded since it focuses, not on the wrongs carried out, but on truth and doing what is correct, as referenced in Al-Sarisi (2011: 205).

Another type of oral folklore is the proverb, a concise and eloquent saying that people use to transmit wisdom or experience. Thousands of proverbs prevail among the contemporary Bedu, which they cite to each other in the appropriate circumstances, e. g., when a comparison can be made based on the similarity between the now and certain previous, perhaps traditional, circumstances. It is most likely due to this reason that the Bedouin, especially the youth, consider proverbs to be wisdom

from their elders that should be understood, and used like flags that mark the way, so that they can follow these words of wisdom and develop strategies to understand and cope with certain situations (Obermeyer 1968:126).

Many Arab proverbs from different countries tend to be similar both in meaning and also how they are pronounced; however, sometimes they only have the same meaning. In this context, Abbas conducted a study about Arab proverbs and attributed this phenomenon to the unity of the source of cultures between the Arab countries, most especially the neighboring countries (2012:126-130). An example of how this works is the proverb “*mn talab al'ala sahir allayali*” which means “no sweet without sweat” and is present in most Arab countries with the same pronunciation and meaning. On the other hand, another common Arab proverb “*ma haka jeldoka mithlo thfrika*” which means “everybody's business is nobody's business” is heard, mostly in the Levant region, as, “*il'ab wahdak terj'a radi*” which means “the one who plays alone returns content”. This is an example of a completely different proverb which is used to convey the same type of meaning.

Bedouin proverbs depict aspects of the environment in which they live and reflect certain features and characteristics of their lifestyle. Like stories, some proverbs contain common cultural knowledge which can supply wisdom and a certain amount of the Bedu philosophy of life which is about concentrating on the moment and not paying attention to the incidents of the past nor to the unknown future.

The English phrase “diwan poetry” includes the Arabic term *diwan*, meaning a list or register, which is, in turn, a lexical expression borrowed from the Persian *dibir* meaning a writer or scribe. In Arabic, it is used to refer to the book, or register, which preserves events, names, and jobs and thus, provides a summary of a group's experiences. All the ideas included here provide an advantage when explaining why the Bedouin revere the concept behind poetry and actively strive to master and memorize its meters while they use it to current affairs. Bedu poetry today still performs the same socio-political purpose it did in ancient times. According to Sawayan, it also enjoys the same social status and allure as it did when the ancient poets used metaphors and other techniques of rhetoric when reciting their poetry to captivated

audiences (1985:192). In addition to metaphor and rhetorical devices, Bedouin poetry makes use of metonymy and personification. Structurally speaking, this type of poetry is conventional in both structure and content; this is most likely due to the fact that it was developed by a people from a traditional culture that used order to balance the hardship and fill the emptiness of the vast desert that surrounded them. In addition, Bedu poetry is capable of expressing a full range of emotion from pain to pleasure and from love to hate. During the times of war and rivalries, the Bedu tribes would call for their poets to recite their work and help to boost the spirit, pride, and self-confidence of their warriors, while they would also recite satirical poetry to scoff and mock the hostile tribe or enemy.

Towards the end of the last century, Holes & Abu Athera conclude that even though Bedouin poetry was a genre that was believed to be in decline, nonetheless, with the technological boom, it has been revived and redeveloped, and is now being heavily used as a communication tool on internal and external political and social affairs. The Bedouin poet encapsulates his/her thoughts through analogies and similes captured from the animals that they find around them: the men of politics can be compared to different birds such as sparrows, falcons, ostriches, and even donkeys, among others. Moreover, the unfamiliar poverty and marginalized world in which the Bedouin currently find themselves also contrasts with their previous prestige. In this way, then, the feeling of powerlessness can also be understood in their poems by regarding events in the animal kingdom (2007: 41-52).

One of the main ways the Bedu poet expresses his views is through metaphorical language drawn from the environment and Bedouin animal kingdom. In this sense, politicians can be compared to certain desert animals e. g., wolves, falcons, foxes, mules, and camels, among others. Another common theme manifested in their poetry nowadays seems to be the harsh world of deprivation and marginalization that the Bedu currently have as compared to past years in which they experienced self-authority and power.

Finally, the ideas discussed above as regards poetry can also be taken into consideration when referring to the use of song by the Bedouin. It is relatively easy to see how a life of constant wandering

and travel with their herds of livestock and camels, either on horseback or on foot, and the subsequent amount of time that these trips took coupled with the extreme weather conditions surely caused much hardship, boredom, and fatigue. No doubt, these difficult circumstances prompted the Bedouin to find a way to amuse themselves and their livestock, and in doing so, they raised their voices in song. In any case, for desert people, singing is food for the soul and represents an outlet in which they are able to find comfort and pleasure.

In the poetic social circumstances already described, one can easily see how the Bedu understand where and how they learned to sing. Obviously, it is their own desert environment that nudges and incites them to sing with the voices of the camel, ram, and sheep, the neighing of the horse, the roaring of the lion, the howling of the wolf, the barking of the dog and the twittering of nightingales and doves as well as with the sounds of nature perceived in the trickling of water, the whirling winds, and even thunder itself. The Bedouin started to imitate these sounds and, over time, learned to express their ecstasy and relieve themselves of their distress (Boufas, 2019:29-33). As a result, the Bedu became the sons and daughters of their environment *par excellence*, so that they were able to simulate the sounds around them and create musical melodies based on the sounds around them for their comings and goings.

Before long, Bedouin songs became as varied as the social occasions in which they were performed. In this way, there are songs used when they gather to celebrate a newborn child's purification, others help to commemorate an engagement or a wedding, and there are also songs for the shepherd when he is alone. One specific type of song is called "*al-hadda*" and is essentially a type of traditional, yet improvised, battle carried out using oral discourse which is spoken to music. In the older days, when wars and invasions were still a common way to solve disputes, seek revenge, or even fight for loot and livestock from other tribes, the war chants were more well-known. A group of women accompanied the men in wars to help spread their enthusiasm. Hence, the women's presence would help to motivate those who were fighting as they heard the women's songs and war chants. Another way that women encouraged the male members of their clan or tribe was to

take off their veils so that the males in their clan would be forced to defend the women and protect them from being taken captive by their enemies. In this way, the women would help the men to overcome their fears so that they would stay on the battlefield and not be accused of cowardice.

Traditionally, in early summer, the Bedouin head to the Western mountains in order to carry out the harvest. While they gather their crops, they accompany their work with specific songs for this time that are meant to instill a hard-working spirit in men and women alike. These songs are characterized by a short poetic verse similar to oral lyric poetry (Ghawanmeh, 2009: 28). Since their crops are gathered by hand using traditional methods that not only require them to bend over for long periods of time, but are also physically rather exhausting, men and women often reply to each other as part of these songs to spread a sense of humor and reduce their fatigue as they work under the hot sun on the particularly rugged terrain common to this area (Simms and Kenneth, 1997:696).

Some of the songs were also performed while dancing. Indeed, the Bedu men are famous for the folkloric dance, which they still take part in today, called “*al-Samer*”. This dance has its origin in a traditional Bedouin ritual that is usually carried out at weddings but may take place any time people wish to express joy. Even though, there are some places in Jordan that would like to change the pace and fix a certain rhythm when the *al-Samer* is danced, the more traditional Bedouins do not believe this to be appropriate and may even see any change as an insult to their cultural heritage. Instead, the Bedu prefer the more traditional *al-Samer* dance, one that is usually done at night, and during which a poetic line is sung with a melody agreed upon by the participants performing the dance. Commonly, two men who have the same vocal layer share the poetry aloud, and then two other people reply back to them; an appropriate response should be of the same weight and rhyme pattern.

The poetic lines of songs that are produced during an *al-Samer* dance tend to include some humor, banter, and riddles to add liveliness and zest to the performance for the enjoyment of the audience. To initiate the dance, the men who have formed a line begin to sway from

left to right as they clap to maintain the rhythm. At a certain point, the pace of the dance may begin to increase, accompanied by clapping, swaying, and even bouncing up and down. This is kept up until the participants become too hot and / or too tired to continue. Then, they rest while beverages are served, usually tea and coffee. After they have rested, they may dance again or watch as another group or clan participates.

In some Bedouin tribes, *al-Samer* is performed in front of a section for females. This special section for the women has no lighting inside so that they remain unseen by the men. An atmosphere of suspense is created when the men perform well enough to cause the women to respond from inside their section with “*zaghrouta*” or ululation. This sound is a sort of long, wavering, high-pitched sound that, normally, women make by shouting and moving their tongue rapidly up and down on the roofs of their mouths to express trills of joy.

In the olden days, political life in the Bedu society did not exist *per se*, at least in the sense understood by more urban or developed countries. As stated above, the Bedouin already had a social structure in place to deal with the problems arising from living together in since they had already developed their tribal law and adhered to it before the existence of the current Jordanian state. In this way, the Bedu tribal law that was passed down through the generations was the system that they used to regulate the members of their society for any necessary social, economic, political, or military action.

According to Sweet, the authority was confined to the head of the tribe, in the person known as the *sheikh*, who determined the place where they would reside, the time of departure, the most appropriate places for grazing, and the borders that a tribe should defend (1965: 1132-1150). From a more modern perspective, the tribal *sheikh* can be seen to bear the moral responsibility of providing the means of livelihood that will provide the greatest degree of stability for his tribe members. Yet he works alongside the group of tribal elders whose duty it is to provide their advice and opinion on all of these matters; even so, the sheikh has the final and binding opinion about tribal issues. In the Bedu hierarchy, age is of utmost importance. The Bedouin society evaluates the extreme importance of a person’s age in terms of where

this person's sits during a session. Thus, young people often sit towards the ends while more important people are placed in the middle.

In this way then, younger members of this social group should be ready and available to carry out the tasks issued by the *sheikh* and his council, especially during time of conflict with other tribes, or when there exists the need to find the best places for grazing and housing, since these tasks may require a significant effort, as well as imply certain hardships that could restrict the participation of the more elderly members of the clan.

Another role that might also be justified as political in nature is that of the *sheikh's* mother or wife. This role is, however, obviously one that is not patent in the day-to-day encounters, but that some have found to be present on a more latent, or hidden level. Obviously, a *sheikh's* mother has a position of great respect and appreciation in her son's eyes. On the one hand, she was the wife of the former *sheikh* of the tribe; accordingly, she has the experience and love that motivates her son to trust her when consulting together about the affairs of the tribe. Concerning the wife, the importance of her opinion stems from the fact that, in most cases, the *sheikh* will marry only women of high class and lineage. Consequently, she comes from a family known for their wisdom and knowledge in dealing with general societal affairs. Women may play a very prominent role in disputes and have historically been observed to be the reason for ending a war, or for forming alliances between tribes when they enter into a marriage with a member of another hostile or friendly tribe and help to provide a strong base for the convergence of differentiated views between the opponents, that will in turn, bring an end to even long-standing conflicts. In any case, as mentioned above, this role remains undeclared because of the extreme sensitivity that Bedu men have towards women when they mix with men or talk to them (Abu-Lughod, 1988: 60-66) and (Fenster, 1999: 226-247).

With the emergence of the current Jordanian state, the authorities have, generally speaking, tried to control the Bedouin people and impose their authority upon them. Many of the measures put into place by the government were met with absolute rejection by the tribesmen to the extreme that, on some occasions, it resulted in armed conflict

between the two parties. However, the Jordanian state quickly realized that the existing, and armed, tribes would be difficult to control due to the difficult geographical conditions of the desert on the one hand, and to the extension of this territory on the other. Moreover, the Jordanian state was newly established, and therefore it was alliances, not conflicts, that were needed to lay the necessary foundations for a more perdurable and longer-lasting rule in Jordan. Consequently, the political system in Jordan resorted to recognizing Bedouin tribal law as well as the institutional law stipulated in the Jordanian constitution (Abu Jaber & Garaibeh, 1980: 297-298).

This recognition provided the Bedu tribes with a victory since they were able to adhere to their freedom and inheritance without civil distortion. Additionally, the Bedouin gained parliamentary representation for each tribe when the people belonging to the Jordanian Bedu tribes were divided into three electoral districts: the Bedouins of the north, the Bedouins of the center and the Bedouins of the south. Thus, all three of these districts are closed in the sense that non-Bedu citizens from the cities may not represent the constituents who belong to one of these areas.

After this decision was taken, it would also be necessary to find a way to resolve the tension that had existed between the ruling regime and the Bedouin tribes for many years. In this sense, the political sphere of the Bedu can be divided into three stages. The first stage took place before and during the beginning of the current Jordanian state. At this time, politically speaking, the Bedu had a unilateral system since their government and administration was carried out by the tribal *sheikh* and the alliances that each clan or tribe formed with other similar groups. This second phase¹¹ started in the 1970s and lasted for many years.

¹¹ It is worth mentioning that this stage began with a strong blow to the Bedouins, especially the Huwaitat tribe in southern Jordan, which is considered to be one of the tribes that contributed to the establishment of the current Jordanian state, mainly during the wars against the Ottoman Empire. The setback occurred when Army Commander, Mashhour Al-Huwaitat was relieved from his position during what is called "Black September" by Jordanians. The secondary effects that resulted from this incident almost impacted the entire country, when martial law was declared, and many Bedouin tents were raided to confiscate any weapons that members of the Bedouin tribes owned. Theoretically, no one can determine the exact time from which oral literature comes, except when it can be related to a historical incident (Salama, 1976:

It saw its end during the time known as the “Arab Spring”¹² in 2013.

The “Arab Spring” is a term given to the protests that swept the Arab world from 2011 to 2013. The protests started in Tunisia and spread throughout most Arab countries in protest against the authoritarian rule and oppression that has been rooted in these countries for decades. Jordan had a share of these protests, but at a lower rate than other countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Yemen. During these arguments, several concessions were made by the local government to find a democratic center that allowed for more personal liberties. At this time, some Bedu found more freedom and were able to have a certain amount of influence and weight in the political status of the country. During this stage, the three Bedouin electoral districts were the ones that participated the most in any election, as compared to the other electoral districts in other regions of Jordan. During the second stage the partial abandonment of more traditional Bedu ways of government was displayed when some did not take into consideration what the Bedouin ancestors had done, and, instead, left the power to make decisions to the authorities which may have had a negative effect.

At the time of writing this dissertation, the third stage has begun. It is a time of a certain amount of distress, perhaps even chagrin, for the Bedouin in terms of their marginalization by the authorities. It may even seem that Bedu find themselves at their weakest moment, politically speaking, as compared to the first two stages. Even now, the authorities are trying to impose a certain amount of constitutional control with clear flexibility on the people and the Bedouins. However, it is also true that during some of the more considerable periods of dissent, the authorities have sought the assistance of tribal and clan elders as a way to contain these conflicts; thus, at the same time, seeking their assistance provides patent recognition of the active role that Bedu clans still enjoy in the current Jordanian state despite what seems to be their recent reduction in political power. Furthermore, the role of the Bedouin clans is still highly regarded locally by all citizens and among those belonging to the Bedu tribes in particular.

37). Consequently, we are able to propose that JRBR73 may have originated during this period in which the existing tension between the tribes and the ruling regime was high.

¹² See Salam (2015).

However, over time, since a certain number of them have become somewhat distanced from tribal life, and also due to an increase in the power that the state authorities have, some have composed wise sayings about dealing with authority. JRBR 73 refers to this type of wisdom that is well-known among the Bedouins, at the same time that it reflects on the relationship between the Bedu and the local authorities when it says “May I ask you about the three difficulties which put a heavy burden on strong men? He, under their pressure, is not to blame if time passes; you surely keep your promise”. The word “difficulties” mentioned in the riddle signifies the stressed relationship between the two parties, since the Bedouin does not accept being ruled by a non-Bedouin.

Like any nation in this universe, spiritual life has its place in people's lives in the Bedouin community. The Bedu in Jordan have been committed to following the Islamic religion for over 1,400 years and consider it to be a significant part of their intellectual and religious heritage. Due primarily to the lack of an educational institution, many believe that until the 1970s the Bedouins did not adhere as strictly to this belief system, unlike other civilized places in Jordan and in the neighboring countries. Nevertheless, in the case of the Bedouin, their faith has always been deeply rooted in their belief in God who can and does help them to survive the harshness of the material life that surrounds them. This belief system has benefitted the Bedu as they attempt to live a spiritually calm life based on common sense and a pure spirit.

Al-Fawali indicates that the Bedu man respects the teachings of Islam and adheres to them in a way that may draw attention (1967: 158-159). Hence, he avoids using the name of God to swear on many occasions, even if he is sincere. In other cases, he often gives up his right to the other party if the decision were to necessitate an oath. In fact, this situation may reach a certain extreme when a Bedouin may pay money to the disputing party in exchange for dropping the oath. For many decades, such behavior has been carried out because of the fear of the divine punishment that might result from a false oath. The Bedouins act on their faith since they take this into consideration because of their belief system and, thus, out of respect for the Creator.

Another aspect that has surely impacted the Bedu belief system is the fact that the geographical conditions of life in the scorching desert may result in many types of natural disasters such as lack of rain, or even drought. The same climatic conditions have also meant that infants and beloved family members may die due to a shortage of medical supplies, ignorance in dealing with a disease, or even the time it would take to travel to another place to seek medical attention. In these cases, according to Abu-Rabia, the patients must take respite in their belief that their fate is decided by Allah (2015: 7-8). Thus, with these circumstances, the Bedu have come to believe in and accept their fate, which most likely helps them to cope with many things that in this way of life are completely out of their control. In this sense, a spirit of tranquility and calmness is established at the same time that the Bedouin, whether living in one place, or wandering from one place to another, commit to and frequently put into practice prayers and supplications.

Many times, these prayers are about simple things since living in the desert and experiencing a lack of food and water has made the Bedouin a thankful people. The Bedu have realized that God is the one who harnessed camels, horses, and sheep, which are the only source of sustenance without which they would not have found a life in the distant desert and that He is the one who provides them with the water that they need to survive.

Another interesting area of spiritual life has to do with dreams. Al-Tahir indicates that many Bedouins believe in dreams, and in being able to visit and see the dead in their dreams; thus, the Bedu often make food when they dream about a dead person that belongs to their family since they believe that this food will benefit the dead as a reward that they receive in their grave (1965:165). Seeing the dead, in favorable or unfavorable condition, has a great impact on bringing delight or sorrow into the life of the Arab and of the Bedu in particular, since the dream is considered to be a sign of the state of the dead person.

The geographical conditions have also affected the Bedouin since this has caused a certain absence of official and unofficial religious institutions until the 1980s as well. Therefore, many Bedu have traditionally considered religion to be more a personal concern as well

as a diligence that was to be constantly and earnestly cared for according to their “tribal heritage” that was accomplished with their traditions and social relationships, than a matter that should be learned from the competent authorities such as official centers like schools, universities, or religious institutes. Accordingly, some contradictions between religion and tribal customs are apparent in Bedouin daily life.

Some scholars, such as Sulieman, who, based on a more urban perspective of religion, posits a more daring and contrasting opinion regarding the Bedu by accusing them of a lack of religiosity and weak religious scruples (1988:298-302). Sulieman states that Bedouins believe in the existence of the holy spirits of righteous people who have passed and their ability to respond to supplications. In addition to this, Halim refers to some activities that incur a sacrifice, e.g., slaughtering a sheep for the souls of these holy spirits next to their graves on different occasions so that they will answer the supplications, for instance, when medical treatment is needed (2000: 196).

However, Al-Masharqah seems to believe that the Bedouin are not better off than their ancestors as far as their religiosity is concerned, that is to say how well they know and understand religious matters involving worship, commands, prohibitions, and rituals. Indeed, Al-Masharqah affirms that the Bedouin are ignorant, in the sense of being uninformed or unaware, of all these more legal ideas. In lieu of this, the belief of the Bedu is limited to the mere oneness of Allah and the prophecy of His Messenger Muhammad. Thus, the Bedu do not feel the need to adhere exactly to certain more rigorous rules that other Muslims may feel the need to follow, especially as concerns certain times for prayer. The Bedouin pray according to their needs and desires and when their free time and long working hours allow them to do so. Another example is the strict observance of Ramadan, which, for many Bedouin, does not call for a change in their eating and drinking schedules, since, most likely due to the severe desert conditions, they continue to follow the same schedule as they do during the other months of the year (Al-Rawi, 1949:50-56). Finally, Al-Masharqah, refers to certain actions that might, to a certain extent, seem to counter the Islamic religious views, such as sanctifying certain stones and trees so that these objects would be able to convey good and repel evil.

Based on these ideas then, it becomes patent that the traditional Bedu has inherited certain ideas from their ancestors who lived in the period before the spread of the knowledge about Islam, and whose religiosity was limited to spiritual matters since they did not come in close contact with the specific requirements of Islam. However, other members of this society who were able, at least to a certain extent, to benefit from the teachings on Islam, now make up the vast majority of the Bedouin who understand the Islamic religion in what is considered to be a more appropriate form, regardless of the extent of commitment to its instructions, as may happen particularly among the younger generation.

In the examples of cultural folklore described above it is easy to see how the Bedu society has historically been influenced by its natural surroundings on many various and different levels. Making a living in the desert is a complex affair, yet, over the centuries the Bedouin have adapted to this harsh environment. Their historical dwelling places located near the caravan route of the famous, ancient Silk Road kept them in contact with other peoples at the same time as it allowed them to maintain their distance. This resulted in a way of life that seeks to avoid the complications and demands of contemporary life in the city and uses simplicity and only what they have immediately at hand to make a living. In this way, the Bedu live without tension; their biggest concern is finding pasture for their flocks and keeping track of the rainfall patterns as well as the location of different bodies of water that they can make use of in their wanderings. They have also adapted to the modern era by using automobiles instead of horses and camels, by resorting to modern methods of extracting groundwater, and, in some cases, by staying near their seasonal vegetable farms that serve as fodder for their livestock instead of traveling long distances; however, this may also be due to the fact that nowadays there are international borders that tend to limit the Bedouin's freedom of movement, especially those enforced by Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Syria.

Even so, the Bedu lifestyle still tends to contradict the more contemporary civilian way of life. By efficiently using all of its institutions, the state has been able to levy its control over citizens who live in cities and rural residential areas; however, this is not the case for

the Bedu. If they feel insulted or restricted in their freedom, they need only fold their tents and search for a place to live far away from what they call “prison life” inside walls and buildings. As affirmed by Elyan, the Bedouins, generally speaking, be it in the desert or in villages, enjoy a greater sense of freedom when compared with urban residents and this reality can be evidenced in the desert life of the nomadic Bedu when they fold their tents and depart if they feel an injustice has occurred (1985: 22). Furthermore, the Bedouins in villages and rural areas do not behave much differently than those who live in the desert, since they keep their tents next to the stone houses in which they live. In certain disputes with another party, some leave the area because if they do not leave, such disputes may force the parties to stay indoors or a certain amount of time, so that they do not coincide with their rivals until after they have been able to reconcile. On the other hand, Elyan points out that the Bedouins in the countryside often put up their tents next to their houses in the spring and summer so that they can live in them and, in this way, receive their guests with a sense of pride and authenticity that substantiates how they proudly live their culture. Another cultural area that is of great importance, as well as a source of pride for the Jordanian Bedu is their use of riddles, as will be discussed in Chapter Two.

CHAPTER TWO: THE JORDANIAN BEDOUIN RIDDLE

In most mortal communities, the riddle has emerged as an elegant form of art and social interaction which is used to communicate a great amount of meaning in a few words; as such, riddles play a vital role in the speech and conversation traditions of any society. As questions, statements, or phrases, and even, at times, as poetic verses, riddles are intentionally worded in puzzling or misleading ways. They tend to be double-meaning or veiled-meaning statements in the form of descriptions that have been composed to make a person use his/her imaginative ingenuity to come up with the correct answer. Since telling someone else a riddle is a way to play with language, it is rather common for children to learn how riddles work at an early age. In fact, riddles are commonly included in the curricula of educational systems all over the world. As a unique language tool, the riddle can enhance the appeal of the language used and, thus, strengthen its communicative effect. In this way then, riddles represent a socio-cultural element in the general cultural knowledge that a society passes on to its members, especially its youth.

Riddles may contain diverse content; consequently, telling a good riddle can be quite challenging for the *riddler*, or the person who narrates or performs the riddle, and thus, doing so implies that riddlers

be well versed with the culture and general knowledge of the elements that make up their environment and of the world in general. At the same time, the person who attempts to answer the riddle, or the *riddlee*, must also share this common knowledge in order to respond appropriately. Indeed, when riddlees attempt to provide a solution for the riddle given, it makes them use their cognitive thinking process as the same time as it widens their awareness of their surroundings.

As a literary genre, riddles are rich in language expressions, techniques, and embedded lore. When studying the riddles of a certain society, one may find a variety of objects from the natural world in which the social group thrives, such as specific terms for the plant, animal, and human life in that area. Many times, these terms comprise the group of socially appropriate answers to the riddles proposed.

This is most likely why the area of folklore as well as that of oral traditions have found the riddle to one of the elements that has endured across various time periods and cultures. As mentioned above, its use has been recorded from before the time of the Greek philosophers and poets to the present day. Those who have studied the riddle have done so as a means of understanding the cultural and social foundations of the peoples who created them, and as a form of popular expression that has revealed much about how everyday people from many different cultural backgrounds viewed the world around them.

One of these peoples are the Anglo-Saxons. Used in the early Middle Ages in southern and eastern Scotland as well as England, the language attributed to this society is the first know version of the English language. It has been said to have evolved from Anglo-Norman, the language that Anglo-Saxon invaders brought into Great Britain in the middle of the fifth century. Even though Anglo-Norman, a language related to French, was adopted by the higher classes, and temporarily took its place after the Normal conquest of 1066, Middle English in England and Early Scots in Scotland are considered to represent the latter stages of the Old English era.

In their rich history, it is evident that one of the most prominent forms of folklore in their oral literary tradition is riddles. As previously mentioned, perhaps the most significant example of this is the *Exeter Book*. Dating from the 10th century, this book is considered to be one of

the most important manuscripts in Anglo-Saxon studies. Indeed, this hand-written anthology of writings comprises one of the four major codices of Old English. Many believe that it was written by a single scribe who copied the texts from various sources, and that it was likely used for instructional and entertainment purposes by a community of scholars and/or monks. Currently housed in the library of Exeter Cathedral in England, it contains a wealth of diverse material, including religious and secular poems, elegies, narrative texts, and a collection of riddles.

There are around 95 riddles in total¹³, each presented as a short poem that describes an object or animal in ambiguous language. As editor Craig Williamson notes in *The Old English Riddles of the 'Exeter Book'* these riddles were often mysterious, reflecting their love of wordplay and puzzles (1977: 1). The examples of Anglo-Saxon riddles included in this volume are enigmatic literary devices used to describe everyday objects or natural phenomena by using metaphorical and descriptive language. They follow a similar format; first there is a series of descriptive clues and then the reader is challenged to guess the answer or solution. One famous example from this time period is the riddle of the “wyrn”, or serpent, which states “I’m a strange creature - serving water and land alike. I have a long body and a massive head, but no limbs”, and then asks, “What am I?”. The answer, a river, is perhaps easy to understand; however, many of the answers are far more difficult to decipher. Indeed, much has been written about them. Even so, exactly how the Anglo-Saxons practiced riddling is still unknown today. Yet, scholars seem to coincide that the inclusion of certain Biblical references, both narrative from the Bible as well as to other terms like manuscript book, soul and body, fish and river, probably suggests a man of the church was responsible for recording all of them in this book form. The linguistic features of the riddles have been found to be comparable to those from other English language samples from the same time period.

No answers are provided for these riddles¹⁴ which are written in alliterative verse and usually conclude with, “say what I am called”.

¹³ Debate still exists about the exact number due to their construction and ambiguity.

¹⁴ For an extensive view about the mindset of the time, see Murphy (2011).

Hence, it is patent that these texts were to be spoken aloud as a form of amusement, perhaps even entertainment. Since many compound nouns and adjectives are included in these texts, the audience would have needed to be alert to double meanings or “hinge words” in order to find the solution. Lind has referred to there being metaphorical references inside different riddles that demonstrate there are riddles within the riddle itself (2007: 112-115). Others have proposed that there is a frequent use of personification of the subject and that this is often an inanimate object (e.g., Paz, 2017; Sebo, 2018). Various objects make up the subjects in these riddles from mere vegetables to praise for religious faith. At the same time, the riddles seem to highlight the dual nature of common items and common themes. For example, in riddle 29, the sun and moon represent the idea of day and night, but also of male and female, and knowledge and mystery, and perhaps even joy and sadness.

Thus, the complexities found in these riddles are still being studied today, as well as other research that has been dedicated to other riddles in English¹⁵. In this way, this example is a good start for this chapter which seeks to define the riddle, consider how it is classified and its various functions. The first step is providing a definition of the riddle.

¹⁵ For a complete list, see: www2.kenyon.edu/AngloSaxonRiddles/listing.htm

2.1 THE RIDDLE: CLASSIFICATION & FUNCTION

Reaching a common definition for the riddle has proven to be a difficult task that has caused a fair amount of scholarly discussion. The presence of riddles appears to be a universal topic and there seem to exist riddles having similar forms across many nations, and even continents. One example of this is the Sphinx riddle which has been documented to exist in Mesopotamia, Ancient Egypt, Greece, and even in the Marshall Islands in the West. It is true that their conventional brevity offers a sort of opportunity for variation or discussion at the same time that it also presents a unique performance for debate. Despite their limited words, simple riddles are commonly a point of controversy for people of all ages. Another point in common across cultures is the fact that many scholars confirm that new riddles are regularly being formed just like any other type of literary work.

It is generally known that riddling was used in traditional societies as a means of entertainment. One of the earliest sources cited by many scholars is Aristotle. Well known for his riddle or *ainigma* collection, which he used in his promotion of the effective use of language, Aristotle referred to the presence of the metaphor in riddles when he wrote, “from good riddling it is generally possible to derive appropriate metaphors; for metaphors are made like riddles; thus, clearly, [a metaphor from a good riddle] is an apt transference of words” (Book 3, Chapter 2)¹⁶. Obviously, Aristotle’s ideas are based on the concepts of rhetoric and the appropriate use of language when speaking; thus, his idea of using a metaphor has been seen as a sort of foundation for the definition of riddles.

The study at hand deals with the more traditional oral riddle. Many scholars have already put forth their ideas about an academic definition of the riddle; this tendency has been bifold. On the one hand, some researchers have paid more attention to the structure, or formula, of the riddle, while others have concentrated on the cognitive aspects of the riddle, in other words, the sociological, psychological, and intellectual aspects of the riddle and the context in which it takes place. Several scholars tend to represent terminological restrictions so as to generate

¹⁶ As translated by George A. Kennedy (1991:201).

a personal definition of the riddle according to the context of the area studied, for instance, Taylor 1938 and 1943, Georges and Dundes 1963, Dienhart 2010, and Jolles 2017 (as referenced in Kaivola-Brengenhøj, 2018: 4-6). Nevertheless, all of their definitions share a common idea: riddles cannot be separated from the element and context to which they refer.

Many scholars cite Petsch to be the initiator of the structural analysis of the riddle in terms of the fundamental units which conform it (George & Dundes, 1963), (Green & Pepicello, 1979), (Kaivola-Brengenhøj, 2018) among others. In his 1898 doctoral dissertation, the German literary scholar, Robert Petsch, proposed the idea that true “folk puzzles”, or true riddles, may include up to five basic elements: an introductory frame, a denominative kernel, a descriptive kernel, a block or distractor component, and a concluding framework (as cited in Green and Pepicello, 1979: 3-20). A second important voice in the definition of the riddle came from the United States: Archer Taylor. A modern folklorist, Taylor believed that the riddle had not been adequately defined and affirmed that, “the true riddle or the riddle in the strict sense, compares an object to another entirely different object” (1943:29). Taylor included the idea of negative and positive descriptive elements in his definition because he thought they “organize the essential structure of the riddle”. In his opinion, the negative element resembles Petsch’s idea of block. While the positive descriptive element is metaphorical in nature, the negative descriptive element is literal and can be understood as such. In other words, “a true riddle consists of two descriptions of an object, one figurative and one literal, and confuses the hearer who endeavors to identify an object described in conflicting ways” (1943:130).

As Georges and Dundes have already pointed out, there exist many riddles which do not have one or both of these descriptive elements. In addition, there are also examples of riddles in which the positive element is not metaphorical, or in which the negative element is. Their solution, from a structural analysis point of view, is to base the definition of the riddle not on style, but on structure. When their theory was applied, only two of Petsch’s five elements were found to be structural: the descriptive kernel element and the block element. They

further broke this down by saying that the descriptive element consisted of both a topic and a comment. Once they did this, they were able to posit that “[a] minimum unit of analysis having been defined, it is now possible to present a tentative structural definition of the riddle: A riddle is a traditional verbal expression which contains one or more descriptive elements, a pair of which may be in opposition; the referent of the elements is to be guessed” (1963:113).

Although some do not agree with their tentative definition, it is a good base for the study at hand. However, additional elements must also be included in the final definition used in the work at hand. For example, the second part of the riddle, or the referent, or answer to the first part, must also be included in the definition and, while Georges & Dundes do not specifically include it, others like Miranda (1972) and Pepicello & Green (1984) do. The latter put forth this more complete version:

We see first that the riddle form is based on the question-and-answer format. Moreover, it is potentially solvable from the information included in the question if the riddlee is able to determine the witty devices for confusion employed to frame the riddle. In turn, we see that the information necessary to discern the witty devices is to be found entirely by virtue of participation in a cultural system (i.e., shared language, world view, and tropes). Finally, the riddle act must, like all folklore, have a conventional locus within a particular tradition and within a performance context (Pepicello & Green, 1984:88).

As put forth above, the entire riddling performance and the social-cultural context in which it takes place are important in achieving a successful end to the riddle act: the correct guess by the audience. This means that the process, the conventions used in the performance, as well as when it happens and the presence of one riddlee or, more commonly, a larger audience, should all be considered when analyzing the oral performance of riddles.

Continuing inside the scope laid out by the linguistic and folklore perspective, riddles have been included in the genre of verbal art alongside proverbs, especially because of the fact that both are at times

encoded in archaic or poetic style language, but, at others, presented in a clear and more succinct style. Nevertheless, riddles and proverbs are seen as inversive to each other, as Milner observed, “if a riddle is an overt question with a covert answer, a proverb is an overt answer to a covert question” (as cited by Kaivola-Bregenhøj, 2001:26)¹⁷. Other oral expressions which have been included in this group of verbal art include: enigmas, old-fashion tales, stories, jokes, and puns. Yet, despite the connections, riddles can easily be distinguished from these other oral expressions, since, as stated above, they take place in certain social situations, a special domain in which a person learns to participate from an early age.

But the folklore perspective is only one of several different perspectives that have included the study of riddles in their area of expertise. From a linguistic point of view, many scholars have dealt with how different strategies using phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics are employed to create a certain amount of confusion, yet, at the same time, will still allow the riddlee and the rest of the audience to come up with the correct answer. In addition to the oral forms, the literary forms of the riddle have been studied in depth since they may also be constructed in the form of simple or compound sentences, texts, or even poetry.

In any case, one can consider a common comprehensive definition that includes different aspects of the riddle. A riddle is a form of popular expression that constitutes an important oral or written aspect of popular creativity as proven by the fact that ancient riddles have been found to reflect degrees of civilization during different historical stages. As is the case for literary genres, the riddle is a widespread global phenomenon that does not have one specifically recognized format; in addition, it can deal with any aspect of life.

After comparing the opinions of researchers and critics in terms of the best definition for a riddle, the work at hand posits that the structural definition is more significant than the cognitive definition or the definition based on content and style. The structural definition is a universal one that can accommodate all riddles from different regions and societies, and it is very rare, perhaps almost impossible, to find a

¹⁷ In reference to a quote by Kōngäs Maranda 1976:129–130.

riddle that does not contain a topic and a reply. Another meaningful consideration is that the structural definition is flexible and can be adjusted to different riddle categories. The Arabic language, as we will discuss later, has riddles with no apparent topics. Still, at the same time, it makes use of what are known as implied pronouns, which can be employed instead of unstated topics, so we will not find any difficulties in applying this structural definition to the Jordanian Bedouin Riddle, henceforth, JBR. In this way, then, one can put forth this definition of the riddle.

A riddle is an oral or written genre that has different functions. It usually consists of one or more oppositional or non-oppositional descriptive elements for one or more stated or unstated topics. It may appear in poetic or prose formulas, and the referent is meant to be deciphered.

Regarding this topic, delineating the minimum unit of analysis is crucial to clarifying the structure of a riddle. It is, thus, suggested that the unit be called a descriptive element, as proposed by Petsch and Taylor, or in other words, a descriptive part recognized as a topic and a comment. The former is the supposed referent; that is, it is the thing or object which is supposedly described. The latter is an affirmation about the topic, usually involving the design, function, status, or performance of the topic.

Many scholars deal with the two general classifications of true riddles that are derived from George and Dundes' definition (Roger Abrahams 1968:143-158, Charles Scott 1969:129-142, and Michael Chyet 1988:267-292). The two types are distinguished by the absence or presence of descriptive elements in opposition. Riddles that contain descriptive elements which do not contradict each other are called non-oppositional riddles. Riddles with descriptive elements that appear to contradict or oppose each other are known as oppositional riddles.

Non-oppositional riddles can be constructed in a literal or metaphorical way. Literal riddles are not complicated to guess, understand, and translate; hence their meanings can simply be inferred from the meaning of their elements. Since the meaning of the answer to this type of riddle shares a relationship to the literal meanings used to

create it, they do not require much processing effort. The vocabulary used in literal riddles are words that are regularly and commonly used. This means that linguistically speaking, they are easy to interpret and understand. In literal non-oppositional riddles, the correspondence between the riddle referent and the topic(s) of the descriptive element(s) is obvious. As in example JRBR 4 “What walks on feet that were not created by egg nor womb? Adam”. The referent and the topic are both “Adam”.

However, in metaphorical non-oppositional riddles the correspondence between the referent and the topic of the descriptive element(s) is not identical, as in “Two rows of white horses on a red hill. Teeth”. In addition, sometimes one can find variation in the descriptive detail, as in the riddle, “What goes up white and comes down yellow? An egg”; still, no contradiction is included.

On the contrary, in oppositional riddles, the first descriptive element appears to contradict the second descriptive element in order to create an integral whole or unit. The two separate elements can be accurately and logically associated only when the solution is provided. In oppositional riddles, the riddle will always contradict the primary function of a familiar object, for example, “Three brothers, the first eats and never gets full. The second goes and never comes back. The third one sleeps and never gets up. Fire, smoke, and ash”. In this riddle, the contradiction among the three phrases with descriptive elements is clearly manifested. In the first part, the descriptive element “eating” contradicts the descriptive element “never gets full”. In the second one, “going” enters into opposition with the descriptive element “coming back”. And in the third, “sleeping” is contradictory to the descriptive element “getting up”.

Oppositional riddles have at least three different varieties of oppositions in the English oral tradition: (1) antithetical contradictory, (2) provisional contradictory, and (3) causal contradictive. (Georges, Robert A., & Dundes, Alan, 1963: 111-118). In antithetical contradictory opposition, just one of the two descriptive elements in opposition can be correct. Usually, the second of the contradictory descriptive elements works to negate the meaning of the first element. As in the riddle “A stone and not a stone, eats grass and not a goat or

sheep? A turtle”. Such a riddle is formed of three descriptive elements, the first and the second ones appear to be in antithetical contradictive opposition. While the privational contradictive opposition results when the second part of a pair of descriptive elements contradict the rational or physical characteristic of the first descriptive element. Generally, it is the essential function of an object that is denied. This is the case in this riddle: “He pinches you without hands? The hunger”. Or in this other one: “She cries without eyes and walks without feet? The cloud”.

The third kind of opposition is called causal contradictive. In this kind of opposition, the initial descriptive element consists of an action carried out by an object or upon an object. In some causal contradictive oppositional riddles, the second descriptive element explicitly denies the hypothetical or logical result of the action involved in the first descriptive element. Examples of this type of riddle include: “She revolves but never gets tired. She eats but never drinks. A hand-mill”.

Finally, with respect to the instances in which the topic of a riddle is stated or not, we can present these examples. For a stated topic, “What is a well that has two different substances? An egg.” In this riddle, the topic is a well. An example for an unstated topic is, “She cries a lot with only one eye. A spring of water”.

In this section, a definite for the riddle has been provided as well as the terminology that will be used to describe and classify the JBR. Next, an appropriate comprehensive perspective about how riddles have been classified is provided so as to allow for a more detailed analysis of the subject at hand.

One of the first classifications of the traditional oral expression known as riddles to cause much attention was provided by Taylor, when he presented the idea of the “true riddle” as being a riddle that “compares an object to another entirely different object” (1943:129) and then later expanded that idea to include, “in terms intended to suggest something entirely different” (1951:2)¹⁸. While Pepicello & Green did not agree with this differentiation since, in their opinion, the literary term “true riddles” should cause suspicion (1984:85), others have continued to use the notion of the “true riddle” as a set of riddles not to be confused with other riddles that are more like puzzles, or with

¹⁸ As referenced in: Pepicello & Green (1984:85).

the questions used in a jocular manner in modern oral rituals carried out by young people. In this sense, the most noticeable distinction separating the true riddle and this type of question is that the image in metaphorical riddles interrupts the expectations of the audience and that it is the latter who must provide the answer. In contrast, humorous questions interfere with the discussion or other discourse and, in most cases, the person who poses the joke will provide the solution.

Another classification of riddles has to do with the fact that while they may be constructed orally, they may also be produced in the form of sketches, drawings, pictures, signals, and even Whatsapp images. In other words, then, riddles are not mere fixed written texts; they can be presented in different methods, like the visual riddle, which is performed by means of gestures, drawings, and so on. The riddler normally introduces his visual riddle by an opening ritual in question form, “Do you know what this means?” or “Have you seen this one?” These questions provide the framework for the performance that follows.¹⁹

Some have classified the riddle by the age group that uses it. Brian Sutton-Smith conducted a study in a small town in Ohio, USA. He was able to demonstrate that eighty percent of the four-year-old children who participated in the study could reproduce simple questions and answers. Given their nature, he proposed they should be called “pre-riddles”. For example, “Why did the man chop down the chimney? He needed the bricks”. He was also able to observe that by the time they were of school age, the use of this type of riddle had decreased by around seven percent, and that teenagers did not use this pre-riddle structure. The study also showed that schoolchildren also consciously produce complex riddles, such as the ones based on a homonym, which he later calls “homonymic riddles” (1973:114-115), for example, “Why did the dog go out into the sun? He wanted to be a hot dog.” The relationship between the image and answer might seem to be a bit frustrating for the audience who expects something else instead of mere word-switching.

¹⁹ For contributions about visual riddles see: Virtanen, Leea. (1988), Lipponen, Ulla (1992) as cited in (Kaivola-Bregenhøj, Annikki.2001:62-68).

Parody riddles are another type of riddle that schoolchildren commonly make use of and are usually performed during riddle gatherings where some samples such as rituals, metaphors, formula, or content are repeated as a way of imitating their elders. The target differs for the various riddle participants. The riddler tries not to forget his/her riddle collection; meanwhile, the riddlee's perspective is that solving the riddle is the only factor that will prevent him/her from falling victim to the mockery of the audience. For everyone who is taking part, such riddles include a pattern of providing random solutions that stray from rational analysis to become a sort of expectation. It seems that the psychological factor plays a significant role in such riddles where the majority of schoolchildren try to gain inspiration from the surprise element rendered by the parody. For example: "Although I am not alive, I have five fingers. What am I? A glove".

Another sub-genre of the riddle is the group of the studies that classify riddles by geographical region. Laurits Bodker published "The Nordic Riddle" in the 1960s. This study included the terminology Bodker developed to classify the different riddle concepts in various Nordic languages. Unfortunately, this terminology does not seem to match other areas, even those having a similar origin as is the case with the North Germanic languages. In addition, the Chinese (or "Sinitic")²⁰ languages' peculiar nature makes them a particularly fruitful field for almost any kind of linguistic riddle. Rudolph Richard attempts to present some general information about the nature of the Chinese riddle and has referenced his most significant findings about Chinese riddles as follows. 1) There exist a large number of homophones which easily lend themselves to riddle making by punning on sound. 2) The meanings of Chinese characters are often many and varied. And 3) the shape and forms of Chinese characters must be taken into consideration since a specific group of riddles that have to do with the description of a character or of its component parts has been detected (1942: 68). The nature of a language, its calligraphy, the extent of its geographical

²⁰ The Chinese (or "Sinitic") languages are typically classified into seven major language groups. They vary as much from each other morphologically and phonetically as does English. In addition, there are approximately 300 minority languages spoken by the remaining 8% of China's population (Dwyer, 2005: 56-62.)

spread, and the number of speakers entail a wide classification for its literary types within the general framework for said language, as mentioned here. Such a classification may be quite demanding and even baffle those who are not familiar with a particular language.

Studies on the English language have also produced a certain terminology for the classification of riddles. Apart from the “true riddle”, Archer Taylor has also recorded (1) the “neck riddle”, i.e., when a person narrates an event known only to the person who poses the riddle so as to prevent anyone from being able to answer and, thus save his life, (2) the “clever question”, i.e. the person who asks supposes that the audience is aware of special knowledge that will allow them to supply the correct answer, (3) the arithmetic puzzle, and (4) the “conundrum”, i.e., when the person posing the witty question does so with an ingenious combination of heterogeneous or conflicting ideas and or puns (1951:1).

Mark Bryant, in *Riddles, Ancient and Modern* and his *Dictionary of Riddles*, apart from the true riddle, identifies (1) the “charade”, as a riddle in which the word or phrase to figure out is divided into several parts that can each be guessed from a verbal sign, (2) “conundrum”, as a riddle in which the answer depends on figuring out the pun or play on words, (3) “logogriph”, as a riddle in which a particular word is formed from by observing the letters in other words, and (4) “literary rebus” and “pictorial riddle”, as using pictures, samples, symbols, or letters instead of words and phrases to present a certain message (1983:14–16) and (1990:6-8)²¹. This variety might be due to the fact that in different societies the comprehensive terminology must differ to account for a certain fluctuation in cultural references.

Another classification of riddles is the “wisdom riddle”. Unlike the riddles mentioned above, wisdom riddles are the ones which most closely resemble ordinary questions. In order to answer them, a person must be aware of facts pertaining to a specific area (i.e., the Bible, astrology, the NBA, etc.); in this case a person’s general knowledge or cultural background might not be enough to be able to distinguish the answer. This type of riddle is most likely linked to an older age-group who share common knowledge of a certain cultural aspect, religion, or

²¹ As referenced in Kaivola Bregenhøj, 2001:55.

ethnic circumstance that allows them to understand and participate in the performance.²² Virtanen has supplied us with some examples, e. g., “Where was the first nail in Jerusalem hit? On the head.” and “How many eggs did Goliath eat on an empty stomach? One” (1960:163.).

Puzzles, on the other hand, try to put the riddlee in a situation of making an attempt to resolve a task. Like wisdom questions, the riddlee needs proper knowledge, especially as per performance and inferring, since he/she has probably not learnt this previous knowledge by heart. Mathematical tasks or the solving of links between the elements in a riddle are standard puzzles. Puzzles are often accompanied by illustrative pictures which is most likely a sign that these puzzles target children more than others. Ulla Lipponen (1988) as cited in (Kaivola-Bregenhøj, 2018), presents some examples, such as: “A man weighs 75 kg and his two sons 25 kg each. They want to cross a river in a boat that can only take 100 kg at a time. How do they do it? First the father rows across with one of the sons. Then the son rows back and fetches his brother”. And also:

You've got to get a cabbage, a wolf, and a sheep across to an island in a rowing boat so that the wolf cannot eat the sheep nor the sheep the cabbage. How do you do it? First you take the sheep to the island. Then you fetch the wolf and leave it on the island, taking the sheep back to the shore. Leave the sheep on the shore and take the cabbage across and leave it with the wolf. Then you return for the sheep and row it across to the island.

Finally, an additional type of riddle classification has to do with the reply and what that reply itself describes. This denotational classification deals with different aspects of life such as human life, plants, animals, birds, insects, tools, technology, regions, sea-life, stars,

²² It is worth noting that wisdom questions may bear a certain relationship with the “neck riddle”. As mentioned above, the name neck riddle comes from the story of the prisoner who tries to save his life by asking the executioner a riddle which he is unable to answer. In some narratives, the person who is able to ask a riddle that no one can answer will win the hand of and marry a princess. The well-known Samson riddle (from *Judges* 14:14-18) is an example of a neck riddle. (See Norton, 1942: 27-57).

sounds, rainbows or even circumcision among others.²³ Moreover, riddles have been syntactically classified as simple or complex. In the simple riddle, the riddle image tends to be pitched in a statement, or more commonly and frequently it merely requires a phrase or one-word answer. The riddle image can be cast in an understandable statement, interrogative or negative sentence, conditional sentence, or an academic sentence. On the contrary, the riddle image of a complex riddle tends to be pitched in more than two statements since the interpretation of this reply will require more a one-word explanation.

Regarding our topic, it is necessary to refer to a general, popular classification of riddles that are represented in poetic or prose form. A poetic riddle is expressed by connected verses that have rhythmic structures, using a meter or rhyme. Poetic riddles can be displayed either in regular or free verse poems. Another type of poetic riddle is the “rhyming riddle” in which poets try to ascertain their consorts’ poetic resourcefulness by presenting a poem that is missing the last word, that is to say, the word that rhymes. The solutions or answers given must rhyme and be compatible with the meaning and context of the poem. Due to the complexity involved, participation in riddle acts with this type of riddle is generally restricted to poets having superior poetic ability. On the other hand, a prose riddle might appear in standard or interrogative sentences; several samples will be presented later in this chapter.

To conclude the idea of how riddles are classified, the classification of the riddle is based on the content, the form (prose or poetic), the question, and the answer or reply format. Furthermore, if the riddlee can discover the witty signs for ambiguity used to compose the riddle from the data introduced in the riddle question, it is potentially solvable. In turn, the information necessary to observe the witty devices may, quite frequently, only be deciphered when participating in a particular cultural system in which there exist a shared

²³ Even though there seems to be a to lack formal sources to confirm this proposition, because of belonging to a conservative Middle Eastern society, the author, from personal experience, can differentiate between masculine and feminine riddles due to the sexual references in the riddles examined which were found to resemble those mentioned in Stewart (1983:40) and Boggs (1934:289-328). The masculine part of society has its characteristics when engaging in particular riddles while the feminine part has its own.

language, world views, and tropes. Finally, like all folklore genres, the performance of the riddle act must have a traditional locus within a specific culture and within a particular context. Next, certain general notions about the function of the riddle and how this chain of information is produced will be provided.

Perhaps the most obvious function of the riddle is its *social* function. When different age groups spend time together engaged in riddling, it provides the younger members of the family or community with the opportunity to participate in pleasant and entertaining social interaction with other members of their family or community and, in this way, to experience a sense of belonging to that same family or community group. Nabila Ibrahim maintained that popular riddles are rich in meaning and symbols that help to reveal an individual's experiences with his / her environment, society, and entire universe, and that this interaction with riddles causes the members of the group to think about and understand their social group so that a certain material, psychological, and spiritual balance is created among the members (1971:5-8).

Another layer of the socialization process is the understanding of one's culture. Despite its limited number of words, the riddle alludes to different, but shared, cultural ideas about certain historical events, which may also be religious in nature. This *cultural* function of the riddle may make solving it specific to the community itself, since outsiders may be at a loss when trying to find a solution and might have to resolve to asking community members directly. Zowi Tijani established that "[t]he riddle reflects civilizational levels of different historical stages" (1977: 86). The cultural function of riddles can be considered to reflect not only how a community thinks but also its lifestyle and civilization.

On a more general level, the riddle, with its clearly distinguished form, is produced with intentional mental processing when a person consciously selects the phrases and plays with the words he or she will use, at the same time that he or she adds elements such as assonance and alliteration to form the initial question or statement. Likewise, when a riddlee attempts to find the solution using the clues presented by the riddler, he or she must also mentally process the information.

This is why Ellis Köngas Maranda affirms that this *cognitive* function is significant and might be the main universal feature of riddle function (1976:131).

Since those using riddles become aware of this mental process, it is obvious that riddles are an efficient educational tool for all age groups, especially children. Indeed, because evidence of riddles being used in education has been observed in Babylonian school texts from ancient times, Potter considers this *educational* function as one of the earliest purposes for some of the oldest documented riddles (1950:939)²⁴.

The concept of having fun while learning seems to link this educational function of the riddle with a more *recreational* function. These findings were recorded in a study by Goldstein that led him to conclude that by the end of the 1950s in the USA, and in many Western nations, the idea of humor or amusement seems to be more important than learning and that riddling had lost its more direct educational function since, by that time, it was primarily used for entertainment (1963:30-36).

Nonetheless, it is true that the riddling does contribute to the practice of role-playing when riddling participants learn and practice how to manage and regulate dialogue in an organized manner. The riddler must pose his/her riddle to the audience and wait for the answer. Sometimes, the riddler interacts with the audience by giving them clues to help them find the solution. In most cases, a peaceful atmosphere is created and maintained which helps them to think calmly and carefully, and also to become aware of the respect that is held for all of the participants. In addition, certain rules for this social and *role-play* function may be set out before the riddler poses the riddle, i.e., who can answer first, who will be allowed to pose the next riddle, or how the next riddlee will be chosen, and such.

Another function of the riddle that is connected to learning is the *challenge* function that seeks to test the riddlee's or audience's level of intelligence and knowledge. While this challenge is obvious when an

²⁴ In his role as a teacher, the author has directly seen the use of riddles as an enjoyable way to attract students' attention and enhance certain traditional learning strategies so as to contribute to students being able to increase their self-awareness with their own effort.

adult asks a child a riddle, this function might be even more intense when the participants are adults who have certain knowledge and share a similar cultural and social background, and this challenge function represents a mental competition, even acting perhaps as a sort of dare, to see who can first provide the solution. In some societies, there may be extra rules added to make it even more difficult. For instance, when the riddlee is supposed to reply in a certain poetic style. In this way, scholar Talal Harb affirms that "... riddles have a function in examining people to show their intellectual potentials, and, thus, their ability to solve more complicated riddles and then move on to a higher level of riddling" (1919:157). Indeed, the cultural level of a riddler plays a significant role in constructing riddles, manipulating vocabulary, and controlling the components in the riddle text so as to make it more complex, or easier to solve. On a parallel level, the riddlees' cultural knowledge is necessary for them to be able to come up with the most appropriate solution to the riddle. In these cases, it is quite probable that age, or years of experience, also play a major role in analyzing the components of the riddle, as what is appropriate for adults is not suitable for young people. One of the most important reasons for the success of the riddling process is the prior knowledge of the age and culture of the target group for a particular riddle.

Apart from the functions already discussed above, there seem to exist other specific functions for riddles in certain societies. In India and China riddles appear to have a *ritualistic* function at certain celebrations having to do with nature, for instance those about rain, and with different life stages such as circumcision, marriage, and death. Nabila Ibrahim refers to the example of when Bantu women would celebrate rainfall ceremonies by dancing naked and posing riddles to anyone who came close to them during the ceremony as recorded in Frazer's work on myth and religion (1981:192).

Even more particular to the Arabic language, Abdelhai Kamal sustained that one of the significant functions of riddles, along with other literary genres such as proverbs, stories, and myths, is the *preservation* of Classical Arabic and its grammatical rules. According to Kamal, this was necessary because of in-mixing with non-Arabs such as Persians, Romans, and Copts and also so that the deviations from

Classical Arabic which presented themselves in regional vernaculars, would not change it significantly, or replace it completely (2009: 10-11)²⁵.

One final function of the riddle in Arabic societies seems to be that of *indirect criticism*. Yousef Bader demonstrates how riddles make use of puns and plays on words in order to write about something indirectly so as not to present a direct criticism but, rather, a context that readers of journalistic articles in Jordan must come to understand on their own (2015:53-67). In this way, Bader observed how authors can use the riddle in maneuvers that allow them to criticize political, social and economic policies concerning life in Jordan, as well as the importance of being able to do so in certain areas where freedom of opinion is not always accepted, nor human rights protected.

Thus, one can conclude that riddles have many varied, intentional, and non-intentional functions for all of the participants who take part in the riddling process, i.e., the riddler and the riddlee(s). At the same time, some riddles might function in different, almost contradictory, ways. That is to say, what is intended by the riddler may be treated as unintended by the riddlee. An example of this might take place when an *educational* function is posed from the side of the riddler as an attempt to know who is the cleverest in a certain group. The riddlee(s) will most likely carry out the solving of the riddle as they actively participate in what for them is the *challenge* function. Moreover, riddles may provide good circumstances for those interested in studying the social, cultural, psychological, and even political situation of a given country or a specific society, even though, the *recreational* function is the most obvious and familiar for many around the world.

In a logical way, then, the existence of riddles is a common feature in all languages and societies because their use is directly related to both the language and the culture of the society itself. Furthermore, due to the sometimes very specific cultural weight they have, riddles are closely related to how individuals in these societies behave and interact. As such, riddles should not be seen a merely a cultural luxury,

²⁵ Such an opinion has many proponents among the Arab world because the telling of a story or a tale is more efficient in preserving a text, or a linguistic phenomenon, than is using language in a more rigid written text.

something that is only meant to be enjoyed in terms of how well a riddler uses his or her imagination, or as fleeting entertainment, but riddles should be recognized for what they are: signs of deeper meaning in a given society, that represent not only its history, but also how that culture is passed on to the next generations.

2.2 SOME STUDIES ON ARABIC RIDDLES

Many investigations into the theoretical nature of Arabic riddles have been carried out. However, when conducting a literature review, it is not always easy to find research that has been translated into the English language, although there do exist a few exceptions²⁶. One of the pioneers in studying the Arabic riddle is Antoine Giacobetti, who published a corpus of 619 Arabic folk riddles from Algeria in 1916. His study includes the riddles in Arabic text with Latin transcriptions and French translations. In the introduction, Giacobetti presents valuable bibliographical sources related to written Arabic riddles. In addition, he briefly examines certain usage cases, for example, the use of riddles in Algerian rural life and the natural topics represented in them²⁷.

In 1938, the Algerian professor, Abdelhamid Hamidou presented a collection of Algerian folk riddles. The riddles in this collection had already been translated and were only recorded in French. The collection included a short review, similar to that of Giacobetti's, as well as certain riddling expressions related to Algerian farmers and a few more written Arabic riddles. Since, as mentioned above, the riddles in this work were only presented in their translated French version, little or nothing can be said about their structure and form.

Another investigation that seems to have been carried out with Giacobetti's study in mind, is that published by Jean Quemeneur (1944). He introduces his book, *Enigmes Tunisiennes*, with an essay that provides important data on the kinds and varieties of riddles in Tunisia, emic names for the riddles, and even some short, comparative observations with riddles from Algeria. Like Giacobetti's collection, Quemeneur provided the Arabic texts with Latin transcriptions and French translations.

²⁶ Despite the presence of some studies published in Arabic on riddles, the volume of these studies is quite small, particularly if the large size of the Arab world and the cultural and intellectual diversity among the Arab peoples is considered. The author still suffers from the scarcity of these resources and published work. It seems that the intellectual passion about riddles in the Arab world is not the same as it is for the Western world for reasons that might make for a long discussion.

²⁷ Giacobetti's work was reviewed by Rene Basset in *Revue des Traditions Populaires* vol. 32 (1916-17: 186-190).

Several years later, in 1965, Charles T. Scott published *Persian and Arabic Riddles*. This book might be one of the earliest investigations in English, from a language-centered approach, to attempt to reach a definition for the riddles provided. Scott tried to set apart, describe and linguistically analyze the stylistic devices employed in the riddles he included in his corpus.

In 1975, in an unpublished thesis entitled, *It's about Our Bean-colored Hen: A Preliminary Look at Tunisian Riddles*, Sabra J. Webber carried out a field study in which she collected fifty riddles. In addition, she put forth her in-depth analysis of the Tunisian cultural context as well as a brief look at Arab/Muslim riddle content, riddle form, riddling tools, and functions of riddles.²⁸

The situation with modern Arab scholars is very similar; not much has been written on the subject. One of the more distinct, yet comprehensive, investigations that has been encountered is a book about Algerian folk riddles by Algerian philosopher, Abdul-Malik al-Murtad (2007).²⁹ In his book, Professor al-Murtad attempts to conduct a detailed investigation of folk riddles in Algeria and provides an index of 176 Algerian riddles.

In a rather valuable as well as useful investigation, Michael L. Chyet examines sets of folk riddles from various Arab countries including Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Tunisia. He looks at the collections to find out if Arabic riddles are related and even similar throughout the Arab World, or if they vary too much to be regarded together as a single group. He aims to clarify that for his investigation, the absence of any riddle from the corpus of a particular country is not evidence that a given riddle is not known there. However, Chyet regards the presence of any riddle in a certain corpus to justify that it forms part of the regional repertory. Furthermore, Chyet presents an extensive collection of Arabic riddles and also attempts to understand the structure of these riddles. To do this, he makes use of some of the more well-known structuralist theories which have been applied to European and other

²⁸ As recorded in Chyet, 1988: 268).

²⁹ This book entitled, "al-Algdz al-Sacbaya al-Gaza'irzya. Dirasa fi algdz al-Garb al-Gaza'irz" *Algerian Folk Riddles: A Study in the Riddles of the Algerian West* was published in 1982.

riddle collections, to determine if Arab riddles can be explained in this way (1988:270-290). The theories that he addresses are those of (Georges & Dundes, 1963), (Scott, 1965), (Maranda, 1971), and (Kaivola-Bregenhøj, 1974)

Since it might be one of the rare studies in English on Arabic riddles, Chyet's 1988 study is truly beneficial for our research, and can be a sort of a starting point. It seems that the Arabic language, its comprehensiveness, and its linguistic ability to present any meaning in more than one linguistic form, within the great diversity of Arabic dialects, has motivated him to investigate riddles in various Arab countries. In this way, Chyet concludes that there exist *multi-structures* when certain riddles have the same meaning but are presented with different expressions and forms in different countries.

Another significant finding which can be applied to the study at hand is that Chyet posits that two of the four theories mentioned above, (Scott, 1965) and (Maranda, 1971) do not afford satisfactory results when applied to Arabic riddles. According to Chyet, the main problems with Scott's strategy are that: 1) it brings together riddles that relate to separate levels, while 2) conversely, it separates riddles with identical structures when one of the riddles has an extra-introductory frame element, or a "stylistic" element which the other lacks.

Chyet also attempts to implement Miranda's structuralist theory or "five-part diagram" (1971)³⁰ on Arabic riddle structure. However, such an approach fails to be applicable to all categories of riddles. Finally, Chyet is able to make use of certain elements for formula analysis that were previously determined. With Kaivola-Bregenhøj's notion of *formula criteria*, and the *descriptive analysis* pattern laid out by Georges & Dundes, Chyet analyzes the most available and common riddle patterns. He is able to posit new riddle patterns related to non-

³⁰ In Elli Kongas Maranda's article "The Logic of Riddles" (1971), she outlines a five-part diagram to analyze the structure of Finnish riddles" The five elements of the riddle are: I. The given term (*signans*) a metaphor which is the core of the riddle image. II. The constant *premiss* which holds true for both the given term and the hidden term. III. The hidden (unstated) *variable*, or what would logically be expected as the second part of the riddle question. IV. The given *variable-clue* to the answer, which informs us that something is amiss in the logic of the riddle. V. The hidden term (*signatum*) or the riddle answer / solution. Maranda considers the riddle answer to be an integral part of the riddle structure.

oppositional riddle categories according to the structural theories presented by Georges & Dundes, and Kaivola-Bregenhøj.

As far as recent master theses and doctoral dissertations, whether published or not, are concerned, most of the ones that are accessible seem to originate in one country: Algeria. This type of study in Algeria normally uses the work mentioned above by Al-Murtad as a starting point and then seeks to describe what occurs in different regions of the same country. In this way, it is obvious that pioneering studies of this nature are necessary for any given topic in a particular society and will be the basis to be referenced for any and all following work that is carried out by researchers in the future.

According to this research the most significant studies that help to describe and explain the riddle genre in Algeria have been included in Table 1.

Table 1. Recent Research on the Riddle in Algeria

Name of researcher	Arabic Title	English title	Year of publication
Rutibeh Hammayod	<i>alalghaz alshabyea fi madinat Qsntint dirasih tahlilih</i>	<i>Popular Riddles in the City of Qusantina: an analytical study</i>	2006
Halima Awaj	<i>alalghaz alshabyea fi alawras wadi altaqa</i>	<i>Popular riddles in Auras and the Valley of Energy</i>	2007
Salwa Tubrukan	<i>alalghaz alshabyea w alqabalyea bi mantiqatay Wadiyeh wa Azazafah</i>	<i>Popular and Tribal Riddles in the Areas of Wadiyeh and Azazafah</i>	2012
Banoor Yousef	<i>al-surah al-fanyea fi al-alghaz fi mantiqat al-wadi</i>	<i>The Artistic Riddle Image in the Valley Area</i>	2016

It is remarkable that all of the Algerian research listed above is very similar in the formation and tracing of the content of the riddle, its

objectives, and its relationship with the society as folk art that preserves and highlights the cultural values and customs in particular regions. In addition, each scholar confines his/her research topic to a specific geographical area that has a similar ethnic character. Nevertheless, they do not make any attempt to develop a theoretical framework for Arabic folk riddles, or any attempt to criticize the universal theories about the riddle as the study at hand seeks to do.

One other study, entitled *Al-alghaz Alnahwiah, Dirasat Tahlilia*, or *Grammatical Riddles: An Analytical Study*, by Zainab Jum'a (2013) from Iraq is worth mentioning. In this study, the author poses her research about the nature of language conductivity as a clarification feature and compares it with certain features of the riddle such as confusion. Jum'a describes the difference between riddles by presenting some examples from the book *Alaintikhab Likashf Al'abyat Almushkilah fi Al'ierab* by Ibn Adlan al-Mawsili³¹ in an attempt to discover how riddles are grammatically made, how they are solved, and their relation to the classical Arabic language.

At the local level, in one of the rare studies that has dealt with the topic of riddle and its use is the one by Juma Salim Al-Najadat, in which he deals with riddles and proverbs as humorous means of enhancing education (2015: 118-119). Al-Najadat explores the results of introducing and using a variety of English humorous texts in a reading translation course for mixed-ability Arabic-speaking English majors at Mu'tah University in Jordan. He concludes that the study has shown that humorous texts in English can provide very helpful language input, and can, therefore, support the language learner and the language instructor in a variety of ways. Unfortunately, the main focus of the paper is on jokes, while the riddles are mostly referenced in the

³¹ Adlan or Afif al-Din 'Ali was born in Mosul city (c. 1187 CE). He received schooling in Baghdad, including lessons on syntax, by one of the most distinguished scholars at that time, the Grammarian, Abu al-Baqa al-Ukbari. Later, he moved to Damascus and Cairo to work as an Arabic language teacher until he died in 1267 CE. Besides his writing, linguistics treatises, and cryptanalysis, he was considered to be an authority on literature and also wrote poetry. Adlan was famous for his multiple nicknames: al-Mawsili (of Mosul), al-Mutarjim (the Cryptanalyst), and al-Nahwi (the grammarian).

Appendix, and, moreover, appear as direct questions with direct answers.

In conclusion, while it is true that the study of the riddle has been attractive for Arab and non-Arab researchers, it is also evident that there are differences in how they deal with riddles. On the one hand, and in contrast to Arabic scholars, Cheyt tried to apply some universal theories to riddles in the Arab world. In contrast, most Arab researchers, especially the studies carried out in Algeria, aimed to imitate the style in riddle collection and research that was being carried out there. Thus, it appears that a certain feeling of language universality is still not present in the dictionary of many Arab scholars and critics, and this is, to a large extent, what distinguishes this study from these other Arabic studies mentioned above. That is to say, the study at hand aims to highlight the most important previous studies and work on riddles in order to provide an analysis, a classification, and certain definitions. For this reason, next, this dissertation will focus more specifically on literature that deals specifically with Jordanian riddles and puns.

Perhaps it is rare to find a specialized study that specifically deals with the form, linguistic composition or grammatical terms of the Jordanian riddle as has previously been mentioned. However, it is worth noting that research on this area in Jordan does include similar studies that address the riddle indirectly and focus on humor, joking questions, wordplay, and puns. In this context, we can refer to many scholars as Kaivola-Bregenhøj (2001:57-75), Taylor (1951:1), and others who regard joking questions as a sub-branch of riddles, and also refer to other sub-genres such as wordplay and puns in which the riddle must face the challenge.

As mentioned above, polysemy, puns, and wordplays can be employed as techniques to intentionally prepare riddles before a certain situation unfolds so as to use them during this situation and drive the attention sarcastically away from the direct talk occurring. In these cases, the resulting humorous situation is the goal of the riddler. Riddles have been used in this way to help promote the Reformation and the Renaissance, as Charles Francis Potter affirms when he says that they were successfully used to protest against social inequality (1950:943). Riddles afford a conventional channel for expressing an impression that

a person has as indirect criticism, which may sometimes be obscured by the resulting humor; such techniques are used in political situations, especially in newspapers and the social media. After the “Arab spring” ended in 2013, the use of sarcasm, irony and puns became more common in the press; this was also partly due to the increase of freedom given to the media after these social movements in the Arab World. Yousef Bader has examined the use of puns and wordplay in satirical columns in local Jordanian newspapers. (2015: 53-67). Additionally, Bader lists many classifications of the pun, which appear to be quite similar to what was mentioned above when we referred to the classification of riddles and how they are inter-related genres.

Bader shows the role of the riddle as an indirect, but literal political question, when he considers the following example written by Ahmad Hasan AL-Zoubi, a well-known journalist who uses sarcasm:

“shloon il-'arab ilyoom?, ahmal min 'arab imbaariH?”

How is/are the Arabs t/Today?

It is/Are they are worse than the Arabs of yesterday (the past)?

The journalist plays on the words “*al-'arab al-yawm*” by switching to local Jordanian dialect or articulation of the standard Arabic phrase (*il-'arab il-yoom*) without any variation in the written style. The phrase conveys two purposes: the first level is unintentional and asks about the state of the newspaper, “How is the Arabs Today (newspaper)?”; the second level has one of deeper meaning and, thus, intentionally asks about the state of the Arabs themselves as a community “How are the Arabs today?”. Notice that the verb to be “is / are” are not required in Arabic, and the small “t” before the beginning of the word “Today” in the English version displays the two meanings of the pun.

The study titled, “Some Aspects of Paronomasia in Arabic Humor”, was carried out by Abumahfouz and Al-Shboul; in this article they develop the idea of how puns are used as an intrinsic source of Arabic humor (2018: 18-25). Abumahfouz and Al-Shboul indicate that the ambiguity classification, as set forth by Pepicello and Green (1984), can be employed as a tool that the speaker can use to form a joking question or pun. They also address some features of the riddle, such as “ambiguity and incongruity” that they observe taking place at the

phonological and morphological levels, to function as basic factors in puns together with the semantic aspect. However, Abumahfouz and Al-Shboul do not refer to the syntactic level of humor in their paper. Abumahfouz and Al-Shboul do present their concept of “interlingual punning”, where two languages share one pronunciation for different terms. Such a strategy may be used as a tool to give a wrong, yet funny answer to the riddler as in:

Riddler: Where did “Sidney” 2000 (take place)?

Riddlee: What on earth did I take from you?!

The term “Sidney” has a local meaning with the same pronunciation. It means “payback the money”; moreover, both terms have the same Arabic homographs. Abumahfouz and Al-Shboul indicate that in order to have a successful, funny situation, both participants in the speech act, the riddler and the riddlee must have a good knowledge of the two languages. A reflection that might also be added here is our own when we point out that this use might be a new way of dealing with riddles which can be called the “reflexive riddle”, or the “counterattack” riddle. In these cases, the riddler is forced into the role of riddlee when he / she is also put to the test, instead of being gratified with the reply. Such a strategy might force riddle posers to revise their riddle, or question, and to make themselves clearer by explaining their ambiguous words.

In another study related to humor, Murad Al-Kayed identifies a certain infringement of rules that occurs at times in Jordanian jokes to produce laughter and to deliver different meanings as well as to mitigate criticism or parody (2019:13-20). This happens because of what Green and Pepicello (1978, 1979) and Pepicello (1980) describe when there is an underlying multi-structure ambiguity in certain terms or expressions, at the same time that there is a similar surface structure, due to the processes taking place at the phonological, morphological, or syntactic grammar levels. Al Kayed has provided the following Jordanian joke as an example:

An Arab asks an American, “what is your name?”

The American replies, “Sam Harry”.

The Arab says, “Sam-harry infected you. Why such an insult?!”

This joke is based on the homophonic relationship and thus, “interlingual punning” between “Sam Harry” /samhari/ (the English name) and the Arabic term “سم هاري” (poison) /samha:ri/. This word is utilized in Arabic as an offensive statement with which the speaker wishes the other death by poison. The misinterpretation between the speaker and hearer initiates the humorous exchange and becomes a starting point for emergence of a new sort of riddle in the last part of the joke.

Any writer or riddler can use wordplay, or language play as a way to bring about the willful manipulation of the peculiarities of a certain linguistic system so as to draw attention to these peculiarities themselves, and thereby cause a communicative and cognitive effect that goes beyond the conveyance of propositional meaning. Among the various phenomena answering to this description one can include the different kinds of riddles that generally depend on more strictly form-based manipulations, such as, personification, alliteration, and other types of figurative speech.

Before concluding this part, one must turn to one of the most significant scholars and authors in Jordanian folk literature, Dr. Hani Al-Amad, who is one of the most prominent contemporary writers in Jordan and has published a great deal of research that addresses folklore from different angles. This includes over 15 works concerned specifically with the Arab and the Jordanian cultures that has, in turn, lead him to be considered one of the most important local and Arab references for social and intellectual studies in Jordanian and Arab society. As such, his research is well-known for its distinguished degree of objectivity and reliability among modern writers.

His 2006 article titled “Features of a Popular Joke in Jordan: a dynamic and active popular culture”³² is a good source for those in interested in local cultural affairs. Al-Amad strives to carry out his study with a social and cultural perspective that reflects the character that represents Jordanian society by collecting a number of study samples (jokes and others) from different Jordanian regions. The samples presented by Al-Amad contain many examples (joke questions) but without linking them to any universal theory previously

³² This is the author’s own translation of the original title: “ملاحم النكتة الشعبية في الأردن، ثقافة: “شعبية فاعلة و متحركة”.

mentioned. Despite this, Al-Amad refers indirectly to the universal connection that characterizes literary genres such as proverbs and jokes. Like societies, Al-Amad says, jokes and sayings have a certain age from beginning to end. Al-Amad also indicates the general feature that distinguishes riddles and jokes to be “the shortness of the text, but with the aesthetic terms and musical tone that draws the attention of the listeners” (2006: 2-22).

In addition, Al-Amad refers to the way in which the joking question is asked so that the interaction can vary according to a person’s age. In this way, the joking question may imply a certain spirit of innocence or even be more exaggerated when used with children so as to encourage them to engage more directly in the discussion. When this type of joking question is used with interactions with older people each category, as mentioned above, seems to have its own traditions and rituals in accordance with the occasion as well as the type of audience.

Furthermore, Al-Amad recognizes the importance of humor to help resolve certain stalemate situations in which each side seems unable to understand the educational or intellectual background of the other. Using humor can help the audience to find common ground, and in doing so, it enables them to empathize with the other side. He also affirms that like the prose riddle, the joking question may not be divided from its answer because the receiver or listener must be able to participate in the exposure to both parts; in this way, the joking question or the prose riddle and its answer make up one complete unit. In other words, the presenter of the joking question or the riddler may not introduce the first part without also providing, or confirming, the second one since it would not make sense and, as such, would not be felicitous. However, it also seems pertinent to affirm that riddles presented in a poetic form may differ from this pattern, but this is due to the fact that Bedu poets may add on new parts for the audience if they are asked to do so.

What distinguishes Al-Amad's research is that it is rather similar to the research previously presented and discussed in this study in terms of its classifications and functions, as well as the rituals that accompany it, in terms of the narrator and recipient; it even deals with the importance of the joking question and why Al-Amad was prompted to

consider this simple comparison between the joking question (a type of riddle) and the simple joke. In order to understand his idea more fully, we have included a short list of examples that are mentioned in this article, as follows:

Example 1

سقط ولد من الطابق العاشر لم يحدث له شيء, لماذا؟ الله ستره.

A boy fell from the tenth floor, nothing happened to him... Why?
God protected him.

Example 2

لماذا يقدم الطفيلية اكواب عصير ممتلئة و فارغة في الاعراس؟
الممتلئة لمن يريد الشرب و الفارغة لمن لا يريد.

Why do Tafili People serve full and empty glasses of juice at
weddings?

The full glass is for those who want to drink and the empty for those
who don't.

Example 3

بدوية سمت نفسها شاحنة نقل, لماذا؟
ارادت ان تقلد ماريا مرسيدس.

A Bedouin girl called herself a pick-up. Why?
She wanted to imitate Maria Mercedes, "the actress".

Example 4

لماذا يفرش السلطية مناهم بالخارج وينامون بالداخل؟
كي يخدعوا البعوض.

Why do Salti people put their beds outside and sleep inside?
So that they deceive the mosquitoes.³³

Al Amad's study is interesting, but it does not address the topic of the riddle *per se*; instead, it has much more to do with jokes in general.

³³ As referenced in (Al-Amad, 2006:2-22).

Thus, we understand that the topic of riddles does not yet seem to be a concern of Jordanian authors who seem to be concentrated on other literary topics at the local level. It is also worth mentioning that, like other previous researchers, Al Amad focuses on the importance of the joke, whether it be Western or Arab, how this type of joke has spread through the use of modern technology, and the association of joking questions with the idea of more public social criticism that, consequently, makes them a bold tool for raising ethical issues that concern a certain society so as to provide indirect criticism, as was already mentioned when the function of the riddle was previously described.

2.3 RESULTS PART 1: THE JORDANIAN BEDOUIN RIDDLE

Up to this point in the study at hand, the research presented has dealt with several different areas. After considering the overview of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on the historical and geographical level, the term Bedouin has been defined, and certain significant areas of Bedu culture have also been identified and described. In addition, we have highlighted how these communities have often been the focus of research by orientalists and one has linked some of the local research carried out to a sort of indirect relationship with riddles. Still, in the end, it has been observed that, in spite of the many studies conducted on the geographical area of the Jordanian Badia, and a smaller number of studies dealing with certain aspects of riddles in Jordan, the Jordanian Bedouin Riddles from the Badia Region continue to be neglected since almost no specialized research has focused on them. Therefore, the focus of this study turns specifically to the Jordanian Bedouin Riddle from the Badia Region, henceforth JRBR. The results presented in this section also afford a general idea of the importance of this research, the challenges faced during the research process, a summary of the results achieved and certain recommendations that may benefit any researcher who wishes to investigate the riddle in the future.

Dating back to the pre-Islamic era, Jordanian Bedu folklore entails a vast range of knowledge. As referenced above, it can be presented proudly to the entire world; it merely needs more attention by investigators. The area of Jordan, and especially the Bedu society, has been a fertile area for various studies and investigations from around the globe. As also previously discussed, many types of research were conducted on various aspects, for example, certain local dialects have been studied in terms of linguistic, phonological, morphological, and syntactical structures. Proverbs have also caught the attention of researchers to a great extent.

This has not been true for riddles. This means that, until now, the oral and written Jordanian riddle has not been dealt with in spite of its distinct cultural importance. The only exceptions are those who indicate riddles in the context of a certain speech act. In this sense, the poetic riddle has drawn some attention, but the studies have mainly dealt with

how this specific situation is carried out, since when the poet poses his/her riddle and demands a reply, the solution must be given using the same meter and rhyme.

JRBR are posed in both prose and poetry, which is considered to be a distinguishable feature when compared with riddles in Jordanian urban society. More attention is paid to the poetic side of JRBRs, since Bedouin poetry is an important element in the daily life of any Arab tribal society, and the poet is highly respected because he is regarded as the voice of the tribe. Riddles are composed and recited by poets, storytellers, and riddlers from different areas, on many different occasions, and these riddles deal with almost every aspect of tribal society. Riddles reveal the feelings and needs of Bedu, remind them of their history, and depict their culture. They are the most common form of entertainment for any gathering of men at council meetings or *al-majlis*, and at wedding parties.

Mentioning the Jordanian folklorist Rūkus ibn Zā'id 'Uzayzī is necessary since he is considered to be the father of Jordanian folklore during the 20th century, and many of his published studies on folklore deal with the Jordanian environment. Uzayzī's collections are references for anyone interested in Jordanian communities and their cultures. He alludes to almost all literary genres in his research, since he was fond of tribal cultures, dialects, and Jordanian historical events at Badia, as well as Bedu social life. One of his most significant, and well-received, books in Jordan is the five-volume one titled, *Ma'lamah Lil-turāth al-Urdunī*. Uzayzī gathers a vast number of riddles involving Jordanian culture in the second volume (1981: 235-239). However, as a folklorist, he has no linguistic interest in the riddle genre itself.

According to Bruce Ingham, riddles constitute a sub-genre of *suwalif*, which is a Bedu term that refers to any narrative talk, apart from poems and proverbs, that operates within particular traditions, works as a vehicle of tradition, and is transmitted orally from generation to generation with the renewing and reinterpretation that necessarily accompanies this process (1993: 5). Since there is no official standard structure, each storyteller, or narrator, re-creates the style and actual content with each narrative act, although certain portions of direct speech describing relevant aspects of the action may be repeated in

separate renderings. Consequently, one narrative action may be notably longer than another, depending on the genre type being told by the storyteller as well as his personal talent. Moreover, some events in a particular version may be either emphasized or minimized because of the narrator's tribal background and their feelings of loyalty towards a particular member during the performance.

In the particular instance of riddles that are expressed as poems, they are often transferred by narrators and poets as a challenge; that is to say, they seek to produce more complicated riddles than the ones presented by others. Abu Athera adds that subjects traditionally attached to Bedu life are commonly used in the popular entertainment that takes place at gatherings (1995: 178). The skill of the narrator poets plays a significant role in constructing the riddle, since they must express themselves with language at the same time that they hide their meaning, and also provide helpful hints to facilitate the deciphering of the reply. Abu Athera included riddles as a separate sub-group; however, his primary focus was not to make any linguistic contributions, but only to present examples of riddles used as challenges between poets.

Despite the limited research dealing directly with the JRBR, it is understood that the JRBRs have undergone a notable transformation in their forms as well as in the content included in them. Traditional Bedouin riddles are different from current ones in several ways. One of the differences is the method of presentation. Traditionally, and until the last few years of the 20th century, JRBR were conveyed orally or through written messages, especially poetic ones. There was no confirmation that JRBR had seen the light of the day in print. However, by the beginning of 21st century, JRBRs have already started to be transmitted regularly on more advanced communication systems, namely the internet and smartphones. Indeed, the custom of sending e-mails and SMS messages has grown tremendously and evolved the world over, with the use of young people all around the world, into the widespread praxis of sending notes, texts, and messages in mass, advanced by the smart phone technology which also acts as a new tool in the spread and ubiquity of riddles.

As previously mentioned, one of the main objectives of this study is to preserve to the greatest extent possible the largest amount of cultural heritage possible in the form of the JRBR. While conducting this research several reasons that have allowed for the preservation of these riddles until now have been found. The first is perhaps the most transparent; the simple lifestyle of the Jordanian Badia Bedouin community has surely contributed to their retaining such a significant part of their culture due mainly to material and moral reasons.

Materially speaking this community is well-known and respected for their creativity and artistic skills seen in their historical industries and traditional handicrafts. This is also reflected in their customs and traditions that involve dancing and popular games, cuisine and cooking methods and even certain traditional medicines.

It is also patent that one of the reasons these cultural practices and traditions have survived for so long is because of a certain lack of change and development over time (Mursi, 1995: 33). Bedu women in the desert still do what their ancestors did before them and engage in many activities, i.e., cooking, spinning, and weaving manually instead of trying to use more modern means to do so. The distance from the center of civilization and the lack of electricity may be another factor in the lack of development of such activities and certainly has a mitigating effect on how fast modern change affects the Bedouin lifestyle. Furthermore, according to Aljawhari, there also exists an intangible aspect, that of intellectual culture that is equally important as popular literature (1996: 25). This intellectual culture extends to creations and the oral arts, whether written or not, such as folk tales, popular poetry and singing, proverbs, riddles, and so on.

Aljawhari, indicates that the folk genre is the most prominent form of expression in the culture of the Bedu folk society, and affirms that this has much to do with the nature of their conservative folk society that prevents women and children from watching most television programs apart from news and religious programs, and even tends to restrict this use with smart devices. s (1996:25).

Thus, the Bedouins refuse to replace their, often long, folk narrations that are inspired by a realism that performs multiple functions. For them, tales, fables, storytelling, riddles, and proverbs

among others act as a sort of protectors that preserve their ancestral heritage, especially the oral one, from disappearing since engaging in these oral activities helps to solidify these cultural aspects among the members of the family, and, in turn, helps to maintain and guard their collective identity as well. In addition, there are roles for both the fathers and mothers to play in this area. The simple, traditional way of living that prevails in Bedouin families today encourages community members to adhere to popular genres in general and riddles in particular. This is also true because the real Bedu lifestyle is simply not similar to what is displayed on TV, rather TV shows are far away from the perceptions, beliefs, and habits of the Bedouin (Rashwan, 1993:74).

Consequently, Rashwan clarifies that while it is understood that the Bedu do not like to watch television frequently, this is not because they have an environment that is closed off from the outside world, but because they prefer to hear something more traditional in nature that coincides with their perceptions than to watch a more contemporary show that does not represent their reality and ideology. This may explain the spread of folk narrations in the Badia and other villages that are not as close to the cities (1993: 72-81). Accordingly, the more popular folk genres are a type of recreation as observed in Bedouin tents and houses. Children still insistently ask, each night, for the adults to tell them a story before bed. The adults seldom falter since they consider these stories to be cultural heritage that was passed down from the previous generation and that, therefore, must be preserved. As referenced in Salih, the so-called favorite atmosphere for listening to the folk tale in the Badia remains the winter nights when it is pitch dark and freezing cold. This atmosphere may seem to increase the poetic nature of the rain and the whistling of the wind. The family gathers around the wood-burning stove or under the woolen mattresses. Cutting power outages and running out of candle or lamp fuel call all family members to turn around to listen to each other, then they enjoy these sessions where family members tell stories and respond to them as through the stories, they experience a sort of dream world overflowing with hope for the future and nostalgia for the beautiful past (1971:14).

This passion for folk stories is similar outside the home and during gatherings. The simple environment as well as the distance from more

accelerated lifestyles and from the complexities of the times are among the most important reasons for the survival of the luster of traditional stories among the Bedu community members. Folk genres are circulated and exchanged at feasts, circumcision events and weddings in the desert (Abdualhakim, 1992: 13). At these events it is common to exchange stories and riddles. When a narrator, or riddler, begins to tell a story / riddle about something that was heard in a certain area, others will soon speak up as well and provide other examples of stories and riddles that they have heard in that area or in a different one. Sometimes, different versions of these stories or riddles are shared as well as manifested in the JRBR corpus in this study where a certain number of riddles having the same solution have been found.

The simple lifestyle and environment of the JRBR and how they actively participate in this type of cultural exchanges also has an impact on the three factors that affect how riddles are shared in this community: the occasions for sharing them and the role that the riddler and the riddlees play in this exchange, as well as the characteristics and nature of the JRBRs themselves which will be discussed next.

As previously mentioned, the choice of place and time is significant for the folk narrations and also for the riddle and help to ensure its continuity. Formal occasions are an important time for these exchanges. Whether it be weddings, annual religious worship services or even at the market, riddles are told by skilled riddlers. Consider this example.

JRBR 68

أنشدك عن بنت لها جملة عيال ما فيهم اللي فوق سن الثلاثين
بهم أربعة ما جربوا حرب وقتال فيهم كريم تحتفل به ملايين.
السنة الهجرية, الأشهر الهجرية, الأشهر الحرم, و شهر رمضان.

May I ask you about a woman who has many boys?

None of her boys is above thirty years.

Four of them do not witness the time of war.

One of them is generous when millions celebrate in.

The lady is the year.

The boys are the months of Hijri-year.
The four boys are the 'Al-Hurm' months
and the generous one is Ramadan month.

JRBR 68 makes explicit reference to certain religious occasions of celebration in which riddling occurs, like the month of fasting and the pilgrimage.

There are also semi-formal occasions when non-professional riddlers may relate riddles that they heard before, or that they have memorized, for family members, some guests, or for the neighborhood. However, it has been the experience of the author that on these occasions the amateur riddler must be aware of telling trustworthy and agreeable versions³⁴ so as to avoid skeptical remarks from his/her audience.

On these semi-formal occasions, then, it is our belief that the riddles that are more efficient are those that include several aspects and that are, to a certain extent, direct, so that they are easy enough to solve that it does not take too long so as not to be seen as being inappropriate for this social situation.

Lastly, there are informal occasions in which riddles are narrated by non-professional riddlers, even ordinary people, who do not usually tell riddles. This might happen when they are casually engaged in conversation and unintentionally fold the riddle into their oral discourse as if it were a sparkling phrase uttered by the speaker to help support his/ her opinion. or to confirm what he /she is saying is true. Here is an example.

JRBR 73

ابنشدك وش الثلاث العصيبات اللي يحدن الرجال الشديدة
واللي بهن معذور لو طافت اوقات وانته على وعد الوعد اكيد.

³⁴ The riddler should choose a riddle of great value, that is well formulated. It should also be worthy of praise once the solution is revealed; in other words, riddlers tend to shy away from any riddle that might make them appear foolish, either due to how easy it is to come up with the solution, or because there are multiple solutions. This is especially true if any guests present are strangers and even when they are relatives.

الحكومة، السيل، و الموت.

May I ask you about the three difficulties
which put a heavy burden on strong men?

He who is under their pressure is not to blame if time passes;
you surely keep your promise.

The government, the flood, and the death.

A person might use this to make reference to the three difficulties. If one of the other participants in the talk exchange is unfamiliar with it, the person who asks the riddle can use it to remind them about the story of the Bedu, the ruling regimes, and modern states so that they understand the meaning.

Another example might be this riddle.

JRBR 57

يدور ولا يتعب، ويأكل وما يشرب. الرحي.

She revolves and never gets tired.

She eats, yet never drinks.

The hand mill.

This might happen when an older woman wished to praise her hard-working daughter-in-law. The woman would tell this riddle and the daughter-in-law would surely understand the meaning in context and recognize it as praise for work well done.

These examples also demonstrate the importance of the role that the riddler plays in these exchanges. According to Quraysh, the oral folk genre is a spontaneous one that unconsciously transmits cultural aspects from person to person and from one generation to another; thus, it is easy to see how riddlers, with their skill and their continued reference to past cultural aspects, have helped to save much popular oral material that would otherwise have disappeared or been forgotten (1980: 79).

Furthermore, the fieldwork carried out on this type of narrators has demonstrated that narration requires a talent that no one possesses, but

everyone is able to narrate, but, that narrators do vary in their ability to narrate as well in their capabilities to draw listeners into their narrations, or, in this case, riddles. Some individuals have a remarkable readiness to manipulate how they narrate and control their tone of the voice, and how well they are able to engage their listeners in the ridding process with their expertise in portraying places and their boldness of speech and self-confidence (Quraysh,1980: 79). They must also be able to stay mentally alert to the oral exchange as it unfolds before them so that they can maintain their audience's attention. While telling a particular riddle, many riddlers tend to point with their hands, change their facial expressions and gestures and adapt their language according to age, gender, and intellectual level of the listeners. How well a riddler narrates can affect how the characters are presented and help the audience focus on the most important details of the events by drawing their attention to them and even helping them to remember this in the future. In this regard, Alsabaagh states that "[t]he narrators are not the ones who create the most beautiful stories, but master how narrations are delivered to the listeners" (1999: 4)³⁵.

Another important feature of narrators, and riddlers, is that they have a good memory. This might surprise those who depend on reading and writing for memorization; but ever since the field of rhetoric began, memory is known to be an important ability that must be worked on and trained. Having a good memory enables the riddler to memorize many different types and versions and also to participate for long periods of time. (Quraysh,1980: 79).

Perhaps no less important than memory is a certain inherent feature that is the narrators', or riddlers', honesty. Many scholars see integrity as a noble privilege that narrators must adhere to so as to preserve the truthfulness of the presentation of these texts that have been inherited from their ancestors. It is true that some have said that being honest is not so much a sign of superiority or excellence, but of a certain creative weakness when narrators who merely perform the same versions over and over show. El-Shamy refers to these weak narrators as "bearers" of

³⁵ Translation by the author of the original text: "الرواة ليسوا بطبيعة الحال هم من يؤلفون " "الروايات, لكن اسلوبهم في النقل هو الذي يضيف جمالاً في السرد عند المستمعين".

heritage (1967: 88). In this case, honesty turns from being an advantage to being a defect since they are considered to not be creatively original in their presentations. (Hassan, 1998: 49). Consequently, the narrators and riddles have no right to change the narrated texts by adding to, or deleting from, them.

In this way then, it is obvious that honesty in creativity is necessary for the survival of the folk text, as also for the riddling process. Considering that honesty should not change the content and the essence of the folk riddle, creativity should revolve around the performance and the way of presentation. Therefore, if there is a change in the content, it should not be a result of the weakness of the narrator's memory, but even if it happened, it must be unintentional, in any case a sort of spontaneous response to community changes.

This means that a good narrator and riddle is the one who preserves the essence of the story / riddle, has a talent that distinguishes him/her from others by employing a poetic language that attracts and maintains the audience's attention, and realizes that there are sentences that have a special effectiveness should be said in a certain way so that they are more appealing to the audience. Good narrators and riddlers will employ all of their linguistic and artistic skills and strategies to attract and entertain their audience. (Alsabaagh, 1999: 4).

Lastly the riddling event would not be successful if it were not for the most important participants: the audience or the riddlees. Riddlees in the Jordanian Badia region can be considered to be participants that play an active and positive role in this process. They do not seem to be satisfied by merely listening to or receiving the riddle; instead, their active participation seems to be quite effective in motivating the narrator to continue. Through the author's experience in various gatherings, he noticed the extent of the riddlees' passion for hearing the riddles. In most cases, these gatherings are more informal in nature since most members of the audience are relatives or friends; therefore, the riddlers may display a variety of riddles, from easier to more difficult, as per their own knowledge. Sometimes, the riddling event has a more formal nature, especially when the riddler is a guest or an older member of the clan. In these cases, the audience show their

respect by being quieter during the performance and by providing more serious and expected answers.

Common experience has demonstrated that riddlees often rush to sit in front of riddlers to listen carefully and to be able to notice all of their gestures and facial expressions. They also seem to monitor the riddlers' discourse to make sure that they do not make any mistakes regarding the interpretation of certain terms, dates or places that occur in the event. At times, the riddlees may even ask for certain prizes for the one who solves the riddle. Riddlers must be very careful since what is suitable for adults may not be suitable for children and vice versa. Men may also prefer a kind of riddles that is different from what women prefer.³⁶ However, a lack of confirmation of the participation of women in the riddling process does not mean that the Bedouin woman cannot engage in any riddle process. The controller depends on the extent of the kinship or relationship that binds the man to the woman. One example are the myths and folk tales, especially the ones that are popular on Jordanian television, in which before a woman freely chooses her husband, he must have been able to solve a particular riddle (Al-Shaqran, 2017: 81).

The riddlees' response to the narrators is evidenced when they make the riddler raise his/ her voice, when they silence the children, or when they ask him/her to repeat a part of the riddle that they consider key to providing the solution to the riddle. The riddlees also respond to the questions that riddlers ask. Riddlers ask their audience questions about the present moment at times; they most likely do this to interact with their audience and focus or refocus their attention. The result is that the riddlees must try to answer that question correctly to demonstrate that they are still vigilant and actively participating in order for the riddler to continue the riddling process. Finally, the riddlees' response to the narrators is also clearly patent when they show sympathy or hate to a certain character that appears in the narrative discourse. This occurs due to the characteristics of the recipient

³⁶ Al-Mararayeh and Alenazy refer to some of the contents of the folk tale and the extent of the Bedu's keenness, not to mention some events (especially those that link men and women) to the audience; this matter is demanded more if some of the works are presented to children or women (2022:20-24).

community in the area of this research, as described above, and how they are completely integrated into this world of folk tales to the point where they forget the present and start to interact with the events being related. Their facial expressions of empathy or dislike provide visual evidence of the riddler's success.

Another factor that allows for the riddling process to be successful is that certain JRBRs are specialized in narrating events and stories as they help to generate different connotations. Thus, they can be seen as a representation of life and of the art of literature; indeed, at times JRBRs contain long narrations of events that focus on the relationship between human beings and the world. Many riddles have new visions, awareness, and structures that illuminate reality since they have been able to receive, in a relatively short amount of time, a distinguished position among critics and writers in the literary arena. Riddles are generally one of the most significant genres of fiction in terms of attractiveness, as it has become more widespread in our current era due to their importance and remarkable role in addressing many social issues.

Some of the JRBR models are suitable to be studied so as to reveal what occurs when their narrative structures are deconstructed. The narrative structure has always represented an interesting topic for literary studies, given that the deconstruction of the structure of a literary work reveals the most important pillars that the writer relies on to assemble his/her work. Moreover, linking incidents by analyzing characters, places and times, and other elements such as plot, language, and so on, allows critics to better understand a given literary work.

According to Abdu-arahman, the linguistic connotation of the term narration means sequence, coherence, and consistency (1945: 11-18). Abd Alaziz states that narration is a part of a comprehensive general concept (1970: 55-63); while contemporary modern criticism has defined it with different definitions that have mostly to do with conveying a realistic image to a linguistic one. Some believe that narration is the fabric with which a text can be interwoven, since efficient narration helps to piece together the important parts of an event so that a more representation of that event can be transmitted. Some add that narration is simply the narrator's way of presenting the

speech. Narration is a transient term for literary and non-literary genres. History depends on narrating events, and, in a similar way, the human sciences also depend on analyzing human phenomena. At the same time, other written sciences use narration as a means of codification and self-affirmation. Using this definition, thus, shows how the discourse production process that takes place during riddling can also be called narration, and the discourse itself becomes the commodity traded between the narrator and the audience.

As regards the study at hand, another universal quality that appears in this case study deals with how the riddles are used to narrate. Indeed, narration is commonly related to a spoken exchange which presupposes that there exists the presence of one who tells and performs, and, at least another, or, depending on the circumstances, various others who participate as active hearers in the interaction. Therefore, in the case of JRBRs, there is communication between a first party called the “narrator/ riddler” and a second party called the “recipient/ riddlee”, or the participant, or participants, who try to figure out the riddle, and who, at least to a certain extent, become engaged in the role-play that participating in a riddling session implies. As far as the basic components of narration are concerned, scholars agree that narration is composed of six parts: the event, the characters, the place, and the setting/space, in addition to the narrator and the recipient.

According to Abd Alaziz, the event in any literary work is a group of interrelated, organized sequences. It is an artistic structure that reshapes life again so that a writer presents us with an ideological message based on actions that produce intellectual visions or specific discourse. The event is not a secondary element in the narration. Instead, it constitutes the basic building block of the spoken material and thus is the pillar of the narrative exchange since the event is considered to be the most important element in an exchange in which situations develop and characters move. It is the subject around which the story revolves. Therefore, a narrator must clarify how it happens, the place, the time, and the reason it arose. It also requires the narrator to pay great attention to the subject and the verb because the event is purely these two items (1970: 55-63).

In the case of JRBRs, the exchange is based on the existence of action and reaction between the characters in the riddle, so the fictional text is a narration based on the characters they present. There is an apparent relationship between the character and the event; the characters' existence does not emerge unless an event is to be performed. On the contrary, the event, or experience, cannot be narrated unless a character is affected by it.

This means that the event element in JRBRs is essentially indispensable since there can be no riddle without experiences that people have gone through. By analyzing the JRBR corpus presented in the study at hand, one has been able to observe that the authors followed two different methods of narration during the riddling event.

The first one is the direct narration method. As its name indicates, by using this method, the narrator presents the events in the third person. According to what we have seen, this seems to be the most efficient and successful way. The direct method allows the narrators to analyze the characters involved and their actions in a thorough way (Qasmi, 1984: 47-61). Moreover, the other participants when they listen, or even read the riddle, do not feel deceived that events are fictitious and subjective life experiences, instead they can appreciate the core of the artistic creation; in this way, the audience enjoys more freedom to actively participate with the riddler.

In JRBR 28, the direct way of narrating the events that make up the story in the riddle appears sequentially. The way the riddler presents his/her riddle also demonstrates his/her high level of craftsmanship since the characters in the riddle seem to flow effortlessly from the child, to hope, and then to the close relationship between the child and his mother. However, this sequence almost seems to go in the opposite direction as what is expected because being close to the mother is the cause of the child's death. Finally, the presence of another mysterious element in the form of an ambiguous character (who takes the child) in an unanticipated manner, i.e., by force, can also be verified. The riddle, in general, talks about the event presented in this abrupt way, or how to take a match from its box and ignite it.

JRBR 28

انشدك عن طفل من بطن امه ياخذوه بسطوت الآلات
ويتركوه بحضن بنت تضمه لو تحكه بظهر امه مات. عود الكبريت.

May I ask you about a baby, taken out of his mother's womb by
machine force?

The baby is then left in the lap of a girl to hug him,
he dies when rubbed against his mother's back.

Matches.

The mother is the matchbox, and the girl is the human hand.

Almost all the JRBRs in this dissertation contain an event in which there is movement, but in this corpus, other JRBRs have been found that seem to contain only a description rather than an action. As descriptive riddles, they are devoid of the event element, and no action is transmitted. Consider the following:

JRBR 54

شي اسمه مثل لونه؟ البيضة.

A thing, its name is like its color.

The egg.

JRBR 58

أرجل خشبية ورأس ذهبية. سنبله القمح.

Wooden legged with a golden head.

The wheat stalk.

In these cases, one might have to imagine that part of the performance of the riddler also involves using some sort of body language, such as moving their hands, eyes, lips, and such.

Of the JRBRs that do include the event element, it has been found that they can be classified using the events represented in them to be historical, social, political, and religious events. In addition, certain JRBRs contain more than one event in the same riddle since the

different events are easily associated; therefore, it may be difficult to classify them as belonging to one group or the other.

In JRBR 6, that refers to the Prophet Noah, the Ark of Deliverance, and the animals that were carried onto the ship. Initially, this seems to form part of the religious group, since it refers to religious events mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, yet, at the same time, it could also form part of the historical group, since it reflects an event that happened thousands of years ago.

JRBR 6

كم زوجا من الحيوانات حملها سيدنا موسى عليه السلام في السفينة قبل الطوفان؟ لا أزواج
لأن نوح عليه السلام هو الذي حملهم

How many pairs of animals did our master Moses, peace be upon him, carry onto the ship (ark) before the flood?

There are no pairs because Noah, peace be upon him, was the one who carried them.

JRBR 45 is similar to the previous example in that it also refers to both religious and historical events.

JRBR 45

يا من انحكم غيابين بالاعدام ذكاه حطم دولة مستقلة
لازال تلقاه البشر بعض الايام مات القاضي والمتهم في محله. هدهد سليمان.

Who was judged in absence by execution?

His smartness smashes an independent state.

Till now, people see him sometimes.

The judge died, and the accused is alive.

The judge is Suleiman, the prophet.

The accused is the Hoopoe.

The independent state is the Sheba kingdom in Yemen.

Another example of a JRBR that represents two types of events is JRBR 70.

JRBR 70

شجرة الخمس أغصانها مستقيمة ثلاثة في الظل واثنين في الشمس ديما. الصلوات الخمس.

A tree with five straight branches,
three of them are in the shadows and the other two are in the light.
The tree is the Muslims' prayer.
The branches in the shadows are the Maghrib, Isha, and Alfajer
prayers.
The branches in the light are the Alduher and Asr prayers.

In JRBR 70 both references to the religious group and the social group are manifested. The religious event is clear through the riddle, while the social one is how the Bedouin divides his/her day and night according to the times for prayer.

Another component of the narrative structure are the characters that appear in the story and are one of the most prominent elements that form part of the discourse. These characters allow the narrator to identify human issues; in this sense, characters can be employed by writers to embody their particular vision and they express their own sense of reality. They serve as the driving energy that creates the surrounding elements of narration and, with the narrator's artistic direction, the characters can reflect the essential human values of realistic life experience in addition to the narrative text, to the extent that many affirm that "the fictional work is the character" and, as such, represents the most dominant element in the narrative (Mabruk 1988:31-39). Moreover, Qasmi points out that characters are responsible for expressing the actions, organizing the actions, and giving the story its narrative dimension (1984: 47-61). Additionally, they are responsible for the growth of discourse within the narrated work by ordering the momentum and its temporal and spatial intersections. In other words, the character is the set of physiological and psychological characteristics that represent an individual or a person as being different from others; each character has a feature that distinguishes it from the rest of the other characters in a given narrative.

The characters found in the JRBR corpus of this study have several aspects that can be observed in their construction, how they are distinguishable from the other characters present, and even, based on the narrator's description. In this way, two characteristics or features stand out: internal and external specifications and social specifications.

The internal specifications are the personality traits of the characters that appear in the JRBRs. In this case everything presented about that character relates to it internally through thoughts, emotions, and sensations. The external specifications are essentially the opposite of the first group, since they have to do with more descriptive external references to the characters. The narrator constructs these individuals by painting a picture of the outward aspects of their personality and all its components: hair color, face, body, age, how they are dressed, how they are groomed, signs, and their privacy and stature. In JRBR 27, for example, the riddler presents his audience with a picture of his character in which they can see how the character moved through the positions of the Muslim prayer routine and how he changes status as in this process.

JRBR 27

انشدك عن رجل يصلي ولا يصوم
وإذا سجد في بعض الاوقات ما يقوم
ولو ما توضى ما عليه التزام
ما يستطيع من السجود القيام
و يحظى مع التقدير الاحترام. العقال.
رجل له التقدير مع كافة القوم

May I ask you about a man, who prays but does not fast?
He has no obligation if he does not do the ablution.
He sometimes kneels, he cannot stand up again.
He has no ability to recover standing-up after he has kneeled.
He is a man who enjoys high esteem among all his people.
In addition to the high esteem he enjoys, he is respected.
The headband.

The other group are those that are portrayed using their social specifications. This has to do with information that is provided by the riddler about the characters' ideologies, social relations, and social

status. An example can be found in JRBR 33 which refers to the socially accepted norms of how to present coffee to guests in Bedouin culture.

JRBR 33

بنشدك عن عذرى تجي للرجاليل يجيبها خمسة وهي ماعصتهم
عيالها قدامها يا المشاكيل عيالها لاكلها ماحملتهم. الدلة والفناجين.

May I ask you about a virgin girl who goes to men?

Never disobeyed she is brought by five.

She is preceded by her babies, though she has never been pregnant.

The coffee pot and the cups.

The use of the term “virgin” is a metaphor for purity, good morals, and a good reputation, which are all characteristics that distinguish Bedouin women. Furthermore, Bedouins tend to use the term (عذراء), or “virgin”, for married and single women alike, as the issue for them is not measured by whether the woman is married or not. Thus, it is a clear reference to social status here.

Finally, a different group appears when a combination of these specifications occurs in the same riddle. An example is JRBR 47 which includes all of the aforementioned specifications.

JRBR 47

أنشدك عن رجل بلا رجلين وله عند الناس قدر ومكانه. ملك الموت.

May I ask you about a man who has no feet.

He is respected and has a high position.

The angel of death.

In JRBR 47, position and prestige are intangible things represented in how the Bedouin deal with the events of death. At the same time, a person’s legs are physically a part of the human body that one can see and touch. The social aspect is substantiated in the fact that it is a societal reflection of a general phenomenon of the Bedouin community and the extent of their relationship to death.

In addition to these specifications that occur in the narrator’s presentation of the characters, they can also be differentiated according

to their role as primary or secondary characters. Primary characters are the ones who play a more essential role in the riddle structure of the JRBRs. They lead the action and tend to achieve the target by moving from one situation to another. Moreover, the primary characters may be employed by the narrator to start the event itself, since the event is created with them, and their actions and attributes are basic to understanding each specific riddle.

In this way, it is easy to identify the primary character in single-topic riddles. The questions and the answer are the same, such as:

JRBR 1

ورقة فوق ورقة، شو هي؟ الملفوف او البصل.

Leaf upon leaf, what is she?

Cabbage or onion.

JRBR 4

يمشي على الاقدام ما جابته بيضه ولا ارحام. آدم عليه السلام.

Walks on feet never generated from eggs nor wombs.

Adam.

However, in the JRBR corpus, it is the multiple-topic riddles that might present the real challenge. Nevertheless, in these samples, it has been found that normally the first topic mentioned in the riddle tends to represent the primary character since it is the topic that inspired the riddler to create his/ her riddle. In addition, the rest of the topics, or characters, that appear, tend to do so in sequences, or chains of completion for the primary character; in this way, they are the secondary characters.

For example, JRBR 11, a double-topic riddle is presented in this way:

JRBR 11

جماعة في حانوت اللي يطلع منهم يموت. اعود التقاب.

A group inside a store, he who steps out will die.

Matches.

The group, or the “matches” in this riddle, functions as the primary character because it is referenced first. The secondary character here is the “store”, or the matchbox, that appears later.

Another example can be found in JRBR 33, a triple-topic riddle as seen here:

JRBR 33

بنشدك عن عذرى تجي للرجايل يجيبها خمسة وهي ما عصتهم
عيالها قدامها يا المشاكيل عيالها لآكنها ما حملتهم. الدلة , اصابع اليد, والفناجين.

May I ask you about a virgin girl who goes to men?

Never disobeyed she is brought by five.

She is preceded by her babies, though she has never been pregnant.

The coffee pot and the cups.

In this riddle, it seems that the Bedouin riddler is inspired by the presence of the *dallah*. or the coffee pot, in front of him and composes a vivid picture of the way coffee is served. The coffee pot becomes the primary character and is also referred to as a “virgin girl”. The narration of the reference will not be complete without the presence of the other elements that are needed to create a vivid picture of this type of social interaction, the hand that serves the coffee and the coffee cups. Also referred to as “brought by five” and “her babies”; they are the secondary characters.

The next example is JRBR 69, a quadruple-topic riddle, in which a man is mentioned first, as follows:

JRBR 69

أنشدك عن رجال في جوف رجال مكانه الأخير بين أخوة له
سبع وثلاثين بناته بلا جدال واسمه حدا البنات يا فاطن له. جزء عم في القرآن.

May I ask you about a man who lives in a man's hollow?

He comes last among his brothers.

Thirty-seven daughters, he has.

His name tires the girls, oh clever.

The first man mentioned is the last chapter of Al-Quran,

Amma's part.

The second man mentioned is Al-Quran.

The brothers are chapters of Al-Quran.

Thirty-seven daughters are the number of “Surahs” in Amma’s part³⁷. Hence, the man, who is mentioned first appears as the primary character. This is especially obvious from the apparent evidence in the Arabic implicit pronoun. There is also a conjunctive pronoun that refers to *Juz Amma*, or Amma's chapter and this also reflects that it is the main character in the riddle. Thus, the riddle is focused on this chapter as in (اخوانه / his Brothers, اسمه / his name). By analyzing the syntax, one can observe a semi-spatial sentence, as referred to in Arabic grammar, that also uses “man” but that appears after the first one, and, thus, indicates the place of residence of the first man. Therefore, (في جوف رجال, / who lives in a man's hollow, is a dependent or descriptive sentence that can be dispensed with or deleted, as is the case for other descriptive elements (Bahrawi, 1990: 22- 28).

Next, it is necessary to refer to the space presented in these narrations. Since every event takes place at a specific place and time, it would be impossible to imagine a story without a place, or the existence of events outside a place. Thus, place, or space is a central component of narrative structure. According to Al-faysal, place is not only a geographical area but rather a bearer of the human experience that lives in the memory of every person who remembers it from time to time (1995: 22-40). This is also true for riddlers who seek to exemplify this in their artistic creations. In many JRBRs, riddlers have a close relationship with the place; in most cases, it tends to be the desert. It becomes evident with analysis that place or space is many times related to the interactions that people and their societies take part in. Like any

³⁷ It is necessary to point out that when referring to the Qur’an, or any of its parts, i.e., verses, or names of the surahs, one must consider the proper selection of names or titles by which the Qur’an can be appropriately described. In this sense, and, as the author has noticed, JRBR 69 may represent a controversial case in Islamic and Arab circles since the word (رجال), a “man” is applied to the Qur’an, and the words (اخوانه) and (بناته), his brothers and his daughters respectively, are applied to the chapters and surahs. This is true even to the extent that the author was asked to change these words due to this sensitive consideration related to verbal description. While the author agrees with this request, nonetheless, the aim of presenting the riddle as it is from the source is intended only for linguistic credibility.

other social product, it carries a certain part of its inhabitants' ideas, awareness, and morality.

The presence of the place in the fictional texts is not based on a fixed rule or a well-known plan because the scenes in literary works are numerous. Thus, narrators must choose their places very carefully so that they can more efficiently depict the scene they want to create. Some choose closed places, and others prefer wide open spaces. To depict those scenes, so we find some of them choose places and prefer one place over another, as some of them tend to the closed places. On the contrary, some prefer wide open spaces (Al-faysal 1995: 22-40).

As the term indicates, open spaces are wide, spacious, unlimited places that are not confined or restricted by barriers or borders. They are external; so, they are not bound by walls. From a geographical point of view, the open spaces draw an open narrative path, often forming a natural painting in the open air of certain locations that might seem familiar to many, i.e., forests, orchards, streets, plains, rivers, seas, even the desert. In other words, most natural places can be called open places.

The opposite of open places are closed places. As its name also infers, it generally represents spaces with spatial boundaries that function to isolate it from the outside world. Additionally, a closed space perimeter tends to be smaller than an open place one. The nature of the closed place is bounded by borders, barriers, and restrictions that obstruct the freedom of physical movement, human activity, and being able to change locations. When closed spaces appear in narrative, they may have a negative effect if they restrict imagination or movement, or a positive effect if they represent a type of refuge or protection that shelters the person away from the hustle and bustle of life. Some examples of closed places are rooms, tents, houses, prisons, and temples.

In the JRBR corpus studied here, the key elements used to identify the space mentioned in both parts of the riddle has been referenced in table 2.

Table 2. Classification of Spaces & Elements Encountered in JRBRs

JRBR NUMBER	OPEN PLACES	CLOSED PLACES	NO PLACE MENTIONED
1			leaf/ cabbage / onion
2	fly / sky / bird		
3		see/ wear / coffin	
4		generate /egg / womb / Adam	
5			see / eye
6		animals/ Moses /ship (ark)/ flood	
7			sleep /night / wake up / day/ sun
8			man/ recognize/ footsteps/ understand/pen / pencil
9			eat /dinner / sleep / hand
10			hair / abdomen / foot/ wheat
11		group /store (storage) step out / die / matches	
12			eat / mouth /fire
13	run / walk /river		
14			move /step / lose/ tail /needle

15			carry foot / head/pen
16			camel / foot /sparrow
17	sea / water/ map		
18			stone /grass/ goat / sheep/ turtle
19			girl /fire /head / hookah
20			train / wheels/ legs/ centipede
21			virgin / tears / candle
22			beat / watch
23			pinch / hands /hunger
24			see / eyes/ mirror
25	cry/ eyes/ walk/ feet /cloud		
26			deliver /babies / pregnant/ ear / earwax
27			man / pray/ fast/ obligation / ablution/ kneel/ stand up/ enjoy/ esteem/ respect/headband
28		baby / womb /force/ lap / girl/ hug/ die/ rub/ mother / matches	

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29		man /reside /girl /hollow / virgin / insult / residency/honor / lowness/ King / mosquito	
30			guest / tie up / serve / baby
31	cry / eye /water spring		
32			lemon/ fill up/ room / light bulb
33			virgin / girl / men / bring/ precede / babies/ pregnant/ coffee pot / cups
34	walk / earth / head /stars / officer		
35			people request / presence / come / hide / rain
36			clothe / people /naked /needle
37			wet/ dry/ bread
38			brothers / eat / get full/ go / come back / sleep / get up/ fire/ smoke/ ash
39			outside / inside /watermelon
40			carry / shoe

41			take / give / photograph
42			tall / young / short / older / candle
43			holes / water / sponge
44			girl / feather / wing/precede / birds / fly/ eye
45			judge / execution/ smartness / smash / state/ people / see / judge/ die / accused / alive / state/ Suleiman/ Hoopoe
46			virgin / cry / tears/ age / perish/ knee / elbow/ buy/candle
47			man / feet / respect / position /angel / death
48	bird / fly / desert/feathers/ beak/ mirage		
49			sleep / wake up/ ash
50			girl / wear / skirts/ lettuce
51			sticks / well / camel / fetus
52			sultan / daughter / wear / headdress /onion

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53		lady / carry / weight/ nail / ship	
54			thing / name / color /egg
55			thing / walk / stand / legs/ clock
56			thing / write /read /pen/ pencil
57			revolve / get tired/ eat / drink/hand mill
58			wooden legged / head / wheat
59			princess / carry / head / fire / candle
60			thing / eat/ satisfy / water / kill / fire
61			body / heart / head/ aubergine
62			ground / market/ home / tea
63	walk / head / dig / axe / kill / bullet / torrent		
64	mountain / home / men /		

	place / wear / clothing/ falcon		
65			man / twirl / swirl / hands / left / use / paralyzed / time/ house / sword
66			bridge / see / walk pregnant / woman/ boy
67	brothers / name / actions / vary / sky / move / hands / touch / kill/ Scorpio Sagittarius / hour hand / scorpion		
68			woman / boys / years / witness / war / millions / celebrate / lady / year / months / Ramadan
69			man / live / hollow / come / brothers / daughters / name / tires/ girls / chapter / Al-Quran / Amma / part / number / Surahs
70			tree / branches / shadow / light / Muslim Prayer / Maghrib / Isha / Alfajer / Alduher / Asrtree
71			roll / burn / dead / hold / see /

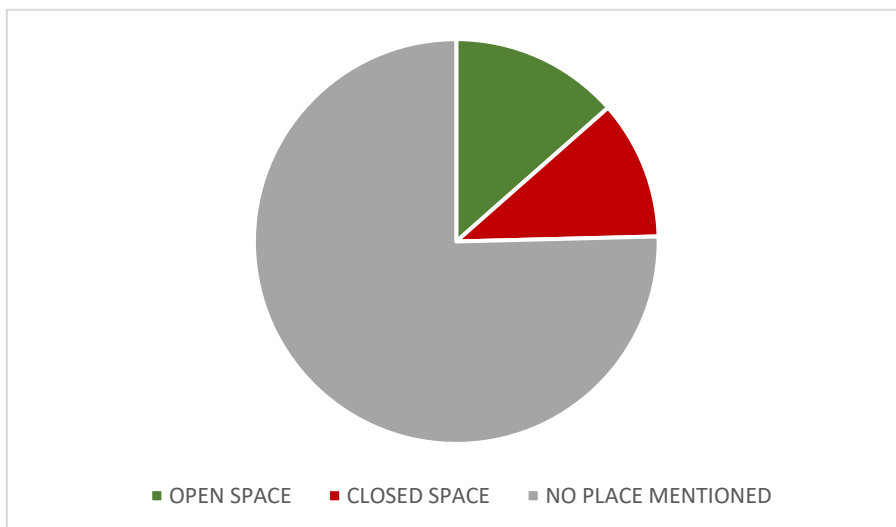
Chapter Two: The Jordanian Bedouin Riddle

			witnesses/ cigarette/ index finger / middle finger /fingers
72			girl / father / fatherhood / girls create / organization / end / move / corrupt /poetic verse
73			difficulty / burden/ men / pressure/ blame / time / pass / keep / promise/ government/ flood / death
74		slave / free man / throw / fate / accompany / torture / birds / pity / earthquake / fire / flames / bring / foot / color / think / vary/ bucket / water / rope /	
75		sugar / Qintar / sell / market / bring / merchants / sleep	
76			messenger / Allah / mother / father / release / farmer / shepherd / drought /rain
77			man / walk / weak / life / cramp /

			live/ girl / lap / buy / sell / sight / eye
78			leaves / plant / skin / animal / knowledge/ human being /book
79			speak / eat / tell / truth / hungry / lie / watch
80			hair / abdomen / foot / wheat
81	friends / girl / exist/ men / keep / balance / Allah / create / mother / land / mountains		

Upon examination of the riddles that compose the JRBR corpus presented here, three different types of space can be encountered: open places, closed places, and riddles in which no place is specified. By observing the nouns and verbs employed by the riddlers in both parts of each riddle, it is observed that there are eleven riddles which refer directly to an open space, nine riddles which refer to a closed space and the remaining 61 riddles do not directly describe any space at all, as presented in graph 1.

Graph 1. Types of Space Described in JRBRs



The most probable reason why this happens is perhaps so that the riddler can make use of the ambiguity afforded by not providing any information about this aspect forthright. This sort of evasiveness might make it more difficult for the audience to solve the riddle, or even cause them to think about something completely different from the thing being depicted so that they get off track and have to concentrate even more on finding the most appropriate answer.

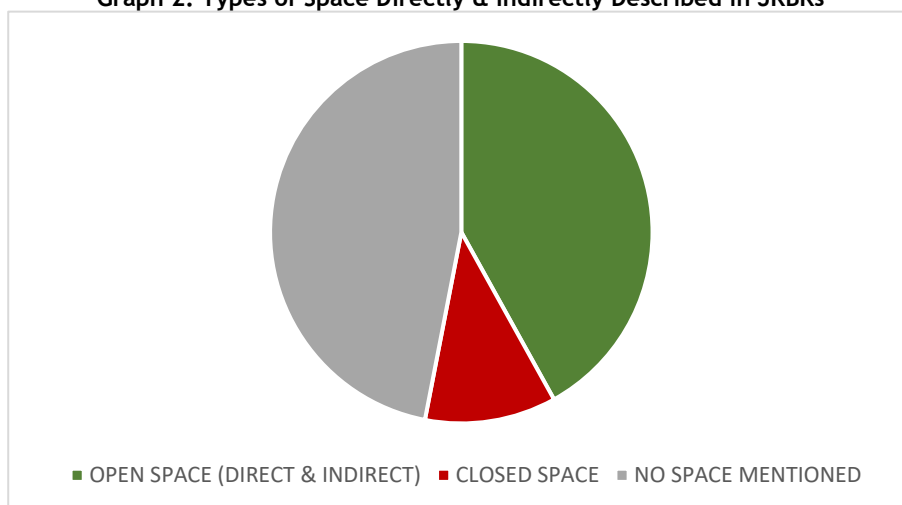
In these cases, the question part may evoke an open space, when the answer really has to do with a closed space and vice versa. As mentioned above, the use of different descriptive spaces in the JRBR surely reveals the riddlers' experience in taking advantage of the surrounding environment. This is an appropriate use since the riddler aims to deceive the riddlee to a certain extent at the same time that it demonstrates the cleverness of the riddler.

Another interesting result of the analysis of the 81 riddles the form part of the JRBR corpus presented here is that, when the concept of space is taken into account, it is revealed that in the space represented in the JRBRs, nature is referred to 32 times. References are made to different types of plants, many of them vegetables, but also to the sky, stars, and many different types of animals. Meanwhile there are 11

references that more specifically refer to spaces that contain water with elements such as the sea, rivers, water springs, and rain. There are also five riddles in which the space that is evoked comprises the idea of both nature and water at the same time, i.e., JRBR 13, JRBR 17, JRBR 25, JRBR 73 and JRBR 76. When all types of creatures are grouped together, there are 13 riddles that include animals. The different animals include birds in a general sense, but there are also more specific references like JRBR 16 that is about the sparrow, JRBR 64 about the falcon and JRBR 45 about the Hoopoe; other animals like camels, goats, sheep, and turtles are mentioned, as well as smaller creatures like the scorpion, centipede and even the mosquito.

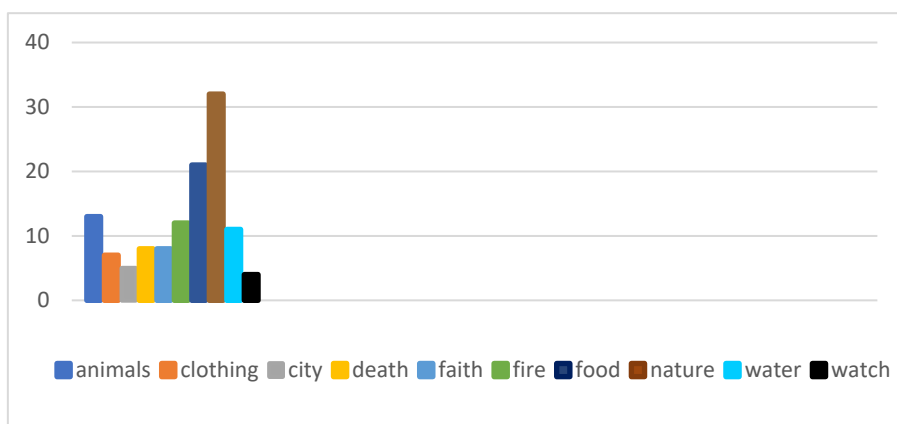
Indeed, by considering the key elements used in the descriptions present in the riddles in which no place is specifically mentioned, it becomes obvious that many times it is these elements themselves that inherently describe something that due to its own nature is most commonly found outside in an open space, for example: rain, camel, turtle, wheat, and such. Thus, the importance of nature and being outdoors is patent in these descriptions. By combining the riddles in which some type of animal, nature or open space is referenced, a total of 34 JRBRs have been found that directly or indirectly describe open spaces, as referenced in graph 2.

Graph 2. Types of Space Directly & Indirectly Described in JRBRs



In addition, many of the references to nature are also about food and drink which are present in 21 riddles as well. References to fire, including candles and matches, occur 12 times in this corpus. Aspects related to the idea of dying or being killed occur eight times. Eight of the riddles deal with topics related to the Muslim faith, as will be discussed in more detail below. There are 7 riddles that mention the idea of wearing clothes or an item of clothing. Finally references to living in a town or city only occur five times while 4 of the JRBRs in this corpus directly include the idea of a watch or clock, i.e., JRBR 22, JRBR 55, JRNBR 68 and JRBR 79. This information is presented in graph 3.

Graph 3. Common Elements Referenced in JRBRs



Among the animals cited in the riddles, it might seem strange that there exists what seems to be an absence of some essential animals such as dogs and donkeys. This is most likely due to the status these animals enjoy. Despite the importance of dogs for hunting and guarding their livelihood, an activity for which Bedouins breed it in abundance, or the worth of donkeys that are used carrying heavy loads as well as for transportation, culturally speaking, it is not widely accepted to be described with characteristics of either of these animals. Thus, it can be assumed that riddlers avoid mentioning these animals and their

characteristics so as not to displease, or offend, their audiences (Abdulkarim, 1988: 7)

As mentioned above, time represents an essential element in the construction of a narrative; it is patent to see that events in narration cannot be narrated outside of this component. Indeed, if place is one of the material dimensions of human life in any narration, then time is life itself or, at least, to a certain extent, it is the awareness of life. An obvious comparison can be made; place forms the realm of constants while time is part of the realm of variables. In this way, time is linked to the actions, or events, that take place, and this means that time is used to present the events in a story. However, time is a logical precedent for narration, that is, a preceded image that connects the narrative passages in a temporal fabric.

Regarding the use of time in the narrative construction of JRBR riddles, at times there seems to be a paradox. This is most likely due to the imaginary nature of time in the riddle. Once the riddler says or writes the first word, the event has already finished. They already know the solution. While the riddler narrates events that have passed, this past represents the riddler's present. In fact, it is very likely for the past, present, and future to coincide in the text. Since the riddle must have a starting point from which to start, the riddler chooses the starting point that defines his/her present and puts the rest of the events on the timeline of the past and the future. Then the text continues in one direction, but it oscillates in time between the present, the past, and the future.

Natural events occur in chronological order; however, in the narrative structure found in JRBR riddles, two different times can occur, the time of narration, i.e., when the riddle is performed, and the time of the story, when the event described in the riddle happened or was imagined to have happened.

Another narrative aspect of time to consider is when riddlers employ retrieval with analepsis and anticipation with prolepsis, as part of their descriptive technique in their narrative constructions. In the first case, at a certain moment, the riddler stops the time of narration and goes back to recall certain events from the past. With this retrieval technique, the riddler can recapitulate the main events. The other

technique has been referred to as anticipation, or a type of flash forward, which the riddler uses to refer to events that have not yet happened as a way to orient the other participants so as to provide them with clues about what might happen so that the riddle is solvable.

In the JRBR corpus in this study, the most important narrative technique affecting time seems to be analepsis. Riddlers use this technique to create a certain retrospective vision from the past that the riddlees need to consider with regard to their present so that they can use this context and understand the most appropriate meaning. According to Rashad, the past has a role in understanding certain qualities or characteristics so that judging the present with the past in mind helps to completely understand what is being referred to since when people remember aspects or situations from the past, they recall them by evoking those past incidents (1998: 33-41). Hence, retrieval is carried out in this manner. In addition, this use of retrieval is not at all arbitrary; instead, it functions as a way to fill in any gaps in the narrative discourse of the present as well as to shed light on a new character or other circumstance that appears in the event.

As previously mentioned, the other technique for manipulating time is anticipation; in other words, mentioning a future event, or referring to it in advance before it occurs. As recorded by Rashad with respect to literary narration, narrators use this technique to follow a sequence of events and then pause to provide a future view that contains events that the narrative has not yet reached (1998: 33-41). The result of employing anticipation is that the narrator is able to provide access to the future that may include presenting certain features of an outcome or a goal before this really takes place in the chronological storyline.

The third technique is the description technique in which time stops or that time is non-existent. The writer uses this method when he/she wants to convey a picture of a person, place, event, or something, such as a tool, an animal, or an element of everyday life. The riddler addresses the different senses of the audience in the description technique, from tasting, smelling, hearing, touching, and seeing, so if the audience feels that they have fully sensed the thing described, then the riddler has been successful in his / her presentation of the description.

This third technique has been found to be the most prevalent one for the study at hand since almost all of the JRBRs in this corpus were found to use this type of timeless description. The most plausible reason why this might be so is, once again, due to the level of ambiguity that the riddler seeks to maintain so as to make the audience concentrate and use all of their senses. Hence, description is the best way to force the riddlees to use their imagination in retrospection so that they can find the most appropriate solution.

This is surely true because most of the cultural experiences that are referenced in their riddles are real situations that they have experienced. Indeed, most of JRBRs in this study can be classified as true riddles since they deal with things that can be touched, for example, watches, candles, food and drink, and natural phenomenon like stars, clouds, mirages, and so on. Other JRBRs included here have an important cultural aspect like those that deal with angels, death, and even poetic verse.

In this corpus, there were no examples of riddles that included an anticipation, or prolepsis. It is obvious that prolepsis may only be to encompass a sort of expectation of things that have yet to happen. Therefore, the difficulty of composing a riddle about something that has not existed would result in the riddle being too ambiguous, hence, most likely unsolvable. thus, increasing the ambiguity of the riddle solving a riddle. Furthermore, only three examples showed the use of retrieval or analepsis. All of these references were historical.

At the end of this section, it becomes clear that the riddle, like any other narration, is an integrated work that may contain the six essential elements in narrative structures. In a nutshell, the narrator is the riddler, the audience, or the riddlees, receive this narration (by hearing it or reading it). The event is the action being described and it may include the characters, the place, and the time. However, while the first two elements are, without the slightest doubt, completely necessary since there is no riddle without a riddler and a riddlee, they are considered constant in any riddling process that takes place to achieve the goal of the riddle, which is to find a solution. The event is also necessary to provide context. However, the rest of the elements are what the riddler uses to build the ambiguity on which he/she creates the riddle. That is

to say, what the riddler intentionally deletes from the riddle text, or simply does not present, to the audience is what makes the vagueness or uncertainty in meaning that is necessary for the riddlees to come up with an appropriate solution. Then, when a solution to the riddle has been provided, the elements of the narrative discourse are again complete, so that the meaning is clear and intact.

In this way, the narrative elements included or not in the JRBR corpus may also be deemed interesting for our descriptive study although, perhaps a more in-depth analysis of a larger corpus is still needed in order to propose more formal final considerations. In any case, the results presented next afford a significant idea about the importance of the JRBR as folklore.

As a genre of folklore art, the essence of all Jordanian Bedouin riddles, or JBRs, is decidedly *emic*³⁸ and, as such, in order to be understood, require the participants in these exchanges to have a certain level of extra-linguistic experience, or more accurately, a high level of cultural knowledge that is not usually linguistically conveyed. At the same time, the practice of riddling, and, more precisely, the practice of riddling as per its social function, may be different in the Jordanian Bedouin culture than it is in other countries. To a great extent, in this society today, riddles are viewed as challenging tools, or a way of developing vocabulary or learning verbal mechanisms on one level, and on another, among adults, as a method of displaying a person's sagacity and resourcefulness. Finally, the highly *emic* quality of certain JRBRs means that there also exists a special referential scope within the linguistic borders for a given riddle. In this chapter, the objectives of this study, and the specific research questions are laid out. Next, the

³⁸ The term *emic* is a concept was put forth in 1954 by the linguist Kenneth L. Pike. It is derived from the word "phonemic" as well as the contrasting term "etic", which is itself derived from "phonetic". They are ways used to analyze behavioral data. The former concentrate on behavioral data and meaningful cognitions of the concerned object. In other words, *emic* categorizes behavior from the insider standpoint "native perspective" in meaningful ways for the individuals practicing that behavior. For example, the way of eating and drinking is culture specific. It has nothing to do with the universal behavior between societies, so such behavior is involved under the *emic* approach. In contrast, the *Etic* approach refers to studying a given behavior from the standpoint of an outsider or "non-native" in ways that are appropriate to various systems and can lead to a comparison between them (Chao et al., 2013:469-472).

theoretical framework provided earlier is applied in the section that presents and specifically discusses the JRBR.

Taking into consideration the previous discussions related to the study of the riddle with reference to structuralism, this doctoral dissertation seeks to fill a gap not yet accounted for by preceding studies, as well as to allow for a deeper understanding of the topic, since it is conducted on the specific Arabic-speaking community of the Bedouin of the Jordanian Badia region. In it, one seeks to demonstrate that JRBRs are systematic and rule-governed, and that they have universal correlations³⁹ and special patterns that can be successfully explained by international theories, such as, for instance, the structuralism theory by George and Dundes (1963).

Furthermore, the study at hand aims to preserve the texts in the corpus presented alongside their English translation, and, thus, draw attention to the JRBR as a literary and aesthetic genre. Much like participating in riddling exchanges in Bedouin societies, this genre itself is extremely popular, and, as such, represents a source of linguistic features generated during a human activity that has yet to be adequately studied. In addition, it seeks to demonstrate the universal link between different societies by applying the well-known theories from the structuralist perspective mentioned above to the JRBR and, in doing so, serve as a referent for future analyses on the function, form, and content of riddles in literary traditions in English-speaking and non-English speaking countries. A final goal is to provide evidence of the variation between prose and poetry riddles. This will also be carried out by applying the theoretical framework from a structuralist point of view.

As mentioned above, one must point out that the translations that resulted are as close as possible to the original text. When an exact

³⁹ As cited in Kaivola-Bregenhøj (2001: 36-37), the universality of riddles is a mere concept by which the scholars admitted its impossibility due to the variety of riddle content, performance, structure, form, or function among some alien cultures (like the Bantu Venda, some urban American subcultures, and British West Indies' communities) where they spent a long time. Moreover, Kaivola-Bregenhøj refers to the significant convergence between riddles in close cultures, which may create a problem for some researchers, especially with the transformation of cultures and the revolution against the old. Therefore, a future study is needed to examine the extent of technological development and its impact on riddles among Internet users and many social networking sites.

grammatical version is not possible the English translations provided aim to provide the complete meaning in the original Arabic version. Finally, it should be noted that poets sometimes fill a line with an irrelevant word or two for the sake of the rhyme or meter in the poem.

This sort of *poetic license* refers to the verbal modifications and changes that a poet is often forced to make to preserve the poetic meter and rhyme. In this dissertation, one has, to a certain extent, allowed for this license in poetry but not for prose since it was not necessary. For prose, no justification is needed since the original Arabic speech pronunciation is correct and sound; thus, such license would be straying from eloquence. Poets must adhere to a rhyming meter that may force them to manipulate the words for the sake of rhyme (Ashmawi 2012:61-62).

Al-Handoud, Ibrahim (2006:1) states that some Arabic grammarians believe this phenomenon is abnormal and should not be used in the Arabic language because it manipulates vocabulary and morphology. Therefore, it is a departure from the rules of the original Arabic language. While others believe that this phenomenon has an origin in Al- Quran (as the first and reliable referent to the Arabic language), such as verses (10) and (67) in Al-Ahzab Sura by adding the last letter in words (الظنوننا) (Al-Dununa) and (السببلا) (Al-Sabila) respectively, While the original and normal terms are (Al-Dunun) and (Al-Sabil) without /a/ sound. Therefore, the addition here is similar to what poets do. To conclude, this phenomenon has existed since antiquity until the modern era in the Arab world. The evidence is that such phenomena are remarkably active and abundant in poems with few poetic verses. The poetic riddles covered later are characterized by shortness, but this does not mean they contain such phenomena.

This description must begin with the idea that the riddle in general, and the JRBR in particular, pertain to can be included in the oral literary tradition, or in what is also referred to as folk literature. Obviously, it is known that such genres were not formed in vain but rather have a certain purpose in their existence. It is difficult, however, to link the appearance of folk literature to a specific date.

Generally speaking, folk literature has been associated with the first human beings who emerged on the earth. Anthropologists and

anthologists tend to refer to this group of humans as “primitive” and claim that theirs was a simple level of civilization. The primitive human being had to struggle with nature and its forces. As they did so, their daily habits and customs formed their way of doing things that were reflected in the cultural and literary remnants that were passed on to the next generations. Much of the folk literature associated with this group tends to be classified as epic tales, legends, fairy tales, and animal tales; these stories contain magical and religious elements, such as conflict with the gods, and even include certain reference to their social history. In this way, the lore, or their traditional knowledge and beliefs, of cultures who did not have a written language was transmitted by word of mouth so that an oral tradition was formed. This oral tradition consisted of both prose and verse narratives in the form of stories, poems, and riddles, among others. Of these, riddles are considered to be a mirror that reflects a certain society, highlights its moral values, traditions, and customs, and that may even be used as a tool to connect peoples by building bridges of cultural understanding between different societies.

Many scholars agree that these literary folk genres were formed based on the experience of the previous generations who used them for different goals. According to Al-Shukairy, the most important goal is to modify the behavior of individuals so that they do not make mistakes and they are better able to serve a particular society (1965:24-32). The JRBR share a similar objective since they abound with wisdom and good moral teaching that are most surely included as a way to dissuade those who hear them from certain, more negative, courses of action, especially those that do not comply with the customs and values with which the Bedouin were brought up. Some riddles (as will be discussed later) allude to the relationship of a man and a woman in the Jordanian Badia region. These JRBR demonstrate who the most important characteristics of a woman are her virginity and the wearing of a veil (to cover her body). The most important characteristics for men are that they be a source of safety and protection for women.

Locally, and even a bit further geographically speaking (since the Bedouin clans have been linked in the entire Levant region for many centuries), and as mentioned above, the Bedouins established a lifestyle

that made it possible for them to overcome the harsh conditions surrounding them. However, some have wrongly suggested that the seasonal movement of the Bedouin tribes did not allow them to establish a sort of tangible civilization, similar to others that were more recognizable due to the landmarks like cities and castles of other people groups. Nonetheless, it is exactly this idea of periodic migration that plays an important role in the force of the Bedouin folk literature traditions that distinguish them from other peoples. Furthermore, their direct dependence on oral transmission may have been the reason that many folk literature styles have disappeared. Therefore, the work at hand seeks to accommodate the author's objective to preserve this cultural knowledge and cultural heritage that comes from his own environment as much as possible.

One of the most important characteristics of the JRBR that were collected for this study is their heterogeneity. This diversity is found in the topics included in the JRBR analyzed in the study at hand. We can see the different topics, how they deal with the various areas of the Bedouin lifestyle and the circumstances and conditions that surround it. Almost all the JRBR also include a positive or negative notion in the phrasing that helps to express praise or criticism appropriately to the audience. The JRBR analyzed here expose how the individual relates to his/her behavior, morals, and life conditions as a member of the Bedouin society. At the same time, exposure to JRBR may allow those who do not belong to this group to begin to understand certain details about the Bedouin lifestyle and how they conceive mental and spiritual aspects related to living in the desert.

In the middle of the last century, there was a growing interest in literary works in Jordan. To distinguish this type of literature from others, the term "vernacular literature", or "popular literature" appeared. However, "folk literature" was not commonly used as an Arabic term, since it was not used until later on, in the fifties, when Arab scholars borrowed this formula from the English word. At that time, researchers such as Ahmed Rushdi Saleh, Farouk Khorshid, and Fawzi Al- Adeb proposed specific criteria to define the concept accurately. In this way then, "popular literature" in Arabic research is linked to many definitions, perhaps the most important of these was set

out by Al-Anbatawi, when he affirmed, “the popular literature of any nation is its imitational oral literature; the author is unknown, and it is passed down from generation to generation”⁴⁰ (2006: 18). Indeed, most Arab scholars agree that popular literature must include the three conditions included above to be called “folk literature”. In other words, for them, folk literature should be imitational oral literature, the author should be unknown, and it should have been inherited from the group’s ancestors.

As far as the first aspect is concerned, when folk literature expresses a traditional form, i.e., myth, story, proverb, riddle, these forms may have been handed down orally from one generation to the next. They may also have been modified to a certain extent since imitation may reflect the original idea at the same time that this type of folk literature may evolve as a social phenomenon that will continuously express new needs. Therefore, limiting folk literature to its original version necessarily means reproducing the previous form. However, the idea of literary development should also be included since human beings are constantly affecting and being affected by everything that surrounds them; hence, a certain amount of evolution is usually present. In fact, no change at all might impede a certain progress and development. In the case at hand, the JRBR collected include various topics that combine the past and present. Logically, such topics are suitable for every era; it is not easy to change the types of topics that the riddler needs to create his/her riddle, like the riddles that talk about the parts of the human body, as will be mentioned below.

However, there exists a certain amount of intellectual conflict between the two types of scholars, which could be exemplified by Ahmed Rushdi Saleh who has a more “original” view and Al-domour, Imad who may be seen as more “contemporary”. This is because the former cannot completely accept folk literature that is not a faithful representation of the past, and, thus, do not allow for any deviation from the norm. This conservative point of view understands folk literature to be a way to study our ancient ancestors’ thought process and spiritual life as well as to understand the social history of earlier stages of a society. In addition, they see the integrity of folk literature in these more

⁴⁰ The original text has been translated by the author.

“original” versions which leads to the belief in its honorableness and even sanctity that maintains its form and content safe from criticism. In this way, these scholars believe that there are restrictions that someone who produces folk literature must adhere to so as to preserve the identity that distinguishes one society from another.

In contrast, the latter claims that renewal is necessary to break restrictions, unleash thought, and create an intellectual space for freedom, especially with globalization and its effects on the world. An example, as referenced by Ala'adeen, of how they perceive the notion of realism to be important as well might be found in the riddle of the Sphinx and Oedipus (2013: 20-28). Yet, even with the two viewpoints, the JRBR has managed to survive; it has preserved its aesthetics and its attraction to a certain audience. Both of these reflect how it imitates a certain original text on the one hand. On the other hand, the JRBR has evolved with the emergence of new topics that are even considered to be a fertile field that can be exploited.

Furthermore, riddles are considered to be orally transmitted literature like other folk literary genres. Hence, it is normal for riddles, or parts of riddles, to be forgotten, or for their words and expressions to be changed and modified. Folk literature is often reduced or increased according to the nature of the occasion, the community, and the time it is delivered to the public, unlike written literary works.

Other scholars have pointed out that there might be a certain overlap between folk literature and ancient religious beliefs. Folk literature often accompanies singing, dancing, acting, and gatherings. Poetry and riddles are arts that developed alongside music and dance and are sometimes associated with rituals and magic. Moreover, Almasu'di explained that in the Arabic language, certain literary genres have been associated with inspiration and the devil (2004:17). Nevertheless, the devil as a riddle topic has not appeared in abundance in hardly any of the sources that were revised for this project.

The second condition that folk literature needs to meet is that the author be unknown. However, the idea that the author be unknown does not necessarily mean that there is no author. Al-Nassibi reported that not knowing the exact author may be the result for several reasons. He believes the most important one is when an ethical matter is concerned,

especially when folk literature presents values that directly contradict the societal values. In these cases, the author may not have wished to be known so as to avoid criticism, or even suffering a punishment if the folk literature ended up violating a prevailing social custom or norm (1983: 67-88).

The famous Arabian “*Tale of Juha*”, the *Arabian Nights*, the riddle of the wolf, the sheep, and the cabbage, among others, did not really occur, but rather are a fabric of one person’s imagination that were developed for the education and amusement of others and then passed on to the next generation. When these examples are passed down, it helps keep a linguistic or social phenomenon from being forgotten. Furthermore, since folk literature in the form of proverbs and riddles is much shorter and easier to memorize, the content and associated meaning may be maintained for a longer amount of time.

Additionally, other scholars earlier on, such as Goldman, introduced a concept called “community literature”. In these cases, the event itself is public and, thus, should be related to the whole community. In this way, those participating do not express themselves as much as they express “the community in which they live” (1968:38-41). The end result of this type of community literature, then, is that the work is not attributed to a specific individual; instead, the authors become the voice of others, and their job is limited to documentation and delivery.

An example of this might be found in how the Bedouin poet may try not to get involved in debates or comparisons with other poets. Since this may demonstrate that a poet has weak poetry, the poet may pretend to be embarrassed if this type of incident happens in public, in front of their tribe. The Bedouin poet is sensitive because Bedouin society is often critical and may find fault with someone for many different reasons, the most important of which may be tribalism, which often leads to disputes and conflicts. Therefore, the trick is not to mention the author’s name and, in this way, avoid any confrontation at all. Some poetic riddles have a well-known source, especially the new ones or those whose author publishes them on social media. In contrast to poetic riddles, prose riddles are almost anonymous identities. Therefore, we find many riddles having the same topic with many

different expressions in different societies, and consequently, it is difficult to know who their author is.

Undoubtedly, folk literature is handled by ordinary people who, when they pass on this cultural knowledge, do not need to understand the same academic principles that researchers work with. This may also lead to a story being narrated in a version that is not complete. Indeed, this might happen frequently at Bedouin gatherings, when the story, or tale, is narrated incompletely and lacks the name of its owner, or even a specific geographical reference to where it took place. Generally speaking, in cultural settings all over the globe, stories may begin with the traditional marker “Once upon a time”. The function of this marker is merely to distinguish what is narrated as being related to a tradition of the past or to emphasize how the audience should consider the story being narrated, in the sense that this story fits into a more formal and traditional format.

Lastly, the third condition of the content being passed down from generation to generation could be referred to as “Ancestral inheritance”. The Holy Quran and the Prophet’s Hadith are among the most important texts for the Arabic language. Over 1400 years ago, at the beginning of the Islamic state, these two sources were transmitted orally until they were written down. The Quran was the first to be written⁴¹. Many scholars agree that the Prophet’s Hadith continued to be transmitted orally for nearly two hundred more years⁴². Such a situation led to the establishment of the most important science in the early centuries of the Islamic state, known as the science of “al-jarh wa al-ta’deel”, or a field concerned with researching the reputations of the narrators of hadiths and their reliability. According to Al-Silawi, this means that these areas of science are the product of a legacy, just as is the case with folk literature, and if it is not documented, distortion and loss may take place (1988:23-34).

As two important sources, the Quran and the Hadith are fertile and valuable material in authorship and content for different folk literature.

⁴¹ As this recorded to have happened within 15 years of the death of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.

⁴² That is, because it was nearly 200 after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, some distortion may have marred it.

The JRBR samples display many references to these texts and, thus, these texts have been used by their authors as material on which to base their riddles.

In the corpus analyzed here, there are many JRBR that share cultural references with topics mentioned in the Quran or the Hadith. While there may be two main groups of Bedouins, those who have been able to read and study both of these texts, and those who are familiar with them because they have been exposed to them in different cultural situations, they are, most likely, able to take part in the cultural meaning present in the riddling process. Since the Hadith is made up of more than one book and has several different sources, it may be more complex as far as riddle topics are concerned. Mubarakiya and Abdul-Majeed have proposed that that this may have to do with the fact that, generally speaking the Hadith comes after the Quran in terms of how sacred it is considered to be; therefore, less attention may be paid to the Hadith by some (2015:38-45). Therefore, in this study we can conclude that the precise and elaborate description of the riddle topics that may come from these two sources is such that the Bedouin are able to actively participate and understand the cultural reference and meanings behind them.

Starting with JRBR 4, a riddle about the first human being in humankind, which says, “Walks on feet never generated from eggs nor wombs. Adam.” This riddle has a pronounced connection with the story that is mentioned in more than one chapter, or “Surah”, of the Quran, i.e., Al-Baqarah, Al-A'raf, Al-Hijr, and Taha. Being in contact and understanding this story as presented in these Surahs surely influenced the riddler to use content to generate the riddle. Another patent example is the story of Noah and the ark of salvation which is a famous story for many people groups around the globe. It also appears in JRBR. It is mentioned in JRBR 6 “How many pairs of animals did Moses, peace be upon him, carry onto the ship (ark) before the flood? No husbands because Noah, peace be upon him, is the one who carried them.” As reported by Haynes, the religious texts of three of the main religions, like the Torah, the Bible, and the Quran, are an important source that people are familiar with as concerns what happened in the first era (2000: 125-143). Evidently, in the Arab world, the Quran has been the

main source for people groups living there to learn about these stories. In particular, the story about the life of Noah is mentioned in many of the Surahs of the Quran, i.e., Al-A'raf, Yunus, Hud, Ala'nbea, Almu'mnon, Al-Furqan, Ashua'ra', Ala'nkabout, and Alqamar.

Another example can be found in JRBR 45 which refers to the story of the Queen of Sheba and the Prophet Solomon (PBUH) and is recorded in the Al-Nmil Surah. Interestingly enough, all of the vents in the storyline of this riddle express a much deeper understanding of the details, particularly with respect to the kind of bird (hoopoe) that played the role of messenger between the Queen and Prophet Solomon. In addition, the story of King Nimrod, told in the Al-Baqarah Surah, is also an example that lives on in JRBR 29, and attests to the in-depth knowledge that the riddler has of Islamic history through the stories recorded in the Quran.

Like other Muslims, Bedouins firmly believe in the existence of the supernatural based on the indications of the Quran. However, the angel of death is considered to be a supernatural entity that some Muslims may believe, while others doubt its existence. In JRBR 47, the angel of death is displayed in an eloquent analogy, as part of a poetic riddle verse, as a supernatural man with no feet; humans are terrified of him.

Riddlers may also have taken inspiration from a very accurate picture of the earth and mountains found in the Quran in the An-Nahil Surah, verse fifteen⁴³, “[a]nd He has set up on the earth mountains standing firm, lest it should shake with you; and rivers and roads; that ye may guide yourselves”. Those who want to solve the riddle must have enough cultural and background knowledge to connect this verse to the text in JRBR 81 which says: “May I ask our friends about a girl who exists? She has men over her to keep her balance. Glory to Allah, who creates the men from their mother. The girl is the land. The men are the mountains.”

As for the riddles that depend directly on the indications that form part of the Hadith of the Prophet, the most noticeable aspect of them is that they revolve around worship and what are known as the seasons of obedience for Muslims. In this way, the riddles sharing this content are

⁴³ “وَأَلْقَى فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَأَنْهَارًا وَسُبُلًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ”

detailed descriptions of worship. JRBR 27 is a riddle about the agal-ropé, or headband, and is presented by describing the typical prayer movements that Muslims use for prayer times, from standing up to kneeling. Moreover, the riddler manipulates the stereotype that Muslims are accustomed to by separating the worship of prayer from fasting to create an atmosphere of doubt. Consequently, the recipient tries to guess the extent of the commitment of the person mentioned in the riddle to the Islamic teachings which people are accustomed to through the unfamiliar image used to construct the riddle. It turns out later that what is meant is an inanimate thing, not a human being.

Another riddle that connects with the instruction found in the Hadith is JRBR 68 which refers to the Hijri year used in the Islamic lunar calendar. Even for Muslims the structural picture drawn by the riddle may require more thought and contemplation since the way the riddle has been set out provides evidence of the deep understanding that the riddler has of this ancient text. The riddler begins by describing the year as a woman who has several children (although the exact number is not given), then makes reference to the ages of these children with a number that requires further clarification; it is only thirty. This “age” topic turns into “days” and represents the Hijri month of 29-30 days. The next clue that the riddler provides is more difficult, but yet still quite clear; these children live in peace and have never witnessed a war. Muslims refer to the four months that take place during the pilgrimage season in which no fighting is permitted as “Haram” months. The last part of the riddle seems to provide the most obvious image because people describe the month of fasting known as Ramadan as the generous month and a time when Muslims are delighted because of its arrival.

JRBR 70 refers to the subject of the five daily prayers that are part of Muslim life; thus, the use of this image also shows how aware the riddler is of the details of the life of a Bedouin or Muslim. This in-depth understanding demonstrates that the riddler is most likely a Muslim or at least is familiar with their daily prayer routine. Surely most Muslims appreciate trees, but given their importance, it is evident that trees have an even more special significance for Bedouins. Trees provide shade in the desert for Bedouins and their flocks, and they may also be a source

of firewood. The riddler goes into more detail about the tree and one can see that the tree represents prayer, and this is a rather holy type of worship, much like a blessed tree and for Muslims it is the most apparent and crucial, because this type of worship allows a Muslim to draw close to his Lord. As described in the image in the riddle, just as trees protect humans from the heat, so does prayer protect Bedouins, and Muslims, from God's torment. Additionally, we see that the prayer is performed five times a day, twice during the day and three times at night (after the sun has gone down and before it comes up again). In this way, the riddle accurately reflects the daily prayer routine of Muslims and Bedouins.

In the corpus studied here, the religious life of the Bedouin has been found to be reflected to a great extent in the content of the riddles. This content shows the spiritual and doctrinal lifestyles, as well as a more pragmatic religious way of life with many intricate details. As mentioned above, the Bedouins in Jordan adhere to the Islamic religion and, as a rule, follow this doctrine. With examples, like the ones just mentioned, the reader is able to construct a vivid picture of Bedouin society, even as an outsider. Religious life has often been considered to be one of the essential heritage pillars for any community and represents an essential part of what researchers look at first when they conduct a study of a particular society.

Along these lines, one can mention that a sensitive question has been asked recently regarding if the Islamic religion is considered to be heritage for Bedouins or not. And, as can be expected, the answer to this has brought about a great deal of perplexity between supporters of libertarian and conservative thought. The first evaluates religion as an aspect of heritage that changes, adjusts, and develops, and, in this way, there exists the possibility to add or delete certain fundamental texts, i.e., the Quran or the Hadith. The latter have defended their more conservative view that the fundamentalist texts should not be violated or changed in any way because they are stable and valid texts for every time and place. In addition, as Hamdawi affirms, they voiced their concern and apprehension about any incorrect information that might be taught as doctrine in the name of religion is an individual product that stems from a direct misunderstanding of these texts (2013: 4-18).

Apart from religious content one has also found that Bedouin riddlers include references to the importance of certain human body parts that were created to help them survive rough desert conditions. One example is eyesight. In the harsh environment of the extended desert the importance of being able to see everything that surrounds them is obvious. The eye is the primary device that Bedouins use to understand things, deal with them, and wonderfully describe them. JRBR 44 which reads, “May I ask you about a girl who has a feather and a wing? She can precede all kinds of birds though she cannot fly” and JRBR 77 which says, “May I ask you about a man? If he is healthy, you walk. If he is weak, your life becomes cramped. He is a man who lives inside a girl's lap. You cannot buy or sell him. The man is sight. The girl's lap is the eye”. With the previous examples, it is evident that the Bedouin realizes the importance that having good eyesight means for a person living in the desert and that having good eyesight is something that everyone needs in order to carry out all their affairs in an appropriate way. If a person's eyesight is poor, it will have a negative effect on that person's life. According to the description of the Bedouin, eyesight is so precious that it cannot be bought or sold, much like the position of a girl who cannot be touched or taken due to her sensitive position.

There are two more examples in this corpus that refer to human body parts. JRBR 26, which reads, “She delivers babies, but she is never pregnant. The ear and earwax”, and JRBR 9 which says, “Eats your dinner and sleeps beside you. The hand”. In both of these examples we can see how the Bedouin riddlers depict the body parts as people who accompany them wherever they go, and who perform in a way that provides a great service. Many of the riddles collected for this corpus involve personification and indicate that the Bedouin riddlers have understood the sensory functions of the body in a way that allows them to present images of comparison to the recipient in the form of a riddle that requires a solution.

Another area of Bedouin life that is present is clothing. As mentioned above, clothing is a source of pride that also distinguishes Bedouins from other city dwellers and, to a lesser extent, villagers. JRBR 27 about the agal-rope, or headband, demonstrates that the

Bedouin always maintains a traditional style of dress; this style is not changed. In fact, those who oppose it may even be criticized to the extent that it is difficult for a male visitor to the desert to sit with Bedouins, especially older men, without a handkerchief, i.e., the traditional head covering for males. This is because revealing the hair on one's head in the presence of men is considered a violation of virility. As mentioned above, Bedouins believe the head must be covered after puberty and, therefore, has a specific place among the men of the tribe. Additionally, in the harsh desert environment, covering one's head is essential to avoid the scorching sun.

Like the agal-robe, the sword enjoys a high status among the Bedouins as reflected in JRBR 65. As a respected tool for self-defense, carrying a sword shows masculinity and doing so is often accompanied by walking with a sort of strut to highlight this significance when men are in front of an audience. The sword is normally decorated and has an aesthetic appearance that complements the traditional dress of the Bedouin. The sword is often hung in the middle of the back wall of the Bedouin tent or on one of the tent poles, and in many cases, the middle pole of the tent is the most prominent place for those present to see it.

Apart from the sword, falcons are also used by the Bedouin to hunt. Thus, in some Bedouin tents, especially those belonging to the sheik of the clan, they display these birds as a symbol of freedom and strength by displaying their trained hunting falcon next to the place where the sheiks sit. However, falcon hunting tends to be more of a recreational sport than an activity done to cover their basic nutritional needs. JRBR 64 refers to this idea of the falcon's place inside the Bedouin tent. Interestingly enough, there do not seem to be any references to woman's clothing in our corpus; however, the idea of what is appropriate for females, and how important this is, is included in this riddle as well. It reads, "The mountains are his home, between men is his place, though he wears women's clothing". Most people who hunt with falcons use a special cap, or hood, to cover the bird's head and eyes for many reasons; the most essential is to prevent the bird from escaping. It is easy to see the correlation between the head-covered falcon and the Bedouin woman who also covers her head to the extent that only her eyes show. As discussed above, Bedouin women always

wear a long-sleeved cloak, usually black, that covers their entire body. Another aspect that can be concluded from JRBR 64 is that men and women have separate places, and they do not mix. The Bedouins consider it taboo for a woman to sit with strange men, so this behavior is not acceptable in their customs and traditions, and, as a result, Bedouin tents are made up of two parts, one for men and the other for women.

By moving to the surroundings near the Bedouin, inside the tent, we can build an imaginary picture of the simple lifestyle that characterizes the inhabitants of the desert. This picture made up of some Bedouins sitting next to the fire, in fact, they may often be observed sitting in a circle around the flames. The riddler conjures up this same image in JRBR 38 which takes into account all of the aspects involved in using a fire for heating or cooking in these circumstances, i.e., lighting the fire, the smoke that rises from the flames, and the resulting ash. It says, “Three brothers, the first eats and never gets full. The second goes and never comes back. The third one sleeps and never gets up. The fire, the smoke, and the ash”. JRBR 49 also refers to the process of cleaning the old ashes from the fire. Here the riddler describes the ashes as a dead person; it reads, “He sleeps and never wakes up. The ash”. In addition to water, fire is one of the most important materials Bedouins are keen to have with them when they travel. The Bedouins invented a unique way of carrying embers by placing a small spark inside a piece of animal excrement, usually donkey dung. They place this inside a pot and then cover it with cold ash. The spark remains intact but does not burn the internal parts of the dung for a long time. If the Bedouin wants to ignite the fire, he/she just blows directly on the spark, which ignites quickly in the dry combustible matter such as sticks or grass.

Another aspect of Bedouin life found in the riddle of this corpus is the role of the Bedouin woman. The content included demonstrates how they have a rather significant role in the daily activity that needs to be carried out; indeed, their work often parallels that of their male counterparts, since the work the women do often requires great effort. One of the tools that the Bedouin women need and that is commonplace in Bedouin tents is the grinding mill; in fact, this mill will be heard on

a daily basis inside the tent. Bedouin women usually do this task since they tend to stay closer to home while the men are often occupied with taking care of their flocks as far as grazing and watering is concerned. and its sound is emitted daily around the tent. Evoking this sound can even bring to mind a picture of a woman sitting inside the tent, using the mill to grind flour, by adding handfuls of wheat and grinding each one until the flour is fine enough. This process continues until the desired amount has been reached. Since the millstone is mostly made of hard granite and is difficult to crumble, pieces of stone do not usually get into the flour. JRBR 57 refers to this image with, “She revolves and never gets tired. She eats, yet never drinks. The hand mill”. After the milling process, the Bedouin woman makes the dough, mostly by hand, and then bakes it, so that the moist dough goes into the oven and the dried bread comes out. The bread-making process is also described. JRBR 37 reads, “He goes in wet and comes out dried. The bread”.

A task of those delegated to Bedouin women is sewing and repairing torn clothes. As mentioned earlier, the Bedouin women’s skill in spinning, weaving and embroidery is so important since the clothing they make, for men and women, is a crucial feature of Jordanian Bedouin cultural heritage. Bedouin women take pride in her dedication to seeing all of her family members well taken care of and appropriately clothed. The needle that they use to do this hard manual labor that require so much accuracy is present in JRBR 36 which says, “A thing that clothes people, while he is naked. The needle”.

Time is valuable to Bedouin, as their time is linked to the appropriate moment to allow their herds to graze. Certain times are also present in our corpus. One general example in JRBR 55 which says, “A thing that walks and stands but has no legs. The clock”, indicates how they value time and the importance that it has for them as they carry out their daily tasks. Activities begin for Bedouins in the early morning, before the sun starts to shine; then, before noon, they stop their work and the grazing because of the high temperatures. Later they let their flocks graze again when the sun deviates to the west, usually from about two o’clock in the afternoon until before sunset. The Bedouin does not stay up much at night because of the next day’s hard work.

Another example is JRBR 7 which makes reference to the sunrise itself. In their daily life, Bedouins rarely miss the rising sun since it is associated with taking care of their livestock and taking them to graze in the pastures nearby. Due to the extreme temperatures, the early morning hours are the best time for this activity since the milder weather is more suitable for grazing animals. Furthermore, living in the desert more or less requires shepherds to go to sleep when the sun sets, due to the lack of recreational possibilities on the one hand and the lack of electricity on the other. Even though, to our knowledge, no pagan rituals or beliefs have been discovered for the Bedouins, the image constructed by the riddler may seem to imply that there is. The riddle says, “She sleeps at night and wakes up during the day? The sun”. Another interesting fact that is worth mentioning in this description is the fact that Muslims also refer to sleep as a “little death”, so this is another way of including this cultural content in the riddle text.

During the time of grazing, the Bedouin normally encounters certain climatic conditions as well as wild animals roaming the desert. Such things have a prominent presence in the corpus of riddles collected for this study. One environmental condition stands out; the mirage might be the most important daily climatic phenomenon that the Bedouin encounter. When there are high temperatures and the hot air touches the surface of the sand, mirages occur, and movement is essentially impossible for humans. The exception is the camel that has adapted quite efficiently to such conditions. JRBR 48 refers to this climatic phenomenon, “A bird flies in the desert. It has neither feathers nor a beak. The mirage”.

As for those who do not have a job, mostly youth people, staying up late in the desert is one of the most stunning experiences, especially in the summer. Summer nights are always characterized by being able to clearly see the stars in the sky. On the contrary, the elders gather in the tent, tell stories, and discuss their affairs. In order to do this, they use candles to illuminate the tent and there are several examples of this in our corpus. Perhaps the riddle with the most descriptive elements about the candle is JRBR 46, “May I ask you about a virgin girl who cries without tears? Her age perishes because of her tears. She has

neither knee nor elbow. Despite her tears, people buy her. The answer is the candle”.

After a day full of hardship and fatigue, Bedouins go to their tent to rest. The comfort and sweetness of sleep are known only to those who sleep when they are truly exhausted from physical exertion. Sleeping in a Bedouin tent on the sand is a special feeling since the calmness of the atmosphere and the softness of the sand affect how well a person sleeps, as does going to bed early. Bedouins say that sleep is their source of comfort, and it is also reflected in JRBR 75, “Sweeter than sugar, heavier than Qintar, never sold in the market nor brought by merchants”.

When the temperatures drop, Bedouins rejoice in the clouds and are glad to see them because they carry everything good, what they have been anticipating for such a long time. The topic of rain is also present in the imagery found in JRBR 25, “She cries without eyes and walks without feet. The cloud”. The description in Arabic is even more subtle since a direct translation of the word “cries” is “tears” (or “tears up”); therefore, the idea of rain is portrayed with the image of a girl crying. The importance is dual, since this indicates the importance of the rain, but, at the same time, it also highlights how valuable a daughter is for her Bedouin family. Another Bedouin custom is described in JRBR 35, which says, “People request his presence, but if he comes, they hide. The rain.” Bedouins will rush to cover not only themselves, but also visitors from the rain.

Generally speaking, through their inherited experience, Bedouins tend to value things as they are and show their consideration for everything that surrounds them. On the one hand, they love rain, but on the other, they fear certain meteorological conditions that may hinder their life or threaten their flocks. In the desert, rain may come heavily, all at once, and this may lead to torrents in the valleys or even in the flatter areas where the herds are kept. Furthermore, a rainstorm may appear suddenly, almost without warning, and this may happen at a difficult time, i.e., early morning or nighttime when there is less visibility. All of these aspects may make it especially difficult for the Bedouin. Hence, they have experienced many dangers, including flooding torrents that may carry away the normally sandy soil; these

conditions have caused them to lose animals from their herds or even people dear to them. For this reason, the Bedouin say, “Do not stand against the flood”⁴⁴. This fearful reaction has also been encountered in the riddles of this corpus, as in JRBR 63, which says, “Walks without a head, digs without an ax, and kills without bullets. The torrent”. Surely, the presence of several different riddles on the topic of rain point to the importance of this meteorological phenomena for the Bedouin.

One example of the significance of water for the Bedouin desert dwellers is that they know where the closest water resources, usually in the form of springs or wells, are. The water from springs⁴⁵ is considered to be better than a well in Bedouin culture; this is firstly because the location of springs occurs in places where ground water naturally comes to the surface. This makes them easier to access and drawing water from them does not require as much physical work. Secondly, the Bedouin consider that flowing and renewable water is always better since it is fresher and less polluted and is, therefore healthier. In contrast wells may contain water that rarely moves and is subject to soil salinity so it may spoil. In our corpus, JRBR 31, which says, “She cries a lot with one eye. Water spring”, represents the personification of where the spring flows to the surface. We have found that the Bedouin often describes water as “tears”; this is most likely because both are dear to them. Water is necessary for their survival, and tears in a person’s eyes, especially those of a woman, are a metaphor for sadness or injustice that Bedouins do not like to accept when it affects the women around them.

Another fear that the Bedouin have is for their flocks, so they seek to protect their animals from any type of imminent danger. In fact, the harsh life they need to make in the desert is mostly for the sake of livestock; thus, Bedouins always say, “Sheep are a valuable prize”⁴⁶. As discussed above in Chapter 1, camels are also an important part of

⁴⁴ Translation by the author of the original: “لا تقف بوجه السيل”

⁴⁵ Fetching water is one of the tasks entrusted to women, and being thirsty is the young men’s excuse to approach the water springs where they might have the opportunity to meet a woman and get to know her. However, women are taught to be cautious of young men they find at there because of the absolute jealousy of the women's relatives.

⁴⁶ Translation by the author of the original: “الغنم غنيمه”

their herds and even for the identification of a tribe. JRBR 51, which says, “Four long sticks sitting in a deep well. The camel fetus” refers to the birthing process of a baby camel. This is quite a significant moment as far as taking care of a she-camel is concerned first because the she-camel may experience dystocia, a slow or difficult birthing situation, and secondly because a camel calf’s body is much larger than its legs, so it may take several hours for it to be able to stand up properly and walk around. These images that the riddler conjured up with this riddle give a very realistic perspective of the camel birthing process. Bedouin may also be afraid of certain wild animals, especially the predatory ones like wolves, foxes, and hyenas that might cause harm to their domestic herds of sheep, camels, and horses. An interesting example from our corpus is JRBR 18, which says, “A stone and not a stone, eats grass, and not a goat nor a sheep. The turtle”. This brings up the image of a turtle that has been encountered at a certain water source and that Bedouins might take in as a pet to entertain their children. Perhaps there is even the idea that the riddler would have to hold the turtle in his/her hand and examine it closely so that he/she is able to invent a technical picture like the one mentioned in this riddle.

As was also examined in Chapter 1, the Bedouins who live in villages or cities experience life in a completely different way than those who inhabit the desert. Nowadays, it is indispensable for the Bedouin desert dwellers to travel to the cities and villages for different purposes. One of these is to procure provisions, like wheat, for example. JRBR 80 refers to wheat, it says, “She has black hair, a golden abdomen, and a wooden foot? The wheat stalk.”. As Al-Khader and Al-Sarabi affirm, Jordanians depend on wheat, in the form of the bread they make, as their main source of food at almost all meals (2013: 5-9). Since growing wheat in the desert is almost impossible due to the lack of rain and the high temperatures, Bedouins must necessarily go to town, commonly with their pick-up trucks nowadays, to load up on flour and other their basic food needs, both for their homes as well as for animal fodder. Usually, such trips take place in the fall or winter. In spring and summer, some Bedouins go towards the western mountains of Jordan to graze and harvest wheat and barley crops.

Some varieties of wheat are characterized by the blackness of the hairs on the head of the spike and are known locally as “wheat with black eyelashes”.⁴⁷ JRBR 58, refers to this process of harvesting or picking wheat when it describes what a person who picks wheat with their hands would see during this process. Harvesting wheat by hand is a primitive method and is rather difficult; however, because of the ruggedness and steepness of the mountains, it is difficult to use agricultural machinery and so most Bedouins use their hands to pick and harvest their wheat crops. When the grains of wheat have ripened, the stems become golden in color. Sometimes wheat seedlings are pulled out with their roots still attached when they are harvested. Again, JRBR 58, makes reference to this when it describes the wheat stalk as having a “wooden leg”.

Some of the riddles in our corpus offer us glimpses of the social layers that prevailed in an earlier period among Bedouins. The Bedouins are like any society in which social stratification appears and is used to determine the tasks and duties assigned to each group. The sheiks and their wives are considered to be the highest-ranking members of the tribe, followed by their relatives and friends. Altogether, they probably make up the majority of the tribe, and both of these classes are known as “free”.⁴⁸ The lower class is made up of servants or “slaves” who work for mainly for the sheik, or some of the other wealthier members of the tribe by carrying out tasks such as fulfilling the requests of the sheik and his wife, fetching firewood and water, making coffee, and serving it to guests, and sometimes working as a messenger, especially for the sheik and his wife. Since tending to their own livestock is important, this is not usually done by the lower class but by the herd owners themselves.

According to this social order, the servants did not traditionally sit in the same place as the sheik and the members of his tribe, rather they sat close to the coffee pots. However, after the 1960s, the class differences have tended to disappear since the lower class became free individuals belonging to the same tribe and with full rights and their own share of the land. Nevertheless, today Bedouin society is not free

⁴⁷ Translation by the author of the original: “قمح ذو رمشة سوداء”

⁴⁸ Translation by the author of the original: “الاحرار”

from racism since, to a certain extent, the color of a person's skin plays a role in distinguishing people and, thus, still reminds them of their past. In JRBR 74; which says,

About a slave and a free man, thrown together by fate,
and a third man who accompanied the slave and the free man.
They were tortured, so that even the birds pitied them,
in the midst of an earthquake with fire and flames.
After the torture, they will be brought to you on foot;
they will be of one color; I don't think it will vary.
The slave man is the bucket, the free man is the water,
and the man who accompanied them is the rope.

this societal division is clearly patent. The water represents the free man because he is being held by the bucket; the latter is characterized by the black color of reinforced plastic that is used to make buckets. Additionally, there is one more class in society and that is people who have done wrong and who have been punished. Since the Bedouin tents were unsuitable, they dug deep holes in the ground to serve as a prison for criminals. The image in the riddle becomes clearer to readers when they understand how the well works as a prison for the water.

Another cultural reference found in the riddles in this corpus has to do with drinking tea. Although the official drink for doing business is coffee as seen above, a visitor to the Bedouins will most likely immediately notice how frequently they drink tea, which may be the most common drink, perhaps due to its how quickly and easily it can be prepared. In fact, some say that this is the most common drink for them to the extent that a shepherd hardly goes anywhere without taking the ingredients necessary to make tea, i.e., a pot, matches, water, sugar, and tea leaves). Generally speaking, Bedouins prefer their tea to be black and very sweet which is reflected in JRBR 62 which says, "Green on the ground, black in the market, and red at home. The tea". Drinking tea is usually accompanied by smoking.

Along these lines, what might draw the most attention about the daily life of the Bedouins are their habits with respect to eating and drinking. Faraj says there is a clear contradiction between the nature of food and the thin bodies of the Bedouins. You rarely find obesity in their old or

young, male or female. On the other hand, they eat foods that contain a lot of fat, such as that found in camel and sheep meat, and drink tea, which tends to be prepared with a lot of sugar. Faraj attributes their slim physical condition to the fact that the Bedouin work hard and, thus, expend a lot of energy during the day (1995:37). In addition to coffee, Bedouin tea (i.e., with a good quantity of sugar) is another one of the important drinks that characterize Bedouin hospitality. Bedouin sessions are rarely devoid of tea along with smoking; in fact, tobacco is a crop that has traditionally been planted in their fields in mountainous areas.

Two examples of how important this drink is can be found in JRBR 62 “Green on the ground, black in the market, and red at home. The tea” and JRBR 75 “Sweeter than sugar, heavier than Qintar, never sold in the market nor brought by merchants. The sleep”.

Bedouins do not normally use eating utensils or serving spoons when they eat together. Instead, they prefer to use their hands, especially when they partake of certain long-established, cultural dishes like *mansaf*, a traditional dish that combines lamb cooked in a sauce made with fermented, dried yogurt and rice or bulgur. The Bedouins consider it very shameful to use cutlery to eat *mansaf*, unless the person is a guest, or is ill. This is manifested in JRBR 9 “تتعشى عشاك وترقد بحداك.” “اليد”, or “Eats your dinner and sleeps beside you. The hand”.

This idea also may be extended to the kitchen in a Bedouin tent where Noah points out that the Bedouin do not require many of the utensils that are common to modern kitchens (2006: 40). Therefore, the Bedouin kitchen is limited to a few unbreakable tools such as large, mostly aluminum, metal pots and plates, some jugs for tea and coffee, teacups, and a metal plate in the form of a circle used for baking purposes. The Bedouins keep grains, like wheat, lentils, and rice, in cloth bags for storage and also so as to be able to place them easily on their animals when they need to change their location.

Unfortunately, smoking is also noticeably more frequent among the Bedouins. The latter is considered a companion to the Bedouin in all cases. Indeed, many Bedouins get angry at the person who advises them to quit smoking or reduce their consumption. The Bedouins in the villages and the countryside even used to plant a special type of

cigarette seeds in their fields. They took care of it to the extent that they allocated special areas of their lands for tobacco cultivation. The Bedouin usually keeps tobacco in a special box with special smoking papers. The cigarette making process, from rolling it to consuming it as well as the way in which they hold a cigarette is described amazingly well in JRBR 71, “A rolled, burnt, and dead one is held by two and seen by three witnesses.” In this riddle the visual image is quite clear. one represents the cigarette, two refers to the index and middle fingers, and three is the number of fingers that remain.

Smokers can also use the hookah, which has, to a great degree, become part of Jordanian societies, to the point that it is essentially common everywhere. Some desert Bedouins still do not use hookah compared to the Bedouins in the villages and countryside because of the fear that it will break and that it would take them days to travel to a city and back with a new one. Since spending a long time without smoking tends to make smokers lose some control over their mood and this may cause problems with others, smoking real cigarettes is still seen as the best solution for those who smoke. The shape of the hookah differs from culture to culture, but the general characteristic is a water bottle with a pipe and the presence of ignited coal on the flavored tobacco which is what JRBR 19 refers to when it says, “A little girl that holds fire on her head. The hookah”⁴⁹.

As work in the specific area of the JRBR continues, there will surely be other significant discoveries that reflect Jordanian Bedouin cultural heritage. However, it is not always easy due to the extensive geographical region if the land that extends beyond the borders of Jordan is included. Additionally, when work on cultural heritage is carried out, both official and unofficial efforts must join together to establish general heritage references. Heritage has the most prominent role in showing the culture and the identity of people groups to each other. Some of the Jordanian Bedu cultural aspects discovered in this

⁴⁹ The hookah may have become one of the new, prevalent devices present at Bedouin events, especially weddings, much to the dismay of the author. Since the hookahs being smoked are supplied by the guests who bring these gadgets, and the embers they need to light them, it means that those holding the event, or wedding, may not invited, nor prevent their guests from partaking. Since this might seem to go against the tradition of honoring one’s guests, it might cause some embarrassing situations for the hosts.

corpus of the JRBR have been highlighted in this section so as to attain a greater understanding for all those interested in local folk heritage, in particular and Jordanian cultural heritage, in general. In section 2.4 the results of the second part of the research carried out in this dissertation is presented since the JRBRs presented in this corpus are analyzed from a structural perspective to demonstrate that the JRBR has universal qualities similar to other riddles as well as other aspects that may be specific for these riddles.

2.4 RESULTS PART 2: THE STRUCTURE OF JRBRs

In the first place, the theoretical framework proposed earlier in this chapter was applied to the JRBRs that form part of our corpus and which appear first in their original Arabic Bedouin dialect, and then in translation. Using English will allow non-Arabic readers to note the use of distinctive stylistic devices utilized and borrowed from oral folklore.

The reader will observe that there is an added difficulty for the English versions since Arabic has no gender-neutral pronoun for the third person singular, or “they” in English. Thus, those who are irritated by the use of the English pronoun “they” should, therefore, remember that to the Arabic speaker (*hom, honn'a*) might just as well be “they”. Another problem is that the Arabic language contains what are known as “implied pronouns” which are used to refer to the gender of the one who does the action; in English, this linguistic category does not exist⁵⁰. In addition, in order to maintain the idea of ambiguity present in the original Arabic version, the English translations have not been corrected as far as the definite / indefinite articles are concerned.⁵¹ Lastly, one should mention that a particular riddle may be used more than once in the following analysis because a riddle can correspond to more than one specific category. In other words, the same riddle may appear at different parts in our discussion because it is clearly patent that the JRBRs studied in this dissertation demonstrate their flexibility and multiplicity in our analysis.

In order to ascertain the structure formula for the JRBR, the structuralist theory has initially been used. It was already tested and found to work on European and other riddle corpuses and the desire was to examine it and how it applied to the JRBR to see if it would be successful. As already mentioned, the theory addressed is that put forth by Georges and Dundes (1963) as well as the related extensions that were posited by Chyet (1988).

⁵⁰ See (Igaab & Tarrad, 2019:53-69).

⁵¹ While it might seem strange, it must be noted that a direct translation into Spanish would render a very similar presence of ambiguity in the use of definite / indefinite articles and, furthermore, would contrast with the more rigid use of the corresponding possessive pronouns in English.

In their article “Toward a Structural Definition of the Riddle”, Georges and Dundes present the following definition: a riddle is “a traditional verbal expression which contains one or more descriptive elements, a pair of which may be in opposition; the referent of the elements is to be guessed” (1963:13). At least one descriptive element is needed as the minimum unit of analysis; it is a pair and consists of two parts: 1) a topic and 2) a comment as a standard riddle formula. Moreover, as mentioned above, they identify two general classes for true riddles: (A) non-oppositional riddles and (B) oppositional riddles. They then divide these two classes into (A.1) literal or (A.2) metaphorical for the non-oppositional riddle category,⁵² and (B.1) antithetical, (B.2) privational, or (B.3) causal contradictive for the oppositional riddle category. As previously observed, Chyet extended this theory to some Arabic riddles; in addition, after he applied Georges and Dundes’ structural categories, he then expanded them by adding another sub-type called (B.4) inverse privational contradictive to their oppositional riddle category. Chyet added a new, third category as well which he called (C) contrastive; he saw this new class to be representative of the transition between non-oppositional and oppositional riddles. Furthermore, Chyet introduced three different formulas as being related to the structure of Arabic riddles, but this will be discussed more fully in the next section that deals more specifically with this concept.

Finally, this study has further developed a proposal for the definition of the JRBR because of several circumstances which will be discussed in the next section. (1) The topic in JRBRs may present itself as being stated, or unstated, i.e., in those the cases in which an “implicit pronoun” adds to the ambiguity. (2) For the most part, as per the comment element, the JRBRs seem to follow the same patterns as noted by the scholars mentioned above. However, this is not true for the

⁵² From the previous research, it can be ascertained that scholars referred to them as “metaphorical” because of the usage of figurative expressions and, thus, some contradiction may be found in them. For example, George & Dundes affirm, “The non-oppositional riddles may be literal or metaphorical, but in either case there is no apparent contradiction involved. Oppositional riddles are almost always metaphorical or a combination of metaphorical and literal descriptions. There are three kinds of oppositions: (i) antithetical contradictive, (2) privational contradictive, or (3) causal contradictive” (1963:116).

instances in which multiple topics appear; we will refer to these riddles as “compound riddles” as a way to explain how one topic is interrelated to either the previous topic or the one that follows it. Therefore, for the study at hand, one would further expand the classification of riddles in this way. *A riddle is an oral or written genre that has different functions. It usually consists of one or more oppositional or non-oppositional descriptive elements for one or more stated or unstated topics. It may appear in poetic or prose formulas, and the referent is meant to be deciphered.* All of this will be discussed in more detail as the examples are presented below.

The first affirmation that can be made is that all of the categories mentioned in the theoretical framework can be applied to the JRBR. The next sections in this chapter help to show how the riddles in our corpus are sufficient to provide examples of each one of these categories in prose and poetry forms.

2.4.1 Non-oppositional

A.1 Literal: This type of riddle, as its name indicates, is normally easy to understand; hence, the hearer or reader should not encounter great difficulty in their interpretation.

JRBR 1

ورقة فوق ورقة، شو هي؟ الملفوف او البصل.

Leaf upon leaf, what is she?

Cabbage or onion.⁵³

⁵³ There are riddles in Turkish culture (Taurus Mountains) similar to JRBR 1 in terms of description. The difference is that each answer (onion and cabbage) has its own riddle as in Taylor & Eberhard (1958:249-256) where this riddle was presented in English as: “My grandfather sat down, / binds on his turban: cabbage. An old man in furs under the earth. onion.” The cabbage topic is also present in Lithuanian culture, and we can see the difference in the formula, with this example as registered in: (Balys, 1950:327) “From birth to death it stays on its foot. (Cabbage).”

JRBR 2

ما هو الذي يطير في السماء؟ العصفور.
What is a thing that flies in the sky?
A bird.

JRBR 3

تشوفه وما تلبسه، وتلبسه ولا تشوفه. الكفن.
You see it and never wear it,
you wear it and never see.
The coffin.

JRBR 4

يمشي على الاقدام ما جابته بيضه ولا ارحام. آدم عليه السلام.
Walks on feet never generated from eggs nor wombs.
Adam.

JRBR 5

لولاهم ما شفناك. العيون
If not for them, I wouldn't see you.
Eyes.

JRBR 6

كم زوجا من الحيوانات حملها سيدنا موسى عليه السلام في السفينة قبل الطوفان؟ لا أزواج
لأن نوح عليه السلام هو الذي حملهم.
How many pairs of animals did our master Moses,
peace be upon him, carry onto the ship (ark) before the flood?
There are no pairs because Noah, peace be upon him,
was the one who carried them.

JRBR 7

يستيقظ في النهار وينام في الليل؟
الشمس.

Sleeps at night and wakes up in the day?
The sun.

While the solutions to these riddles might seem straightforward, it should be noted that such riddles may not be as easy as they seem at first glance. Even though they seem to be quite direct, there exists the possibility of them having more than one correct and logical answer, for example, another possible solution to JRBR 1 might be corn.

Still, the JRBRs listed above provide us with examples of riddles that seem to be easier to answer. It is most likely that the simplicity of the solutions has to do with the fact that the target audience for most of these riddles is surely children more than adults. In contrast, JRBR 3 and JRBR 6 provide examples of a more difficult level of riddles which may be aimed at a more adult audience who has more life experience and a deeper knowledge of the history of the ancient prophets.

A.2 Metaphorical: The riddles in this category tend to be based on figurative language, and thus, require the riddlee to cognitively compare the precedent with the referent. In general, metaphorical riddles are more widely used and since they are more difficult to solve, they require more time and effort than literal riddles do.

JRBR 8

وش رجلا تعرفه لنظرت الى جرته
ولو كنتم لك هرجته إلا تبين كلها. (القلم).

What would you say about a man whom you recognize from his
footsteps?

Although he is silent, you understand all of what he says.
The pen/ pencil.

JRBR 9

تتعشى عشاك وترقد بذاك اليد.
Eats your dinner and sleeps beside you.
The hand.

JRBR 10

له شعر اسود وبطنه ذهب ورجله حطب. القمح.
He has black hair, a golden abdomen, and a wooden foot.
The wheat stalk.

JRBR 11

جماعة في حانوت اللي يطلع منهم يموت. اعواد الثقاب.
A group inside a store, he who steps out will die.
Matches⁵⁴.

JRBR 12

ياكل من غير فم؟
النار.
What eats without a mouth?
The fire.

JRBR 13

شيء يركض وما له اقدام. النهر.
A thing that runs but can't walk. The river⁵⁵.

⁵⁴ From Yapese culture (Micronesia), Simon presents a riddle similar to JRBR 11 but with more descriptive elements as in: "Who are we? We look alike. We live in one house. When you take one of us and strike his head on our house, you get fire from him. Who are we? Matchsticks" (1977:107). As a type of universal item, matches are a topic that many societies can write about. From Malta, Miranda provides another example: "A big men's house, very many men live in it. If they come out, they die" (1978: 215).

⁵⁵ The author was able to count at least four different formulas for the "river" topic in Venda society. See (Blacking, 1961: 1-32).

JRBR 14

كلما تحرك خطوة, فقد جزء من ذيله. ابرة الخياطة.
Whenever it moves a step, it loses some of its tail?
A sewing needle⁵⁶

JRBR 15

ما الذي يحمل طعامه فوق راسه؟ القلم.
A thing carries its food on its head?
The pen.

In the above examples, we can see that the metaphorical classification depicts these riddles well since solving them involves understanding the figures of speech such as simile, exaggeration, contradiction, paradox, personification, and such. Perhaps the more significant feature in the above examples is the use of personification which is the most common feature in the riddles in the JRBR corpus. Furthermore, paradox and contradiction have also been found to be some of the most important figures of speech that the riddler relies on to create an atmosphere of confusion for the riddlees.

2.4.2 Oppositional

B.1 Antithetical Contradictive: This category refers to the riddles in which there exist two descriptive elements but only one of them can be true.

JRBR 16

اطول من بعير أصغر من قدم. العصفور.
Higher than a camel and lower than a foot.
The sparrow.

⁵⁶ The topic of the needle has a strong presence in Africa through Zulu riddles. See Hadebe, (1978:146-186). When compared to JRBRs, for the work at hand, the author counted more than ten formulas of riddles having a needle topic. One interesting common feature for Zulu riddles and JRBRs is that the riddles always describe needles as having a tail.

JRBR 17

وين البحر اللي ما به ماء؟ بحر الخريطة.
Where is the sea where there is no water?
The sea on the map.

JRBR 18

حجرة وما هي حجرة تأكل الحشيش وما هي بماعز ولا غنم. السلحفاة.
A stone and not a stone, eats grass, and not a goat nor a sheep.
The turtle.

JRBR 19

بنيه صغيرة وتحمل النار فوق رأسها. الشيشة.
A little girl holds fire on her head.
The hookah⁵⁷.

JRBR 20

قطار بلا دواليب ولكن له ارجل؟
الحريش " ام اربعة واربعين".
What is a train without wheels but that has legs?
The centipede.

In each of the above examples it is easy to observe how the use of two different antithetical elements helps to achieve the effect of

⁵⁷ Emeneau and Taylor recorded a riddle similar to JRBR 19, conceptually speaking, from Panjabi, India, as: "A smallish girl; on her head a basket of ashes" (1945:18). Moreover, this riddle provides an important source for tracing the origin of things and how they reached other peoples. According to Karama, the hookah was transmitted to the Arab world through the Persian peoples who were geographically closer to India. It used to be an emptied coconut with two holes, one for tobacco, which was covered by burning coals, and the other hole was connected with a tube to the water inside the hookah flask (1851: 1115- 1117).

bafflement on the audience by evoking images that seem to be contradictory and, therefore, impossible to solve. However, when the riddler provides the simple answer, the audience can then see that the riddle was not truly impossible, but that the clever form of description allowed the riddler to make them perplexed enough that they might not be able to come up with the correct solution.

B.2 Privational Contradictive: In these cases, the characteristic of the first descriptive element is denied by the second descriptive element.

JRBR 12

ياكل من غير فم؟
النار.

Eats without a mouth?
The fire.

JRBR 13

شيء يركض وما له اقدام. النهر.
A thing that ; runs but can't walk.
The river.

JRBR 21

انشدك عن عذرى تبكي بلا دموع؟ الشمعة.
May I ask you about a virgin who cries without tears?
The candle⁵⁸.

⁵⁸ The “candle” topic can also be found in Ālu Kuṛumba riddles from South India, recorded as: “konena', kannani:rucu:eiadu'. kannaniiru' "bandade:,'avan-v-e-' karedonu' o:dadu'. avana:ra'n ? Having looked at [his] tip, he sheds tears. As soon as the tears come.” “A is melting away. Who is he? adu mekku-tiri. .That's the candle”. See Kapp, 1984: 306-307.

JRBR 22

ينبض بلا قلب. الساعة.
She beats heartless.
The watch.

JRBR 23

يقرصك ولا تراه؟ الجوع.
He pinches you without hands?
The hunger.

JRBR 24

تشوف كل شيء وما لها عيون. المرأة.
She sees everything but has no eyes.
The mirror.

JRBR 25

شيء يبكي من غير عيون ويمشي من غير اقدام. الغيمة.
A thing cries without eyes and walks without feet.
The c
loud.

JRBR 26

تجيب عيال ولا تحمل ابدًا. الاذن وشمع الاذن.
Delivers babies, but she is never pregnant.
The ear and earwax.

When the **oppositional** categories referred to as **B.1 Antithetical Contradictive** and **B.2 Privational Contradictive** above are compared,

it is found that two types of descriptive elements are present. There are true elements, i.e., ones that can be felt, touched, and / or seen. These seem to characterize the first group of antithetical contradictory riddles. The other type are intangible descriptive elements that cannot be seen or touched but are given the characteristics and / or actions of living beings, human or animal, to describe the situation in which they behave or function. These intangible descriptive elements are displayed in almost all of the JRBR corpus, such as JRBR18 (describing the turtle as a stone), JRBR 19 (referring to the hookah as a little girl), JRBR20 (calling the centipede a train), JRBR12 (explaining fire as a creature with a mouth), JRBR22 (suggesting the watch is a creature with a heart), and so on.

B.3 Causal Contradictive: In these examples, one can observe how the items included are not arranged as they would normally be; in addition, a time dimension is often involved.

JRBR 27

انشدك عن رجل يصلي ولا يصوم
واذا سجد في بعض الاوقات ما يقوم
ولو ما توضى ما عليه التزام
ما يستطيع من السجود القيام
رجل له التقدير مع كافة القوم
ويحظى مع التقدير الاحترام. العقال.

May I ask you about a man, who prays but does not fast?

He has no obligation if he does not do the ablution.

He sometimes kneels, he cannot stand up again.

He has no ability to recover standing-up after he has kneeled.

He is a man who enjoys high esteem among all his people.

In addition to the high esteem he enjoys, he is respected.

The headband.

JRBR 28

انشدك عن طفل من بطن امه ياخذوه بسطوت الآلات
ويتركوه بحضن بنت تضمه لو تحكه بظهر امه مات. عود الكبريت.

May I ask you about a baby, taken out of his mother's womb by
machine force?

The baby is then left in the lap of a girl to hug him.

He dies when rubbed against his mother's back.

Matches.

The mother is the matchbox, and the girl is the human hand.

JRBR 29

انشدك عن رجل سكنت داخله بنت البنت عذرى و النشامى بيونه
الرجل شاف الذل من سكنت البنت والبنت شافت عز عقب المهونه. النمرود والذبابه.

May I ask you about a man who is resided by a girl inside his hollow?

The girl is virgin and the men like the man's position.

The man experienced insult due to the girl's residency.

The girl experienced honor after the lowness.

The Nimrod King of Babel, and the mosquito.

JRBR 30

جانا ضيف، ضيفناه وكتفناه. الطفل المولود.

A guest came to us; we tied him up after serving him.

The newborn baby.

When compared with the previous two classifications, the B.3 Causal Contradictive is found to be employed when describing events that take a longer period of time than the B.1 antithetical contradictory JRBRs and the B.2 privational contradictory JRBRs. This can be observed in JRBR27 that includes the description of Muslim prayer and the headband that Bedouin men wear during this time, as well as the story of Nimrod and the mosquito in JRBR29. Another notable characteristic is that, at times, the sequence of events included in the

description present in the riddle seem to come in a somewhat unexpected order. This is obviously acceptable since riddles are typified by the shortness and ambiguity of the phrases of which they are made. Clearly listing all of the details in order might possibly reveal the solution; so, some of the information is reserved or provided with a different time arrangement.

Moreover, with all of the previous examples in mind, one can easily perceive the different categories and how the structural approach that was put forth initially can be successfully applied to the JRBR. In addition, one can apply the three additional categories posited by Chyet (1988), more specifically; the inverse privational contradictive, the contrastive oppositional riddle, and riddles that have multiple descriptive elements as evidenced below.

C.1 Inverse Privational Contradictive: The cases of this type of riddle present a sort of privational riddle status and a casual construction that lacks a dimension of time as can be seen in the next example.

JRBR 31

تبكي دوم بعين واحدة. (عين الماء).
She cries a lot with one eye.
The water spring.

Whereas the standard privational riddle would normally be “What has eyes, but doesn't cry?”, in this case, the riddle in this example poses the question, “What has one eye, yet cries?” Thus, one can observe how the second descriptive element functions to create a surprising image. In other words, the two parts do not seem to combine as they should which is not anticipated by the riddlee. Hence, it represents one of the features of the privational contradictive type of riddle. In addition, it lacks a time dimension, which is another defining characteristic of the causal modification. The same type of riddle can also be observed in the following example in which there is a “small” thing that carries out the role of something much larger.

JRBR 32

المصباح. حجمه حجم الليمونه ويملا البيت وعيونه.

Its size is the size of a lemon, and it fills up a room.

The light bulb.

JRBR 33

بنشدك عن عذرى تجي للرجايل يجيبها خمسة وهي ما عصتهم
عيالها قدامها يا المشاكيل عيالها لاكلها ما حملتهم. الدلة والفناجين.

May I ask you about a virgin girl who goes to men?

Never disobeyed she is brought by five.

She is preceded by her babies, though she has never been pregnant.

The coffee pot and the cups.

Example JRBR 33 is merely a sample of a prevalent and widespread topic found in the corpus studied that deals with the idea of a “virgin” who performs certain functions of a “married woman”. In this case, if the riddle were a true privational contradictory riddle, in Arabic the text structure would look somewhat like, “Have you heard about a virgin who engages in activities normally done by a married woman? She has babies but “has never been pregnant”. In addition, the structure is arranged so that the sequence lacks a dimension of time.

C.2 Contrastive oppositional: In this type of riddle there does not seem to be a logical contradiction. Instead, at first glance, it seems to be oppositional; however, in the end, it is a case of a type of transition between non-oppositional and oppositional. In other words, the descriptive elements in such riddles appear to be contradictory for the riddlee, but the sequence of actions, the arrangements, and results are not contradictory at all. This kind of riddle seeks to shock the “opponents” taking place in the riddling exchange as can be observed in the following examples.

JRBR 34

يمشي على الأرض ورأسه فوق النجوم. الضابط.
He walks on earth, and his head is above stars.
The officer.

JRBR 35

ينشده الناس، فإذا جاء اختبأوا. المطر.
People request his presence, but if he comes, they hide.
The rain.

JRBR 36

شيء يكسو الناس وهو بدون ملابس. الإبرة.
A thing that clothes people, while he is naked.
The needle.

JRBR 37

يدخل مبلول ويخرج ناشف. الخبز.
He goes in wet, and comes out dried.
The bread.

JRBR 38

ثلاثة إخوة واحد يأكل ما يشبع وواحد يذهب ما يرجع والأخر يرقد ما يقوم. النار، الدخان،
والرماد.
Three brothers, the first eats and never gets full.
The second goes and never comes back.
The third one sleeps and never gets up.
The fire, the smoke, and the ash⁵⁹.

⁵⁹ These topics appear separately in the riddles that Blacking reported for the Venda community, unlike what is presented in JRBR 38, which includes three topics in one riddle. For more details, see (Blacking, 1961: 20. 1-32).

JRBR 39

اخضر من الخارج احمر من الداخل. البطيخ.
Green from outside, red inside.
The watermelon.

JRBR 40

شيء تحمله ويحملك: الحذاء.
You carry it, and at the same time, it carries you.
The shoe.

JRBR 41

يؤخذ منك قبل ان يعطى لك. الصورة.
It is taken before it is given to you.
The photograph.

JRBR 42

انا طويل عندما اكون صغيرا في العمر وقصير عندما اكبر. الشمعة
I'm tall when I'm young and short when I get older.
The candle.

JRBR 43

كلي ثقب واحفظ الماء
Despite my holes, I keep water.
The sponge.

In the above examples, one can observe how riddlers use the oppositional contrast to create confusion in their audiences. In most of the examples personification is used to hinder the thought process so that the solution is not immediate, but instead requires a certain amount of concentrated thinking.

C.3 Multiple descriptive elements: The riddles in this category seem to be both non-oppositional and oppositional at the same time. In addition, they tend to contain at least three descriptive elements, although in the JRBR corpus presented in the study at hand, there are cases in which there are more than three descriptive elements.

JRBR 44

ابنشدك عن بنت لها ريش وجناح؟ تسبيق جميع الطير وما تطير. العين.

May I ask you about a girl who has a feather and a wing?
She can precede all kinds of birds though she cannot fly.
The eye.

JRBR 45

يا من انحكمت غيايبن بالاعدام ذكاه حطم دولة مستقلة
لازال تلقاه البشر بعض الايام مات القاضي والمتهم في محله. هدهد سليمان.

Who was judged in absence by execution?
His smartness smashes an independent state.
Till now, people see him sometimes.
The judge died, and the accused is alive.
The judge is Suleiman, the prophet.
The accused is the Hoopoe.
The independent state is the Sheba kingdom in Yemen⁶⁰.

JRBR 46

انشد عن عذرى تبكي بليا دموع وعمرها يفنى بكثرة بكاها
هي مالها ركبة وما لها كوع والناس تشربها وتظهر بكاها. الشمعة.

May I ask you about a virgin girl who cries without tears?
Her age perishes because of her tears.

⁶⁰ In his research, Taylor mentioned Lot and his sons as an old riddle transmitted from Hebrew Old Testament (1938:26-27), Although the riddle was quite old, it was still enjoyed by many and was very popular. As Taylor indicates, the riddle about Queen Sheba goes together with this riddle. Both of these popular stories were transmitted to other cultures through religious texts in the Near East. One should note that riddle topics like these depend on the same referential background in cultures where these religious texts are culturally transmitted. The JRBRs meaning relies on the correlation of Islam through the Quran.

She has neither knee nor elbow.
Despite her tears, people buy her.
The answer is the candle⁶¹.

In example JRBR 46, the presence of multiple descriptive elements is obvious. First, there is a privational contradictive in “cries without tears”. Next, the sections formed by “her age perishes because of her tears”, and “she has no knee either elbow” are metaphorical, non-oppositional elements. Finally, the last section “people buy her despite her tears” can be seen as a contrastive oppositional element.

In the JRBR corpus presented here, riddles having multi-descriptive elements appear more often than riddles having one or two descriptive elements. It is worth noting that many of these riddles are used in a particular way during the riddling process. That is to say, that the riddler may provide the descriptive elements in stages. In these cases, the riddler uses the first verse to test the audience. If they are unable to answer, the riddler then provides another descriptive element and waits to see if they answer. If they still have not come up with the solution, the riddler then provides another element. This method seems to work especially well when the audience is enthusiastic about the riddle and trying to find the most appropriate solution.

JRBR 47

أنشدك عن رجل بلا رجلين وله عند الناس قدر ومكانه. ملك الموت.

May I ask you about a man who has no feet,

he is respected and has a high position.

The angel of death.

⁶¹ In the article titled, “Mountain White Riddles” Carter proposed that riddles that rhyme are more durable and, thus, easier to remember than their prose counterparts (1934:76-80). She introduces a group of riddles based on the rhyme tone, of which one shares the candle topic: “Nanny Sheep, nanny sheep. With a red nose. The longer she stands. The lower she grows. Candle”. Thus, she demonstrates that poetic and rhymed riddles may tend to be passed on more through the generations than unrhymed ones, as is the case with the poetic JRBRs among Bedu people.

JRBR 48

طير يطير في الببغاء بدون ريش ولا منقار. السراب.

A bird flies in the desert.

It has neither feathers nor a beak.

The mirage.

Having taken the aforementioned examples into account, we can now confirm that some of the JRBRs in this corpus comply with and fit into the categories laid out by Georges and Dundes (1963). More specifically, we can confirm that this structural theory has been successfully applied to the JRBR written in prose. Moreover, the JRBR written in prose also adhere to the related extensions proposed by Chyet (1988). Furthermore, we must note that the JRBRs presented in this corpus are the first Jordanian riddles to be considered in this context since, even though there exists a certain common knowledge among the Arab countries, and more particularly, those that are geographically closer and, thus, share similar traditions and cultural aspects, Chyet did not explicitly include any Jordanian riddles in his study.

Nonetheless, when we take the riddles written in poetic meter into account, the results are different since only three of the six categories, i.e., “casual contradictive”, “inverse privational contradictive”, and “multiple descriptive elements” provide a good fit for the JRBR poetic riddles. There are several reasons why the three categories just mentioned suit the poetic riddle better. First, the category definitions for antithetical, privational, and contrastive show the presence of only two descriptive elements for any given riddle; thus, there is no room for any additional descriptive element. In this way, the more traditional JRBR poetic riddle, which consists of at least one line with two parts, cannot fit in this more limited word structure.

In second place, in the more traditional JRBR poetic riddle, if the stylistic elements are omitted, each part in the samples provided comprises a separate meaningful descriptive element that may agree or differ semantically with the descriptive elements that precede or follow it. Hence, this affords an idea of why the poetic riddles fit into the casual

contradictive, inverse privational contradictive, and multiple descriptive elements categories more efficiently.

In addition, culturally speaking, we have found some references to death (coffin, angel of death) in our corpus. This is perhaps due to the role played by the teachings of Islam. It is a truism of functionalist views of religion that religion enables people to cope with death and other life aspects (Lila 1993: 188). With the riddles present in our corpus, we can confirm that religious discourse in riddles also includes discourse about death through Muslim practices such as the recitation of the faith profession, preparing the dead for burying, and prayer over dead people; therefore, such riddles can be understood across Arab societies.

According to the George and Dundes' definition, a riddle "contains one or more descriptive elements, a pair of which may be in opposition" (1963:13). Thus, a single descriptive element is all that is necessary to form a non-oppositional riddle, and two descriptive elements are required for an oppositional riddle. If this definition and rules are applied to our corpus, we can find the following examples of literal and metaphorical non-oppositional riddles that have one descriptive element.

JRBR 50

حلوة ومغرورة وتلبس مية تنورة، من هي؟ الخس.

A beautiful and arrogant girl wears a hundred skirts, what is she?

The lettuce.

JRBR 54

شي اسمه مثل لونه؟ البيضة.

A thing, its name is like its color.

The egg⁶².

⁶² Riddles like JRBR 4, 6, 18, 39, and 54 share the same riddle topics as those recorded by Hasar & Badakhshan in Kurdish culture, but their form differs. (2018:161-188).

In JRBR 50, the topic is “a beautiful and arrogant girl” (حلوه و مغرورة), and the comment element is “wears a hundred skirts” (تلبس مئة تنورة). The final element appearing here “what is she?” is an example of what Petsch refers to as “concluding frame elements” (as referenced in Green & Pepicello, 1979: 3). Since this is a stylistic rather than a structural unit, it can be dismissed for the structural analysis at hand. In JRBR 54, the topic is a thing (شيء); the comment element is “its name is like its color” (اسمه على لونه).

However, the difference in non-oppositional and oppositional riddles is pertinent for our discussion. Thus, according to Georges and Dundes' definition, oppositional (and contrastive) riddles are made of “descriptive elements, a pair of which may be in opposition” (1963:13). In this way then, at least one pair of descriptive elements is necessary to form an acceptable riddle in contrast with non-oppositional riddles in which only one descriptive element is required. This is taken into account in the following analysis.

As mentioned in chapter one, Kaivola-Bregenhøj (1974) uses formula analysis to map out the preferred structures that differentiate different types of riddles. She first isolates a structure common in Finnish riddles and then tracks the same structure in Estonian, English, Swedish, and German riddles. Even though he does not follow the concept she posits exactly, Chyet (1988) borrows Kaivola-Bregenhøj's formula analysis to study the structure/s of Arabic riddles. He attempts to show how several different surface structures may be reduced to a particular deep structural standard, or, in contrast to what might be expected, how a particular deep structural standard may present many surface patterns. Though Chyet admits that since he presents only three riddle formulas, his study is not an exhaustive one, it is a good starting point for us to use in order to deal with and anticipate new formulas regarding our topic, especially poetic riddles. In the work at hand, Chyet's formulas have been applied to some of the most common

Moreover, as recorded by Lieber, the Latin riddle “*A house with no door: an egg*”, is one of the most widely spread formulas in the Arabic world (1976:256). Apart from Arabic, Kurdish and Latin cultures, the “egg” topic is popular in many other cultures such as: Swahili, Welsh, and Kikongo as cited in (Harries, 1976: 39-43).

reciprocal riddle patterns found in JRBRs. They will be presented and examples of them will be provided below.

The first formula is Formula 1A.

“Optional” Topic + “Core” comment A + “Core” comment B

First, one can observe some examples of JRBR that adhere to Formula 1A.

JRBR 13

شي يجري ولا يستطيع المشي. النهر.
A thing that runs but cannot walk.
The river.

JRBR 15

ما الذي يحمل طعامه فوق راسه؟ القلم.
A thing that carries its food on its head?
The pen.

JRBR 25

شي يبكي وما له عيون ويمشي وما له اقدام. الغيمة.
She cries without eyes and walks without feet.
The cloud.

JRBR 55

شي يمشي ويوقف، ولكن ليس له أرجل. الساعة.
A thing that walks and stands but has no legs.
The clock.

JRBR 56

شي يكتب وما يقرأ. القلم.

A thing that writes yet never reads.

The pen / pencil.

In the five examples above, the element referred to as “a thing” is optional; it is placed at the beginning of the statement and is, thus, the topic. The “Core” Comment A of each of these examples are: “runs”, “carries food”, “cries without eyes”, “walks” and “writes” in the order in which the examples are given. The additional “Core” element is found in Comment B. Hence, they all have a double comment structure. This leads us to observe that while the topic is not stated, structurally it is still present in the idea of the noun “thing” and in the assumptions resulting from the comments.

The next formula presented by Cheyt is Formula 1B.

“Unstated” Topic + “Core” comment A + “Core” comment B

Here are some examples of JRBR that conform to Formula 1B.

JRBR 4

يمشي على الأقدام وما ولدته بيضة ولا أرحام. ادم عليه السلام.
Walks on feet never generated from eggs nor wombs.
Adam.

JRBR 9

تتعشى عشاك وتنام بجانبك. اليد.
Eats your dinner and sleeps beside you.
The hand.

JRBR 23

يقرصك وما تراه؟ الجوع.
He pinches you without hands?
The hunger.

JRBR 24

ترى كل شي وما لها عيون. المرأة.
She sees everything but has no eyes.
The mirror.

JRBR 32

حجمه حجم الليمونه ويملا البيت وعيونه. المصباح.
Its size is the size of a lemon, and it fills up a room.
The light bulb.

JRBR 42

انا طويل عندما اكون صغيرا في العمر وقصير عندما اكبر. الشمعة
I'm tall when I'm young and short when I get older:
The candle.

JRBR 49

ينام وما يستطيع القيام. الرماد
He sleeps and never wakes up.
The ash.

In the examples listed above, the topic itself seems to be regularly deleted. However, at times, it is associated with an implied suffix connected to the verb appearing in comment A, i.e., in JRBR 24, “sees” is understood as “she sees” in Arabic. It can also appear as an attached pronoun which marks the either masculine or feminine gender of the

topic, as in (ولدته) or “generated” in JRBR 4, which is a masculine pronoun. Once again, by comparing the Formulas in 1A and 1B, there seems to be no clear-cut connection between them. In addition, the oppositional or non-oppositional quality of the riddles adhering to Formulas 1A and 1B seem to show a fixed double comment initial component. Formulas 1A and 1B, then, have the same surface structure, which is manifested in the fixed double comment and, in addition, seem to share a similar underlying structure.

The next formula is Formula 2.

“Core” topic + “Core” comment A + “Optional” comment B

JRBRs that follow Formula 2 structure can be observed below.

JRBR 50

حلوة ومغرورة وتلبس مئة تنورة، من هي؟ الخس.

A beautiful and arrogant girl wears a hundred skirts,
who is she?
The lettuce.

JRBR 51

أربع مطارق جالسات في بئر غارق. الحوار في بطن الناقة.

Four long sticks sitting in a deep well.
The camel fetus⁶³.

⁶³ The surroundings of a people group surely play a significant role in how riddles are composed; therefore, many true riddles, like those found in the JRBR corpus depend on the existence of the object (topic) for the riddler to conjure up a particular riddle. JRBR 51, like many other JRBRs, is distinguished by its close connection with the Bedouin environmental context in general and with camel herders in particular, as it might be complicated to find such a riddle in other societies and cultures. Nonetheless, Pilane *et al.* recorded this riddle from the Bakgatla (Botswana, Southern Africa): “Ke Sale Ke Tsalwa Ratla La Tlou Ga Ke Le Itse? Namane Ella Mpeng Ya Mmayona. Never in my life have I heard the noise of an elephant? The

JRBR 52

بنت السلطان تلبس مية فستان. البصلة.

The sultan's daughter wearing 100 headdresses.
The onion.

JRBR 53

سيده ضخمة تحمل اطنان ولا تحمل مسمار. السفينة.

A huge lady carries weight yet cannot bear a nail.
The ship.

As is demonstrated by the examples provided, unlike Formula 1, the topic in Formula 2 is always stated. Moreover, it is often restricted by a rather specific image. Further observation proves that rhyme cannot be regarded as a defining part of Formula 2, since it is not always present. In addition, oppositionality does not seem to be a defining criterion for Formula 2.

Next Formula 3 is presented.

“Optional” topic + “Core” comment A + “Core” comment B

The following examples demonstrate some JRBR riddles that follow Formula 3.

JRBR 57

يدور ولا يتعب، ويأكل وما يشرب. الرحي.

She revolves and never gets tired.
She eats and never drinks.
The hand mill.

calf inside its mother” (1974: 32). Riddles like this could not possibly exist in the Jordanian Bedu culture due to the absence of cows, and, thus, of any background knowledge about them.

JRBR 58

أرجل خشبية ورأس ذهبية. سنبله القمح.
Wooden legged with a golden head.
The wheat stalk.

JRBR 59

أميرة صغيرة وتحمل على رأسها نار. الشمعة.
A little princess that carries a fire on her head.
The candle.

JRBR 60

شيء يأكل ولا يشبع وعندما يشرب يموت. النار
A thing that eats but does not get satisfied, and water kills it.
The fire.

As shown in the examples provided, unlike Formula 1A, the pattern in Formula 3 allows for the “core” comment A to be expressed by a verb participle, an adjective, or a noun.

When the JRBR are compared to the formulas set out by Chyet, it has been found that some of them are structurally compatible to his formulas. However, at the same time, we have been able to establish a new formula for the prose riddle that has a notable structural difference to those originally proposed by Chyet. Consequently, it has also been found that not all JRBR riddles are compatible with Chyet’s formulas. Indeed, many times, JRBR poetic riddles do not follow the same pattern. Hence, the next section aims to develop new formulas that can more efficiently take the JRBR poetic riddle construction into account.

2.4.3 The Contrastive Oppositional Formula of the JRBR

So far in our discussion we have presented and applied formula posited by previous researchers, but formula 4 is a new structural form as found

for the prose JRBR. In this case, we have found an inverse relationship that links that topic with the descriptive element. For the JRBR examples found in our corpus, when the topic is mentioned, the descriptive elements seem to be reduced on the one hand, and on the other in the case where the topic is reduced, the descriptive elements are mentioned.

Formula 4 can be defined as follows.

“Unstated” topic + “Core” comment A + “Core” comment B + “Core” comment C

Some examples of JRBRs that follow the Contrastive Oppositional Formula are presented below.

JRBR 61

يملك جسم اسود وقلب ابيض و رأس اخضر. الباذنجان.

He has a black body, a white heart, and a green head.
The aubergine.

JRBR 62

اخضر في الأرض واسود في السوق واحمر في البيت. الشاي.

Green on the ground, black in the market, and red at home.
The tea.

JRBR 63

يمشي من غير رأس ويحفر من غير فأس ويقتل من غير رصاص. السيل.

Walks without a head, digs without an ax, kills without bullets.
The torrent.

JRBR 64

الجبال مسكنه، وبين الرجال مجلسه، ثوب الحرير ملبسه. الصقر.

The mountains are his home, between men is his place,
though he wears women's clothing.

Falcon.

JRBR 78

له ورق وليس نبات، له جلد وليس حيوان، له علم وليس انسان: الكتاب

Has leaves but is not a plant, has skin but is not an animal,
has knowledge but is not a human being:

The book.

JRBR 79

لا يتكلم، اذا اكل قال الحقيقة، واذا جاع كذب. الساعة.

She does not speak;
if she eats, she tells the truth,
and if she is hungry, she lies.

The watch.

JRBR 80

يملك شعر اسود وبطن ذهب ورجل حطب. القمح.

She has black hair, a golden abdomen, and a wooden foot.
The wheat stalk.

As demonstrated by the preceding examples of prose riddles, the topic in each one is not stated at all. Nevertheless, it is referred to by an “implied pronoun: he” in JRBR 63 (يمشي = walks, يحفر = digs, يقتل = kills), in JRBR 61 (يملك = has), in JRBR 62 (اخضر, اسود, احمر = the masculine adjectives green, black, and red: he is green..... etc.), and in JRBR 80 (يملك = has), and by an attached pronoun /o/ (the last letter in each word of (مسكنه, مجلسه, ملبسه) “his”, as in JRBR 64. The most

outstanding new feature is the fact that these JRBR share three related core comments. These descriptive elements, as present in JRBRs that follow the Contrastive Oppositional Formula, provide the riddlee with extra information that will help him / her figure out the solution to the riddle.

2.4.4. The General Poetic Riddle Formula of the JRBR

At this point in the study at hand, it is time to introduce another new formula for the poetic JRBR. There does not seem to exist in previous research any attempt to provide a formula for this characteristic type of riddle as created by Jordanian Bedouin poets. From our corpus, we can ascertain that the poetic riddle in JRBR usually does not exceed a few verses; most likely, it has a maximum of four lines at best. However, the Jordanian Bedouin poets sometimes tend to present their poetic riddles with an introductory verse that does not have to be related to the topic present in the JRBR; they also tend to end it with an unrelated closure in poetic verse. In this context, we are only concerned with the riddle itself.

There are many examples from our corpus in which the poetic JRBR has multiple descriptive elements as will be seen in the examples below. We define formula 5 as follows.

“Core” topic + Multiple descriptive elements

Some examples of the general poetic riddle formula in JRBRs as expressed in formula 5 have been listed below.

JRBR 8

وش رجلا تعرفه لا نظرت لجرته ولو كنتم لك هرجة إلا تبين كلها. القلم.

What would you say about a man

whom you recognize from his footsteps?

Although he is silent, you understand all of what he says.

The pen/pencil.

In JRBR 8 we observe that the core topic is “a man” as presented at the beginning of the riddle structure. Next, three descriptive elements are included: (1) “has footsteps”, (2) “his silence” and (3) “he says”. The multiple descriptive elements in JRBR 6 appear as a triple comment structure.

JRBR 65

أسألك وافتني عن علوم رجال يصول بأيدين الرجاجيل ويطول
وإذا اتركوه وما لقي كف شيال يقضي في بيته طول العمر مشلول. السيف.

May I ask you about a man?

He twirls and swirls between the men's hands.

If the men left him without use,

he will be paralyzed for a long time in his house.

The sword.

As can be observed here, JRBR 65 is structurally similar to JRBR 8; it has one core topic “man”; however, JRBR 65 has two descriptive elements: (1) “he twirls and swirls between men’s hands”, and (2) “if the men left him without use, he will be paralyzed for a long time in his house”. Thus, in JRBR 65, the last line comprises a sequence of actions that function as the second descriptive element that is presented as a condition on which something else is contingent.

In the following riddle, where we can account for five descriptive elements that correspond to one single core topic which is “a man”.

JRBR 27

انشدك عن رجل يصلي ولا يصوم ولو ما توضى ما عليه التزام
وإذا سجد في بعض الاوقات ما يقوم ما يستطيع من السجود القيام
رجل له التقدير مع كافة القوم و يحظى مع التقدير الاحترام. العقال.

- (1) May I ask you about a man, who prays but does not fast?
- (2) He has no obligation even if he does not do the ablution.
- (3) He sometimes kneels; however, he cannot stand up again;

- he has no ability to recover standing-up after he has kneeled.
(4) He is a man who enjoys high esteem among all his people.
(5) In addition to the high esteem he enjoys, he is respected.
The headband.

In JRBR 27, the core topic of “a man” is immediately presented and then followed by multiple descriptive elements that all function to supplement the information given to the riddlee so that it may be solved. The examples provided in this section also include phrases similar to “What would you say about” and “May I ask you about”. Such phrases represent what Robert Petsch terms “concluding frame elements”. These elements are stylistic rather than structural parts, and as such, are not essential to the structural analysis carried out in the work at hand.

2.4.5. Riddle Inside a Riddle Formula and Multiple Topic Formula

The Riddle Inside a Riddle Formula and also the Multiple Topic Formula are two of the unique forms found in our corpus of Jordanian riddles from the Badia region. Many JRBRs that follow this formula have multiple topics; however, there may be only two present as well. These topics, that are related on a general level, must be guessed by the riddlee. But first, the riddler initiates the poetic riddle sequence by supplying a general comment which functions as a preliminary introduction for the topics that follow. In addition, each topic is followed by its own specific comment.

It can be represented as Formula 6.

*“General comment core” + “Topic 1” core + Comment 1 +
“Topic 2” core + Comment 2 + “Topic 3 core” + Comment 3*

JRBR 38

ثلاثة اخوة: الاول يأكل وما يشبع، والثاني يذهب وما يرجع، والثالث ينام وما يقوم. النار والدخان والرماد.

Three brothers: the first eats and never gets full.

The second goes and never comes back.

The third one sleeps and never gets up.

The fire, the smoke, and the ash.

JRBR 38 initiates with the general comment element “three brothers” which functions as the core element as well as for the introduction to the following three topics that are also core elements. We can see that in each of the three topics that follow the general comment core, the subject “brother” is implicitly omitted. Moreover, each topic core element has its own consecutive comment that provides more information about it. The same structural formula can be observed in JRBR 66 and JRBR 67 below.

JRBR 66

ثلاثة عبروا الجسر: الأول شاف الجسر ومشى عليه، والثاني شاف الجسر ولم يمشي عليه، والثالث ما شاف الجسر ولم يمشي عليه. ام حامل و تحمل طفلها.

Three across a bridge: the first saw the bridge and walked on,

the second saw the bridge but didn't walk on,

the third didn't see the bridge or walk on.

A pregnant woman holding a little boy.

JRBR 67

ثلاث اخوان، لهم نفس الاسم وافعاله مختلفة: الأول، في السماء بيد الرحمن، والثاني في
ايدك، والثالث، إذا يلمس، يقتل.
برج العقرب، عقرب الساعة، والعقرب.

Three brothers have the same name, but their actions vary.

The first, in the sky is moving by the Most Gracious.

The second is in your hands,
and the third, when he touches, he kills.

The Scorpio Sagittarius, hour hand, and the scorpion⁶⁴.

JRBR 67 is a bit different from other examples discussed here because in the initial general comment core, the riddler provides the audience with more than just a general reference although it is still ambiguous enough not to give the audience any more clues. This information is once again provided in the topics and the specific comments that are presented with each one.

In addition to how the Riddle Inside a Riddle Formula, and the Multiple Topic Formula, is found in JRBR prose riddles, this formula is also used in some prose riddles but also in poetic riddles. However, in these cases, the initiation sequence varies in that it is not just a mere general comment core but rather a seemingly multiple topic core followed by a chain of overlapping references to this topic. In this way then, the topics provided function as descriptive elements that describe the entire topic presented. This formula is represented as Formula 7.

⁶⁴ In one of the latest Arabic studies reviewed for the study at hand, Belkasim & Rifrafi researched the riddles in Arabic poetry in ancient times (before Islam, in the early Islamic era, and in the Umayyad state era followed by state era of Abbasid). Their study, of Algerian origin, follows the traditional approach, as discussed in Section 1.4 of the present study, in terms of how the information is displayed. What differentiates this study is that it adds a new category of riddle: the astronomical riddle. This category includes everything related to the study of space and the stars. Obviously JRBR 67 fits nicely into this category. In addition, Belkasim & Rifrafi also classify riddles by age when they correlate them to the time period of their inception (2021: 199 -212).

“Multiple topic” core + “Overlapping” descriptive elements of topic

The examples that follow will allow us to observe how formula 7 appears in JRBRs.

JRBR 68

أنشدك عن بنت لها جملة عيال ما فيهم اللي فوق سن الثلاثين
بهم أربعة ما جربوا حرب وقتال فيهم كريم تحتفل به ملايين.
السنة الهجرية, الأشهر الهجرية, الأشهر الحرم, و شهر رمضان.
May I ask you about a woman who has many boys?
No one of her boys is above thirty years.
Four of them do not witness the time of war.
One of them is Generous when millions celebrate in.
The lady is the year,
the boys are the months of Hijri-year;
the four boys are the “Al-Hurm” months
and the generous one is the month of “Ramadan”.

In this poetic riddle, the sequence is initiated with a multiple topic core including “a lady” and “many boys”. The introductory idea is expanded with two more topics from the same group “four boys” and “Generous”, so that a total of four core topics are included. The second part seems to provide overlapping descriptive elements about the topics already presented since each additional element functions as a comment for either the preceding or the following topic. Indeed, the “correct” translation of the first verse could be “a lady has many boys” or “many boys belong to a lady”. This chain of overlapping descriptive elements maintains its connection in the next statements “four of many boys don’t witness the wars’ time” and “one of the boys is generous when millions celebrate in”. In the end, the riddlee who has enough common cultural knowledge to decipher the different elements and what they all

represent will be able to solve at least one of the four different overlapping descriptive elements and, hence, come to understand the rest. We can notice a similar formula in the JRBR examples below.

JRBR 69

أنشدك عن رجال في جوف رجال مكانه الأخيـر بين أخوة له
سبع وثلاثين بناته بلا جدال واسمه حدا البنات يا فاطن له. جزء عم في القرآن.

May I ask you about a man who lives in a man's hollow?

He comes last among his brothers.

Thirty-seven daughters, he has.

His name tires the girls, oh clever.

The first man mentioned is the last chapter of Al-Quran,

Amma's part.

The second man mentioned is Al-Quran.

Brothers are chapters of Al-Quran.

Thirty-seven daughters are the number of “Surahs” in Amma's part.

JRBR 70

شجرة الخمس أغصانها مستقيمة ثلاثة في الظل واثنين في الشمس ديما. الصلوات الخمس.

A tree with five straight branches,
three of them are in the shadows and the other two are in the light.

The tree is the Muslims' prayer.

The branches in the shadows are the Maghrib, Isha, and Alfajer
prayers.

The branches in the light are the Alduher and Asr prayers.

JRBR 71

ميت محروق وملفوف، يحملوه اثنين وثلاثة شهود. السجارة، السبابة والوسطى، وباقي
أصابع اليد.

A rolled, burnt, and dead one is held by two
and seen by three witnesses.

The rolled, burnt, dead one is the cigarette.
The two are the index and the middle fingers.
The three are the other fingers.

JRBR 45

يا من انحكم غياب بالاعدام ذكاه حطم دولة مستقلة
لازال تلقاه البشر بعض الايام مات الحكيم والمتهم في محله
النبي سليمان، الهدهد، ومملكة سبأ في اليمن.

Who was judged in absence by execution?
His smartness smashes an independent state.
Till now, people see him sometimes.
The judge died, and the accused is alive.
The judge is Suleiman, the prophet.
The accused is the Hoopoe.⁶⁵

The independent state is the Sheba kingdom in Yemen.

In JRBR 45, the multiple topic core presents three different unknown elements: the judge, the person executed and why was he judged from afar. Then, the riddlee is presented with several descriptive elements that refer to the other elements as the overlap and seem to form a chain as they provide the riddlee with clues.

The way in which the descriptive elements overlap each other and weave together to provide hints as to the correct solution is patent in the next example as well.

JRBR 72

اسألك عن واحد ابو بنات هو ابوهن بس هن كوننه
لا وقف وقفة توصف ثبات ولا تحرك القوايم دهورنه
البيت الشعري و القوافي.

May I ask you about a girls' father?
Despite his fatherhood, the girls create him.

⁶⁵ Species name: *upupa epops*, also known as the Eurasian hoopoe.

He has a steady organization,
but if the ends move, he will be corrupted.
The poetic verse.

IN JRBR 72, the question that begins the sequence provides the multiple topic core with “girls” and “father”. The descriptive elements add flavor, and perhaps, even some confusion for those seeking to solve this riddle and its implications which rely heavily on shared cultural knowledge. In the end, this is resolved when the “father” is discovered to be the poet and the “girls” his artwork, or the poetic verses that he has composed.

Hence, it appears that the riddle inside a riddle, and the multiple topic poetic JRBRs tend to be the style most favored by Jordanian Bedouin poets because they reflect their inherited culture. They also contain correlations to aphorisms, as in the following JRBR 73, which presents “the three difficulties”.

JRBR 73

ابنشدك وش الثلاث العصبيات اللي يحدن الرجال الشديدة
اللي بهن معذور لو طافت اوقات وانته على وعد الوعد . الحكومة، السيل، والموت.
في اكيد

May I ask you about the three difficulties
which put a heavy burden on strong men?

He who is under their pressure is not to blame if time passes;
you surely keep your promise.

The government, the flood, and the death.

The poet has made use of a common cultural saying which he incorporated into the riddle itself. The idea of “the three difficulties” in JRBR 73 is a clear indication of the somewhat unfriendly relationship with the political system that does not fit with the nature of the Bedouins in terms of freedom of actions and movements. Its meaning

is understood by those who are familiar with the JB culture. Moreover, such riddles allow poetic riddlers to show their extent of poetic ability to create riddles about any topic that comes to their mind with a well-organized image, as in JRBR 74.

JRBR 74

عبد وحر جمعتهم التقادير ورفيق ثالث رافق العبد والحر
ثم عذبه تعذيب يصخف الطير في وسط زلزال به النار تسعر
وبعد العذاب يجوك مشي مسايير بلون واحد ما هقيت يتغير
الماء, الدلو, والحبل.

About a slave and a free man, thrown together by fate,
and a third who accompanied the slave and the free man.

They were tortured, so that even the birds pitied them.

In the midst of an earthquake with fire and flames.

After the torture, they will be brought to you on foot.

They will be of one color; I don't think it will vary.

The slave man is the bucket, the free man is the water,
and the one who accompanied them is the rope.

Once again, it is evident that in this type of JRBR the core topics are culturally related in well-known ways that have to deal with the lifestyle of the JB. The riddlees who share this cultural knowledge are, thus, aware of these cultural concepts and their relationship, and will, therefore, be able to decipher the rest of the topics because of their close connection.

Before moving to the next section, it is fair to say that the poetic riddle is characterized by the use of more polite language than the prose riddle when interacting with the audience. In other words, in the poetic riddle, introductory words and phrases are employed to attract the attention of the listeners. The significance of this ritual can be observed in how these words and phrases are used to compliment the audience, express the riddlers' approval of their knowledge and mental strength,

and to provide the audience with a feeling of the importance of the riddle at the same time that the riddlers try to not create a tense atmosphere when the audience might not quickly solve the riddle. This process has been found to be quite different from prose riddles which tend to be presented in a straightforward manner and without the use of any introductory words that applaud the audience's knowledge. An example is patent in JRBR 69 when it says; "May I ask you about a man who lives in a man's hollow? He comes last among his brothers. Thirty-seven daughters, he has. His name tires the girls, oh clever".

Note that the riddle begins with the word (انشدك, May I ask you). This term or other linguistic derivatives are used in almost all poetic riddles in order to attract the attention of the audience with this single word that serves the combined purpose of being a request and a question. At the end of this riddle, one can see the use of the word (فاطن, clever) to conclude by expressing approval of the audience and encouraging them to find the solution. This indicates two important aspects. First, the author of the riddle shows humility and respect for the audience and second, the riddler pushes the listeners to try to find the most appropriate solution. This use has also been found in JRBR 73 when the riddler ends this poetic riddle with, "you surely keep your promise".

2.4.6 Classification of JRBR Structure by Topic Number

In this final section of our discussion, we develop the idea that certain folklorists have previously extended in their "method of structural classification of riddles" (Georges & Dundes, 1976: 111-118, and Chyet, 1963: 267-292). Even though a few other scholars have referred to this strategy as merely an attempt to find the most beneficial way of indexing riddles for any given collection, we still find it useful. Other scholars have classified the riddles in their corpus according to categories based on the solution or answer to the riddle itself.⁶⁶ In the case at hand, we find this category to be a secondary step which can

⁶⁶ This occurred, for instance, with African riddles which have been classified as per the answer; furthermore, such categorization has gained acceptance for certain Bantu languages. See: Cole-Beuchat (1957: 133-149), Munyambu (2019: 30-44), and Thwala (2017:199-206).

only be carried out after the most significant part of the riddle, or the initiating sequence, should be previously discussed. This is the same method followed by Taylor and other folklorists who have indexed riddles according to the categories based on, at least in the case of riddles in the English language, the elements present in the “question”. The folklorists have had a significant debate on these matters. Taking into account these previous studies, we put forward another new structural category for the JRBR which depends on the structure of the initial sequence, which, at times, is also a question; we will refer to this, as evident in the title of this section, as the *classification of the JRBR structure by topic number*.

Undoubtedly, each cultural area and language may have its own formula. As mentioned earlier in chapter one when dealing with the classification of riddles, there exist various ways to classify riddles: classification based on the answer to the riddle as per the functional approach, classification based on simplicity or complexity as per syntactic approach, and classification according to the structural approach posited by George and Dundes (1963).

In the study at hand, the previous example of our corpus seem to show that the topic(s) of poetic and of certain prose riddles are always the core. Furthermore, the topics for poetic JRBRs are almost never optional or unstated, unlike other JRBR prose riddles that do fit into every different topic category we observed, i.e., core, optional, and unstated, and also contain descriptive elements. Based on these findings a new category of prose riddles is presented below, and it is one that differentiates them according to the number of core topics in each riddle. There are riddles with no topic, riddles with a single topic, and riddles having two, three, and four topics as we can observe in the following examples.

2.4.6.1. The Unstated Topic or “Null-topic” Riddle

The examples of JRBR that appear below all introduce the riddle with a sequence of initiation that does not name the object being described. They are riddles in which the topic is unstated, in other words they are “null-topic” riddles.

JRBR 9

تتعشى عشاك وترقد جنبك. اليد.

Eats your dinner and sleeps beside you. The hand.

JRBR 63

يمشي من غير رأس ويحفر من غير فأس ويقتل من غير رصاص. السيل.

Walks without a head, digs without an ax, kills without bullets.

The flood or the torrent.

JRBR 75

أحلى من السكر وأثقل من القنطار لا يباع في السوق ولا يجيبوه التجار. النوم.

Sweeter than sugar, heavier than Qintar,

Never sold in the market nor brought by merchants.

The sleep.

JRBR 78

له ورق وليس نبات, له جلد وليس حيوان, له علم وليس انسان: الكتاب,
Has leaves but is not a plant, has skin but is not an animal,
Has knowledge but is not a human being.

The book.

When comparing the Arabic original to the literal English translation, one aspect stands out. Unlike the English language in which many verbs, phrases and even complete sentences can make reference to the one doing the action without alluding specifically to its gender, the Arabic language allows for what is called the “implied” pronoun. This type of construction marks the gender of the one doing the action

as either feminine or masculine which, in the end, will help to find the solution or answer to the riddle⁶⁷.

In this way then, we can observe that in JRBR 9, when the riddle is introduced by the “null-topic” phrase “eats your dinner and sleeps beside you”, a native-speaker of Arabic will mentally shift this phrase to mean, “*she* eats your dinner and sleeps beside you”. The same mental shift takes place when a native Arabic speaker tries to solve JRBR 63, JRBR 75, and JRBR 78 and the sentences will be understood to mean, “*he* walks without a head, digs without an ax, kills without bullets”, “*he* is sweeter than sugar, heavier than Qintar, **he is** never sold in the market nor brought by merchants”, and “**it** has leaves, but is not a plant, etc.” respectively.

2.4.6.2. *The Mono-topic Riddle*

As the section name indicates, the JRBR examples included here are riddles that have one only topic in the initiation sequence. Some of the examples in our corpus even use a question format which is quite similar structurally speaking to riddles in the English language.

JRBR 8

وش رجلا تعرفه لا نظرت لجرته ولو كنتم لك هرجته إلا تبين كلها. القلم.

What would you say about a **man**

whom you recognize from his footsteps?

Although he is silent, you understand all of what he says.

The pen/pencil.

⁶⁷ Arabic depends heavily on diacritics, or morphological markers. In these cases, the verb shows the masculine or feminine agreement morphologically. Furthermore, in Arabic, adjectives, like nouns, morphologically index the number and gender features of what they describe.

JRBR 20

قطار بلا دواليب ولكن له ارجل؟
الحريش " ام اربعة واربعين".

A **train** without wheels but that has legs?
The centipede.

JRBR 65

أسألك وافنتي عن علوم رجال يصول بأيدين الرجاجيل ويطول
وإذا اتركوه وما لقي كف شيال يقضي في بيته طول العمر مشلول. السيف.

May I ask you about a **man**?

He twirls and swirls between the men's hands.

If the men left him without use,

he will be paralyzed a long time in his house.

The sword.

JRBR 76

مرسول من الرب لا عنده أم ولا أب يفك الفلاح والراعي من الغلب. المطر.

A **messenger** from Allah has no mother nor father,
releases the farmer and the shepherd from drought.

The rain.

In JRBR 6, JRBR 20, JRBR 65 and JRBR 76, the mono-topic is a “man”, a “train” or a “messenger”, even though, in each case, the answer does not actually have anything to do with human beings or a machine as in JRBR 20. Instead, it is the gender being reflected that helps the riddlee make the mental shift so as to be able to decipher the other subject being described that is masculine in Arabic.

2.4.6.3. *The Double-topic Riddle*

In the following JRBR examples, we can find riddles that have a double topic. This means that instead of having to find one answer to the riddler's question, the audience is expected to figure out both of the answers that fit in the situation being described in the double-topic riddles below.

JRBR 29

انشدك عن رجل سكنت داخله بنت البنت عذرا والنشاما بيونه
الرجل شاف الذل من سكنت البنت والبنت شافت عز عقب المهونه. النمرود والبعوضة.

May I ask you about a **(1) man** who lives in a girl's hollow?

The **(2) girl** is a virgin and the men like the man's position.

The man experienced insult due to the girl's residency.

The girl experienced honor after her lowness.

The man is the Nimrod king of ancient Babel.

The girl is the mosquito that entered the king's head.

JRBR 77

انشد عن رجل ليا طال بك سرت وليا قصر ضاقت عليك الوسيلة
أهو رجل لكن سكن في حزن بنت لا قادر تشريه ولا تبيعه. النظر، ومحجر العين.

May I ask you about a **man**? If he is healthy, you walk.

If he is weak, your life becomes cramped.

He is a man who lives inside a **girl's lap**.

You cannot buy or sell him.

The man is sight.

The girl's lap is the eye⁶⁸.

⁶⁸ With respect to American Indian riddles, Taylor has reported a riddle with a topic similar to JRBR 77: "What travels swiftly? It is eyesight" (1944: 5).

JRBR 81

ابا انشد اصحابنا وش بنت موجودة، ورجالها فوقها تحفظ توازنها، سبحان خلاق كل
ارجالها منها. الأرض والجبال.

May I ask our friends about a **girl** who exists?

She has **men** over her to keep her balance.

Glory to Allah, who creates the men from their mother.

The girl is the land.

The men are the mountains.

As is seen in these examples, JRBR 29 asks about two separate topics that must be deciphered, “man” and “girl”. Interestingly enough, this double topic is quite similar to the other two examples included here, JRBR 77, in which the audience must provide the correct solution for the topics “man” and “girl’s lap”, and JRBR 81, in which the double topic that needs solving is “girl” and “men”.

2.4.6.4. The Triple-topic Riddle

Just as in the previous sections, the JRBR examples listed here all include three topics which are presented at the beginning of the riddle so that the correct answer is not just one noun, but there are three different answers that need to be figured out; in other words, they are examples of triple-topic riddles.

JRBR 38

ثلاثة اخوة: الاول يأكل وما يشبع، والثاني يذهب وما يرجع، والثالث ينام وما يقوم. النار
والدخان والرماد.

Three brothers: the **first** eats and never gets full.

The **second** goes and never comes back.

The **third** one sleeps and never gets up.

The fire, the smoke, and the ash.

JRBR 28

انشدك عن طفل من بطن امه ياخذوه بسطوت الآلات
ويتركوه بحضن بنت تضمه لو تحكه بظهر امه مات. عود الكبريت، علبة الكبريت، يد
الانسان.

May I ask you about a **baby**, taken out of his **mother**'s womb by
machine force?

The baby is then left in the lap of a **girl** to hug him, he dies when
rubbed against his mother's back.

The baby is the matchstick.

The mother is the matchbox, and the girl is the human hand.

JRBR 33

بنشدك عن عذرى تجي للرجاليل يجيها خمسة وهي ماعصتهم
عيالها قدامها يا المشاكيل عيالها لاكلها ماحملتهم. القهوة، أصابع اليد، والفناجيل.

May I ask you about a virgin **girl** who goes to men?

Never disobeyed she is brought by **five**.

She is preceded by her **babies (boys)**, though she has never been
pregnant.

The coffee pot and the cups.

As is patent in the above examples, each riddle requires the audience to provide more than one correct solution; in this case there are three answers. For JRBR 38, they must figure out who the “first”, the “second” and the “third” “brothers” are⁶⁹. In JRBR 28, they must decipher who are the “baby”, the “mother” and the “girl”. Finally, for JRBR 33 the riddles must find out who the “girl”, the “five” and the

⁶⁹ Perkins has recorded this riddle from New Orleans, LA (USA): “I have an apple I can't cut, a blanket I can't fold, and so much money I can't count it. Moon, stars, sky” (1922: 110). This riddle also presents three different topics and, thus, substantiates the universality of riddles from around the world which is most likely based in the universality of language used for human communication.

“boys” are. In this case, the girl represents the *al-dallah*, or coffee pot. the five refer to the five fingers in a hand and the baby boys are the coffee cups.

2.4.6.5. *The Quadruple-topic Riddle*

In this last section, we present some examples of JRBRs in which the riddler asks his / her audience to come up with four different answers to the parts of the riddle; thus, they are examples of quadruple-topic riddles.

JRBR 68

أنشدك عن بنت لها جملة عيال ما فيهم اللي فوق سن الثلاثين
بهم أربعة ما جربوا حرب وقتال فيهم كريم تحتفل به ملايين
May I ask you about a **lady** who has many boys?

None of her **boys** is above thirty years.

Four of them do not witness the time of war.

One of them is Generous when millions celebrate in.

The lady is the year.

The boys are the months of Hijri-year.

The four boys are the Al-Hurm months
and the Generous one is the month of Ramadan.

JRBR 69

أنشدك عن رجال في جوف رجال مكانه الأخيـير بين أخوة له
سبع وثلاثين بناته بلا جدال واسمه حدا البنات يا فاطن له
May I ask you about a **man** who lives in a **man's** hollow?

He comes last among **his brothers**.

Thirty-seven daughters, he has.

His name tires the girls, oh clever.

The first man mentioned is the last chapter of AL-Quran, Amma's part.

The second man mentioned is AL-Quran.

The brothers are chapters of AL-Quran.

Thirty-seven daughters are the number of “Surahs” in Amma's part.

In JRBR 68 and JRBR 69 it is evident that to be successful, instead of one single answer, four different answers to different parts of the riddle must be found by the audience. JRBR 68 asks about the “lady” (woman), her “boys”, the “four” and “one of them”, while JRBR 69 invokes a “man”, another “man’s hollow”, “his brothers” and his “thirty-seven daughters”. Both of these riddles are also very clear examples of the cultural content present in the JRBR that requires the audience to have very specific common shared cultural knowledge about Islam if they are to participate in the riddling event in a felicitous manner. Indeed, in spite of the tendency towards low levels of formal education in the Bedouin population, we have found a high occurrence of the concepts and teachings of Islam to be present in the riddles that form part of our corpus. In fact, this topic, as we have discussed above, seems to be one of the most prevalent ones found in JRBR as substantiated in the riddles that have been presented and whose meanings have to do with the daily worship performed by a Muslim, the five daily prayers and ablution, and also provide references to the seasons of worship that Muslims celebrate, such as the month of Ramadan, the months of Hajj, and some events in the Holy Quran.

We should also remark on the fact that it is quite possible that there exist JRBRs containing even more than four topics. Hopefully, after the world health situation has improved and more movement is allowed between cities, regions and countries, other examples will be collected to confirm this belief.⁷⁰ However, at this time, these results will have to suffice in our effort to demonstrate the flexibility of the Arabic language and its dialects in presenting novel attributions for already existing global theories as well as for us to posit new theories that describe this also very local riddling tradition.

⁷⁰ The COVID pandemic has made it especially difficult to go back and forth in certain areas and regions. Apart from that, the extreme geographic weather conditions of the Badia desert area also makes it challenging, particularly when there exists no cell phone service in these remote areas.

The Jordanian Bedouin dialect, represented in the JRBRs in our corpus, has provided us with a valuable and applicable example for the universal theories discussed here. There is no doubt that the poetic riddles in our corpus, when compared to the prose riddles, play the heartiest role in presenting the original findings that, to the best of our knowledge, have yet to be studied, as explained above.

CONCLUSIONS

Like other national identities, the Jordanian cultural identity seems to involve much pomp and circumstance. However, at the same time, it does collectively furnish the individual with a feeling of belonging to a larger body, and, thus, helps to create his/her pride, which is an essential function of one's national identity. Certainly, one important feature of the Jordanian nationality is its diversity. Since Jordan is made up of a blend of social cultures that have contributed to the making of its cultural identity, this diversity is obviously part of the social fabric that forms Jordanian society. Therefore, one of the main aims of the work at hand was to help explain a particular aspect of the Jordanian Bedu lifestyle as well as to display the rich literary legacy in the area studied. Many people would like to better understand and enjoy Jordanian Bedouin riddles in poems and prose; yet, in those circumstances in which they are not completely familiar with the content, style and sub-dialect found in the JRBRs, they face many obstacles in doing so. This dissertation not only preserves these texts, but also provides those who cannot understand them in Arabic a way to access them in English, thus, it helps in the understanding of the beliefs and worldviews of this people group. Moreover, the English translations presented here may be included in a future publication which represents innovative work in the field of translation studies.

In Jordanian Bedouin society, riddles play an important role in social life; thus, this study has focused on paying attention to this subject from the perspectives put forth by the fields of linguistics, cultural studies, literary and postcolonial studies. By considering the specific topics of oral literature, folklore, narration, and the concept of the riddle itself, the JRBRs presented here have been analyzed.

Furthermore, the research undertaken using the critical apparatus described above and that provided in the structural linguistics definition of the riddle by Georges & Dundes (1963), and also with the addenda that Chyet (1988) posited, has provided several new formulae worthy of consideration. In this way, the study at hand has also revealed a universal link between the riddles presented in this corpus and those present in the oral literary traditions found in societies all over the world. In addition, it may be seen as a potential referent for other analyses on the functions, form and content of riddles in other areas, regions and countries.

More specifically, it has provided research on certain riddles that form part of Jordanian “Nabati” Bedu poems and prose from a linguistic point of view so as to render fresh insight on this area. The existence of several, varied riddle units that differ in how they are worded and in their linguistic style because of the culture in which they originate have been afforded. In this sense, the study at hand has shed light on the relationship of certain linguistic features present in Jordanian Bedouin poetic and prose riddles, and also on the variety of riddle styles, and, thus, provides more complete evidence and knowledge about this particular cultural phenomenon.

However, as in any research project, there exist several areas that have interfered with progress in the study of JRBRs. Yrttiaho has affirmed that one of the primary reasons for the deficiency of written and published academic work on colloquial literary aspects found in Arabic is because researchers tend only to pay special attention to the uses of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and continue to disregard the other modern Arabic dialects which may be seen as mere deviations of *Al-Arabiyya*, as MSA is called in Arabic, and, as such, a restraint that slows down the process of achieving educational, political and religious goals (1988: 145-168). Indeed, in Arab nations with a Bedouin history and tradition, there exists a notable interest in *Adab Albadiya*, which is the Arabic term for anything related to Bedouin literature, yet native investigators may encounter difficulty in collecting samples, as well as later on when they try to publish their work. Other difficulties face foreign researchers who have no experience with the lifestyle and living conditions of the Bedouin background, and who may lack extensive

reading knowledge and appropriate dictionaries when it comes to understanding Bedu poetry. Even so, it is still possible that they may become more at home and accepted in the field when collecting pure prose material.

In addition, it seems that the authorities and certain universities may not be entirely on board about promoting investigation into these literary works, especially poetry. This is because (1) the dialectic features may make them hard to understand, and (2) because, at times, certain censorship rules and regulations prohibit the publication of controversial works. Another point that may distract the focus and attention of scholars' interest is that the chronology of the Bedu tribes and their histories have traditionally been collected orally; thus, they are not easily accessed. Furthermore, there is a fair amount of sensitivity when negative situations have occurred because Bedouins are so sentient about their history that these undesirable events tend to be perceived as insults and it is not socially acceptable or polite to discuss them.

Furthermore, the tradition of riddling and participating in riddling sessions may be at risk itself. In today's society in Jordan, the two main sources that might endanger the survival of the Bedouin literary genres are sedentarization, as has developed due to urbanization, and education. The former has an obvious physical and psychological influence on the Bedu people. When they are not physically close to the desert and begin to live indoors, it often means that people from a certain tribe start to have less contact with each other than they would in traditional circumstances. In second place, education can also take its toll. One of the most impacting results of the educational system is when children are taught the classical genres at school by teachers who come from an urban background. In these cases, the children may not receive enough help if they seek to compose more popular literature on their own, or they may even be subject to humiliation for what a teacher might understand to be a lack of culture. It is obvious that these negative situations do not work in favor of the continuation of certain Bedouin literary traditions.

Along other lines, another rather observable difference in the southern Badia region⁷¹ is that the use of dialects is more complex than one might find in Amman, for instance. In the BR there exists a variety of dialects; moreover, the use of specific lexicon seems to be associated with certain local groups and may even help to differentiate between “the urban farmer” and the “Bedu”; although one might find it hard to determine if this expression of identity manifests itself in a conscious or unconscious way. Be that as it may, in written form, the Jordanian prose riddle tends to appear in MSA; this means that the main distinguishable feature of the Bedouin prose riddle is that the most common form of expression is first oral. In addition, when a Bedouin poetic riddle appears in written form, it still makes use of colloquial lexicon, and even entire phrases, (i.e., initiation structures), that mark it as being different from the accepted MSA poetic style.

One more important technicality that might have hindered the final results afforded in the study at hand that, according to the literature review, this study may be considered as the first of its kind regarding riddles as a literary genre at the local level. This is because no published or unpublished work related to the riddle as a genre by itself was found, except what was recorded above. This may be due to the fact that most researchers in Jordan, who are also university professors, favor the use of quantitatively based research.

Finally, as is common knowledge, when the Corona pandemic erupted in 2020, it disrupted most human activity, crippled human mobility, and forced people to stay indoors for weeks, even months. The ensuing lockdowns were a major limiting factor for any movement during this time and also affected a person’s possibilities of communication to a great extent. The fear of contracting the disease, and even more so of transmitting it, was a considerable factor in the research carried out. Moreover, it patently affected the direct communication with the nomad groups, and even more so when they were residing deep in the desert, in places where mobile phone coverage was non-existent.

However, significant conclusions have been reached in this dissertation. As per the results when the linguistic structural analysis

⁷¹ The author’s homeland.

put forth by Georges and Dundes (1963) was applied to JRBRs it was found that Jordanian Bedouin riddles typically matched their use of this theory. Moreover, JRBRs also match the related extensions set out by Chyet (1988). This was especially true for prose JRBRs which had a better fit than poetic JRBRs. On the other hand, samples of poetic JRBRs were found to represent the casual contradictory, inverse privational contradictory, and multiple descriptive elements.

Thus, after applying both Georges and Dundes and Chyet's methods, and supplying a base from which to work, this study was successful since both of these methods had a good fit and because several new formulas, related specifically to JRBRs were posited in this study as listed below.

1. The Contrastive Oppositional Formula of the JRBR as represented by formula 4:

“Unstated” topic + “Core” comment A + “Core” comment B + “Core” comment C

2. The General Poetic Riddle Formula of the JRBR as represented by formula 5:

“Core” topic + Multiple descriptive elements

3. The Riddle Inside a Riddle Formula as represented by formula 6:

“General comment core” + “Topic 1” core + Comment 1 + “Topic 2” core + Comment 2 + “Topic 3 core” + Comment 3

4. The Multiple Topic Formula as represented by formula 7:

“Multiple topic” core + “Overlapping” descriptive elements of topic

The corpus of riddles presented here also allowed for the introduction of a new type of classification of the JRBR based on the number of core topics in each riddle. In this way, this dissertation substantiated the following types of JRBRs: the unstated-topic or “null-topic” riddle, the mono-topic riddle, the double-topic riddle, the triple-topic riddle, and the quadruple-topic riddle.

Apart for different structures and number of topics in the JRBRs it has also been revealed that, contrary to what Green & Pepicello assert (1984), the origin of the surface orientation is not always directly connected to the production of a grammatical riddle question. Green and Pepicello believe that the grammatical riddle is formed from surface orientation based on speech error and ambiguity. However, the argument presented in this dissertation is that any riddle must have a well-organized form and be socially acceptable within a particular speech community. Scholars take for granted that humans regularly make mistakes when they talk and even produce illogical utterances; nevertheless, many times they are understood because of the context of the interaction. Hence, it is unreasonable to rely on speech errors as a source of origin for riddles. Ambiguity is a process used by the riddler as a way to try to mislead his/her audience, and, as such, requires a certain amount of mental preparation before presenting the riddle. A riddler should evoke both solutions, i.e., the closest linguistic “correct” answer as well as the one that is farthest away. The latter is intended to trick the riddlees who compete to answer first. Finally, it should be pointed out that Green and Pepicello based their conceptualization on both the question and the answer of the riddle, unlike what was evidenced in the study at hand, which is based only on the question part of the riddle sequence.

The findings of this dissertation also imply that there exist areas on which to continue this research in the future. As mentioned earlier, be it a conscious action that is undertaken, or merely an accident, literary genres are produced by blending the lines between given genres, such as riddles with jokes or riddles with erotic expressions. In any case, keeping an eye on how the traditional riddle evolves means that whoever is interested should remain actively aware of what is happening in the future. The riddle genre is a field that can be measured

and, thus, renewed either by how it is classified, or even by a closer investigation of its subgenres.

Perhaps the primary task is still the complete definition of the riddle. Although there seems to be almost nothing new when compared to the established definition, some scholars tend to create new interpretations that suit their cultural environment. In any case, certain questions arise, for example, to what extent is there a need for universal scientific definition as a satisfactory base for the demands of research? Another question that might be posed is, are the differences in riddle definitions related to ethnic differences? If such a definition, or base is reached, it may need to take into account various levels, such as structural, pragmatic, semantic, content, stylistic, and social features. But before that happens, many multiple research hypotheses should be applied by the further examination of riddles in the field because there are still many societies in which the practice of true riddles, and participating in riddling events in ways that reflect their folklore, form part of their existing oral literary traditions.

Apart from a certain number of subgenres examined by scholars in the past few decades, remarkable large and exciting projects still remain to be investigated. Establishing universal terminologies comprising all the subgenres of the riddle and their indexes is a further recommended step. Why do true riddles and other subgenres appear more widely spread than others? Why have different people at different times and in different societies become accustomed to using them? And what is the image and the position of the riddle and the riddling act in rural societies where herding and farming still take place versus more modern, manufacturing ones?

Therefore, the need for better cooperation between riddle scholars is required. This is true as well for studies to identify the form, content, subgenres, performance, origin, function, and distribution of the different types of riddles, and would require the active participation of many local and perhaps international scholars. Returning to the work at hand, until this time, and as per the review of literature presented above, in Jordan, no exhaustive studies have been made regarding riddles except the ones that were previously mentioned in this text.

The riddle in different countries in the Arab world may stem from the same source, although there seem to be variations in how they are structured, and the lexicon that is employed to create them. These differences are most likely due to the various Arabic dialects that characterize each country as well as their own regional dialects. The preliminary investigative study by Chyet (1988) has proven that the Arabic language is distinct, and that it contains valuable linguistic phenomenon that deserve to be investigated. It seems that the need for an in-depth study regarding Arab countries is an inevitable necessity in reaching important goals such as how riddles are similar, how they have developed, and how different cultures deal with them. In Jordan, a first step might be to find the link between the Bedouin riddle and the riddle in rural and urban areas, so as to continue the comparison of various riddle aspects.

Furthermore, on a more general level, the necessity to study the similarity between riddles, i.e., universally, becomes more patent due to the presence of certain similar riddles that originated in different societies around the world. At times, they seem to match in topic and, at others, in the formulas observed here. Tracing the origin of riddles is an interesting topic that might well be conducted in several studies to reveal the main origin of a given riddle and how the topics of the riddles were transmitted between different cultures. As described in section 2.3, JRBR 19, the hookah riddle, is a good example of this.

The riddle has the ability to develop and transform. In light of the acceleration of technological progress in contemporary times, types of traditional riddles have started to be presented in the form of texts, pictures, and even games on smartphones and social networks. The use of smartphones and social media to form folklore genres has been observed very closely by folklorists. They have recorded examples to show how traditional narrative structures of particular types, such as jokes and riddles, have shared an exciting transformation in displaying text and context. Some riddles have developed with the progression of advanced technology; nowadays it is mainly those generated on the Internet. Without a doubt, the primary purpose is the entertainment that results from the challenge being made. Research on how this

transformation is taking place between past and present would also be welcome.

In addition, there is the specific community of the Bedouin to consider in further research carried out on linguistic aspects of this group, not just on a dialectical or phonological level, but also as regards poetic devices, colloquial expressions, musical choices, and such. Finally, yet another direction of investigation might be the language of Bedouin youth. Today young people make up the distinguished majority in most Jordanian Bedouin areas, yet we hardly have any specifics as per youth language usage in Bedu areas.

In any case, riddles must be regarded as genuine folklore since they are created, circulated and accessible within societies that have a common cultural component that qualifies them as a folk group. On a national level, great attention is needed from different institutions, both governmental and private, to take care of a nation's folklore, which presents and preserves its local identity. One should remember that those who do not boast about their folklore will not boast about their present or future.

As made patent by this dissertation, the Arabic language is an elegant one that can comprehend any linguistic phenomena observed in other languages, and at the same time add new linguistic phenomena that may not be found in other languages. When reference is made to the Arabic language, it means that around twenty Arab countries extending from Morocco in the west to Iraq in the east are being considered. There exist hundreds of local dialects within the countries contained in this large geographical extension. There is no doubt that each region has its unique dialect, vocalizations, and terminology that distinguishes it from others, and thus the great literary and artistic diversity in the oral literary and folklore traditions of each country, race, and area.

This research has presented an initial and straightforward idea of the capabilities and contributions that the Arabic language and its dialects can make to any global theory related to language and its characteristics at the same time that it has preserved the corpus of riddles included as significant elements of oral literature that can be used in other research projects in the future, especially due to the

inclusion of their English translation. This dissertation has introduced the JRBR system based on a structural linguistics theory as applied to a corpus of local riddles and has proven that JRBRs are systematic and rule-governed to the extent that they show universal correlations as well as specific patterns that can be explained with international theories. Furthermore, it has been successfully proven that JRBR features can account for new categories of the riddle as an extension to the universality of the riddle occurring in every literate or illiterate nation. In addition, this study has shown satisfactory results since new types of structural riddle formula have been developed as well as additional new classifications based on the number of topics present in JRBRs as well as the variation that exists between prose and poetic riddles. This, in turn, may serve as a referent for future analyses on the function, form, and content of riddles in other geographical areas.

Finally, the ideas included in the study at hand may help to form a transitional view of riddle aspects that could lead to new comprehensive research projects investigating the Arabic of various sub-ethnicities in Jordan and the surrounding nations, which might lead to the remapping of riddle groups with particular interests in colloquial Bedouin poetry. The Bedu have their own methods when it comes to expressing themselves. They depend on older community members' knowledge to determine how the riddle will be created and who will participate in the riddle exchange. Despite the drastic life changes the Bedu have undergone lately, and more often than not, without the same technology that others have grown accustomed to in today's world, their traditional way of doing things is still of great interest to many scholars. Since there do not seem to be enough studies published on the local, social knowledge of the Bedu people from the South-east Badia region, it can be confirmed that the logical continuation of the study at hand is to research this subject. Furthermore, future investigations carried out would do well to focus on the local-literary genres, as well as certain factors related to the Bedouins' recognition of the variability of language.

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APPENDIX: CORPUS OF JORDANIAN RIDDLES FROM THE BADIA REGION

Each example appears in the original Arabic and is followed by a literal English translation.

JRBR 1

ورقة فوق ورقة، شو هي؟ الملفوف او البصل.
Leaf upon leaf, what is she?
Cabbage or onion.

JRBR 2

ما هو الذي يطير في السماء؟ العصفور.
What is a thing that flies in the sky?
A bird.

JRBR 3

تشوفه وما تلبسه، وتلبسه ولا تشوفه. الكفن.
You see it and never wear it,
you wear it and never see.
The coffin.

JRBR 4

يمشي على الاقدام ما جابته بيضه ولا ارحام. آدم عليه السلام.
Walks on feet never generated from eggs nor wombs.

Adam.

JRBR 5

لو لاهم ما شفتك. العيون
If not for them, I wouldn't see you.
Eyes.

JRBR 6

كم زوجا من الحيوانات حملها سيدنا موسى عليه السلام في السفينة قبل الطوفان؟ لا أزواج
لأن نوح عليه السلام هو الذي حملهم.
How many pairs of animals did our master Moses, peace be upon him,
carry onto the ship (ark) before the flood?
There are no pairs because Noah, peace be upon him, was the one
who carried them.

JRBR 7

الشمس. يستيقظ في النهار وينام في الليل؟
She sleeps at night and wakes up during the day?
The sun.

JRBR 8

وش رجلا تعرفه لنظرت الى جرته ولو كتم لك هرجته إلا تبين كلها. (القلم).
What would you say about a man
whom you recognize from his footsteps?
Although he is silent, you understand all of what he says.
The pen / pencil.

JRBR 9

تتعشى عشاك وترقد بذاك. اليد.
Eats your dinner and sleeps beside you.

The hand.

JRBR 10

له شعر اسود وبطنه ذهب ورجله حطب. القمح.
He has black hair, a golden abdomen, and a wooden foot.
The wheat stalk.

JRBR 11

جماعة في حانوت اللي يطلع منهم يموت. اعواد الثقاب.
A group inside a store, he who steps out will die.
Matches.

JRBR 12

يأكل من غير فم؟ النار.
Eats without a mouth?
The fire.

JRBR 13

شيء يركض وما له اقدم. النهر.
A thing that runs but can't walk.
The river.

JRBR 14

كلما تحرك خطوة, فقد جزء من ذيله. ابرة الخياطة
Whenever it moves a step, it loses some of its tail?
A sewing needle.

JRBR 15

ما الذي يحمل طعامه فوق راسه؟ القلم.
A thing that carries its food on its head?

The pen.

JRBR 16

اطول من بغير أصغر من قدم. العصفور.
Higher than a camel and lower than a foot.
The sparrow.

JRBR 17

وين البحر اللي ما به ماء؟ بحر الخريطة.
Where is the sea where there is no water?
The sea on the map.

JRBR 18

حجرة وما هي حجرة تأكل الحشيش وما هي بماعر ولا غنم. السلحفاة.
A stone and not a stone, eats grass, and not a goat nor a sheep.
The turtle.

JRBR 19

بنيه صغيرة وتحمل النار فوق رأسها. الشيشة.
A little girl that holds fire on her head.
The hookah.

JRBR 20

قطار بلا دواليب ولكن له أرجل. الحرش " ام اربعة واربعين
A train without wheels but that has legs?
The centipede.

JRBR 21

انشدك عن عذرى تبكي بلا دموع؟ الشمعة.
May I ask you about a virgin who cries without tears?

The candle.

JRBR 22

ينبض بلا قلب. الساعة.
She beats heartless. The watch.

JRBR 23

يقرصك ولا تراه؟ الجوع.
He pinches you without hands?
The hunger.

JRBR 24

تشوف كل شيء وما لها عيون. المرأة.
She sees everything but has no eyes.
The mirror.

JRBR 25

شيء يبكي من غير عيون ويمشي من غير اقدام. الغيمة.
She cries without eyes and walks without feet.
The cloud.

JRBR 26

تحبيب عيال ولا تحمل ابدا. الاذن وشمع الاذن.
She delivers babies, but she is never pregnant.
The ear and earwax.

JRBR 27

انشدك عن رجل يصلي ولا يصوم
ولو ما توضى ما عليه إلتزام
وإذا سجد في بعض الاوقات ما يقوم
ما يستطيع من السجود القيام
رجل له التقدير مع كافة القوم
و يحظى مع التقدير الاحترام. العقال.

May I ask you about a man, who prays but does not fast?
He has no obligation if he does not do the ablution.
He sometimes kneels, he cannot stand up again.
He has no ability to recover standing-up after he has kneeled.
He is a man who enjoys high esteem among all his people.
In addition to the high esteem he enjoys, he is respected.
The headband.

JRBR 28

انشدك عن طفل من بطن امه ياخذوه بسطوت الآلات
ويتركوه بحضن بنت تضمه لو تحكه بظهر امه مات. عود الكبريت.
May I ask you about a baby, taken out of his mother's womb by
machine force?
The baby is then left in the lap of a girl to hug him, he dies when
rubbed against his mother's back.
Matches.
The mother is the matchbox, and the girl is the human hand.

JRBR 29

انشدك عن رجل سكن داخله بنت البنت عذرى و النشامى بيونه
الرجل شاف الذل من سكنت البنت والبنت شافت عز عقب المهونه. النمرود والذبابه.
May I ask you about a man who is resided by a girl inside his hollow?
The girl is virgin and the men like the man's position.
The man experienced insult due to the girl's residency.
The girl experienced honor after the lowness.
The Nimrod King of Babel, and the mosquito.

JRBR 30

جانا ضيف، ضيفناه وكتفناه. الطفل المولود.
A guest came to us; we tied him up after serving him.

The newborn baby.

JRBR 31

تبكي دوم بعين واحدة. (عين الماء).
She cries a lot with one eye.
The water spring.

JRBR 32

حجمه حجم الليمونه ويملاً البيت وعيونه.
Its size is the size of a lemon, and it fills up a room.
The light bulb.

JRBR 33

بنشدك عن عذرى تجي للرجايل يجيها خمسة وهي ما عصتهم
عيالها قدامها يا المشاكيل عيالها لآكنها ما حملتهم. الدلة والفناجين.
May I ask you about a virgin girl who goes to men?
Never disobeyed is brought by five.
She is preceded by her babies, though she has never been pregnant.
The coffee pot and the cups.

JRBR 34

يمشي على الأرض ورأسه فوق النجوم. الضابط.
He walks on earth, and his head is above stars.
The officer.

JRBR 35

ينشده الناس، فإذا جاء اختبأوا. المطر.
People request his presence, but if he comes, they hide.
The rain.

JRBR 36

شيء يكسو الناس وهو بدون ملابس. الإبرة.
A thing that clothes people, while he is naked.
The needle.

JRBR 37

يدخل مبلول ويخرج ناشف. الخبز.
He goes in wet and comes out dried.
The bread.

JRBR 38

ثلاثة إخوة واحد يأكل ما يشبع وواحد يذهب ما يرجع والأخر يرقد ما يقوم. النار، الدخان،
والرماد.
Three brothers, the first eats and never gets full.
The second goes and never comes back.
The third one sleeps and never gets up.
The fire, the smoke, and the ash.

JRBR 39

اخضر من الخارج احمر من الداخل. البطيخ.
He looks green outside, red inside.
The watermelon.

JRBR 40

شيء تحمله ويحملك. الحذاء

You carry it, and at the same time, it carries you.
The shoe.

JRBR 41

. يؤخذ منك قبل ان يعطى لك. الصورة
It is taken before it is given to you.
The photograph.

JRBR 42

انا طويل عندما اكون صغيرا في العمر وقصير عندما اكبر. الشمعة
I'm tall when I'm young and short when I get older.
The candle.

JRBR 43

كلي ثقوب واحفظ الماء. الاسفنج.
Despite my holes, I keep water.
The sponge.

JRBR 44

ابنشدك عن بنت لها ريش وجناح؟ تسبيق جميع الطير وما تطير. العين.
May I ask you about a girl who has a feather and a wing?
She can precede all kinds of birds though she cannot fly.
The eye.

JRBR 45

يا من انحكم غيابين بالاعدام ذكاه حطم دولة مستقلة
لازال تلقاه البشر بعض الايام مات القاضي والمتهم في محله. هدهد سليمان.
Who was judged in absence by execution?
His smartness smashes an independent state.
Till now, people see him sometimes.

The judge died, and the accused is alive.
The judge is Suleiman, the prophet.
The accused is the Hoopoe.
The independent state is the Sheba kingdom in Yemen.

JRBR 46

انشد عن عذرى تيكي بلبا دموع وعمرها يفنى بكثرة بكاها
هي مالها ركبة وما لها كوع والناس تشرىها وتظهر بكاها. الشمعة.
May I ask you about a virgin girl who cries without tears?
Her age perishes because of her tears.
She has neither knee nor elbow.
Despite her tears, people buy her.
The answer is the candle.

JRBR 47

أنشدك عن رجل بلا رجلين وله عند الناس قدر ومكانه. ملك الموت.
May I ask you about a man who has no feet.
He is respected and has a high position.
The angel of death.

JRBR 48

طير يطير في الببغاء بدون ريش ولا منقار. السراب.
A bird flies in the desert.
It has neither feathers nor a beak.
The mirage.

JRBR 49

ينام وما يستطيع القيام. الرماد
He sleeps and never wakes up.

The ash.

JRBR 50

حلوة ومغرورة وتلبس مئة تنورة، من هي؟ الخس.

A beautiful and arrogant girl wears a hundred skirts,
who is she?
The lettuce.

JRBR 51

أربع مطارق جالسات في بئر غارق. الحوار في بطن الناقة

Four long sticks sitting in a deep well.
The camel fetus.

JRBR 52

بنت السلطان تلبس مئة فستان. البصلة.

The sultan's daughter wearing 100 headdresses.
The onion.

JRBR 53

سيدة ضخمة تحمل اطنان ولا تحمل مسمار. السفينة

A huge lady carries weight but cannot carry a nail.
The ship.

JRBR 54

شي اسمه مثل لونه؟ البيضة.

A thing, its name is like its color.
The egg.

JRBR 55

شي يمشي ويوقف، ولكن ليس له أرجل. الساعة
A thing that walks and stands but has no legs.
The clock.

JRBR 56

شي يكتب وما يقرأ. القلم
A thing that writes yet never reads.
The pen / pencil.

JRBR 57

يدور ولا يتعب، ويأكل وما يشرب. الرحي.
She revolves and never gets tired.
She eats, yet never drinks.
The hand mill.

JRBR 58

أرجل خشبية ورأس ذهبية. سنبله القمح
Wooden legged with a golden head.
The wheat stalk.

JRBR 59

أميرة صغيرة وتحمل على رأسها نار. الشمعة
A little princess that carries a fire on her head.
The candle.

JRBR 60

شيء يأكل و لا يشبع وعندما يشرب يموت. النار

A thing that eats but does not get satisfied, and water kills it.
The fire.

JBBR 61

يملك جسم اسود وقلب ابيض و راس اخضر. الباذنجان.
He has a black body, a white heart, and a green head.
The aubergine.

JRBR 62

اخضر في الأرض واسود في السوق واحمر في البيت. الشاي.
Green on the ground, black in the market, and red at home.
The tea.

JRBR 63

يمشي من غير رأس ويحفر من غير فأس ويقتل من غير رصاص. السيل.
Walks without a head, digs without an ax, kills without bullets.
The torrent.

JRBR 64

الجبال مسكنه، وبين الرجال مجلسه، ثوب الحرير ملبسه. الصقر.
The mountains are his home, between men is his place,
though he wears women's clothing.
The falcon.

JRBR 65

أسألك وافتنني عن علوم رجال يصول بأيدين الرجاجيل ويطول
وإذا اتركوه وما لقي كف شيال يقضي في بيته طول العمر مشلول. السيف.

May I ask you about a man?

He twirls and swirls between the men's hands.

If the men left him without use,

he will be paralyzed for a long time in his house.

The sword.

JRBR 66

ثلاثة عبروا الجسر: الأول شاف الجسر ومشى عليه، والثاني شاف الجسر ولم
يمشي عليه، والثالث ما شاف الجسر ولم يمشي عليه. ام حامل و تحمل طفلها.

Three across a bridge: the first saw the bridge and walked on,

the second saw the bridge but didn't walk on,

the third didn't see the bridge or walk on.

A pregnant woman holding a little boy.

JRBR 67

ثلاث اخوان، لهم نفس الاسم و افعاله مختلفة: الأول، في السماء بيد الرحمن، والثاني في
ايدك، والثالث، إذا يلمس، يقتل.

برج العقرب، عقرب الساعة، والعقرب.

Three brothers have the same name, but their actions vary.

The first, in the sky is moving by the Most Gracious.

The second is in your hands,

and the third, when he touches, he kills.

The Scorpio Sagittarius, hour hand, and the scorpion.

JRBR 68

أنشدك عن بنت لها جملة عيال ما فيهم اللي فوق سن الثلاثين
بهم أربعة ما جربوا حرب وقتال فيهم كريم تحنفل به ملايين.
السنة الهجرية, الأشهر الهجرية, الأشهر الحرم, وشهر رمضان.
May I ask you about a woman who has many boys?
None of her boys is above thirty years.
Four of them do not witness the time of war.
One of them is generous when millions celebrate in.
The lady is the year.
The boys are the months of Hijri-year.
The four boys are the 'Al-Hurm' months
and the generous one is Ramadan month.

JRBR 69

أنشدك عن رجال في جوف رجال مكانه الأخير بين أخوة له
سبع وثلاثين بناته بلا جدال واسمه حدا البنات يا فاطن له. جزء عم في القرآن.
May I ask you about a man who lives in a man's hollow?
He comes last among his brothers.
Thirty-seven daughters, he has.
His name tires the girls, oh clever.
The first man mentioned is the last chapter of Al-Quran,
Amma's part.
The second man mentioned is Al-Quran.
The brothers are chapters of Al-Quran.
Thirty-seven daughters are the number of "Surahs" in Amma's part.

JRBR 70

شجرة الخمس أغصانها مستقيمة ثلاثة في الظل واثنين في الشمس ديمًا. الصلوات الخمس

A tree with five straight branches,
three of them are in the shadows and the other two are in the light.

The tree is the Muslims' prayer.

The branches in the shadows are the Maghrib, Isha, and Alfajer
prayers.

The branches in the light are the Alduher and Asr prayers.

JRBR 71

ميت محروق وملفوف، يحملوه اثنين وثلاثة شهود.

السيجارة، السبابة والوسطى، وباقي أصابع اليد.

A rolled, burnt, and dead one is held by two
and seen by three witnesses.

The rolled, burnt, dead one is the cigarette.

The two are the index and the middle fingers.

The three are the other fingers.

JRBR 72

اسألك عن واحد ابو بنات هو ابوهن بس هن كوننه
لا وقف وقفة توصف ثبات ولا تحرك القوايم دهورنه
البيت الشعري و القوافي.

May I ask you about a girl's father?

Despite his fatherhood, the girls create him.

He has a steady organization,

but if the ends move, he will be corrupted.

The poetic verse.

JRBR 73

ابنشدك وش الثلاث العصبيات اللي يحدن الرجال الشديدة
واللي بهن معذور لو طافت اوقات وانتة على وعد الوعد اكيد.
الحكومة, السيل, و الموت.

May I ask you about the three difficulties
which put a heavy burden on strong men?

He who is under their pressure is not to blame if time passes;
you surely keep your promise.

The government, the flood, and the death.

JRBR 74

عبد وحر جمعتهم التقادير ورفيق ثالث رافق العبد والحر
ثم عذبه تعذيب يصخف الطير في وسط زلزال به النار تسعر
وبعد العذاب يجوك مشي مسايير بلون واحد ما هقيت يتغير
الماء, الدلو, والحبل.

About a slave and a free man, thrown together by fate,
and a third man who accompanied the slave and the free man.

They were tortured, so that even the birds pitied them,
in the midst of an earthquake with fire and flames.

After the torture, they will be brought to you on foot;
they will be of one color; I don't think it will vary.

The slave is the bucket, the free man is the water,
and the man who accompanied them is the rope.

JRBR 75

75 أحلى من السكر وأثقل من القنطار لا يباع في السوق ولا يجيبوه التجار. النوم.

Sweeter than sugar, heavier than Qintar,
never sold in the market nor brought by merchants.

The sleep.

JRBR 76

مرسول من الرب لا عنده أم ولا أب يفك الفلاح والراعي من الغلب. المطر.

A messenger from Allah has no mother nor father,
releases the farmer and the shepherd from drought.

The rain.

JRBR 77

انشد عن رجل ليا طال بك سرت وليا قصر ضاقت عليك الوسيلة
أهو رجل لكن سكن في حضن بنت لا قادر تشريه ولا تبيعه. النظر، ومحجر العين.

May I ask you about a man? If he is healthy, you walk.

If he is weak, your life becomes cramped.

He is a man who lives inside a girl's lap.

You cannot buy or sell him.

The man is sight.

The girl's lap is the eye.

JRBR 78

له ورق وليس نبات, له جلد وليس حيوان, له علم وليس انسان. الكتاب.
Has leaves but is not a plant, has skin but is not an animal,
has knowledge but is not a human being:
The book.

JRBR 79

لا يتكلم, اذا اكل قال الحقيقة, واذا جاع كذب. الساعة.
She does not speak;
if she eats, she tells the truth,
and if she is hungry, she lies.
The watch.

JRBR 80

يملك شعر اسود وبطن ذهب و رجل خشب. القمح.
She has black hair, a golden abdomen, and a wooden foot?
The wheat stalk.

JRBR 81

ابا انشد اصحابنا وش بنت موجودة, ورجالها فوقها تحفظ توازنها, سبحان خلاق كل
ارجالها منها. الأرض والجبال.
May I ask our friends about a girl who exists?
She has men over her to keep her balance.
Glory to Allah, who creates the men from their mother.
The girl is the land.
The men are the mountains.

This research project analyzes Jordanian Bedouin riddles from the Ras Alnaqb area of the Badia region. First a corpus of Nabati Jordanian riddles were collected and considered from a linguistic, cultural studies, and post-colonial studies perspective. The resulting qualitative study is composed of two parts. The first discusses certain historical, social, and cultural aspects to be considered. The second section outlines earlier studies on Arabic riddles from other areas as well as previous work done on Jordanian riddles. Next it presents the corpus collected, discusses the cultural and structural findings and puts forth new formulae to use in the classification of Jordanian Bedouin riddles.