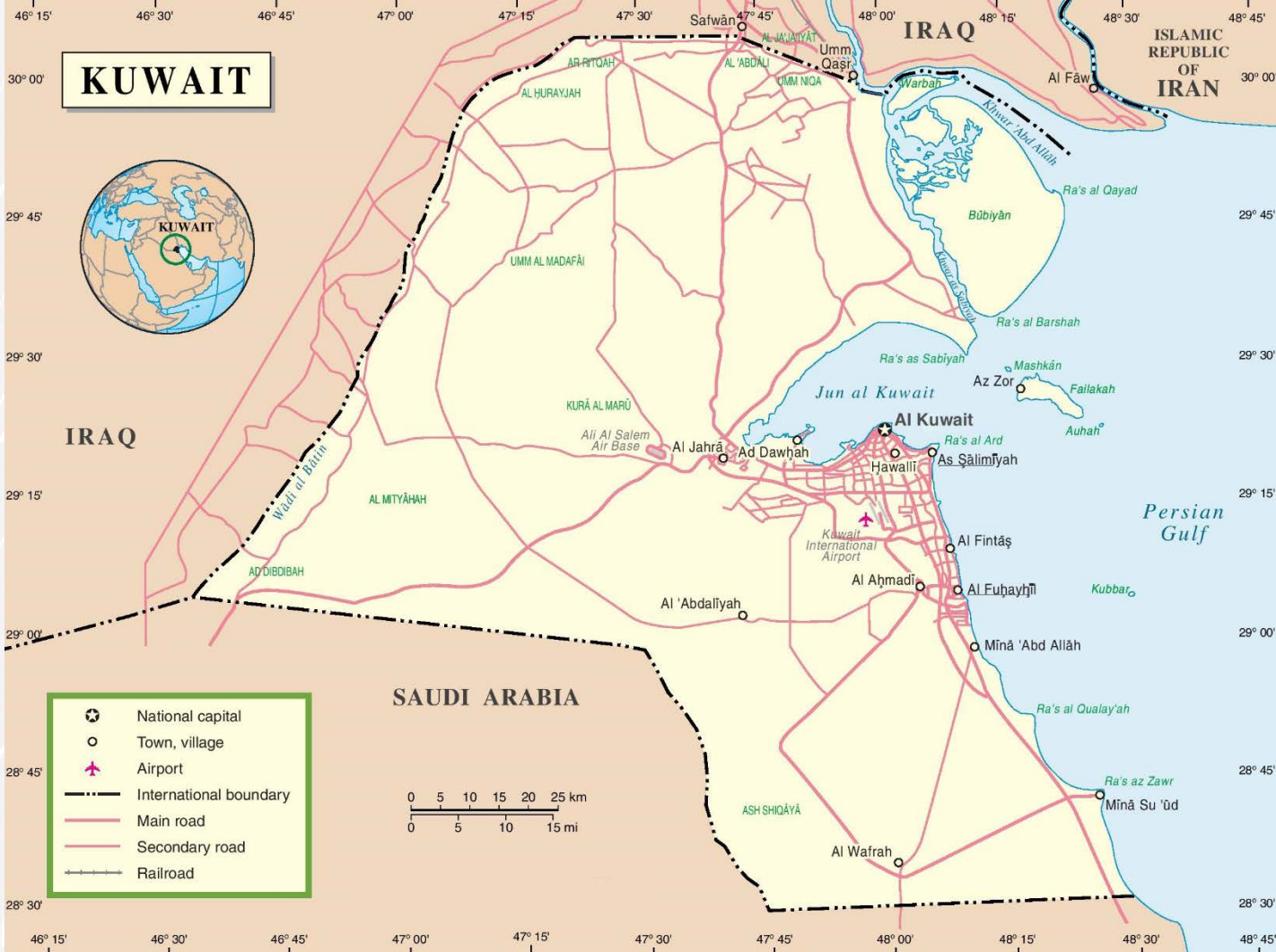


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**The Persian Dialects of the
'*Ajam* in Kuwait**



1. Al-Ghānim, Gh. Y. al-Š.: *Aṣālat al-Kuwaitīyīn*. Al-Kuwait, 2013. [The Origin of the Kuwaitis]
2. Jamāl, M. ‘A.: *Aswāq al-Kuwait al-Qadīma*. Al-Kuwait, 2004. [The Old Souks of Kuwait]

Kuwait – *kūt* ‘fortress-like house surrounded by a settlement’; diminutive pattern *fu‘ail*

Kuwaiti family names: Bahbahānī, Aškanānī, Lārī, Daštī, al-Būšahrī, Qābandī, al-Bastakī

Persianized Arabs ↔ Arabized Persians: the '*Ajam* العجم

'*Ajam* is “the name given in medieval Arabic literature to the non-Arabs of the Islamic empire, but applied especially to the Persians.” (Bosworth 2011)

“The term [could also] be applied to any of the speakers of non-Arabic languages with whom the conquering Arabs came into contact.” (Bosworth 2011)

The '*Ajam* in the contemporary Persian Gulf states: citizens of Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and the UAE whose families originally hail from Persia.

Pronunciation in Gulf Colloquial Arabic: 'ē \bar{m} ī (sing.) and 'ayam (pl.)

Three major dividing lines in Kuwaiti society

1. *Ḥaḍar* الحضر 'city dwellers', sedentary population ↔

Badū البدو 'Bedouin', non-sedentary population

Trade, artisanship, pearl diving, shipbuilding ↔

Camel breeding, animal husbandry, agriculture

2. *Sunnī* ↔ *Shī'ī* Muslims

3. 'Arab العرب ↔ 'Ajam العجم

al-Tarākmaḥ

التراکمة

- Phonology:

- Arabic voiced pharyngeal fricative *‘ain*, instead of Persian glottal stop (*ba‘d* ‘after’)
- Unvoiced counterpart, *tašrīḥ* ‘anatomy’, *nâjeḥ* ‘successful’, instead of the Persian voiceless glottal fricative
- Arabic emphatic consonants retained: *šād* (*kalāš* ‘finished, complete’), *ḍād* (*maḍmūn* ‘included’), *ṭā* (*ṭibb* ‘medicine’)
- Arabic voiced labio-velar approximant *wāw* (*awwal* ‘first’, *dowwom* ‘second’, *Kuweit*), instead of the Persian voiced labiodental fricative

- Lexicon:

tānawīya ‘secondary [school]’, *raftom sīš* ‘I went to him’; *ī bačče* ‘this boy’

al-Bahbahāniya البهبائية

- Me‘mārī, M.: *Barresī va Towṣīf-e Zabānšenâktī-ye Gūyeš-e Behbahānī*. Ahvâz: Entešârât-e Kerdegâr, 1389.
- Nešâtī, F.: *Tabâršenâsī-ye Vâžegân dar Gūyeš-e Behbahānī*. Qom: Entešârât-e Żohūr, 1391.
- Râstī Behbahānī, A.: *Gūyeš-e Behbahānī (Dastūr-e Şarfī, Vâžegân-e Ma‘mūl)*. Tehrân: Tarḥ va Ejrâ-ye Ketâb, 1388.

| | | | |
|---|---|-------------------|-----------------------|
| šomâ | > | koṭâ | ‘you (pl.)’ |
| dīg | > | dīč | ‘yesterday’ |
| čoč | > | ârâm | ‘calm’ |
| šass-am / šass-a / šas / šass-im / šass-i / šass-en | > | | |
| šass-iam / šass-ia / šass-e / šass-eim / šass-ei / šass-ien | | | ‘I sat, etc.’ |
| Te-t nâme nevešt. | | | ‘You wrote a letter.’ |
| Ošu-šo Ḥasan dīt. | > | Ošu Ḥasan-še dīt. | ‘They saw Ḥasan.’ |

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