

# Beyond Words: A Linguistic and Cultural Analysis of Tribe's Image in Jordanian Proverbs

Safwat al rousan

Department of Sociology, Al-Balqa' Applied University, Jordan

Rami Al-Jbour

University of Science and Technology of Fujairah, UAE;  
Al-Balqa' Applied University, Jordan

Rafat M. Al Rousan

Department of Translation, Yarmouk University, Jordan

Malak AlRousan

Department of World Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics, West Virginia University, USA

Hala Hassan

Advancement Department, Birzeit University, Palestine

**Abstract**—Proverbs, as a form of cultural expression, encapsulate long-standing human experiences. Proverbs associated with the tribe reflect a distinct form of social organization in Arab societies, including Jordan. This study examines the image of the tribe in the popular proverbs in Jordanian culture. The corpus of the study consists of 42 Jordanian proverbial expressions related to the tribe. The data were obtained from 36 students studying at Al-Balqa Applied University and Yarmouk University, Jordan. This study adopts Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions theory. The proverbs were organized using content analysis methods into five key cultural themes or dimensions, linking their linguistic meanings to their cultural connotations. These themes include collective identity, blood ties, a sense of strength, pride in lineage, and leadership. The study has concluded that investigating the tribe through popular proverbs is an important means of understanding the nature of Jordanian culture. The findings have also indicated that the tribe persists in the collective consciousness and people's everyday lives. Some recommendations for future studies have been suggested.

**Index Terms**—proverbs, tribe, Jordan, culture, linguistics, sociology

## I. INTRODUCTION

Popular proverbs associated with the tribe reflect a distinct form of social organization in Arab societies, including Jordan, and are firmly grounded in historical Bedouin and rural life. Therefore, these proverbs cannot be judged through the lens of contemporary urban society, as they are embedded in a specific social and historical context that shaped Jordanian values and ways of life (Shabi, 2022). As a cultural reservoir, Proverbs express society's self-awareness, illustrating both progress and backwardness (Al Rousan & Shatnawi, 2023). They are a fundamental component of intellectual life, easily understood, accepted, and circulated due to their rhythmic and memorable structure.

Proverbs, as a form of cultural expression, encapsulate long-standing human experiences. Linguistically, they are concise yet rich in meaning, reflecting societal customs, traditions, and values. Their ability to convey ancestral experiences makes them deeply resonant with people's emotions, reinforcing their significance in daily life (Eid, 2023, p. 63). Moreover, they serve as one of the most direct means of communication, capturing the complexities of social life across different class dimensions (Al-Kuwari, 2005, p. 97).

Beyond their linguistic function, proverbs construct social discourse by embedding meanings within their imagery and words. Their interpretation arises from the interplay between language and cultural implications (Zubair, 2017). In Jordan, proverbs are prominent in shaping social beliefs, reflecting positive and negative connotations. While they reinforce values such as pride, strength, loyalty, and unity, they can also foster divisions by distinguishing individuals based on tribal affiliations. Critics argue that tribal proverbs sometimes promote exclusivity and discrimination, emphasizing differences even on a geographical level (Barakat, 2009). Research examining either the linguistic or the cultural aspects cannot avoid its influence on people's past, present, and future.

The tribe is primarily a social structure that extends from the family and is characterized by a specific kinship hierarchy that aligns with a unique residential system. The tribe remains a vital social structure in Jordan, exerting a lasting influence on political and social life. In the Jordanian collective consciousness, the tribe symbolizes identity, loyalty, and a spiritual entity (Bsharat & Al-Aqaili, 2016). It is regarded as a social organization ensuring its members'

security and stability. It represents a set of values and norms that shape a well-established society based on solidarity, cooperation, and mutual support (Al-Zyoud & Al-Shtaywi, 2000). Despite efforts to integrate the tribe into modern state institutions, it persists in the people's collective consciousness (Al-Afif & Saleh, 2006).

Hofstede's (1980) Theory offers a helpful framework for analyzing Jordanian tribal identity and values represented in Jordanian popular proverbs. This theory will help us identify fundamental tribal values and dimensions that shape Jordanian values, social relations, and behaviours. Moreover, Hofstede's theory systematically comprehends how linguistic expressions in proverbs emphasize tribal values in Jordanian society.

Despite its significance, the portrayal of the tribe in Jordanian proverbs remains underexplored. This study examines the image of the Jordanian tribe in Jordanian cultural proverbs. It aims to examine how Jordanian cultural proverbs construct the image of the tribe in relation to values such as loyalty, power, respect, and unity. By analyzing linguistic expressions that prioritize collective identity over individualism, this study will highlight how proverbs embed tribal values into social behaviour, decision-making, and social relations.

#### A. Proverbs

Proverbs are one of the vital cultural components of all societies and nations. They are defined as grammatical structures with a traditional nature highlighting customs, tradition, and folklore (Norricks, 1985). They reflect their past and present. Proverbs encapsulate people's experiences simply yet meaningfully, shaping their interpersonal relationships (Al Rousan & Shatnawi, 2023). Proverbs serve an educational role by conveying the wisdom of ancestors. They also function as an informal means of social regulation by providing a framework for individual and collective behaviours (Eid, 2023). At the same time, they remain cultural indicators that help understand the self and others (Al-Domrani, 2017). Proverbs play a key role in social regulation because of their religious, cultural, and social components, passed down from generation to generation. (Al-Shihri, 2016, p. 184) Proverbs are concise, colloquial expressions that reflect individual and society's experiences, carrying civilizational and spiritual dimensions with philosophical meanings (Al-Kuwari, 2005, p. 93). Through their cultural significance, proverbs are transmitted across generations as part of a cultural heritage. They are brief, eloquent, elegantly phrased, and easy to remember. They serve as a timeless witness to a nation's traditions, morals, and experiences. Proverbs are a universal phenomenon that provides insight into a people's collective mind and ambitions (Fang, 2023). Even though proverbs are a kind of artistic expression, they serve as social documents that represent all social classes and reflect the spirit of a community. They are among the simplest forms of mass communication; they use written and spoken forms of language but mainly rely on oral transmission and rhythmic delivery (Al-Kuwari, 2005, p. 93). Proverbs embody ideas, traditions, and experiences. They are culturally significant literary texts, capturing imagery and collective intellectual experiences (Eid, 2023).

#### B. Tribe in Jordan

Émile Durkheim (1909) views the tribe as a society of several social groups while maintaining its unity and homogeneity. Despite being composed of smaller family units, the tribe remains unified and does not divide into individual political communities within its whole structure (Ghoneim, 2009). The tribe represents a spatial entity whose members believe in a common ancestor—a legendary figure sometimes—who is believed to be the tribe's founder. In Jordan, the tribe has deep roots in history. It also expresses longstanding traditions and values that have existed since the beginning of history. Furthermore, the tribe holds a significant impact. It plays a vital role in all aspects of Jordanian society, whether political, social, or economic, contributing to its development and progress over time (Al-Zyoud & Al-Shtaywi, 2000). The tribe has significantly contributed to Jordan's society and state, playing a significant role in development and social stability. It is regarded as a safeguard for society, with tribal law as a quasi-legal system that upholds customs and traditions. The Jordanian government has historically dealt with the tribe as one of the country's most vital social components, emphasizing that Jordan's political system has had a strong tribal foundation since the state's formation (Al-Rousan, 2019). Over time, the tribe's political and social role has evolved (Ghoneimat, 2014). The tribe's security and reconciliation role cannot be denied as it helps Jordanian authorities to resolve conflicts through "tribal mediation" (*jahah*), a traditional tribal delegation whose aim is to ease tensions and to facilitate the government's role in reconciliation efforts (Rawashdeh, 2016). Generally, Jordanians believe that tribal roles should be upheld, especially in conflicts, such as disputes and homicide (Jibreel, 2016).

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research has discussed the importance of the tribe in Jordan. For example, Al-Hourani's (2012) study examines the role of the tribe as a social framework for Jordanian tribal members, emphasizing its deep connection to their interests, which in turn strengthens their loyalty and unity. The study demonstrates that tribal affiliation is a source of power and social cohesion, fostering solidarity through blood relations. Regardless of social or professional standing, the results show that strong tribal allegiance persists across all economic levels. Al-Hourani (2012) notes that while everyone argues that older people show higher tribal loyalty than urban dwellers, educated people show more loyalty than less educated people. Bakhit's (2011) research discusses Jordanian attitudes toward the tribe's role in security-related issues, confirming that Jordanians trust the tribe as a stabilizing force. The study identifies economic factors as the primary threat to security, followed by media and technology, which are perceived as having a negative impact. Additionally,

the research focuses on the tribe's crucial role in crime prevention and social order conservation. On the other hand, Bsharat and Al-Aqaili's (2016) study points out that the Jordanian political system heavily relied on tribal structures to establish the modern state, which established power and emphasized authority all over Jordan. Tribalism has played an active role in the political process, contributing to political stability during various critical periods in Jordan's history. The study stresses that the tribe has been essential in nation-building, development, security, political stability, and national success and achievement. The study by Al-Zayoud and Al-Shtaywi (2000) revealed that the tribe has a fundamental role in parliamentary elections, with tribes engaging in strong competition to reinforce tribal influence in Jordan. As a traditional social structure, the tribe has successfully adapted to modern social frameworks, either by strongly supporting political figures or, in some electoral districts, by acting as an alternative to conventional political structures. In certain cases, tribes have established electoral alliances based on tribal associations and affiliations.

The role of proverbs in promoting the tribal structure has been investigated by some Arab scholars, such as Abdelbaki and Abdulrahman (2014), Ben Youb (2015), Al-Tamimi (2016), and Shabi (2022). Contrary to expectations that tribalism would diminish in contemporary Arab societies, the reality has been quite the opposite. Ben Youb (2015) argues that the tribal system has demonstrated remarkable resilience, adapting to new social and political conditions. In Algeria, for example, the tribe has maintained its influence despite post-independence political rhetoric that dismissed it as a relic of backwardness and an obstacle to state-building. One key factor in the endurance of tribal structures is the role of popular proverbs in reinforcing tribal consciousness. Shabi (2022) argues that proverbs are crucial in maintaining social structure, fostering stability, and reflecting shared societal norms. They serve as linguistic expressions and cultural markers of identity. Similarly, Al-Tamimi (2016) asserts that proverbs capture a society's collective consciousness, articulating its values, concerns, and conflicts. The study highlights the adaptability of proverbs, as they are continually reshaped to fit new social contexts. The influence of proverbs extends across different social classes, as Abdelbaki and Abdulrahman (2014) argue from a social psychology perspective. Their study suggests that despite differences in education, profession, or social standing, people are influenced by popular culture and tend to conform to its authority. Al-Ali (2004) and Al-Domrani (2017) study proverbs' social and educational functions in Syria and Egypt. Al-Ali's (2004) study on the educational aspects of proverbs in Deir ez-Zor classifies them into several themes, including social, emotional, religious, ethical, intellectual, economic, and political dimensions. His field research emphasizes the role of proverbs in shaping people's lives, highlighting their cultural and educational value, historical depth, and role in social upbringing. Al-Domrani's (2017) study on marital relationships in Upper Egypt further confirms the powerful influence of proverbs in structuring social relationships. Despite age, profession, and education variations, proverbs continue to shape family dynamics and reinforce social norms across diverse backgrounds.

### III. METHODS

#### A. *Participants and Data*

This study adopted a qualitative analytical approach. The data analyzed in this study were collected from 36 students in the Department of Social Sciences at Al-Balqa Applied University, Jordan, and the Department of Translation at Yarmouk University, Jordan. They were enrolled in two courses the authors usually teach. They were all native Jordanians who came from different cities in Jordan. The students were all in their fourth year of study. The instructors asked them to jot down tribe-related proverbs they were familiar with in Jordanian Culture. They were also asked to provide the meaning and the social context in which the proverbs are used. The data collection process occurred in the second semester of 2023-2024. The students provided 48 proverbs. Six proverbs were excluded because they were not proverbs, or they do not belong to the tribe; thus, only 42 proverbs were used in the analysis.

#### B. *Data Analysis*

This study adopted a qualitative analytical approach. The data analyzed in this study were collected from 36 students in the Department of Social Sciences at Al-Balqa Applied University, Jordan, and the Department of Translation at Yarmouk University, Jordan. They were enrolled in two courses the authors usually teach. They were all native Jordanians who came from different cities in Jordan. The students were all in their fourth year of study. The instructors asked them to jot down tribe-related proverbs they were familiar with in Jordanian Culture. They were also asked to provide the meaning and the social context in which the proverbs are used. The data collection process occurred in the second semester of 2023-2024. The students provided 48 proverbs. Six proverbs were excluded because they were not proverbs or they did not belong to the tribe; thus, only 42 proverbs were used in the analysis.

### IV. FINDINGS

This section presents the findings and discusses the data analysis. The selected examples were translated literally and transliterated into English.

#### A. *Collective Identity*

Throughout history, the family has been an economic and social organization for its members, closely tied to their social and geographical identity. Similarly, the tribe has functioned as a political unit, protecting individuals and families. The tribe also represents a historical continuity, with individual names passed down through generations, as people are often identified by their tribe names. This creates a strong emotional bond between individuals and their tribes, and as a result, this affiliation influences individual behaviour and shapes the nature of their social relationships. Some proverbs in Jordanian society reflect an individual's collective sentiment and sense of belonging to the tribe and highlight the importance of family in their life. The following three examples represent this theme.

Example 1:

ان انجنو ربيعك عقلك ما ينفك

?in injannu rab 'ak, 'aqlak ma binfa 'ak

"If your group goes mad, your reason won't help you."

This saying expresses the idea that an individual follows the group's decisions, even if those decisions are wrong. This implies that personal freedom is limited in the face of collective decision-making, illustrating the dominance of group thought over individual reasoning. Although some required actions may contradict personal beliefs, the individual must comply.

Example 2:

الموت مع الجماعة رحمة

Al-mūt ma 'a al-jamā 'a raḥma

"Dying with the group is a mercy."

The above proverb indicates that pain and suffering feel lighter when shared with the group. It expresses the moral importance of the community in an individual's life and its influence in alleviating their struggles and challenges. Additionally, taking on dangerous tasks becomes easier when done collectively. This proverb also highlights courage, particularly in facing challenges and adversaries, emphasizing the strength found in unity, togetherness, and solidarity.

Example 3:

نحترق ولا نفترق

niḥtariq walā niḥtariq

"Better burn together than to part."

This proverb highlights the crucial role of social unity and oneness within a tribe. It emphasizes that, regardless of individuals' difficulties, struggles, and hardships, maintaining the tribe's cohesion is far more valuable than risking its fragmentation and discord. The proverb also indicates that conflicts or injustices might arise among tribe members, but such challenges should never lead to separation. The unity of the tribe is deemed more important and more bearable than the consequences of division.

### B. Blood Ties

The tribe's sense of unity and belonging, rooted in blood ties and the individual's extended family, is a vital concern for all tribe members and their leadership. From a social perspective, this can be seen as tribal loyalty through which individuals identify themselves within a collective cultural and cognitive framework. The structure of Jordanian society, deeply ingrained in tribal and familial affiliations, reinforces this sense of identity and behaviour. Most individuals in society who define themselves through their tribal connections embrace this sentiment.

Jordanian proverbs show the importance of blood ties within a group, creating a sense of belonging that can even feel sacred. Individuals feel a moral obligation to their tribe, strengthened by their blood connection. This bond helps ensure the tribe's continuity and its role in society. In addition, the tribe attempts to identify and fix any problems that could harm its relationships, focusing on reinforcing the members' sense of unity. For example,

Example 4:

انا وأخوي على ابن عمي وانا وابن عمي على الغريب

Ana wa akhūy 'alā ibn 'ammī, wa ana wa ibn 'ammī 'alā al-gharīb

"My brother and I stand against my cousin, but my cousin and I stand against the stranger."

This proverb highlights the strong, inseparable bond between a person and their tribe. It shows that this connection is essential, and if it is broken, the individual feels deep pain, emphasizing how important it is to one's identity. The proverb expresses that without this tribal bond, the group cannot survive, and without the group, the individual loses value. The strongest form of unity is defending those closest to you, starting with family, then extended family, and finally more distant relatives. Defense and rivalry depend on the closeness of the blood relationship.

Example 5:

الدم ما بصير مي

id-dam mā biṣīr māi

"Blood does not turn into water."

This proverb highlights the strong, inseparable bond between a person and their tribe. It shows that this connection is essential, and if it is broken, the individual feels deep pain, emphasizing how important it is to one's identity. The proverb expresses that without this tribal bond, the group cannot survive, and without the group, the individual loses value. The strongest form of unity is defending those closest to you, starting with family, then extended family, and finally more distant relatives. Defense and rivalry depend on the closeness of the blood relationship.

### C. Sense of Strength

Individuals who belong to the same tribe view their connection as an undeniable and unbreakable bond. This deep association gives them a strong sense of security and power, originating in their natural connection to the group. It strengthens their belief in a collective system ensuring justice, equality, and protection of rights. The more a person feels this strong connection, the stronger their sense of responsibility toward fellow tribe members, driven by loyalty and the sense of strength and protection the tribe provides. Thus, the tribe creates a shared sense of equality among its members, fostering a belief in unity and collective support. Consider example (7-9).

Example 7:

الكثرة غلبت الشجاعة

*Al-kathrah ghalabat ash-shajā'ah*

“Numbers outweigh the bravery.”

The proverb emphasizes the importance of the tribe in protecting its members and providing its members with a sense of security. It suggests that an individual is vulnerable and easily defeated on their own. The proverb highlights that no matter how strong or brave a person is, they always need the support of their family and tribe to be strong. It shows the significance of family and tribal bonds, a value that becomes clear only in crucial moments—whether in battle or times of hardship. A brother, whether close or distant, never abandons another.

Example 8:

عد ارجالك ورد المي

*'idd irjālak wirid al-mai*

“Count your men, then fetch the water.”

The proverb in example 8 conveys that the larger the tribe, the stronger it becomes; this strength is reflected in the unity and power of its members. Just as a large tribe first takes its livestock to water sources due to its large number of members and influence, the same principle applies to many life affairs. This idea is evident in Jordan during parliamentary and municipal elections, where the tribe's influence often plays a significant role in securing a seat for its candidate.

Example 9:

الواحد بين اهله حصين

*il-wāḥad bain ahluh ḥaṣīn*

“A person is safe with his family.”

This proverb also refers to the importance of the tribe in protecting its members, as it serves as a source of security and strength. Many Jordanians prefer to live in areas where members of their tribe reside, as they provide mutual support and protection. Furthermore, the proverb stresses the importance of the group in an individual's life, providing them with social and economic protection and safeguarding them from external threats. The tribe in Jordan can provide such support. That is, within their close-knit group, an individual feels the protection of the tribe, ensuring they are not alone in facing internal and external challenges but rather have others to support them in overcoming such challenges.

### D. Pride in Lineage

Lineage, which refers to an individual's ancestry or family line, is significant in many cultures because it affects inheritance, social status, and family traditions. One way a person is proud of his lineage is through marriage. Marriage is regarded as one of human history's most important social and cultural foundations. In the Arab and Jordanian context, marriage holds particular social significance that is deeply rooted in Jordanian society's structure, history, and culture. It is not merely an individual decision but a future endeavour that involves the family and tribe, impacting the lives of children as well. As such, marriage is closely tied to the tribe, as it represents the individual's lineage, which plays a key role in determining their social status. The importance of lineage is reflected in many popular proverbs. Consider examples (10-12) below.

Example 10:

النسب عند الغانمين كنوز

*in-nasab 'ind al-ghānimīn knūz*

“lineage is a treasure to the victors.”

Proverb 10 emphasizes the tribe's strength, reflected in its women. The daughters of the tribes are known for their prestige, good morals, and generosity. Therefore, the true value lies in choosing a woman from a respected lineage with a strong origin. While money is important in the lives of tribe members, what truly matters is selecting a wife from a good tribe, someone with strong principles and high morals and values. A young man about to marry should choose a wife who will honour and protect him, and only a daughter of the tribe can provide that. Otherwise, the husband may face hardship and misery in his life.

Example 11:

النسب عز يا مكيلة يا بهدله

*in-nasab 'izz ya makialah ya bahdhalah*

“Lineage is a crown, bringing either glory or shame.”

This proverb deeply reflects the value of choosing a wife, not only for who she is but also for her family, as she will pass on her character and heritage to her children. This proverb expresses that the core value in marriage lies in both the wife's and husband's families, making the union socially sacred. It grants significant status to both individuals and their families in the future. Additionally, the proverb highlights the importance of the wife's lineage, as it brings pride and honour to her husband and future children. Those with a weak lineage are encouraged to seek a partner from a strong family or tribe, as this will provide them with strength and status. It speaks to the tribe's role in protecting the individual, whether they are a direct member, an ally, or a relative. The "back" represents the tribe's strength, and those without a strong tribe often seek to marry into one to gain this protection.

Example 12:

طريقك لو طالت و بنت عمك لو بارت

*Tariqak law tālat wa bint ‘ammak law bārat*

“Your path, no matter how long, and your cousin, no matter how distant.”

Example 12 presents marriage between relatives in Jordanian society as a symbol of their honour and protection. It considers a man as obligated to marry his cousin even if she is not beautiful. Despite the health problems of marrying between relatives, Jordanians still prefer internal marriage for psychological, social, and symbolic reasons. This proverb prioritizes marriage within the family over marrying outsiders. It encourages Jordanians to marry their female cousins, expressing the significance of preserving lineage and safeguarding the family and tribe.

### E. Leadership

Historically, the tribe's leadership has been crucial to its progress, continuity, and reputation. The leader's role in the lives of all his tribe members is to guide and protect them while ensuring the tribe's social and cultural continuity cannot be ignored or disrespected. A great and wise leader is essential in maintaining the tribe's positive reputation among other tribes, as the leader's status reflects the tribe's overall standing. Therefore, this leader must be respected by all tribe members, as they represent the tribe in gatherings and embody its presence, serving as a key symbol of its social strength. Al-Qurashi (2011, p. 220) points out that social control and the protection of individuals are maintained through the authority of the tribe's leader or sheikh. For example,

Example 13:

شيخ بلا عزوه قلة مراجيله

*Shīkh bilā ‘azwah qillāh marājīlūh*

“A leader without a tribe is powerless.”

This saying represents the power of a leader or sheikh in the tribe, a power that does not come from the individual alone. It is shaped by the support of the tribe's members, from whom the leader obtains his value, position, and power. This proverb means that a leader without strong support or loyal followers lacks power and true authority. The proverb expresses a significant aspect of tribal structure in Jordanian society. A tribe needs a leader and wise individuals who offer insight and advice, but it also requires strong and loyal people who guarantee the tribe's survival and power. The balance of wisdom and action is vital; wisdom leads with planning, while strength executes. This balance is a key political and social dynamic relied upon in many serious situations within the tribe, especially during disputes. This aligns with the study conducted by Areiqat and Tarawneh (2019), which emphasizes the vital role of tribal councils.

Example 14:

اللي ما له كبير يشتري كبير

*illi māluh kabeer yashtari kabeer*

“He who has no elder buys an elder.”

Proverb 14 also emphasizes the significance of having wise leadership in the lives of tribe members. It highlights the vitality of guidance, wisdom, and experience. A tribe cannot prosper or continue without the presence of a wise, strong, and experienced leader, who is usually an elder. In this context, the elder is not necessarily the oldest member, but rather someone with influence, power, and social wisdom. These proverbs indicate that the management of a tribe's affairs is never done randomly. There must be a leader who directs, plans and makes decisions, especially in crucial situations that require a thoughtful, balanced viewpoint to address complex issues. The proverbs imply that the leader or sheikh of the tribe does not act or make decisions aimlessly; every choice is made with purpose and is intended to serve the best interests of the tribe and its members.

Example 15:

الذئب ما يركض عبث

*il-dhīb mā yarkuḍ ‘abath*

“The wolf does not run in vain.”

The image in this proverb strong and wise leadership. This proverb means that when the leader of the wolves begins to run, the pack follows him because it trusts his judgment. The proverb emphasizes the necessity of listening and obeying the leader or the tribe's sheikh, symbolized by the wolf, in what he does and says; his actions are known to be guided by wisdom and for a specific objective that often benefits the tribe's members. In other words, he does not act or speak for no reason but rather for a meaningful cause.

## V. DISCUSSION

The findings show that the tribe has developed into a new form of collective awareness. It has become one of the fundamental components of the cognitive structure of Jordanian society, forming a social and political bond with distinct boundaries that define identity and differentiate it from others while continuously governed by the rules of mutual interest. The tribe holds a significant position within the traditional structures of Jordanian society and continues intertwining the realities of the past with the dynamics of the present. It notably influences the future, influencing individuals, groups, and cultures. This aligns with Bakhit's (2011) study, which highlights that belonging to a tribe enhances the sense of security, serving as a protective factor that safeguards property and reduces crime rates.

Tribe-related proverbs indicate that Jordanians take great pride in their strong family ties, as the family serves as a source of values that support individuals in every aspect of life. Through the heritage passed down from generation to generation, individuals gain a powerful moral foundation, including material, emotional, and psychological dimensions. This foundation fosters a sense of security and protection. Furthermore, the tribe plays a vital role in shaping an individual's identity and guiding their relationships with others. Matouq (2017) maintains that the attachment to the tribe is so powerful that it can acquire a sacred significance, and sometimes it is considered a fundamental aspect of one's religious belief. This bond is deeply embedded in the individual's mind, leading them to fully embrace the ideals of loyalty and devotion to the tribe. Thus, it becomes a natural and automatic sense of belonging to the group. Tribal affiliation holds a high societal value, fostering social cohesion, strengthening ties to geography and community, and promoting integration among individuals and groups.

Furthermore, the proverbs in this study highlight the importance of staying connected and united with family and tribe members. They encourage keeping close ties with the tribe, even during disputes and discourage hostility within the group. A person always remains loyal to their tribe and cannot abandon it. The tribe is compared to paradise, a place of safety, comfort, and love. It provides protection and support, even if an individual experiences injustice from within. Despite its imperfections, the tribe remains the best and most important place for its members. Dortier (2011) noted that tribe members strongly believe they share a common ancestor, even without proof. This belief is like a myth, not something that can be proven.

Throughout history, people have sought a unifying framework that makes them feel connected. They are not merely members of a social group but bound by blood. This bond instils a sense of responsibility toward the group, creating a shared understanding of equality in rights and duties. This deep connection, born from shared blood, cannot be disregarded or overlooked by individuals or institutions.

Historically, especially in Jordan, the tribe provided security and protection to its members even before the establishment of the modern Jordanian state. It was also responsible for basic needs such as food, and land and livestock were collectively owned. It handled matters of security and justice as well. Although this role changed significantly with the rise of the state and its institutions, the tribe's influence continued to shape the individual's sense of belonging and community. Hence, it instilled a strong feeling of solidarity and equality with fellow tribe members. As Al-Hourani (2012) points out, the tribe acts as a form of social capital, providing emotional support to its members. This support helps them feel strong, secure and reassured. It also boosts their unity and solidarity when collective strength is needed.

Lineage has also been emphasized in the proverbs used by Jordanians. Lineage is a source of social and cultural pride, closely tied to one's social status and the enhancement of their social standing. It is also linked to a person's reputation and honour, based on the belief that blood from a particular lineage carries unique qualities. As a result, many people pay close attention to the family name of the person they wish to marry, as it is associated with boosting social status and serves as a point of pride for both families.

Tribes' leaders have also received their share of praise and significance from the proverbs. Tribal leaders often hold significant social influence within and outside the tribe, making them authoritative figures who can make decisions that serve the tribe's social and political interests. These leaders are typically seen as wise and astute, representing a symbolic status that reflects the tribe as a whole. Being elderly, they command respect for both their age and social standing. Their wisdom and knowledge make them key advisors on the tribe and its decisions.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The tribe portrays one of the most fundamental pillars of Jordanian society. The clan has shaped peoples' thinking, built on the foundation of "we" as members of one clan and "they" as outsiders and different. Therefore, a clan member does not consider their support and loyalty to the clan's interests a form of hostility. Rather, they see it as a defense of a right he believes in, making it a justified behaviour. The tribe is a symbol and a question of existence for most Arabs, as the clan's survival ensures its people's survival and existence. By doing so, people also protect themselves and their children, whom the clan will continue to protect as long as it exists.

Members of the same clan often feel they are the best, strongest, and most deserving to survive. To achieve this, individuals usually seek to express their personal and individual identity through their clan. They take pride in being associated with its name and love to be addressed by it. Thus, they praise the clan and its members, prioritizing them over all others. The clan members' identity is simultaneously an expression of their collective identity. For them, defending the clan represents a defense of their history of existence and that of their ancestors, whose presence is deeply embedded in their collective consciousness.

Accordingly, members of the Jordanian society refer to the clan in their daily lives through popular proverbs, which are seen as the product of real experiences. These proverbs serve as deep linguistic expressions of the lived experiences of Jordanians and provide a logical representation of these experiences. When it comes to the clan, this takes on a deeply psychological dimension, as the formation of Jordanian society is rooted in the individual's sense of belonging to the clan. This belonging reinforces a deep understanding of actual existence, particularly during the erosion of the traditional structure of Jordanian society due to Palestinian refuge and the country's domination of the clan, diminishing its role in their lives.

This study argues that several factors have contributed to the tribe's continuity as an indispensable social structure in Jordanian society. The most significant of these factors is the interest of the tribe individuals, as it ensures the continuation of their historical privileges and social standing. At a profound collective level, members of tribes perceive the tribe as an essential part of their identity, bridging the past and present. As a result, they feel compelled to preserve it, even symbolically, through their colloquial language and the proverbs they use in various social situations. Finally, this study has revealed that the tribe functions as an extended kinship system, beginning with the family unit and expanding into a broader network through blood relations, marital alliances, and lineage-based affiliations. It also serves as a protective source of strength, reinforcing social cohesion and providing a cultural and social identity rooted in the symbolic connection to a common ancestor.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Abdelbaki, D., & Abdulrahman, S. (2014). The psychological and social content of Sudanese popular proverbs in the socialization process. *Journal of African and Asian Studies*, 1, 1–34.
- [2] Al-Afif, A. K., & Saleh, M. Q. (2006). *National education*. Jarir Publishing and Distribution House.
- [3] Al-Ali, H. A. (2004). *The system of educational values in popular proverbs* (Master's thesis). University of Damascus.
- [4] Al-Domrani, M. M. (2017). Family relations in popular proverbs: A field study in Upper Egypt. *Arab Journal of Sociology*, 20, 187–258.
- [5] Al-Hourani, M. A. (2012). Clan as a social capital: A sociological study of clan loyalty components and transmissions in the Jordanian society. *Jordanian Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(2), 172–201.
- [6] Al-Kuwari, R. (2005). Popular proverbs and mass communication: The case of Qatari diving proverbs. *Journal of the College of Arts*, 8, 93–141.
- [7] Al-Qurashi, G. (2011). *Social control* (1st ed.). Dar Al-Safa.
- [8] Al Rousan, R., & Shatnawi, H. (2023). The portrayal of women in Jordanian proverbial expressions: A thematic analysis. *Lebende Sprachen*, 689(2), 1–21.
- [9] Al Rousan, S. (2019). The function of tribe in Jordan within the social and political interferences: A sociological approach. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 11, 38–44.
- [10] Al-Shihri, Z. M. (2016). Popular proverbs and social control. *The Arab Journal of Social Sciences*, 10(4), 182–202.
- [11] Al-Tamimi, J. (2016). The stereotypical image of women in popular proverbs: A semantic analysis and pragmatic approach. *Journal of Linguistic and Literary Studies*, 4. Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University.
- [12] Al-Zyoud, I. M., & Al-Shtaywi, M. (2000). *The tribe and parliamentary elections in Jordan* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Jordan.
- [13] Areiqat, I. A., & Al-Tarawneh, M. F. (2019). The obstacles limiting the role of tribal elders in social control in villages of Southern West Bank. *Islamic University Journal of Humanitarian Research*, 27(3), 247–267.
- [14] Barakat, H. (2009). *The contemporary Arab society: A study on changing conditions and relationships* (Special ed.). Al-Safir Press.
- [15] Ben Youb, M. (2015). Popular proverbs and their role in reproducing the clan in Algerian reality. *Al-Riwaq Journal*, 1, 76–79.
- [16] Bakhit, N. (2011). Attitudes of Jordanian citizens towards factors related to tribal issues. *Journal of Security Studies, General Directorate of Public Security*, 4, 3–60.
- [17] Bsharat, U. H., & Al-Aqaili, M. S. (2016). *The tribal dimension and its impact on the Jordanian political process (1989-2015)* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Jordan.
- [18] Dortier, J. F. (2011). *Dictionary of the humanities* (J. Katturah, Trans.) (2nd ed.). Kalima and Majd University Press.
- [19] Eid, A. (2023). Popular proverbs: The wisdom of ancestors and the culture of societies. *Popular Culture*, 16(62), 62–71.
- [20] Fang, Y. Y. (2023). Traditional Chinese proverbs: Their characteristics and sources. *Journal of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities*, 47, 11–22.
- [21] Ghoneim, M. A. (2009). *Social control and customary law: A study in social anthropology* (1st ed.). Ain Publishing for Humanities and Social Research.
- [22] Ghoneimat, A. (2014). *The role of tribes in social control and crime prevention*. Retrieved November 15, 2024, from <https://www.khaberni.com/news/%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%B1>
- [23] Jibreel, D. (2016). *Is Jordan ready to abandon tribal justice?* Retrieved November 13, 2024, from <https://www.7iber.com/society/will-jordan-stop-tribal-law/>
- [24] Matouq, F. (2017). *The clash of Arab identities*. Muntada Al-Ma'arif.
- [25] Norrick, N. (1985). *How proverbs mean: Semantic studies in English proverbs*. Mouton.
- [26] Rawashdeh, Y. (2016). *A cup of coffee*. Retrieved December 2, 2024, from <https://www.ammonnews.net/article/256089>
- [27] Shabi, A. (2022). Popular proverbs and their social function: An anthropological study in Tébessa Governorate. *Journal of Functional Linguistics*, 9(2), 802–814.
- [28] Zubair, L. (2017). Women and Moroccan popular proverbs: What is the relationship? *Journal of Legal Sciences*, 7, 288–312.

**Safwat Al rousan** is an Associate Professor of Sociology and Social Work in the Department of Social Sciences at Al-Balqa Applied University, Ajloun, Jordan. His research interests include studies on the elderly, childhood, women, and the sociology of language.

**Rami Al-Jbour** is an Associate Professor of Sociology in the Department of Social Sciences at Al-Balqa Applied University and the University of Fujairah. His research interests include violence, women's issues, and juvenile delinquency.

**Rafat Al Rousan** is an Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics in the Department of Translation at Yarmouk University, Jordan. His research interests and publications are primarily in socio-pragmatics, discourse analysis, computer-mediated communication (CMC), and translation studies.

**Malak Alrousan** earned a BA in Translation from Yarmouk University, Jordan, and is currently pursuing an MA in Linguistics with a TESOL certificate at West Virginia University. Her research interests include translation studies, sociolinguistics, and language variation.

**Hala Yousef Hassan** works in the Advancement Department at Birzeit University. She earned a bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature with a specialization in Translation from Birzeit University, Palestine, and a master's degree in Translation Studies from Yarmouk University, Jordan. Her research interests primarily focus on discourse analysis and translation.