

## ON THE SYNTAX OF TENSE IN STANDARD ARABIC

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The paper considers the issue of tense in Standard Arabic. We show that simple tense, particularly past tense and present tense, is not morphologically expressed by the verb (Aoun, et al., 2010; Benmamoun, 2000; Ouali, 2018). In other words, the distinction between past tense and present tense is not accounted for by dint of morphological mechanisms. Rather, the two simple tenses are dealt with in terms of syntactic aspects. Accordingly, we argue for an abstract tense projection in the clause structure of Standard Arabic. Tense can be captured only by T, a Core Functional Category. As a corollary, we are not required to deploy other functional categories in the clausal skeleton, adhering to minimalist tenets along the lines proposed in Chomsky (2000a, 2001). The proposed analysis provides a solution for the issue of tense in Standard Arabic based solely on syntactic means.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Standard Arabic, Tense, T, Clause Structure, Minimalist Tenets*