East-Mediterranean Ethnopoetics: Transcription and Representation of the Spoken Word

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Abstract
This paper introduces Ethnopoetics as a literary discipline that aims at increasing the appreciation of oral poetics of indigenous people of different cultures. It discusses ethnopoetics as a field of study that appeared in the second half of the twentieth century and the purposes, methods and scholars of that field of study. As an application to the methods of transcription and representation used by the scholars of ethnopoetics, this paper rediscovers an oral chant that has been chanted to children in the East Mediterranean countries for ages. Following the guidelines of transcription that have been set by Dinnes Tedlock, this paper transcribes the song and represents its translation on the page to make it accessible to the English reader. Another objective is to explain this chant as an oral narrative along with its social and linguistic contexts. In general, this paper will be an elaboration for the methodology of transcription, representation on the page and the problems of translation.

Keywords: Ethnopoetics, East-Mediterranean, Tedlock, Hymes
Introduction

Ethnopoetics is the study of the verbal art of the pre-literate cultures that aims at discovering the cultural and aesthetic aspects of their oral poetics. It focuses on texts, their rhetorical structure and presentational form. Ethnopoetics was developed as a separate discipline of study in the middle of the twentieth century by both the anthropology scholars and linguists Dell Hymes and Dennis Tedlock. However, it was first coined as a term in 1968 by “Jerome Rothenberg who views ethnopoetics as a way of talking about poetry, both the practice and the theory of poetry, as it exists in different cultures in which oral poetry and poetics seemed to be dominant.” (as cited in Moore, 2013, p. 34).

Hymes understands ethnopoetics as an “intervention into the printed form of texts, a way of rearranging the transcript of an event of oral narration so as to recover the literary form in which the native words had their being” (Hymes, 1981, p. 384). This claim suggests that it is possible to arrive at an arrangement of a transcript that reflects on the page the poetic structure of any oral performance in order to recover the native voice, or, in other words, their cultural meaning. Hymes calls this arrangement of a transcript a ‘presentational form’ that functions as ‘a verse analysis’ method to enhance the respect for the native voice and the appreciation of the “aesthetics of original oral text and their literary monuments.” (Silverstein, 2010, p.936)

As Hymes believes in the significance of the cultural and esthetic aspects of the oral text, he also believes that patterns or the form of an oral text is of a great significance. To him, “Language is ... a configuration of common understandings and individual voices” (Hymes, 1996, p.98). Accordingly, pauses and repetition that are abundant in oral texts are significant and have impact, or otherwise, he argues, “why do storytellers use pauses and repetitions in their oral performances?” (as cited in Quick, 1999, p. 97) Hymes’ theory focuses on the grammar and syntax of the transcribed and translated texts to bring about their cultural and aesthetic values. Content, as Jan Bolmmaert believes, “is an effect of the formal organization of a narrative: What there is to be told emerges out of how it is being told.” (Blommaert, 2006, p.182).

While Hymes’ ethnopoetics focuses on aesthetic and cultural aspects of the verbal art, Dennis Tedlock’s has developed a method of oral texts’ documentation and transcription for performance purposes. In the introduction and the first chapter of his book, The Spoken Word and the Work of Interpretation, Tedlock presents his theory of ethnopoetics. He insists that the stories are not merely narrated, but performed, or re-enacted in an oral narrative situation (p. 54). His purpose has been to find a method of transcription and translation to write a performable text. Leif Lorentzon, in her essay “Translating Orality to Literacy,” summarizes his approach by stating that “Tedlock's idea is to perceive oral narratives as dramatic poetry” (1997, p. 7). Tedlock argues that:

The content tends towards the fantastic rather than the prosaic, the emotions of the characters are evoked rather than described, there are patterns of repetitions of parallelism ranging from the level of words to that of whole episodes, the narrator's voice shifts constantly in amplitude and tone, and the flow of that voice is paced by pauses that segments its sounds into what I have chosen to call lines (1983, p. 55).

Therefore, a new method of transcription of the oral text is required to reflect the “patterns of repetition”, “parallelism”, and the “narrator’s voice shifts”, “tone” and “pauses.”

Tedlock further argues that the visual representation of oral text for performance in the form of written texts conveys more accurately the aesthetic qualities of the verbal art. He defines ethnopoetics as
the study of the verbal arts in a worldwide range of languages and cultures. Primary attention is given to the vocal-auditory channel of communication in which speaking, chanting, or singing voices give shape to proverbs, riddles, curses, laments, praises, prayers, prophecies, public announcements, and narratives. The aim is not only to analyze and interpret oral performances but to make them directly accessible through transcriptions and translations that display their qualities as works of art (1992, p.81).

This addition to the function of ethnopoetics involves that oral texts should be made “directly accessible through transcriptions and translations that display their qualities as works of art.” The process of transcription of the original text in English language graphology is a process of transliteration. In short, the transcription and translation suggested by Tedlock are actually translation and the transcription of the transliteration of the audible text which is usually not English.

Jerome Rothenberg, an American poet and anthropologist who founded and co-edited with Dennis Tedlock Alcheringa, the first magazine of ethnopoetics, highlights the importance of both translation and transcription of the transliteration so as to convey the aesthetics and poetics of the original text. He writes that “most translations of Native American oral traditions . . . failed to capture the power and beauty of the oral performances on the written page,” especially when “western poetic styles were imposed upon these written texts” (as cited in Quick 1999, p.96). To Rothenberg the power and the beauty of the oral performance should follow an “accessible method of transcription” (as cited in Quick 1999, p. 96). This method has to be accessible to everyone not only linguists and phoneticians.

In order to write the audible text in an accessible method, Tedlock has constructed a method that transcribes oral style into verse. This method is called “textual representation” (1972, p. xxv). For instance, he breaks a line when a pause can be heard. If the pause is longer he jumps a line, or inserts a dot before the next line. He also manages to include other paralinguistic features in the audible text by splitting lines, using capitals, parentheses, italics. He writes gestures like stage directions, and dashes for long vowels, (e.g. go o----n), etc. Tedlock (1972) designed guidelines for transcription and reading aloud in his essay “Because he Made Marks on the Paper, The Soldiers Came.” The guidelines read as follows:

**Pausing:** A new line at the left-hand margin is preceded by a pause of at least a second but no more than a full second; indented lines run without a pause. Longer pauses are indicated by strophe breaks, with one dot (.) for each full second.

**Amplitude. Bold Type** indicates loud words or passages; softness is indicated by small type.

**Intonation.** A lack of punctuation at the end of a line indicates a level tone; a dash indicates a rise; a coma, a slight fall; a semicolon, a more definite fall; and a period, the kind of fall that marks a complete sentence. (p.583)

This method is not a replacement for the meaning text, but a way to show how it has to be performed in a similar manner to the original people or a form or what Hymes calls “narrative patterning” (1996, p.219). Ethnopoetics doesn’t concern itself with simply poetic lines and careful attention to performance qualities. The demonstration of the “narrative patterning” can enhance respect for and appreciation of the voices of others. “Translations and other attempts to understand and represent such voices, with appropriate fidelity to their artfulness” are necessary
to understand and appreciate the indigenous language texts (Webster and Kroskrity, 2013, p.5).

Dennis Tedlock (1972) defends his use of textual representation of poetry. To him, everyone can become a storyteller and can experience "vocal texts" if the transcriber has done his job correctly. He drives a trained academic reader back into the oral tradition by employing italics, bold type, and other easy to understand textual manipulations. To him, representing the natural performance in an accessible way makes a greater impact on the reader’s mental images (p. xxiv). In “Because He Made Marks on Paper,” he emphasizes the idea that transcription is so much more than just dictation—rather a good transcriber must use a system to represent the performance-to capture the essence of the original. Tedlock writes, “when writing makes its appearance on the scene, it does so an instrument of power” (p.581).

**Ethnopoetics as a Literary Discipline**

Ethnopoetics emerged in the context of a generational struggle between practitioners working in a number of different but overlapping fields of inquiry and practice: academic anthropology, folklore, literary criticism, poetry, and performance art. However, Hymes insisted on the literary nature of this discipline in definition of ethnopoetic, he writes that it is “a way of arranging the transcript of an event of oral narration so as to recover the literary form in which the native words had their being” (1981, p. 384). In so doing “to recover the literary form in which the native words had their being,” there is an emphasis on the literary nature of the study to discover the poetics of the indigenous people. Jerome Rothenberg, the coiner of the term ethnopoetics, explains in an interview his own view about Ethnopoetics as “not a way of making poetry, but rather a way of talking about poetry, both the practice and the theory of poetry, as it exists in different cultures” (Moore, 2013, p. 35).

M. Eleanor Nevins, on the other hand, suggests that ethnopoetics is most commonly understood as “that branch of linguistic anthropology dedicated to the discovery of the poetic organization of oral texts, their transcription and representation on the printed page, and their translation into more widely accessible languages.” (as cited in Bauman, 2013 p.180) Nevertheless, ethnopoetics involves two principal factors, the ‘ethno’ which is a prefix concerned with specific people, nation, or an ethnic group, and ‘poetics’ which gives prominence to an interest in the artfulness and artistic values of the text. The text, in such a view, is not necessary to be written in a literary language as poets, novelists or playwrights usually do because “poetics”, as the term, doesn’t imply an absolute distinction between literary and non-literary language. Instead, poetics is taken in “its etymological sense, that is, as a name for everything that bears upon the creation or composition of works having language at once as their substance and as their instrument” (Todorov, 1981, p. 7).

Contrary to M. Eleanor Nevins, who classifies ethnopoetics as a branch of linguistic anthropology (as cited in Bauman, 2013 p.180-83), Jan Blommaert (2006) finds ethnopoetics as a literary method “designed, initially, for the analysis of poetry and folk stories and based on an ethnographic performance-based understanding of narrative emphasizing that meaning is an effect of performance”(p.181) Ethnopoetics, seen from this perspective, is a literary method to analyze poetry and discover meaning. This meaning doesn’t only lie in the word but also in the performance, sounds, pauses and even vocal hems. This understanding of poetic analysis relates the study of poetics not only to the written text, but also to the audible aspect of the language. This understanding of ethnopoetics is echoed by Henri Meschonnic who writes, “If everything in language is the play of meaning, which is necessarily so, since nothing that is in language can fail to have an effect on meaning, then not only do rhymes have meaning, and meters, but also
each consonant, each vowel, all the seen and heard materiality of words that contributes to meaning” (1988, p.93).

The “materiality of words” in the above quotation refers to everything that can be “seen or heard,” which, in other words, refer to the transcription of the word on the printed page (what can be seen) and sound or music of that word (what can be heard). The transcription of words, or the way it looks on the printed page as part of the function of ethnopoetics, was discussed earlier in this paper with reference to both Dennis Tedlock and Dell Hymes while the importance of music as essential part of literary studies was emphasized by both T.S Eliot and Ezra Pound. Eliot wrote of the quality he calls “instrumental music” which allows us to “be deeply stirred by hearing the recitation of a poem in a language of which we understand no word” (1975, p.22). Pound (1968), on the other hand, emphasizes the same idea. He says, “In short, behave as a musician, a good musician, when dealing with that phase of your art which has exact parallels in music. . . . There is . . . in the best verse a sort of residue of sound which remains in the ear of the hearer and acts more or less as an organ-base” (p. 7).

Similarly, William Wordsworth, in his famous poem “The Solitary Reaper,” stresses the power of the sound and music as a means of literary appreciation despite the fact that he doesn’t understand the meaning of the song of the reaping girl. At the closing lines of the poem, and after wondering for long about the meaning of the girl’s song, he says, “The music in my heart I bore, / Long after it was heard no more” (1999, p. 20). The pleasure of Wordsworth is caused by what Eliot calls “instrumental music,” and the pleasure it affords comes through the sound.

Samuel Coleridge, like his friend and colleague William Wordsworth, is moved by the song and the music of the Abyssinian maid who plays on the dulcimer and sings of Mount Abora in his poem “Kubla Khan.” The speaker of the poem insists that if he could only “revive” within him “her symphony and song,” (Quiller, 1919, p.1084) he would recreate the pleasure-dome out of music and words, and becomes a magician. The power of the music and words of the oral text, in this context, is a means of artistic pleasure and source of inspiration for great literary works.

Ethnopoetic Transcription and Translation of an East-Mediterranean Song

Inspired by ethnopoetics as a literary discipline, this paper rediscovers an oral chant that has been chanted to children in the East Mediterranean countries since ages. Following the guidelines of transcription that have been set by Dinnes Tedlock, the song will be transcribed and represented on the page to make it possible for the non-Arab reader to sing it. The chant is also explained as an oral narrative along with its social and linguistic contexts. The song’s title is ‘Yalla Tnam Reema,’ which is a Shaman song usually sung by mothers to their children to put them to sleep. Like the stories told to children before going to sleep, this chant is a sleeping song that is chanted by a large number of people in the east-Mediterranean area.

Poetics of the Chant

Unlike the narratives told to children who are able to understand and interact with the story, this song is usually sung to those younger children or infants who have no sense of storytelling. Children, in this age, are in need for a repetitive rhythm and soft tone to help them go to sleep. For this reason, the song of discussions is rhythmic and has stanzaic rhyme scheme that changes in four stanzas.

The rhythm of the song alternates between slow and mid-fast, but regular in general and the reason is not to distract the child’s attention. This rhythm is usually accompanied by the regular lulling of the child. The lulling and the rhythm are harmonic to serve the same purpose of putting
the child to sleep. The song is usually sung by a single voice and a soft tone that varies between a long tone, as the song starts, then a short tone in the middle which returns to the same length of the first part at the end.

The song has a poetic form although it can’t be called a poem because it doesn’t follow the rules of Arabic poetry composition. The only similarity is the end rhyme closing the lines despite the fact that Arabic blank verse has one end rhyme called (Qafia) that is repeated at the end of all lines of the poem. Arabic free verse, on the other hand, on which there is a lot of debate whether to be considered poetry or poetic prose, is unrhymed in general. The child’s song of discussion has a stanzaic rhyme pattern which is unfamiliar to both Arabic blank verse and free verse. Moreover, the song doesn’t follow the Arabic poetry meters which are of great importance to the process of composition. Arabic poetic meters usually divide the poetic line into a regular number of feet in both parts of the poetic line (the poetic line in Arabic poetry is usually divided into two parts of the same number of feet). The lines of “Yalla Tnam Reema” don’t have a form of regularity neither in the type of feet nor in the number of feet in each line.

Orality Features

The song is of oral tradition. It includes the characteristics of oral texts; the first of which is the formulaic structure of sentences. All complete sentences in the song have a kind of a parallel structure that keeps the same rhythm. Most importantly, there is a set of common expressions usually used in Arabic language as formulas to express some ideas. The first example which is very common in Arabic is that making supplication to god to make something happen (O Lord…. Make something happen). The very common supplications for those whom we love are: Lord make them Healthier and make them love praying fasting. It is also very common in Arabic to describe a beautiful girl as ‘charming of fine blond hair’. Another common formula used to describe lovely children is ‘the one who loves you, gives you a kiss, and he who hates you, will never succeed’. Natural elements like, peach trees, apricot trees, Jasmine trees, blowing of breeze, are common symbols used in Arabic to refer to the good old days of pastoral life.

A second feature of orality in the song is the repetition of words and phrases; ‘yalla’ is repeated seven times, ‘yjeeha’ is repeated twice, ‘Reema’ four times, ‘Tnam’ three times, and ‘hey’ is repeated three times. This repetition, as Tedlock says, “frequently serves obvious poetic ends…. repetitions give greater force.”(1972, p. xxvi) The last two lines of the song indicate that the song is of an old oral tradition; ‘Hey Leena, lend us you copper basin to wash Reema’s cloths and dry them on the Jasmine tree.’ The copper basin ceased to be used for washing long time ago, and branches of trees are no longer used for drying clothes.

Guidelines for Transcription of the Song

Unlike the English language, Arabic Language has 28 letters; nine of them are different from the English sounds, but have similar places and manners of articulation. The first of which is the /q/ (Qaf) sound, which is a voiceless uvular stop. It is a heavy /q/ sound. The song discussed is in the east Mediterranean dialect, in which speakers change the heavy /q/ sound into an /a/ sound, for example the word /qahwa/ ‘coffee’ in classical Arabic, is pronounced /aahwa/ in east Mediterranean dialect. To solve the problem of confusion with the original /a/ sound, the heavy /q/ will be represented as /a~/ in the song transcription. The second sound is /x/ (kha), which is voiceless uvular fricative. It is usually transcribed as /x/ sound as in (Javier), but in order not to be mixed with the original English ‘x’ sound, it will be represented as /kh/ in the
song transcription. The third sound is /غ/ (Gha) like in (Ghoul), which is voiced uvular fricative. It will be transcribed as /gh/ in the song. The fourth is /ح/ (ha) like in (humus), which is voiceless pharyngeal fricative. It will be transcribed as /h/ in the song. The fifth sound is /ع/ like in (Amman), which is voiced pharyngeal fricative. It is usually transcribed as /aa/ sound, but to avoid the confusion with both English /a/ sound and Arabic /a~/, it will be transcribed as /a~/ in the song. The sixth sound is /ص/ like in (sudden), which is a heavy /s/ sound like in (sudden). It will be transcribed as /s/ in the song. The seventh sound is /ض/ like in (thaw), which is a heavy /d/ sound. It will be transcribed as /d/ in the song. The eighth sound is /ط/ like in (thaw), which is a heavy /t/ sound; it will be transcribed as /t/ in the song. The last different sound is /ظ/ like in (thaw), which is a heavy /δ/ sound. It will be transcribed as /th/ in the song. The table below sums up the different sounds from English and their transcription in the song.

Table 1. Transcription of Arabic sounds different from English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Alphabet</th>
<th>In English written as</th>
<th>Sounds as in</th>
<th>Transcription in the song</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ق</td>
<td>(Qaf) a heavy /q/</td>
<td>Quran</td>
<td>/a~/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>خ</td>
<td>(kha)</td>
<td>Javier</td>
<td>/kh/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غ</td>
<td>(Gha)</td>
<td>Ghoul</td>
<td>/gh/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ح</td>
<td>(ha)</td>
<td>Humus</td>
<td>/h/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ع</td>
<td>(aa)</td>
<td>Amman</td>
<td>/a~/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ص</td>
<td>a heavy /s/</td>
<td>Sudden</td>
<td>/s/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ض</td>
<td>a heavy /d/</td>
<td>Dump</td>
<td>/d/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ط</td>
<td>a heavy /t/</td>
<td>Tough</td>
<td>/t/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ظ</td>
<td>a heavy /δ/</td>
<td>Thus</td>
<td>/th/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The loudness in this song ranges between normal speech and whispering. Following Tedlock’s method of transcription, the soft whisper-like tone will be represented by lowercase letters (font 10), normal speech, on the other hand, will be represented by lowercase letters (font 12). The tone which may be louder than normal speech will be represented by capital letters. Different pitches will be represented by a level that is different from the normal level of transcription. The high pitch will be transcribed above the normal pitch, while the lower pitch will be in a lower level than the pitch of normal speech. Example:

HE

sang

a song

Another important aspect of transcription is the time interval spent in singing a word or part of it. Adopting Tedlock’s method of representation, “the long time or distance may be indicated by repeated vowels rather than by long dashes, while keeping a steady pitch.” (1972, p. xxiii) In case there is a change in the pitch, the lower pitch will be represented by a descending ladder shape vowels, while the higher pitch will be represented by an ascending ladder vowel shape. The longer the steps of the ladder, the longer the time distance indicated and vice versa.

Representation of the Translation

When a translation is done into another language, the translator has to interpret the meaning and render it in the new language. It is, by nature, an approximation of the meaning,
since words and ideas cannot be expressed identically in different languages. When I started translating this song, I encountered a number of conventional problems of translation. One of these problems is the cultural problem; the song is a cultural song that is sung in a certain situation to specific listeners. If the translation has been done without the explanatory background provided in this paper, it will be very difficult for the target language reader to understand what it is all about. The song also has some cultural terms that may seem out of context or lack coherence for the target language reader. These cultural terms are ‘I will slaughter a pigeon for her,’ ‘kidnapped by the gypsies,’ and ‘oh you the one who sells grapes and grapes' jam.’ Each of them has its cultural connotations that require further explanations. I preferred to keep them as they are without further explanation because I think explaining them will add more ambiguity to the song.

Arabic is a characterized by verbosity; it has a very big number of words, and words have many shades of meaning. Thus, as in many languages, it often requires more wordiness to get the exact meaning of the source text. No matter how many times the translation of this song was revised, there might be something lacking.

A third problem was translating ‘vocables’ or ‘untranslatables’, which are the nonsense words. Such words have no meaning, but serve necessary rhyming sounds in the song. ‘Witishetsha witishetsha’ are two repetitions of the same nonsense word in the song. They have no meaning in the Arabic language, but they are used in the song to serve both the rhythm and rhyme. They are rhythmic because of repeated similar syllables and they rhyme with the end of the following line. Instead of deleting them from the translation, I preferred to keep them untranslated. A similar decision I took regarding the proper names in the song. Reema and Leena are two Arabic proper names for girls. Both are translatables, but translating their meaning would be of no benefit because they are originally used in the song as proper names not because of the connotations of their meaning.

Because of the stanziac pattern of the song, and the Arabic poetic line structure, which is usually divided into two parts, as well as the rhyme of the song, it was difficult for me to decide how to transcribe or represent the English translation of the song on paper. The tone of the song, the pitch of pronunciation and the time distance also added to this difficulty. I found that the best method of representation is Tedlock’s technique that combines both the poetic and dramatic features of the text. Such approach enabled me to determine the tone, rhythm, intonation, pauses all other supra-semantic elements.

To make the chant more accessible to the English speaker, the translation of the song is represented in the same way English poetry is written. Another reason that supports this approach is the difference in the word order of both Arabic and English languages. This difference makes it difficult to compare the transcription of the song with the representation of its translation. The transcription represents the Arabic word order while the translation follows the English language grammar and structure. The following two pages show the transcription of the song and the representation of its translation successively.

Conclusion
In closing, this paper surveyed the main interests of ethnopoetics and explained Dennis Tedlock’s method of transcription. It also focused on ethnopoetics as a literary discipline that aspires to rediscover the oral narratives of different cultural backgrounds. To reconstruct the east-Mediterranean cultural voice and for the purpose of increasing appreciation of the indigenous texts by English language readers, this paper applied Tedlock’s approach to an
exemplary text from the Middle East region. The paper concludes that for better understanding and appreciation of an oral text, common translation is not enough. It appears that the text has to be considered in terms of complete oral performance and representation on the page. If one wishes to reach as large an audience as possible to reflect target-culture aesthetics, Tedlock’s method is advisable.

**Transcription of the song**

\[
\begin{align*}
yalla & \quad a \\
tnarm & \quad Reema \quad a \\
yalla & \quad yjeeha \quad Annoum \\
yalla & \quad thib \quad Esla \quad a \\
yallah & \quad Thib \quad Esaoum \\
yalla & \quad tjeeha \quad alawafi \quad \text{kil yaoom byaoum} \\
yalla & \quad tnaam \quad yalla \quad tnaam \\
ladbaa & \quad layir \quad elhamaM \\
routh & \quad yahamam \quad la \quad tsadiaa \quad a \\
badhak & \quad a’reema \quad tatnaM \\
Reeema & \quad Reeema \quad elhindaa \quad A \\
sha’rik & \quad asha-ar \quad wimnaa \quad A \\
Wili & \quad habik \quad bibou \quad sik \\
ilbaghdik & \quad shoo \quad bietraa \quad aa \\
yaa & \quad baia’a \quad elainaab \quad wilainabiee \\
Aowo & \quad la’imi \quad waowo \quad labayee \\
\text{Khatafouni elghajjaar} & \quad \text{Min tahat khaimet Majdaliee} \\
\text{sh sh sh sh sh} & \quad \text{ou sh sh} \\
\text{Witi et a witi et a} & \quad \text{wilkha kh tahat elmimaa} \\
kil ma hab elhaouna & \quad laatouflareema mishmsha \\
whey hey hey leena & \quad distik laknik a’arinaa \\
tanghasel tyab reema & \quad wnonshourhon a’alyasmeenaaa
\end{align*}
\]
Representation of the Song's Translation

[tense voice] O lord make Reema fall asleep__
let sleep come to her__
[tense voice] O lord make her love praying__
make her love fasting__
[tense voice] O Lord make her healthier__
[whisper like] a day after day__
let her sleep, let her sleep;
[normal voice] and I will slaughter a pigeon for her in turn
O pigeons don’t take me seriously,
I am bluffing Reema to sleep.
Reema, Reema you are a charming girl,
you have a fine blond hair
Those who love you, give you a kiss
and he who might hate you will never succeed__
[smooth] Oh you who sells grapes.
and grapes jam
tell my father and tell my mother
[Normal again] I was kidnapped by the Gypsies
when I was playing under Majdalia tent__

Wtishetsha  Wtishetsha
peach trees grow below the apricots’ ones
every time the breeze blows
I will pick an apricot for Reema to eat.
Hey Hey you Leena;
lend us your copper basin
to wash Reema’s clothes__
and dry them up on the Jasmine tree__. [smooth voice]
Authors Notes

i The *Washington Post* introduces Hymes as “an influential scholar of linguistics and anthropology who helped pioneer the study of how people use language in their everyday lives…. While scholars such as Noam Chomsky studied the abstract ways that people acquire grammar and other language skills, Dr. Hymes pursued a simpler question: How do people communicate?” (Langer, 2009)

ii A Research Professor of Anthropology at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

iii ‘Sham’ refers to the countries located in the east Mediterranean area which are: Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan

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Ayman Hassan Elhallaq, a PhD holder in Literature and Criticism from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Published a book and a number of papers in peer-viewed journals. A member of board of directors of the Fulbright Association in Gaza Strip. He teaches literature courses at the Islamic University of Gaza.
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