

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