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(London)

## THE LINGUISTIC CONTENT OF IRAQI POPULAR SONGS

### 1. Introduction

Iraqi music is to a large extent vocal, consisting of classical monorhyming odes, *qaSiddas*, set to music, or popular stanzaic songs, *aGaanii šačbiyya*, or a combination of the two. According to D'ERLANGER (1959: 154) the voice has, throughout the ages, been the favoured »instrument» of the Arabs. Yet to date there has been very little interest shown in the vocal content of Iraqi music.

The well-known Iraqi *maqam* song cycle, for example, which consists of both odes and short popular pieces, has nearly always been studied from a musical perspective, with hardly any attention given to its rich poetic content. The language of Iraqi popular songs also has rarely been analysed. All that is usually known about Iraqi vocal music is that the odes are sung or recited in classical Arabic, while the popular songs are sung in colloquial Arabic. The present article, which focuses on eight popular Iraqi songs, presents an analysis of their linguistic content.

Iraqi popular songs are generally divided into two broad groups: urban and rural/Bedouin. These in turn can be divided into various subgroups, according to whether they are from the Tigris or Euphrates regions, or from south, west or central Iraq. It is a well-known fact that some of the best loved songs originated in small towns and villages on the Euphrates, among them Hilla and Musayyab. In fact two of the songs in this survey refer to Musayyab. Many songs from western Iraq found their way to urban centres where they were adapted to the local dialects. Urban singers frequently introduce into a song some Bedouin features of language. These features include the phonemes *g* and *č* instead of their urban allophones *q* and *k* respectively; the *-an* element suffixed to the first person singular of an imperfect verb, as in *ajuuzan* for *ajuuz* 'I give up'; and some typically Bedouin lexical items. It should be pointed out, however, that introducing Bedouin elements into a song is of common occurrence in other Arab countries. In the Lebanon, for example, some folk songs, like the *šruu'i*, are sung in keeping with Bedouin pronunciation norms (ABU-HAIDAR 1979). Similarly, Algerian urban songs often contain Bedouin Arabic hallmarks, notably *g* for *q*, and words referring to nomadic experience (Nadya Bouzar-Kasbadji, personal communication).

## 2. Transcription system

### 2.1. Consonants

The consonants which do not have an English equivalent are transcribed below:

<i>t̪</i>	interdental fricative as in <i>miṭīl</i> 'like'
<i>ḏ</i>	interdental fricative as in <i>aḏīyya</i> 'harm'
<i>D</i>	pharyngealised interdental fricative as in <i>Dammeeta</i> 'I hid it'
<i>č</i>	alveolar affricate as in <i>Hinič</i> 'chin'
<i>š</i>	alveolar fricative as in <i>šaḏīr</i> 'turquoise'
<i>H</i>	pharyngeal fricative as in <i>maHbuubi</i> 'my beloved'
<i>x</i>	uvular fricative as in <i>xaayib</i> 'disappointed'
<i>G</i>	uvular fricative as in <i>Gaab</i> 'to disappear'
'	glottal stop as in ' <i>alla</i> 'God'
<i>ʕ</i>	pharyngeal fricative as in <i>ʕnaadi</i> 'obstinate'
<i>q</i>	uvular plosive as in <i>ʕaqli</i> 'my mind'
<i>S</i>	pharyngealised alveolar fricative as in <i>Soob</i> '(river) bank'
<i>T</i>	pharyngealised alveolar plosive as in <i>Taalʕa</i> 'going out (f.s.)'

### 2.2. Vowels

#### 2.2.1. Short vowels:

<i>a</i>	ranges from [ɛ] to [ɑ], depending on the environment in which it occurs.
<i>i</i>	in non-final position is realised as [ə] in final position it is realised as [i]
<i>u</i>	occurs in all positions

#### 2.2.2. Long vowels

*aa, ee, ii, oo, uu*

*ie*, a glide vowel, typical of women's speech, is the allophone of *ee*.

#### 2.2.3. Diphthongs

<i>aw</i>	occurs invariably in final position denoting a third person plural pronominal suffix, as in <i>ligaw</i> 'they found'
<i>aww</i>	as in the term of address <i>mʕawwad</i> 'oh you!'
<i>ayy</i>	as in <i>ʕalayya</i> 'on me'
<i>iyy</i>	as in <i>aḏīyya</i> 'harm'

## 3. The songs

The following eight stanzaic songs, which are still sung today, are transcribed from recordings made in Baghdad between 1959 and 1966. As a great deal of improvisation usually takes place during a performance, the language of the songs sometimes appears to be of a composite nature where urban, rural/Bedouin and classical Arabic elements are freely blended. The opening verses constitute the refrain, sung initially by the principal singer. The refrain is then repeated by the chorus at the end of each stanza. Where the song is of the *murabbaʕ* variety, or composed of quatrains with the rhyme scheme **aaab**, the fourth hemistich rhymes with the last hemistich of the refrain. Where it is of the *muzdawij* variety, or made up of two consecutive rhyming hemistichs, **aa**, **bb**, **cc**, **dd**, etc., the refrain, consisting also of two rhyming hemistichs, need not rhyme with any part of the song.<sup>1</sup>

Among songs of the *murabbaʕ* variety is the *ʕataaba* where the fourth hemistich

<sup>1</sup> According to D'ERLANGER (1959: 161-162) "les trois premiers vers (du *murabbaʕ*) ont une rime propre changeant avec les stances, et le quatrième une rime constante toujours la même tout le long du poème". "(Dans le) *muzdawadj* ... la rime change de deux vers en deux vers".



Answer, don't be obstinate.

It is not right (lit. God will not accept that) by the Prophet.

## Song II

(refrain)

*mɔ̄awwad ya baaba ya baaba  
halak rabbook il-galbi ɔ̄aɔ̄aaba*

(song)

*ɔ̄ala jisr il-imsayyib sayyibooni  
ahli w iHbaab galbi sayyibooni  
mitil Teer il-imgaSgaS sayyibooni  
w la xaafaw ɔ̄alayya mnil-ɔ̄aɔ̄aaba*

*ɔ̄ala jisr il-imsayyib šifit lamma  
giSaayib suud ɔ̄ala čitif lamma  
illi yigHam Habibi yɔ̄uuf damma  
ymuut w yinHirim šamm il-habaaba*

*bhaɔ̄aak iS-Soob laaganni faxaati  
axaɔ̄na ɔ̄aqli w nassanni ɔ̄abaati  
loo jaač il-moot lafdiič xawaati  
waxuuya lli bɔ̄izz šabaaba*

### Translation II

Oh you, you my dear, your people brought you up to torment me (lit. to be a torment to my heart).

They abandoned me on Musayyab bridge,  
My relatives and my loved ones abandoned me,  
Like a bird whose wings have been clipped, they abandoned me,  
And they did not worry in case I'd suffer.

On Musayyab bridge I saw a gathering,  
Black plaits gathered on a shoulder.  
He who harms my loved one will be deprived of his blood,  
He will die and be deprived of breathing any air.

On the other bank (of the river) I was met by (a group of) young women,  
They dazzled me (lit. they took my mind), and they made me forget my cloak.  
If death should come (anywhere) near you, I would make my sisters a ransom for you,  
And my brother (also) who is in his prime.

**Song III**

(refrain)

*gulli yaa Hilu mneen 'alla jaabak  
xazzan jariH galbi min izaDaabak  
jarh il-galib min fargaak xazzan  
mahhad mitli b maHabba tmaHHan*

(song)

*ham haada naSiibi wanjibir bii  
laani atuub w laa 'alla yihdii  
gulli š-šifit minni ađiyya  
galbak min Saxar maa Hann icalayya*

*gulli šbidat minni jinaaya  
xalleet il-xalag tibči waraaya  
gulli yaa Hilu šjaabak icalayya  
waani r-ribaTiT naSiibak biidayya*

Translation III

Tell me, you handsome one, where did you come from?  
The wounds of my heart have festered because of your cruelty.  
The wounds of my heart have festered because (of the pain) of my parting from you.  
No one like me was subjected to (the trials of) love.

And this is my fate which I have to face.

I do not repent, nor will God guide him to better ways (lit. nor will God make him behave differently).

Tell me, what ill treatment have you received (lit. seen) from me?  
Your heart is made of stone and has no compassion for me.

Tell me, what crime has been committed by me?  
I left behind me people crying.  
Tell me, oh you handsome one, what brought you my way?  
And I decided your fate myself (lit. I tied your fate with my own hands).

**Song IV**

(refrain)

*saayib yaa galbi saayib* *icala fraag il-Habaayib*

(song)

<i>šloon Haali w išloon</i>	<i>sleemaani w la fargaahum</i>
<i>w icaasa maa siboona</i>	<i>šloon il-galib yisbiikum</i>
<i>darib baGdaad imšeeta</i>	<i>kulla zarič laymuuni</i>
<i>w il-miil ma xalleeta</i>	<i>w laa kaHHalit ičyuuni</i>

*wanneet gaalaw farHaan  
Salleet gaalaw taayib*

*štikeet gaalaw Haznaan  
min ifraag il-Habaayib*

*min yoom žilmi w žilmak  
w lamman gaalaw mitzawwij*

*il-miil maa xalleeta  
kuHl il-Hajar Dammeeta*

Translation IV

My heart is forlorn because of the absence of my loved ones.

Woe is me!

I'd rather take poison than be separated from them.

I hope they haven't abandoned us,

How does one's heart abandon them?

I walked all the way to Baghdad.

It is all orange groves.

I did not use the kohl pencil,

Nor did I put any kohl on my eyes.

(When) you moaned they said you were happy,

(When) you complained they said you were sad.

(When) you prayed they said you had repented

Because of being separated from the loved ones.

From that day which you and I know of,

I did not handle the kohl pencil.

And when they told me you were married,

I hid all the eye kohl.

**Song V**

(refrain)

*yammul žiyuun is-suud ma juuzan ana  
w xaddič il-geemar ana trayyag mina*

(song)

*Tilžat ib fisTaanha l-wardi j-jamiil  
w inziwat Hiina SbiGat šams il-aSiil  
GuSun xadha mintili b nasma yimiil  
Hilwa mašyatha tinHini b rahdana*

*waagfa bil-baab tiSruux yaa laTiif  
laani majnuuna wa laa žaqli xafiif  
min wara t-tannuur itnaawišni r-riGiif  
yaa riGiif il-Hilwa yikfiini sana*

*yaa waliifat galbi ma yfiid iS-Sabur  
min baꜥad hajrič wa laa yiswa l-ꜥumur  
loo halič yirDuun aana l-beetič amurr  
aknis il-mawgid waꜥuuf iS-SalTana*

## Translation V

Oh you with the black eyes that I will not give up  
Your cheek is like the cream which I have for breakfast.

She went out in her beautiful pink dress,  
And she went inside when the late afternoon sun became strong.  
The branch that is her cheek is full and inclines at the (slightest) breeze.  
She walks gracefully and bends with ease.

Standing in the doorway, she cries out :»Oh merciful Lord,  
I am neither mad nor unintelligent»  
From behind the oven she hands me the loaf of bread.  
Oh you loaf of bread (made by) the beautiful one, you will last me a year.

Oh you companion of my heart, patience is of no use  
After you abandoned me, and life is of no value.  
If your people accept, I would pass by your house  
And sweep the fireplace, and give up all comforts.

**Song VI**

(refrain)

*malyaan kull galbi Hizin  
mayinfaꜥ igleebi n-nadam*

*ꜥidman aruuH aštiki  
mayinfaꜥ iꜥyuuni l-bači*

(song)

*malyaan galbi mnil-wilif  
ilman aꜥaatib yaa xalag*

*ya naas kulla ꜥtaab  
wil-wilif ꜥanni Gaab*

*nadmaan ꜥala ꜥumr il giDa  
xallaani wib Geeri HiDa*

*wiyya l-wilif ya Hbaab  
wilamal minna xaab*

*farHaan maHbuubi w ziha  
nisaani wib Geeri ltiha*

*yimkin w ꜥeeša Taab  
wilamal minna xaab*

*Hayraana w daayra bšikil  
xallaani bamri w antiDir*

*hajr balayya sbaab  
balkit yiji lli Gaab*

## Translation VI

My heart is full of sadness,  
To whom shall I go to complain?  
Regret is not going to make me feel better,

Weeping will not do my eyes any good.

My heart is full of longing,  
Oh you people, it is full of reproof.  
Who do I reprove, friends,  
When my loved one has left me?

I regret the lifetime that I spent  
With my loved one, oh friends.  
He left me and found someone else,  
And my hope of having him back vanished.

I am bewildered and perplexed to such an extent  
At being abandoned for no reason.  
He left me alone, (while) I (go on) waiting  
For the one who is absent, in case he comes back.

### Song VII

(refrain)

*Taaḷa min beet abuuha  
faat ma sallam ̣alayya*

*w raayHa l-beet ij-jiiraan  
yimkin il-Hilu zạlaan*

(song)

*gittilha yaa Hilwa rwiini  
gaalatli ruH yaa maskiini  
gittilha yaa Hilwa rwiini  
gaalatli ruH yaa maskiini*

*̣aṬsaan mayya sgiini  
mayna maa tirwi l-̣aṬsaan  
w ̣ala Tuulič farjiini  
ya Tuuli naḅat riiHaan*

*gittilha yaa Hilwa rwiini  
gaalatli ruH yaa maskiini*

*w ̣ala ̣yuunič farjiini  
̣yuuni ̣yuun il-Gizlaan*

### Translation VII

She is going out of her father's house  
And going to the neighbours'.  
He passed by me without greeting me,  
Perhaps the handsome one is angry.

I said to her: »Oh, you beautiful one, quench my thirst,  
I am thirsty, give me water to drink.»  
She said to me: »Go away, you poor soul,  
Our water does not revive a thirsty man.»

I said to her: »Oh, you beautiful one, quench my thirst,  
Let me look at your (beautiful) stature.»  
She said to me: »Go away, you poor soul,



I have the (tall, erect) stature of a basil stem.»

I said to her: »Oh, you beautiful one, quench my thirst,  
Let me look at your eyes.»

She said to me: »Go away, you poor soul,  
My eyes are like the eyes of gazelles.»

**Song VIII**

(refrain)

*xaayif ʔaleeha*

*šaama w dagga bil-Hinič*

*talfaan biha*

*min yištiriha*

(song)

*waana štiri bir-ruuH*

*warDa bikull išruuT*

*šaama lib-xaddič*

*xalliini ʔindič*

*w daggat šaḍir ya naas*

*wil-wijih mab ʔaṭ nuur*

*w iš-šaama ʔambar*

*w ir-rugba marmar*

*šamrat Hisin w il-ʔeen*

*w jalla llaḍi sawwa*

*tisbi b hawaaha*

*b Suura Sawwarha*

Translation VIII

I am worried about her,

I am dying (of love for) her.

(She has) a mole and a tattoo on her chin,

Who would buy them?

I would buy with my life

The mole that is on your cheek,

And I accept all (your) conditions,

(Just) let me be with you.

The tattoo is turquoise, you people,

And the mole is amber,

And her face is the source of light,

And her neck is (white like) marble.

She has the coquetishness of extreme beauty,

(while) her eye

Makes me a captive of her love.

Praise be to Him who made her

The beauty that she is.

#### 4. Phonological features

##### 4.1. Use of phonemes

In most songs the use of forms with interdental *t̪* is rare, except in *mit̪il* 'like', or in classical borrowings, as, for example, *mab̪̣at̪* 'source' and *akt̪ar* 'more than'. The term *akt̪ar*, however, is often replaced by its colloquial equivalent *azyad*.

The uvular plosive *q* is usually avoided unless it occurs in a classical borrowing like *̣aq̣li* 'my mind' which has no colloquial equivalent.

The pharyngeals *H* and *̣* occur frequently in songs since they are evocative of words like *Hubbi* 'my love'; *maHbuubi* 'my loved one'; *̣umur* 'life'; *̣aqaab* 'suffering'; *̣ataaba*. It is not unusual to come across a verse or a hemistich where either *H* or *̣* is repeated, as, for example,

*maHHad miṭli b maHabba tmaHHan* 'No one like me was subjected to (the trials of) love'

*w la xaafaw ̣alayya mṇil-̣aqaaba* 'And they did not worry in case I'd suffer'.

##### 4.2. Elision and loss of vowel length

###### 4.2.1. Elision of the glottal stop

The glottal stop ' in initial position is invariably elided, except in the form '*alla* 'God'. Thus, *l-alam* 'pain', *l-ajl* 'for the sake of', *laa aani* 'I am not', *bala ayya* 'without any', *b amri* 'alone' are realised as *lalam*, *lajl*, *laani*, *balayya*, *bamri* respectively.

###### 4.2.2. Elision of a-

In word junction *a-* of the first person singular imperfect verb is often elided if it is preceded by a word ending in *-a*, as, for example,

V *ana atrayyag minna* > *ana trayyag mina*  
'I have it for breakfast' (lit. 'I have breakfast from it')

##### 4.3. Loss of gemination

Loss of gemination takes place when the metre and rhyme scheme have to be adhered to, as in the final word of the above example where *minna* 'from it' is realised as *mina*.

##### 4.4. Vowel quality and quantity

4.4.1. The long vowel of the negative and vocative particles is usually shortened when it precedes or follows a syllable with a long vowel. Thus, *laa xaafaw ̣alayya* 'they did not worry about me', *il-miil maa xalleeta* 'I did not use the kohl pencil', *yaa naas* 'oh, people; oh, friends' become *la xaafaw ̣alayya*, *il-miil ma xalleeta* and *ya naas* respectively.

In VII, however, the long vowel of the vocative particle *yaa* is retained, while the vowel of the preceding syllable is shortened. Thus:

*gaalatli ruuH yaa maskiini* > *gaalatli ruH yaa maskiini* 'She said to me: "Go away, you poor soul!"'

The 1st pers. sing. independent pronoun occurs as *aani* (Baghdadi) and *aana* (south-western Iraqi) according to the metre. Occasionally the long vowel of *aana* is shortened to give *ana*. The long vowel of *aani*, however, is never shortened.

4.4.2. In the refrains of III and VIII the long vowel of *mneen* and *ʔaleeha* is in both cases realised as a long vowel *ee* by the male singer and as a glide vowel *ie* by the female chorus, as, for example,

III

*gulli yaa Hilu mneen 'alla jaabak* (male lead singer)

*gilli yaa Hilu mnien 'alla jaabak* (all female chorus)

'Tell me, you handsome one, where did you come from?'

VIII:

*xaayif ʔaleeha* (male lead singer)

*xaayif ʔalieha* (all female chorus)

'I am worried about her'

In the refrain of III, the vowel of the initial syllable of *gulli/gilli* 'tell me!' can be both *u* (urban) and *i* (rural/Bedouin).

#### 4.5. Anaptyxis

Anaptyxis occurs frequently to maintain the syllabic balance. In I, for example, an anaptyctic vowel *i* is inserted between the first and second syllables of *baGdaad* to maintain the heptasyllabic pattern of the quatrain, giving *baGidaad*. Similarly in the third hemistich of the opening stanza of V, *ymil* > *yimiil* 'it inclines' to give eleven syllables instead of ten.

In VI anaptyxis occurs between the antepenultimate and penultimate words of the refrain to retain the pharyngeal fricative *ʔ* in the two words *mayinfaʔ* and *iʔyuuni*. In conversation the anaptyctic vowel sometimes occurs after the second pharyngeal fricative *ʔ*, resulting in the elision of the first *ʔ*, as, for example, *mayinfa ʔiyuuni* 'it is of no use to my eyes'.

#### 4.6. Initial stress

In most Iraqi stanzaic songs the initial syllable of each hemistich is stressed, often going against stress assignment rules where stress is ordinarily determined by vowel length. Thus contrast:

	opening word		non-opening word
I	<i>jáwaad</i>	I	<i>jawáad musayyábi</i>
I	<i>lá thuumini</i>	I	<i>w la lúumak</i>
VI	<i>mályaana</i>	VII	<i>zaʔláan</i>
VI	<i>nísaani</i>	VI	<i>maHbúubi</i>
II	<i>gíSaayib</i>	III	<i>ʔaḏáabak</i>

## 5. Grammatical features

### 5.1. Syllable structure

Words of more than three syllables are rare in Iraqi songs which consist mostly of di- and trisyllabic forms. The few quadrisyllabic words to be found are compound forms, like *sayyibooni* 'they abandoned me' and *musayyabi* 'from Musayyab'.

#### 5.1.1 Word-final -a

In a *ḥataaba* type song -a is added to the final word of the quatrain in order to make it rhyme with the word *ḥataaba*, thus making the disyllabic CaCaaC form into a trisyllabic one of the pattern CaCaaCa, as, for example,

- III *ḥaḍaab + -a > ḥaḍaaba* 'torment; suffering'  
*habaab + -a > habaaba* 'wind; air'

5.1.1.1. -a is sometimes elided to maintain the metre, as, for example,

- VI *nadmaan* 'regretting (f.s.)' < *nadmaana*

However, the -a in *Hayraana* 'perplexed' which qualifies the same feminine subject is not elided.

#### 5.1.2. Bedouin loanwords

Words of Bedouin provenance have different patterns from those of their urban equivalents. Thus compare:

	Bedouin	urban
	CCvCat	CvCCat
V	<i>SbiGat</i>	<i>SibGat</i> 'to become hot (sun)'
	CvCak/CvCič	vCCak/vCCič
II	<i>halak</i>	<i>ahlak</i> 'your (m.s.) people'
V	<i>halič</i>	<i>ahlič</i> 'your (f.s.) people'
	CCvvCi	CvCCi
VI	<i>gleebi</i>	<i>galbi</i> 'my heart'

Other Bedouin/urban contrasting features are the addition of the suffix -an to the first person of the verb *jaaz* 'to give up' (the refrain of V), and the third person plural feminine marker (the last stanza of II). Thus compare:

	Bedouin	urban
V	(a)juuzan	ajuuz 'I give up'
II	laaganni	laagooni 'they (f.p.) met me'
	axaḍna	axḍaw 'they (f.p.) took'
	nassanni	nassooni 'they (f.p.) made me forget'

#### 5.2. Homophonic words

Each of the following forms belongs to a different category and has no semantic relationship with its homonym(s):

- (i)l- 'the'                      (i)l- 'to; for'                      l- 'he who; that which'



#### 5.4. Conditional sentences

Conditional sentences introduced by the particle *loo* occur frequently in Iraqi songs and usually refer to unreal or hypothetical conditions. The verb of the protasis, or *loo*-clause, is in the imperfect, unless it is a verb of motion when it is in the perfect. The verb of the apodosis or main clause is invariably in the imperfect. In folk poetry the *loo*-clause is sometimes linked to the apodosis by a conjunction. However, a conjunction or a link-word is frequently omitted in poetry, but "rarely in prose" (cf. WRIGHT II, 1951: 346). In the two examples below, the particle *la* is used to introduce the apodosis of the first sentence, while in the second example no link-word occurs:

- II *loo jaač il-moot lafdiič xawaati*  
 'If death should come anywhere near you,  
 I would make my sisters a ransom for you'

This sentence can also occur without a link-word as:

- loo jaač il-moot afdiič xawaati*  
 V *loo halič yirDuun aana l-beetič amurr*  
 'If your people accept I would pass by your house'

#### 5.5. The relative particle

The relative particle (*i*)lli/(*i*)l presents an idea of definiteness or indefiniteness, depending on whether it refers to a specific noun or not. If the relative particle denotes definiteness it generally means 'the one who' or 'that which'. If, on the other hand, it denotes indefiniteness, then the meaning implied is 'he who' or 'anyone who', as, for example,

- I *winsa l-muDa* 'And forget all that is past'  
 VI *nadmaan čala čumr il giDa* 'I regret the lifetime that we spent'  
 VI *balkit yiji lli Gaab* 'perhaps the one who is absent will come back'  
 II *illi yigHam Habiibi yč uuf damma* 'He who harms my loved one will be  
 deprived of his blood'

#### 5.6. Post-stated object

In each of the following three examples the pronominal suffix occurs as a post-stated object:

- IV *darib baGdaad imšeeta* 'I walked all the way to Baghdad (lit. I walked the  
 road to Baghdad)'  
 IV *w il-miil ma xalleeta* 'I did not handle (lit. put) the kohl pencil'  
 III *ham haača naSiibi wanjibir bii* 'And this is my fate which I have to face'

In the first two sentences the pronoun is suffixed to the verb. In the third sentence it is attached to the preposition. A pronominal suffix acting as a post-stated object ordinarily "implies a greater degree of emphasis than does a noun" (ERWIN 1963: 332). In songs, apart from adding emphasis, the post-stated object provides the additional syllable needed to maintain the metre.

## 6. Glossary

The following are some typically Iraqi terms used in the songs:

*ġaaf* 'to leave; to abandon'.

*balkit* 'perhaps' < Turkish *belkide* 'as likely as not'.

*ġaak iS-Soob* 'the other river bank'. This is how people in Baghdad refer to the west bank of the Tigris (AL-SHALCHY 1983(2): 272).

*dagga* 'tattoo'.

*fuxaati* (f.p.) 'young women'. This is a Baghdadi term which usually occurs in the plural. The singular *fuxtaaya* (lit. 'young pigeon; fledgling') is rarely used (cf. AL-SHALCHY 1983(2): 407).

*geemar* 'clotted cream'. Made of buffalo milk, *geemar*, together with date syrup or jam, is eaten for breakfast throughout Iraq. Although it is widely available, *geemar* is considered to be a delicacy.

*giSaayib* (f.p.) 'plaits'. The singular is *giSiiba*.

*kaHHal iġyuun* 'to apply kohl to the eyes'. This form, however, is frequently used idiomatically to mean 'to put someone in their place'.

*mġawwad* (f.s. *mġawda*; c.p. *mġawdiin*) is used as a vocative when someone is imploring the person he/she is addressing.

*naawaš* 'to hand over; to pass; to give'.

*rahdana* 'calm; ease'.

*SalTana* 'a life of ease' (cf. AL-SHALCHY 1983(2): 170).

*Teer imgaSgaS* 'a bird with clipped wings'.

*xalag* 'people'.

*xazzan* 'to store; to accumulate'. In songs where the subject is 'wounds', *xazzan* acquires the meaning of 'to fester'.

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