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## **The Immortality of Folktales by Abdelaziz El-Aroui**

### **Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to provide a brief introduction to the life and tales of Abdelaziz El-Aroui<sup>1</sup> (1898–1971), a well-known Tunisian storyteller. He was above all a journalist and a playwright. He was also an active member of the literary group Taht Essour. His tales were transmitted by Tunisian radio and later by TV. Their popularity spread to neighboring countries, especially Algeria and Libya. This popularity derives from his practice of drawing upon traditional sayings, stories and proverbs and from his intention to associate his work with the Tunisian dialect and to penetrate the depth of the human soul.

**Keywords:** Abdelaziz El-Aroui, Tunisian folktales, Tunisian dialect

### **Introductory Remarks**

The contents of the considerable amount of tales by Abdelaziz El-Aroui revolve around problems intimately connected with life of Tunisian society in the time of the French occupation and during independence. What is hardly understandable for this author is that in spite of the enormous popularity which these tales have enjoyed up to the present time in Tunisia, there is no adequate research concerning this concrete genre of Tunisian folk literature. One of the sources that I have read and taken into consideration was the book of Mohamed Turki in which he describes in great details Abdelaziz's life and work. His book is a collection of encyclopedic information on the author's life and the period in which he created his work but the tales are only briefly treated. In his book Turki does

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<sup>1</sup> Abdelaziz El-Aroui is in use. In Arabic عبد العزيز العروي 'Abd al-'Azīz al-'Urwī. In Tunisia it is spelled 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī.

not include the text of the tales or their analysis. Another source is the work of Mohamad Bacha who translated some selected tales by El-Arouï to different languages, in particular French and English. His goal was to use the tales to create a source material for teaching Tunisian dialect to foreigners. Bacha's input in research on Tunisian dialect could not be overestimated. Apart from this enterprise, he also is the author of multiple publications concerning Tunisian grammar and vocabulary. He developed as well a well-grounded transliteration system of Tunisian dialect. Undeniably, the translations into other languages contributed to the growing popularity of the tales. More than this, his translations have a value for comparative studies.

Unlike Turki and Bacha, the author of this article focused on different aspects of Abdelaziz's life and work basing mainly herself on the original radio and television recordings accessible in Youtube. Although she is familiar with the studies of both mentioned authors, she chose to take a different path of approach.

In conclusion the author emphasizes that the literature concerning the tales by Abdelaziz that she was able to use does not exhaust all possible aspects of the linguistic and literary analysis. What is more, listening to the record material was rather tedious because of the constant change of topics, people, and the way they spoke. The creation of a coherent text by the author required an amount of time to sensibly order the often chaotic transmission.

Being convinced of the immortality of these unique tales in the history of Tunisian folk literature, the author would like to express first her deep admiration for these tales, originating from the memory of her personal experience as a member of the Tunisian cultural community who has grown up in the intimate contact with these tales.

Taking into consideration the intransient beauty and the relevance of the message, the author is of the opinion that these tales deserve to be seriously studied in terms of their theoretical literary and linguistic qualities. It would be nice to hope that future investigations will not be limited to the repetitions of the bibliography of Abdelaziz El-Arouï copied from Turki (1988) and the reproduction on the internet of random selections of these tales.

Thus, in particular in the present article, the followings topics will be addressed:

- (i) Abdelaziz El-Arouï,
- (ii) Tales of Abdelaziz El-Arouï,
- (iii) Analysis of some aspects of these tales.

Before the proper analysis, for the sake of clarity, the author would like to provide the following information:

- (i) The notation of Arabic names (cities, towns, villages, authors, artists) will be given in Arabic script used for administrative purposes, and also in transcription.
- (ii) In notating the Arabic names of authors and artists two methods are applied:
  - (a) If they use a romanization of their names in publications, then these forms are used in the present article.
  - (b) If the names of authors and artists are given in the Arabic script, then their names are transcribed by the system used in this article.

- (iii) Taking into account the lack of a unified method for writing colloquial varieties of Arabic, the tales examined in this article are transcribed from the radio versions of tales known to the author. The transcription used is somewhat idealized in the direction of MSA though some features of local pronunciation are maintained.

## 1. Abdelaziz El-Aroui as a Folk Storyteller

Abdelaziz El-Aroui, famous as Bābā 'zīz,<sup>2</sup> the storyteller of the tales which will be the subject of this article, was born on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November 1898 in the city of Monastir (Al-Munastīr المنستير).<sup>3</sup> After elementary school, which he finished in 1912<sup>4</sup> in his native city, he was lucky to continue his education in Tunis, in Sadiqiyya College (Aṣ-Ṣādiqiyya الصادقية)<sup>5</sup> which held a good reputation thanks to its high standard of education based on the Franco-Arab modern system of schools. After three years of education El-Aroui graduated from high school in 1916,<sup>6</sup> and he got a job in administration. The job required

<sup>2</sup> See internet source (1)

"بالنسبة لنا أحنأ الكل المرحوم بابا عزيز. أحنأ الكل نعيطوله بابا عزيز مانعيطوش عبد العزيز". (دلندة عبدو)  
*bi-n-nisba līna aḥna il-kul il-marḥūm bābā 'zīz. aḥna il-kul n'ayṭūlu bābā 'zīz mā n'ayṭūš 'Abdla 'zīz.* (Dalanda 'Abdū).

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<sup>3</sup> See internet source (4,3).

"مستيري ولد خالة الحبيب بورقيبة قرا غادي ومن بعد كيف أئداده تعدى للصادقية".

*mistīri wild ḥālīt l-ḥbīb Būrgība (Habib Bourguiba) qra ḡādī w-min ba'd kif andādū t'addā li-ṣ-ṣādiqiyya.*

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<sup>4</sup> See Turki 1988, pp. 49–51.

<sup>5</sup> In Arabic المدرسة الصادقية Al-Madrassa aṣ-Ṣādiqiyya, in Frensh Le College Sadiki.

<sup>6</sup> See internet source (1, 4).

"سي عبد العزيز العروي قرا في المستير في المدرسة الابتدائية ثم في الصادقية. النخبة برك كانت تدخل للصادقية. عبد العزيز العروي كان من هاك الممتازين المحظوظين. قرا حتى للجزء الأول متع الباكالوريا. إذن عنده تكوين موش فقط في اللغة العربية واللغة التونسية واللغة الفرنسية". (الهادي البالغ)

*sī 'Abdla 'zīz l-'Irwī qra fi-l-mistīr fi-l-madrssa il-ibtidā'iyya tumma fi-ṣ-ṣādiqiyya. in-noḥba bark kānīt tudḥol li-ṣ-ṣādiqiyya. 'Abdla 'zīz l-'Irwī kān min ḥāk il-mumtāzīn il-maḥzūzīn. qra ḥatta li-l-ḡuz' il-awwil mta' il-bākālūrīyā. iḍan 'andu takwīn mūš faqaṭ fi-l-luḡa il-'arabiyya wi-l-luḡa it-tūnsiyya wi-l-luḡa il-faransiyya. (Al-Hādī al-Bālīḡ).*

"مستيري ولد خالة الحبيب بورقيبة قرا غادي ومن بعد كيف أئداده تعدى للصادقية وتخصص في إدارة الأعمال".

*mistīri wild ḥālīt l-ḥbīb būrgība qra ḡādī w-min ba'd kif andādū t'addā li-ṣ-ṣādiqiyya wi ḥaṣṣis fi-idārat il-a'māl.*

him to travel to other cities across the entire country.<sup>7</sup> But quickly, he did not feel well being far from the capital and far from his cultural activities and intellectual atmosphere and he decided to resign from that job to return to the capital, Tunis.<sup>8</sup>

The journalistic career of El-Aroui began gaining speed in 1930. He wrote at that time articles, in French and Arabic, for various newspapers including for *Tunis-Socialist*.<sup>9</sup> Later, in the same year, he founded his own newspaper *Le chameau*.<sup>10</sup>

In the beginning of the 1930, he became one of the founders of the Tunisian intellectual group known by the name of Taht Essour (جماعة تحت السور),<sup>11</sup> the members of which later included journalists, artists, poets, writers, musicians and singers.<sup>12</sup> The place of meeting of the group was a coffee house in Bab Souika (Bāb Swīqa باب سويقة), in the district of the medina of Tunis. The coffee house was located against the ramparts of the medina and was famous by the name of coffee Taht Essour. The group was busy promoting the Tunisian dialect and Tunisian literature. El-Aroui was the *spiritus movens* of this group and he was loved by all of them, especially because of his intelligence, his high culture and his rich language.<sup>13</sup> In 1937, El-Aroui married the

<sup>7</sup> See internet source (1).

"كانت عنده تجارب عديدة. بعد ماخرج من المعهد الصادقي خدم وجاب وقتها كانوا يقولوا الإيالة الجمهورية التونسية الكل من الشمال الجنوب من الشرق للغرب للوسط. خدم في جربة تونس...". (الهادي البالغ)  
*kānit 'andu tağārib 'dīda. ba'd mā hrag mi-l-ma'hid iṣ-ṣādāqī ḥdim w-ğāb waqtāhā kānu yqūlu il-iyāla il-ğumhūriyya it-tūnsiyya il-kul mi-ṣ-ṣamāl li-l-ğanūb mi-ṣ-ṣarq li-l-ğarb li-l-wasat ḥdim fī ġirba, tūnis.* (Al-Hādī al-Bālig)

<sup>8</sup> See internet source (1).

<sup>9</sup> See internet source (3), Turki 1988.

<sup>10</sup> See internet source (4), Turki 1988.

"صحفي وشد برشة جرايد كيم النهضة و Le Petit Matin وأسس جريدة الهلال التونسي اللي كانت مستقلة وقلقت شوية وهذا حلى السلطة الاستعمارية اتسكرها في نوفمبر 1930 قبل حتى ما تغلق العام."  
*ṣuḥfī w-šd brša ġraid kīm nehضة و Le petit matin w-assis ġarīdat il-hilāl it-tūnsi illi kānat mustaqilla w-qalqit šwayya w- hāda ḥalla is-sulṭa il-isti'māriyya ittsakkarhā fī novembre 1930 qbal ḥatta ma tağlaq il-'ām.*

<sup>11</sup> See internet source (4,3), Turki 1988, pp. 89–95, pp. 143–144.

"وكيم مثقفي عصره وأدباءه كان العروي من جماعة تحت السور اللي كان عندها دور كبير بعد الحرب العالمية الأولى."  
*w-kīm muṭṭafī 'aṣru w-udabā'u kān l-'l-rwī min ġmā'it taht is-sūr illi kān 'andha dawr kbīr ba'd il-ḥarb il-'ālamīyya il-lūla.*

<sup>12</sup> Habib Cheikhrouhou (Al-Habīb Ṣayḥ Rūḥūh (الحبيب شيخ روحه), Zine el-Abidine Snousi (Zayn al-'Ābidīn as-Sanūsī (زين العابدين السنوسي), Mohamed Uraybi (Muḥammad al-'Uraybī (محمد العريبي), Abou el Kacem Chebbi (Abū al-Qāsim aṣ-Ṣābbī (أبو القاسم الشابي), Tahar Haddad (Aṭ-Ṭāhir al-Haddād (الطاهر الحداد), Abdarrazak Karabaka ('Abd ar-Razzāq Karabāka (عبد الرزاق كراباكة), Mustapha Kraïef (Muṣṭafā Ḥurayyif (مصطفى خريف), Ali Douagi ('Alī ad-Dū'āğī (علي الدواعي), Mohammad al-Marzouki (Muḥammad al-Marzūqī (محمد المرزوقي), Mohamed Triki (Muḥammad at-Turaykī (محمد التركي), Sadok Thraya (Aṣ-Ṣādiq Ṭariyya (الصادق ثرية), Khemaïes Tamane (Ḥumayyis Tarnāna (خمس ترنانة), Hédi Jouini (Al-Hādī al-Ġuwaynī (الهادي الجويني).

<sup>13</sup> See internet source (2).

"بديع يا خوي... بديع طبيعي. كيف يجاوبك يجاوبك بسرعة كينك تقرا في حاجة قدامك... يوما كنا تحت السور... العروي قاعد في قهوة العباسية ودايرين بيه جماعة تحت السور. كان مدرسة اجتماعية خارقة للعادة". (محمد التركي)  
*badī' yā ḥūya...badī' ṭabī'i. kif yğāwbik yğāwbik b-sur'a kayinnik taqra fī ḥāğa qoddāmik...yawmiyyan kunnā taht is-sūr...l-'l-rwī qā'id fī qahwit il-'abbāsiyya w-dāyryn bīh ġmā'it taht is-sūr. kān madras iğtimā'iyya ḥarqa li-l-'āda.* (Muḥammad at-Trikī)

sister of Mohamed Aribi, a journalist of the group, and in 1940, together with his wife, he moved to Radis, a locality near Tunis, where he lived with his family until his death on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July 1971.<sup>14</sup>

Thanks to his journalistic activity El-Aroui became well-known. He wrote articles with patriotic, cultural, political and social overtone, both in Arabic and French. In the newspaper *Le Petit Matin*, there appeared, among others, a series of articles about Tunisian national heroes such as politicians, poets and theologians. He also wrote about other known historical figures, as well as such subjects as art exhibitions, cinematography, theatre, singing, dance, and other artistic domains.<sup>15</sup> It is important to emphasize his journalistic activity which also embraced radio sphere. He started to work in radio from 1938<sup>16</sup> and from 1942 he was a newscaster and a speaker in radio Tunis<sup>17</sup>. His work in radio was connected inseparably with frequent travels to towns and villages in remote parts of the country, with which he already was in contact during his work in administration. During his numerous travels he had the chance to make himself familiar with the living conditions of the Tunisian people and the situation of the country.<sup>18</sup>

Radio broadcasts, in the daytime and at night, which concerned various important problems, brought him popularity.<sup>19</sup> During broadcasts, recordings of theatrical plays

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<sup>14</sup> See internet source (1,3).

<sup>15</sup> See Turki 1988.

<sup>16</sup> See internet source (1).

"سي عبد العروي شخصية محترمة شخصية كبيرة معروفة من الجميع. عرفتها أنا مع دخولنا للإذاعة عرفتها عام 1938". (عبد المجيد بوديدح)

*sī 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī šahšiyya muhtarama kbība ma'rūfa mi-l-ġamī'. 'raftha āna m'a dhūlha li-l-iḏā'a 'raftha 'ām 1938. (\*Abd al-Maġīd Būḏīdah)*

<sup>17</sup> See internet source (4,1).

"ودخل مذياع في الإذاعة التونسية من أول ما تحلت وترأسها لمدة عشرة سنين وقعد يخدم فيها لين توفي في أول السبعينات" *w-dhal mūḏīc fī l-iḏā'a it-tūnisīyya min awwil māthallit w-tra'ishā l-muddit 'ašra snīn w-q'ad yihḏīm fīha līn twaffā fī awwil is-sab'īnāt.*

"كيف تكونت الإذاعة...دخل هو من اللولين بعد ماكان صحافي عنده جريدة الهلال وبرشة جرائد". (العربي بالحاج صالح)

*kīf tkawnit l-iḏā'a...dhal huwwa mi-l-lawlīn ba'd mākan šahāfī 'andu ġarīda il-hilāl w barša ġarā'id. (Al-'Arbī Bilhāġ Šālah)*

<sup>18</sup> See internet source (1,2).

<sup>19</sup> See internet source (1).

"سي عبد العزيز العروي شخصية محترمة شخصية كبيرة معروفة من الجميع. وعرفتها أنا مع دخولنا للإذاعة عرفتها عام 1938. سي عبد العزيز العروي دخل للإذاعة وهذا مكان اللي قبله كان يعمل بالدارجة لأنه الدارجة بدأت في الإذاعة في الأخبار بالخصوص. موش من سي عبد العزيز العروي. شهرته ومقدرته ورواجه في نطاق الصحافة المكتوبة خللاه يرشحوه باش يكون هو اللي يعطي الأخبار بالدارجة نظرا لمقدرته ونظرا لثيقته في أداء مهمته الصحفية خاصة في جهاز إعلامي دقيق...وأصبح عبد العزيز العروي موش مختصر على الحصة أذيك فقط... كيم مايقولو مافمش حصة إلى سي عبد العزيز العروي ما باشراهش وماخدمهاش. سي عبد العزيز العروي قعد سنوات يعطينا في الأدب الشعبي يقر لنا المجزومة ويقر لنا القسم. في الإذاعة عنده حصة هك إلا أنه الحكايات هذيك جات من بعد. كذلك آخر ماياشر سي عبد العزيز العروي هي مسألة الكتابة المسرحية". (عبد المجيد بوديدح)

were also presented. In addition to his job in radio, El-Arouï also was a director of a folk theatre and the author of satiric plays, for example *The laughing camel* (i-ġmal dħak dħaka ضحكة الجمل), well known in the country.<sup>20</sup> However, he became most famous not only in his homeland but also in most of North Africa, from Morocco, through Algeria, Tunisia, all the way to Libya, because of the tales he narrated during his Sunday programs.

When he began working in radio he showed interest in folk literature. Already at that time he created stories but only the later ones, developed and refined, became a cultural phenomenon.<sup>21</sup> The author had a very rich imagination. His tales were full of hope, and had positive conclusions. Even though they played a serious role, they were not pompous but rather humorous and satirical.

Folktales by El-Arouï had a moralizing character and an important status in Tunisian literature. Belonging to oral literature, they continued folk tradition. They sprang into existence in a historically crucial period for the country. Of regaining independence, when the population needed moral and psychic support, both in the uncertain process of change and the restoration of its identity.<sup>22</sup>

sī 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī šaḥṣiyya muḥtarama šaḥṣiyya kbīra ma'rūfa mi-l-ġamī'. w 'raftħa āna m'a duḥūlna li-l-iqā'a 'raftħa 'ām 1938. sī 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī dħal li-l-iqā'a wi ḥḡa makān illi qablu kān ya 'mil bi-d-dārġa li 'annu id-dārġa bdāt fi-l-iqā'a fi-l-aḥbār bi-l-ḥuṣūš. mūs min sī 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī min wāḥid āḥir qablu lākin sī 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī šuḥrtu w-maqdartu w-rawāġu fi niṭāq iṣ-ṣaḥāfa il-maktūba ḥallātu yrašḥūh bāš ykūn huwwa illi ya 'ṭi l-aḥbār bi-d-dārġa naẓaran l-maqdartu w-naẓaran liṭīqtu fi ādā' muḥimtu iṣ-ṣuḥūfiyya ḥāṣṣatan fi ġīhāz i 'lāmī daqīq... wa aṣbaḥa 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī mūs muḥtaṣar 'ala il-ḥiṣṣa aḡṭka faqaṭ...kīm māyqūlu ma fammiš ḥiṣṣa illi sī 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī mā bāširḥāš w-mā ḥdimḥāš. sī 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī q'ad sanawāt ya 'fīnā fi-l-adab iṣ-ša'bī yaqrālna il-maġzūma w-yaqra līna il-qasīm. fi-l-iqā'a 'andu ḥiṣṣa ḥakka illā annu il-ḥkāyāt ḥaḡṭka ġāt min ba'd. kaḡālika āḥir mābāšir sī 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī hiwwa mas'alat il-kitāba il-masraḥiyya. ('Abd al-Maġīd Būdīdah)

<sup>20</sup> See internet source (1,3).

"كیم مايقولو ما فمش حصة إلی سی عبد العزیز العرووی ما بشرهاش وما خدماهاش. سی عبد العزیز العرووی قعد سنوات یعطينا فی الأدب الشعبی یقرالنا المجزومة ویقرالنا القسیم. فی الإذاعة عنده حصة هک إلا أنه الحکایات هذیک جات من بعد. کذک آخر ما بشر سی عبد العزیز العرووی هی مسألة الكتابة المسرحیة". (عبد المجید بودیدح)

kīm māyqūlu ma fammiš ḥiṣṣa illi sī 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī mā bāširḥāš w-mā ḥdimḥāš. sī 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī q'ad sanawāt ya 'fīnā fi-l-adab iṣ-ša'bī yaqrālna il-maġzūma w-yaqra līnā il-qasīm. fi-l-iqā'a 'andu ḥiṣṣa ḥakka illa annu il-ḥkāyāt ḥaḡṭka ġāt min ba'd. kaḡālika āḥir mābāšir sī 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī hiwwa mas'alat il-kitāba il-masraḥiyya. ('Abd al-Maġīd Būdīdah)

<sup>21</sup> See internet source (1).

"مانجمننا نمنعو کان مثلا حکایاته هذه ستة أجزاء من نشر الدار التونسیة للنشر لکن کان دونا حکایاته الكل راو فی القلیة خمسین جزء وكان دونا أسما ره ومسرحیاته الجمل ضحک ضحکة فی دار عمی سی علالة وخاصة أك الیورترجات مناعه إلی کانت آیه فی البلاغة و فی الکلمة اللی فی محلها راهی فی القلیة مکتبة کاملة عروویة". (الهادی البالغ)

mā naġġamnā nman'ū kān maṭalan ḥkāyātu ḥaḡī sitta aġzā' min našr id-dār it-tūnisiyya li-n-našr lakin kān dawwinna ḥkāyātu il-kul rāw fi-l-qlīla ḥamsīn ġuz' w-kān dawwinna asmāru w-masraḥiyyātu il-ġmal dħak dħaka fi dār 'ammī sī 'allāla w-ḥāṣṣatan rāk ir-ripūrtūġāt mtā'u illi kānīt āya fi-l-balāġa w-fi-l-kilma illi fi maḥalha rāhi fi-l-qlīla makṭba kāmla 'irwiyya. (Al-Hādī al-Bālīġ)

<sup>22</sup> See internet source (4).

"العرووی ماعملش فی الإذاعة کان الروایات ولا المسرحیات أما کان عنده برامج أخری ومن أشهرهم برنامج اجتماعی أما موش کیف البرامج اللی نسمعوهم تو راه. البرنامج کان یرکز علی إنه یوعي الناس ویبني فیهم المواطننة وهذا کان بعد الاستقلال وقت تکوین الجمهوریة".

The tales fulfilled a social mission of El-Aroui *sui generis*, he was an educated person. Having regained independence by Tunisia was important for the whole nation to cultivate and create a modern culture, not only Arabic but above all Tunisian. The contents of the tales included both the postulate of returning to the roots as well as creating a new national identity.<sup>23</sup>

Admired in the whole country,<sup>24</sup> the author died in consequence of a chronic illness on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July 1971. His death moved the whole region, various Tunisian political, cultural and journalistic circles with which he was in contact, and also the whole society which felt an intimate bond with him.<sup>25</sup>

Stressing the uniqueness of Abdelaziz I wanted to convey the opinions of various people (journalists, artists, artists, critics and family) who knew Abdelaziz well and worked with him for a long time. Emphasizing his great popularity in Tunisia and neighboring countries in a difficult time of changes is one of the strongest pieces of evidence of his great achievements. His name is still on the lips of Tunisian people as a spiritual mentor.

## 2. Towards a General Description of the Storyteller's Oeuvre (Ḥkāyāt El-Aroui)

When speaking of folktales, Tunisians immediately direct their thoughts to El-Aroui. This is not at all surprising, because he is the storyteller of the most famous collection of Tunisian folktales. He worked on this collection in the time span between the late 1940s

*l-'Irwī mā 'malš fi-l-liḍā'a kān ir-rwāyāt welle il-masraḥiyyāt āma kān 'andu barāmiḡ uḥrīn w-min ašharhom barnamiḡ iḡtimā'i āma mūs kif il-barāmiḡ illi nasm 'u fihom tawwa rāhu. il-barnamiḡ kān yrakkiz 'la innu ywa "ī in-nās w-yibni fihom il-muwāṭna w-hāḍā kān ba'd listiqlāl waqt takwīn il-ḡumhūriyya.*

<sup>23</sup> See internet source (1,3).

"لغة العروبي كانت دولة. أش معناها؟ كانت رمز متع الإذاعة التونسية. وقتاش تقول إذاعة وقت اللي تقول ميكرو وقت اللي تقول منباغ كإنك تقول عبد العزيز العروبي. هو اللي يرمز للإذاعة كاملة. كان مثلا في الأسمار متاعه وفي الروايات يعطينا دروس من مدرسة الحياة. دروس كيفاش الإنسان يسير في المجتمع كيفاش يلزمه يعيش كيفاش يلزمه يتكلم... ها الدروس هذه الإجتماعية والأخلاق معناها كان يعطينا دروس في الأخلاق باش يرفع من المستوى الأخلاقي متع المجتمع التونسي". (سالم الصيادي)

*luḡat l-'Irwī kānit dawla. āš ma' nāhā? kānit ramz mta' il-iḍā'a it-tūnsiyya. waqtāš tqūl iḍā'a waqt illi tqūl mikrū waqt illi tqūl miḡyā' ka'innik tqūl 'Abdla'iz l-'Irwī. huwwa illi yurmuz li-l-iḍā'a kāmla. kān maṭalan fi-l-asmār mta' u w-fi-r-rwāyāt ya'ṭinā drūs min madrasat il-hayāt. drūs kifāš il-insān ysīr fi-l-muḡtama' kifāš yilzmu y'īš kifāš yilzmu yitkallim...hā id-drūs hāḍi il-iḡtimā'iyya wi-l-aḥlāq ma' nāha kān ya'ṭina drūs fi-l-aḥlāq bāš yarfa' mi-l-mustawā il-aḥlāq mta' il-muḡtama' it-tūnsī. (Sālim aš-Ṣayyādī)*

<sup>24</sup> See internet source (1).

"بابا عزيز علاقته طيبة مع الناس الكل بو الناس الكل ويحب الناس الكل وعلاقتي بيه من الإذاعة طبعاً...نحترموه في الإذاعة الكل بو خو كبير صديق زميل اللي تتصورو في بالك". (بلندة عبدي)

*bābā 'zīz 'alāqtū ṭayba m'a in-nās il-kul bū in-nās il-kul w-yḥib in-nās il-kul w-'alāqtū bīh mi-l-liḍā'a 'ṭab'an... naḥtarmūh fi-l-iḍā'a il-kul. bū ḥū kbīr, ṣadīq, zamīl illi titṣawru fī bālik. (Dalanda 'Abdū)*

<sup>25</sup> See Turki 1988, p. 21; internet source (3).

and the 1960s.<sup>26</sup> Over this time he created about 200 tales.<sup>27</sup> The cultural importance of these tales finds confirmation in their continuous presence in the consciousness of the Tunisian people. The literary status of Abdelaziz's tales is equivocal. In accordance with what will be said in pages 11–12 of the article, while creating his stories, Abdelaziz drew inspiration from various sources above all the popular Tunisian *folktales* or from his own observations of the then current events. He stated himself that irrespectively of the source he had to transform the stories and write them down before he told them on the radio. Taking into account his approach and knowing the relevant theory of oral literature as well as after consulting experts on theory of folktales and also basing on the translations of M. Bacha, the author of the article uses the term *folktales/tales* in reference to 'Ĥkāyāt El-Aroui'.

From the appearance of the *ĥkāyāt* in the middle of the previous century, five different versions came into existence.<sup>28</sup> First, they were broadcasted by Radio Tunis. With the event of the Tunisian TV station Al-Waṭaniyya (الوطنية) in the year 1966, a second version was broadcast on TV in which El-Aroui was the only performer. He sat on a traditional Tunisian "bank" (بنك) and narrated his tales. This version continued until his death in 1971. In 1976 the TV channel Al-Waṭaniyya decided to produce filmed versions based on radio and the first TV recordings. This version produced about 60 films with tales in black and white.<sup>29</sup> Recently in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a new TV version was made. This

<sup>26</sup> See internet source (4).

"وكنقولو حكايات وروايات في الراديو ولا في التلفزة نقولو عبد العزيز العروي واللي على طول السنين العروي ولي المصدر التونسي متع الحكايات كيف نقولو الف ليلة وليلة ولا...تاريخنا حافل برشة بالحكايات والخرافات والعروي من الناس اللي خلد حكاياتنا الشعبية من الذاكرة التونسية".

*w-kinqūlū ĥkāyāt w-rwāyāt fi-r-rādyu welle fi-t-talvza nqūlū 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī wi-llī 'lā fūl is-snīn l-'Irwī wallā il-mašdar it-tūnsī mta' laħkāyāt kif nqūlū alf līla w-līla welle les femmes de la fontaine... tāriħnā ĥāfil barša bi-l-ħkāyāt wi-l-ħrāfāt. wi-l-'irwī mi-n-nās illī ĥallid ĥkāyāyātānā iš-sa'biyya mi-ġ-ġākra it-tūnsiyya.*

<sup>27</sup> See internet source (2).

"حكايات العروي يقولو اللي عنده تقريبا 200 حكاية أو أكثر من 200 حكاية". (سالم الصيادي)

*ħkāyāt l-'Irwī yqūlu illi 'andu taqrīb 200 ĥkāya aw aktar min 200 ĥkāya.* (Sālīm aš-Šayyādī)

<sup>28</sup> See internet source (4).

"حكايات العروي اللي ستانسنا وتعودنا بيهم تعدادو على ثلاثة مراحل لولى في الإذاعة تسجيلات يتعداو في سهرياتها ومن بعد جات ققرة التلفزة ولي يتعمل برنامج هو قاعد على فردة بنك ويحكي وحتى ككبر ومرض شوية التصوير تبدل من ستوديووات الإذاعة والتلفزة لداره اللي في رادس وبعد منام عينه التلفزة خمت في قالب جديد لحكاياته وصوته كان حاضر ديمافيه".

*ħkāyāt l-'Irwī illī stānisna wi t'awwidna bīhom t'addāw 'lā ūlāta marāhil lūla fi-l-liḍā'a tasḡilāt yit'addāw fi saħriyyāthā w-min ba'd ġāt faqrīt it-talwza wallā yiti'mal barnamiġ huwwa qā'id 'la farda bank w-yaħki w-ħattā kibbir w-mroġ šwayya it-tašwīr tbaḍḍil min stūdyūwāt il-iḍā'a wi-t-talwza l-dāru illī fi rādīs w-ba'd mnām 'inū it-talwza ĥammit fi qālib ġāid li-ħkāyātu wīn tšawrwī silska li-ħkāyātu w-šūtu kān ĥāzīr dīma fiha.*

<sup>29</sup> See internet source (1).

"أنا عام 1976 إدارة التلفزة طلبت مني باش نخرجها الروايات هاذي وقتها بديت في إخراج حكايات عبد العزيز العروي...والله مانجمش تعطيك عدد مظلوط وإنما فوق من 60 حكاية...أخرجتها للتلفزة مابين ألوان و blanc و noire بدينا ب ولات بالألوان. حكايات العروي يقولو اللي عنده تقريبا 200 حكاية أو أكثر من 200 حماية ماهمش الكل صالحين باش نخرجهم في التلفزة...على خاطر فم حكايات مبنية على الكلام ماهيش مبنية على الصورة... أنا قبل مانبدا في العمل متاعي نبدا نسمع حكايات العروي نسمعها ثم ننسخهم بخطي ثم إذا كان عجبتني الحكاية نبدا نخدم فيها...نعملها le découpage technique adaptation أذيك الكتابة الثانية... فم وحوذ مومش صالحين...إذاعية وموش تلفزية". (سالم الصيادي)



version is partly a repetition of the previous one. Some tales have appeared as variants of those emitted earlier but the majority are tales which have been broadcasted earlier. This new version starts also in the introduction with a song which illustrates the value of El-Aroui and his tales.<sup>30</sup> In the last two TV versions El-Aroui was present in the form of his voice only from time to time as narrator in addition to the actors. They enjoy much greater popularity in radio and the two first television versions.<sup>31</sup> Each tale, in both the radio and later television versions, began and ended by the author with characteristic strike of a gong, at the sound of which the audience gathered in order to listen to the tales. This sign has become an inalienable part of every story, and an identification sign

*āna 'ām 1976 idārat it-talfza talbit minni bāš nohroğ ha ir-rwāyāt hādī waqtha bdīt ft iħrāğ ħkāyāt 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī...wallahi mā innağğimš na'fīk 'dad mażbūt wa innama fūq min sittīn ħkāya ...aħrağtha li-t-talfza mā bīn alwān wi noire et blanc.bdīna bi noire et blanc tumma wallāt bi-l-alwān. ħkāyāt il-'irwī yqūlū illi 'andu taqrīb mi tīn (200) ħkāya aw aħtar min mi tīn ħkāya ma homoš il-kul şālħīn bāš noħrğūhom fi-t-talfza...'lahātir famma ħkāyāt mabniyya 'la l-kalām mā ħiš mabniyya 'la-ş-şūra. āna qbal ma nabda fi-l-'amal mātā'ī nabda nasma' ħkāyāt nasma'ha tumma nansahħom b-ħaḥḥ tumma tda kān 'iğbitni il-ħkāya nabda niħdim fiha... na'milħa le partenage/adaptation technique. āđika il-kitāba it-tānya...famma whūd mūhomš şālħīn...idā'iywa w mūš talfaziyya. (Sālim Aş-Şayyādī)*

<sup>30</sup> See internet source (5).

كانت ناس ويا ما كان  
ولا صورة من الإنسان  
ولسانه يغزل الحرير  
والغنجة بنت السلطان  
ولا صورة من الإنسان  
اسمع بابا عزيز يروي  
احكي له وعليك الأمان  
ومعناها ذهب معبر  
فيها الإنس وفيها الجان

بابا عزيز أيام زمان  
كل حكاية هي رواية  
بابا عزيز كلامه كبير  
باش حانية و حاجب ووزير  
كل حكاية هي رواية  
إذا تحب الخير وتنوي  
وأذا تحب تشكي للعروي  
فيها كلام معبر  
عليها ما عندك ما تخير

*bābā 'zīzī ayyām zmān  
kul ħkāya ħiyya rwāya  
bābā 'zīzī klāmū kbīr  
bāš ħānba w-ħāğib wi-wzīr  
kul ħkāyæ ħiyya mrāya  
idā thib il-ħīr w-tinwī  
w-idā thib tiški li-l-'Irwī  
fiħā klām m'abbīr  
'līhā mā 'andik mā thayyir*

*kānit nās w-yā mā kān  
welle şūra mi-l-insān  
wi-l-sānū yağzil l-aħrīr  
wi-l-ğænğe bint is-sulḥān  
welle şūra mi-l-insān  
isma' bābā 'zayyiz yirwi  
aħkilū wa-'lik l-āmān  
w-m'ānīhā dħab m'ayyir  
fiħā l-insu w-fiħā l-ğān*

<sup>31</sup> See internet source (2).

"روايات عبد العزيز العروي كانت روايات ممتازة وعجبت الجمهور الكل وبالأسف اللي ماتصورتش في التلفزة صورناها على لول مايدات التلفزة صورت وإنما ماكانش التصوير خارق للعادة. معناها الناس الكل معجبين بيها روايات عبد العزيز العروي وعملنا بيها عروض ماشاء الله. المسرح يتسكر التساكر تتباغ marché noire ... هي أول حاجة من تأليف عبد العزيز العروي ماتنكروش هذا وثانيا من ناحية التمثيل والممثلين الموجودين فيها. معناها خذات صدى كبير ياسر". (دلندة عبدو)

*riwāyāt Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī kānit rwāyāt mumtāza w 'iğbit il-ğumħūr il-kul w yā li-l-asaf illi mā tşawritiš fi-t-talfza. şawwarnāha 'la lūl mā bdāt it-talfza şawrit wa innama mā kāniš it-taşwīr ħāriğ li-l-'āda...ma'nāha in-nās il-kul mo'ğbīn bīha rwāyāt Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī wi 'malna bīha 'urūđ maşālla. il-masrah yitsakkir it-tşakir tiḥbā' marché noire. ħiyya awwil ħāğa min ta'lif Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī mā nonkrūš ħāğa w tāniyan min nāħiyat it-tamṭil wi-l-mumaṭlīn il-mawğūđīn fiha. ma'nāha ħđāt şada kbīr yāsir. (Dalanda 'Abdū)*

of the whole series. It has also been preserved in the newest screen adaptation.<sup>32</sup> In the written version they were published only twice, in the years 1973 and 1989, and both times they were released in not very large editions.<sup>33</sup>

The tales were meticulously conceived via radio which cares about education and moral. They concerned many fundamental social values which the author took great pains to pass on to the audience. The inspiration for the tales was derived partly from Tunisian folklore with which he had been familiar from childhood<sup>34</sup>. However, most of

<sup>32</sup> See internet source (1).

"لما نسمعو هذا الحس هذا نعرفو أنه بابا عزيز سي عبد العزيز العروي معنا أو هو باش يسمعا حكاية". (خالد التلاتي)

*lamma nasm'u hāda il-ħis hāda na 'rfu annu bābā 'ziz sī 'Abdla 'ziz l-'Irwī ma 'āha aw huwwa bās ysamma 'na ħkāya.* (Ḥālid it-Tlātī)

"بابا عزيز الكثير من الناس لما تقدم السمرة متعك أو الحديث متعك سواء كان في الإذاعة أو التلفزة تبدأ بضرية القونق هذه اللي تعرفت بالعروي. سرها وقصتها يعني".

*bābā 'ziz il-kāfir mina in-nās lamma tqaddim is-samar mta "ik aw il-ħadī mta "ik sawā' kān fi-l-iḍā'a aw it-talfza tabdā b-ḍarbit il-gūng hāḍi illi t'arfit bi-l-'Irwī. sirha w qışṣitha ya 'ni...? (Ḥālid it-Tlātī)*

"السر متعها مافيهاش سر كبير... ماو كنتحدثو تقولو السلام عليكم والمستمعين فم مسلمين وفم يهود وفم طلابين وفم أمالط وفم فرنسويين إلى آخره يقومشي الواحد يقول السلام عليكم للناس الكل ولا يقول السلام على من اتبع الهدى معناها سيداتي سادتي أنساني السلام عليكم

mademoiselles monsieurs mademoiselles bon soir sinjor sinjorita bonoir (عبد العزيز العروي)

*is-sir mta 'ha ma fīhās sir kbīr...māw kitithadīu tqūlu is-salām 'alaykom wi-l-mustam 'in famma muslimīn w-famma yhud w-famma tlāyin w-famma ummālīt w-famma fransawiyīn ilā āħirihi yqūmšī il-wāħid yqūl is-salāmu 'alaykom li-n-nās il-kul welle yqūl as-salām 'alā man ittaba'a al-hudā. ma 'nāhā sayyidātī sādatī ānisātī as-salāmu 'alaykom mademoiselles, monsieurs, mademoiselles bon soir, sinjor, sinjorita bonsoir. kul wāħid ya 'rif innū hāḍihi as-salāmu 'alaykom.* (Abdelaziz El-Aroui)

<sup>33</sup> See internet source (1).

"مانجنا نمنعو كان مثلا حكاياته هذه ستة أجزاء من نشر الدار التونسية للنشر لكن كان دونا حكاياته الكل راو في القليلة خمسين جزء". (الهادي البالغ)

*ma naḡḡamna nman'u kān maḡalan ħkāyātu hāḍi sitta aḡzā' min našr id-dār it-tūnisīyya li-n-našr lakin kān dawwanna ħikāyātu il-kul rāw fi-l-qlīla ḥamsīn ḡuz'. (Al-Hādī al-Bālīg)*

"في مسألة الكتب اللي هو تعرف بالعروي فم دار من دور النشر اللي تعافدنا معاها باش تنجم تخرج الإنتاج متع العروي في وسط الثنية وقفت على المسألة هذي وبرشة ناس طالبين الكتب طالبين كذا. طالبين على العروي هي ماحتش تكمل المسألة هذي وقعدنا شادين بعضنا فاك الكنتراتو...مازالو عدنا حكايات في دارنا اللي مزالو مايعرفوهمش الناس". (سيف الدين ابن العروي)

*fī mas 'alat il-kutub illi huwwa t'arriḥ bi-l-'Irwī famma dār min dūr in-našr illi t'āqīdna m'āha bās naḡḡim toħroḡ il-intāḡ mta' il-'Irwī fī woš t-tūniyya waqfīt 'la il-mas 'la hāḍiya w barša nās tālbīn il-kutub tālbīn kaḍ. tālbīn 'la il-'Irwī hīyya mā ḥabbiṣ t-kammil il-mas 'la hāḍiya w q'adnā šādīn b'aḍna fāk il-kuntrātu...māzālu 'adna ħkāyāt fī dārna illi māzālu māya 'rfūhomš in-nās. (Sayf id-Dīn the son of El-Aroui)*

<sup>34</sup> See internet source (6).

"الحكايات اللي تحكيهم العزوزة في السهرية لأولاد أو لادها أو لادها أولاد بناتها هم الحكايات حكايتنا ممانتا وقت اللي كنا صغار واللي يحكيو فيهم اليوم العزوزة لأحفادهم موش هو قد قد واللي يسمع حكاية ويعاودها أما يزيد فيها ولا ينقص ولا تتغير هاك الحكاية هنك حسب الظروف والتطورات والأخلاق الجديدة والعوايد الجديدة أما الأصل هو واحد". (عبد العزيز العروي)

*il-ħkāyāt illi taħkīhim la-'zūza fi-s-saħriyya la-wlād wlādhā w-wlād bnāthā hūma laħkāyāt ħkāthomlna mamātnā waqt illi kunna šḡār wi-lli yaħkīw fīhom il-yūm il-'zāyiz la-ħfādhom mūs hūma qad qad wi-lli yasma' ħkāya wi-y'āwidhā amā yzīd fīhā welle ynaqāṣ welle tiḡayyir hāka laħkāya haḍīka ḥašb iz-zurūf wi-t-taḥawwūrāt wi-l-āħlāq iḡ-ḡdāda wi-l-'wāyid iḡ-ḡdāda amā il-aṣl huwwa wāħid. (Abdelaziz El-Aroui)*

the tales were invented by El-Aroui himself.<sup>35</sup> People placed confidence in him<sup>36</sup> and the audience treated him as their defender and a trusted person within the country's elite circles. He was not only an advocate in their matters but also somebody speaking their language. An expression became current in the country: if you have a problem write to El-Aroui.<sup>37</sup> Frequently people wrote letters to him sharing their problems. The events described in these letters served him subsequently as a source of inspiration for successive tales. Instead of answering the letters straightforwardly, he created a tale reflecting the problems described in these letters. In this way he offered universal solutions or advice, relevant not only for those who sent the letters but also for other people listening to the radio broadcast.<sup>38</sup> His wife was also a very important consultant for him.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>35</sup> See internet source (7).

"الكلنا نعرفو حكايات بوك عكرك والغول. أشكون ما حكايتلهاوش مامته في صغره وما يتفكر هاش ولو كليمات البعض منها. مرة نقرا في كتاب فرنساوي متع حكايات لقيت حكاية تشبه لهذه وهي ماي الحكايات الكل تتسلف من بعضها وساعات نحكيكم حكاية من الأندلس ولا من الهند ولا من الجبون وهي كينها حكاية من حكاياتنا وتلقاها في أغلب الأوقات ماتختلفش على حكاياتنا إلا في بعض جزئيات". (عبد العزيز العروي)

*il-kolnā na 'rfū hkāyāt būk 'karrik wi-l-ḡul. aškūn mā hkāthlālūs mammātu fi šoḡrtu w-mā yitfakkarhās wa law klīmāt l-ba'ḍ minhā. marra naqrā fi-ktāb fransāwī mta' hkāyāt lqīt hkāya tšabbah l-aḡī w-hiyya māy l-hkāyāt l-kul tšallif min ba'dhā w- sāt nihkilkom hkāya mi-l-andlos welle mi-l-hind welle mi-l-ḡābūn w-hiyya kayinhā hkāya min hkāyātānā w-tilqāhā fi aḡlib lawqāt mā tihṭališ 'lā hkāyātānā illā fi ba'ḍ ḡuz 'iyyāt.* (Abdelaziz El-Aroui)

<sup>36</sup> See internet source (8).

"كنا هاك العام حكينا حكاية لسعة ضرابة القصعة اللي أولادها تسعة والحكايات ماهي تشبه لبعضها. وفي كل بلاد تلقاه يحكيو حكايات اللي كتجي تبحث تجي تشوف تلقاه الأصل الكل كيف كيف. هاهو جتنا حكاية تشبه لهذي بعثها سي رشيد الجمل من صفاقس. قال... " (عبد العزيز العروي)

*kunnā hāk il-'ām hkānā hkāyāt lis'a ḡarrābit il-ḡas'a illi awlādhā tis'a wi-l-hkāyāt māhī tšabbah l-ba'dhā. w-fi kul blād talqāh yihkīw hkāyāt illi kitḡt tihṭiṭ tḡt tšūf tilqāh il-aḡl il-kul kif kif. hāw ḡitnā hkāya tšabbah l-haḡiyya b'aḡhā sī ršīd iḡ-ḡmal min šfāqis. qāl...* (Abdelaziz El-Aroui)

<sup>37</sup> See internet source (1).

"أخذا شهرة من الأربعينات حتى للستينات... امش اشك للعروي. كل شكوى اللي تجبه ياخذها في مخه في راسه ويعمل عليها مسامرة". (العربي بالحاج صالح)

*hḡa šohra mi-larb'ināt hattā li-s-sittīnāt... imšī iški li-l-'Irwī. kul šakwā illi tḡīh yāhīdhā fi muhḡu fi rāsu w-ya'mil 'līha musāmra....* (Al-'Arbī bil-Hāḡ Šālāh)

<sup>38</sup> See internet source (9).

"ألك النهار في سمر من أسمارنا بمناسبة قلنا هاذي كيف المتزكر وثقيل الروح. فم ناس كاتبونا قالوا بربي أحكلنا حكاية سي المتزكر وثقيل الروح. حكاية المتزكر وثقيل الروح: قالك... " (عبد العزيز العروي)

*āka in-nhār fi samar min asmārānā b-munāsba qolnā hāḡī kif il-mitzakkir wi-tḡil ir-rūh. famma nās kātbūnā qālū b-rabbī ahkīlnā hkāyāt sī il-mitzakkir wi-tḡil ir-rūh. hkāyāt il-mitzakkir wi-tḡil ir-rūh: qāllik...* (Abdelaziz El-Aroui)

"ألك المرة نتحدث أنا والجماعة على رضاية الوالدين وعلى اللي يمشي في حظوظ والديهم ويبدوو بجرى ويقولو يا قلة الصحة ويعتبرو نفسهم باقي ما خلصوش معاهم... ياخي حكاوي على سيد من حبابنا هو أمه مرا كبيرة ومريضة مقعدة... قلناهم أنا نحكيكم حكاية. يحكيو على مرا... " (عبد العزيز العروي)

*āka il-marra niḡhaddī ānā wi-ḡ-ḡmā'a 'la rḡāyāt il-wāldīn w-'allī yimšī fi hḡūz wāldīthom w-yabḡw yīḡru wi yqālū yā qāllit iḡ-šihḡa w-ya'tabrū nfašom bāqī mā ḡolšūs m'āhom... yāhī hkāwlī 'la seyyid min ḡbābnā huwwa ummū mrā kbīra wi-mrīḡa moq'da ... qultilhom āw nihkilkom hkāya. yahkīw 'la mrā ...* (Abdelaziz El-Aroui)

<sup>39</sup> See internet source (1,4).

"تعاوني هنديك وذني وعيني... هي ماي تخرج كل يوم تمشي تقضي وتمشي... تحكيلي. ساعات حاجة باش نحكيها تكون منها هي أو اللي يقع في فندق الغلة ولا في باب بحر ولا في ما نعرفش شئ. حاجات تكون حضرت فيها هي وتحكيلي وأنا عندي فيها الثقة... وناقدة زادة عندها ما تقول في ها الميدان هذا". (عبد العزيز العروي)

He enjoyed enormous popularity among the people of Tunisia, since he addressed vital problems in a way they could easily understand with the message of his tales. As an eminent narrator of fables he managed to involve listeners into the world of the stories.<sup>40</sup> As an educated person he was aware that the education in the country was available exclusively to a narrow group of affluent people. In rural areas the schools were scarce, and they offered elementary education only to a limited number of students. Before the introduction of obligatory education the uneducated population did not attach weight to learning. Aroui's tales pursued intentionally educational goals. Their contents filled in the gaps in elementary knowledge, for instance, concerning some aspects of the country, and they usually ended with a piece of advice or a moral, following from the events described. The author thus taught and brought up his audience. The majority of society was deprived of access to universal education. He influenced the world view of the people staying at home who could benefit from his tales which appealed to both men and women, the education of the former having priority over the latter in those times. The tales of El-Aroui showed the communities in various regions of the country which he observed during his travels in the North and South.<sup>41</sup>

El-Aroui brought up problems concerning various aspects of private and social life in his tales. These included domestic violence, inheritance, the relations with the elderly, the life in the countryside, in the town and at the sultanic court. Being fictitious creations his stories did not happen in a definite place and time. However, the use of Tunisian dialect in the radio broadcast clearly identified the place of action. In TV broadcasts there were more identifying hints. In addition to the use of dialect, other identifying features included traditional Tunisian songs playing in the background, actors wearing traditional costumes,

*t'āwinnī haḍīka wiḡnayya w- 'īnayya ...hiyya may toḥroḡ kul yūm timši taqdi w-timši...tiḥkīli. sā 'āt hāḡa bāš nahkīhā tkān minha hiyya 'a-lī yāqa' fi fundiq il-ḡalla welle fi bāb bhar welle fi mā na'rifš šnuwwa. hāḡāt tkūn ḥadrit fiḥā hiyya w-tahkīli w-ānā 'andī fiḥā iṭ-ṭīqa...w-nāqda zāda 'andhā mā tqūl fi hā il-maydān hāḡā. (Abdelaziz El-Aroui)* "وكانوا المستمعين زادا يبعثونه جوابات للرديون التي يخدم فيه فيهم حكاياتهم وخرافات جداهم. والتي يميز حكايات العروي هي الحكمة والعبرة التي فيها... من الحاجات التي شدوا انتباه المستمعين ليه ولحكاياته إنه على قد ما يحكي ديما يجبد على مرته في الحكايات أما لا عمره سماها شكون ولا بنت شكون وكان ديما يقول أم الفلافل".

*w-kānū il-mustam'in zāda yib 'ūlu ḡwābāt li-r-radyūn illi yiḥdim fiḥ fiḥom ḥkāyāthom w-ḥrāfāt ḡdādhom w-illi ymayyiz ḥkāyāt l-'Irwī hiyya il-ḥikma wi-l-'ibra illi fiḥa. ...mi-l-hāḡāt illi šaddū intibāh in-nās il-mutāb'in liḥ w-li-ḥkāyātu innu 'la qad mā yiḥki dīmā yiḡbid 'la martu fi-l-ḥrāfāt āmalā 'omru sammāha škūnī welle bint škūn w-kān dīmā yqūl li-lha om il-falāfil.*

<sup>40</sup> See internet source (1).

"ابا عزيز هو تأثيره في الإلقاء في الكلام. هو يجي أسطوانة يجي كاسات ما يجيش كتاب لأنه يعتمد الفاصلة يعتمد الحيرة في السؤال ولذلك هي قدرته في الخلق والابتكار وقدرته في جلب السامع في هذيك في الإلقاء لا في الكتابة. سي عبد العزيز العروي تقراه إنت ما تنجم تعمل بيه حتى شيء لأنها الكلها فواصل والكلها فواصل والكلها...كذواقات نقطة استقهام نقطة تساؤل...لكن كيف يلقي هو السمر متعه تلقى حاجات كيف مايقول هو موش مكتوبة". (سحنون مختار)

*bābā 'zīz huwwa ta'īru fi-l-'ilqā' fi-l-klām. huwwa yḡt ustuwāna yḡt kāsāt mā yḡtīs ktāb li'annu ya'tamid il-fāšla ya'tamid al-ḥayra fi-s-su'āl wa liḡālik hiyya qudrtu fi-l-ḥalq wa-l-ibitkār w-qudrtu fi ḡalb is-sāmi' fi hāḡika fi-l-ilqā' lā fi-l-kitāba. sī 'Abdāla 'zīz l-'Irwī taqrāh inti mā tnaḡḡim ta'mil biḥ ḥatta šay lianha il-kolha fawāšil wi-lkolha ... kaḡā waqfāt noqtit istiḥfām noqtat tasā'ul...lakin kif yilqi huwwa is-samar mta"u talqa hāḡāt kif mā yqūl huwwa mūš maktūba. (Suḥnūn Muḥtār)*

<sup>41</sup> See Turki 1988, p. 136.

buildings with typical Tunisian interior decoration and the characteristic arrangement of rooms.

The language of the tales is characterized by appropriately chosen vocabulary and the insertion of proverbs and sayings, Tunisian and Arabic, in the text.<sup>42</sup> The descriptions of the landscape are faithful to the extent that they allowed to imagine the corresponding reality. The listener could easily move to the world of the story, because the reality in which the fictional stories were placed closely resembled local life, well-known to the Tunisian public and functioned as a source of fiction.<sup>43</sup>

The choice of language for his tales was a very important decision. The author did not avail himself of Modern Standard Arabic but decided in favor of the Tunisian dialect. Immediately after Tunisia have regained independence, the standard version of Arabic, and earlier French, were exclusively used in official situations. However, both languages were not comprehensible for the majority of the population, because of the low level of education. He recognized thus the value of common language for intrasocial communication, and insisted on introducing the Tunisian dialect to official use although the presence of dialect in Tunisian Radio had begun before El-Aroui.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> See internet source (1).

"العروي العرس متع حكاياته متع أسماره... هي الأمثال الشعبية". (الهادي البائع)

l-'Irwī il-'ros mta' hkāyātu mta' asmāru...hiyya il-amṭāl iṣ-ša'biyya. (Al-Hādī al-Bālig)

<sup>43</sup> See internet source (1).

"لغة العروي كانت دولة. أش معناها؟ كانت رمز متع الإذاعة التونسية. وقتاش تقول إذاعة وقت اللي تقول ميكرو وقت اللي تقول مذيع كإنك تقول عبد العزيز العروي. هو اللي يرمز للإذاعة كاملة. كان مثلا في الأسمار متاعه وفي الروايات يعطينا دروس من مدرسة الحياة. دروس كيفاش الإنسان يسير في المجتمع كيفاش يلزمه يعيش كيفاش لازمه يتكلم... ها الدروس هذه الإجتماعية والأخلاق معناها كان يعطينا دروس في الأخلاق باش يرفع من المستوى الأخلاقي متع المجتمع التونسي". (سالم الصيادي)

luḡat l-'Irwī kānit dawla. aš ma'nāha? kānit ramz mta' il-iḏā'a it-tūnsiyya. waqtāš tqūl iḏā'a waqt illi tqūl mikrū waqt illi tqūl mīdya' ka'innik tqūl 'Abdla'z l-'Irwī. huwwa illi yurmuz li-l-iḏā'a kāmla. kān maṭalan fi-l-asmār mta'u w-fi-r-rwīyāt ya'fīna drūs min madrasat il-hayāt. drūs kifāš il-insān ysīr fi-l-muḡtama' kifāš yilzmu y'īš kifāš lāzmu yūtkallim...hā id-drūs hādi il-iḡtimā'iyya wi-l-aḥlāq ma'nāha kān ya'fīna drūs fi-l-aḥlāq bāš yarfa' mi-l-mustawīl il-aḥlāq mta' il-muḡtama' it-tūnsi. (Sālim Aš-Ṣayyādī)

<sup>44</sup> See source (1).

"سي عبد العزيز العروي شخصية محترمة شخصية كبيرة معروفة من الجميع. وعرقها أنا مع دخولنا للإذاعة عرقها عام 1938. سي عبد العزيز العروي دخل للإذاعة وخذا مكان اللي قبله كان يعمل بالدارجة لأنه الدارجة بدأت في الإذاعة في الأخبار بالخصوص. موش من سي عبد العزيز العروي. شهرته ومقدرته ورواجه في نطاق الصحافة المكتوبة خلاته يرشحوه باش يكون هو اللي يعطي الأخبار بالدارجة نظرا لمقدرته ونظرا لثيقته في أداء مهمته الصحفية خاصة في جهاز إعلامي دقيق...وأصبح عبد العزيز العروي موش مختصر على الحصة أذيك فقط... كيم مايقولو مافمش حصة إلي سي عبد العزيز العروي مباشر هاش وماخدمهاش.سي عبد العزيز العروي قعد سنوات يعطينا في الأدب الشعبي يقرالنا المجزومة ويقرالنا القسم. في الإذاعة عنده حصة هك إلا أنه الحكايات هذيك جات من بعد. كذلك آخر مباشر سي عبد العزيز العروي هي مسألة الكتابة المسرحية". (عبد المجيد بويدح)

sī 'Abdla'z l-'Irwī ṣaḥṣiyya muḥtarama ṣaḥṣiyya kbīra ma'rūfa mi-l-ḡami'. w'raftha āna m'a duḥlānā li-l-iḏā'a 'raftha 'ām 1938. sī 'Abdla'z l-'Irwī dhal li-l-iḏā'a wi ḥdā makān illi qablu kān ya'mil bi-d-dārġa li'annu id-dārġa bdāt fi-l-iḏā'a fi-l-aḥbār bi-l-ḥuṣūš. mūs min sī 'Abdla'z l-'Irwī min wāḥid aḥīr qablū lākin sī 'Abdla'z l-'Irwī šuhrtu w-maqdardu w-rawāġu fī niṭāq iṣ-ṣaḥāfa il-maktūba ḥallātu yrašḥūh bāš ykūn huwwa illi ya'fī la-ḥbār bi-d-dārġa nazaran l-maqdardu w-nazaran liṭīqtu fī ādā' muhimtu iṣ-ṣuḥufiyya ḥāṣṣatan fī ġihāz i'lāmī daḡīq... wa aṣbaḥa 'Abdla'z l-'Irwī mūs muḥtaṣar 'ala il-ḥiṣṣa aḡīka faqaṭ...kīm māyqūlu mā fāmīš ḥiṣṣa illi sī 'Abdla'z l-'Irwī mā bāsrhās w-mā ḥdimhās. sī 'Abdla'z l-'Irwī q'ad sanawāt ya'fīnā fi-l-adab iṣ-ša'bi' yaqrālna il-maḡzūma

The dialect played an important role in contributing to the great success of the stories. It made it not only possible to enlarge the number of receivers but also it made happen that they felt like participants of the tales identifying themselves with active users of the language.<sup>45</sup>

### 3. Some Necessary Sociolinguistic Observations

The language used by El-Arouï in his tales, for convenience denoted here also by the abbreviation *LFT*, is lectally diversified on the one hand and at the same time relatively uniform on the other. It is possible to put forward a hypothesis that this duality was intended by the author in order to make the contents of the tales communicatively accessible to as many people as possible. This goal seems to have been achieved. In spite of the lectal diversity, the range of the tales's comprehensibility is enormous encompassing not only to the Tunisian communicative community but also to a Maghrebian community. The language of the tales enjoys thus a supradialectal status. While very close to the dialect of Tunis, it is not identical with it. Expressions from various Tunisian dialects occurring in the texts of the tales reveal the wide dialectal knowledge of the author. Although he was not a linguist, he was able to create a means of communication, that is, a lingual variety, understandable for a vast subcommunity of Arabic linguators. In communicating via tales, in which also dialectal expressions have been incorporated, listeners feel not only included in the local communicative community but also imagine participating in a much larger communicative community. It is even possible to say that the folktales by El-Arouï contribute to turning a communicative community into a language community *sui generis*. Hence it seems appropriate to devote some attention to the inspection of the language of the folktales.

However, it would not be true to assert that it is only the language of the tales which exerts a force integrating a communicative community. An important factor also is the contents of these tales which depict various aspects of real life, with its shadows and light. But again these contents are encoded in a certain language. And, this in turn, enhances curiosity about it.

Against of the above context, it seems to be of interest to acquaint the reader with relevant opinions on the status of this language used by El-Arouï expressed by some Tunisian intellectuals.

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*w-yaqra līna il-qasīm. fi-l-idā'a 'andu hišša hakka illa annu il-ḥkayāt haḍika gāt min ba'd. kaḍālika āḥir mā bāšir sī 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī hiwwa mas'alat il-kitāba il-masraḥiyya. ('Abd al-Maḡīd Būḍīdah)*

<sup>45</sup> See internet source (1).

"عبد العزيز العروي وهذه العبقرية متاعه يستعمل اللغة التونسية لحما ودما من اللول للخر ما فيهاش أك الأشياء اللي تظهر بين قوسين إنه متقّف. هو شعبي بأتم معنى الكلمة". (الهادي البالغ)

*'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī w ḥāḍi il-'abqariyya mtā'u yista'mil il-luḡa il-tūnsiyya laḥman wa daman mi-l-līl li-l-liḥhir mā fīhās aki il-ašyā' illi tẓahhir bīn qawsayn innu muṭaqqaf. huwwa ša'bi bi-atam ma'nā il-kalima. (Al-Hādī al-Bālīg)*

One of these opinions is that of Al-Hādī al-Bālīg (الهادي البالغ) who wrote: “The language of Abdelaziz El-Aroui was unique. Through his language he influenced the audience. Those who hear him from the far North understand him and those who hear him from the far South as well as from all parts of the republic understand him. He was understood not only in Tunisia, but also in neighboring Maghreb countries. In Libya, for example, they heard him and he was very famous in Algeria as well, although the radio was Radio Tunis”.

"ولغة عبد العزيز العروي جمعت فأوعت. فوعى بها الجمهور. اللي يسمعه من أقصى الشمال يفهمه واللي يسمعه من أقصى الجنوب كذلك يفهمه. من جميع أنحاء الجمهورية. مش تونس فقط بل البلدان المغاربية المجاورة. في ليبيا مثلا كانوا يسموه وكان مشهور عندهم برشة في الجزائر كذلك وإن كانت الإذاعة تونس". (الهادي البالغ)

*w luġat 'Abdla'ziz l-'Irwī ġama'at fa'aw'at. fawa "ā bihā il-ġomhūr. illi yism'u min aqṣā iṣ-šamāl yiḥmu wi-lli yasm'u min aqṣā il-ġanūb kaḍālika yiḥmu min ġamī' anhā' il-ġumhūriyya muṣ tūnis faqaṭ bal il-buldān il-maġāribiyya il-muġāwira fī lībyā maṭalan kānū yism'ūh w-kān maṣhūr 'andhom barša fī-l-ġazā'ir kaḍālik wa in kānat il-iḍā'a tūnis.* (Al-Hādī al-Bālīg)<sup>46</sup>

He added “The genius of Abdelaziz is his good use of the Tunisian language from the very beginning to the end. His language does not show that he is an intellectual. He was one of the people in the fullest sense of the word ...”

"عبد العزيز العروي وهذه العبقرية متعه يستعمل اللغة التونسية لحما ودما من اللول للخر. مافيهاش أك الأشياء اللي تظهر بين قوسين إنه مثقف. هو شعبي بأتم معنى الكلمة".

*'Abdlaziz l-'Irwī w haḍī il-'abqariyya mtā'u yista'mil il-luġa it-tūnsiyya laḥman wa daman mi-l-lūl li-l-liḥḥir. ma fihāš aka-l-aṣyā' illī tzaḥhir bīn qawsayn innu muṭaqqaf. huwwa ša'bī bi'atammi ma'nā al-kalima.*<sup>47</sup>

The second opinion is from Saḥnūn Muḥtār (سحنون مختار) “Bābā ‘ziz had a full idea of all Tunisian regions so that he knew that this word is acceptable in Tunis and not in Gabès. He knew that this word does not exist in Gabès and that word does not make pleasure for some one from el-Djerid. That is why, during the broadcast of his tales, he avoids obscenity, avoids disrespectful words and avoids words that can be erroneously interpreted in one region. I can say that he is a teacher for us but to imitate him as a person is impossible”.

"بابا عزيز كانت عنده فكرة شاملة على كل الجهات التونسية بحيث يعرف الكلمة هذه راهي في تونس باهية وفي قابس موش باهية. يعرف الكلمة هذه ماهيش متع قوابسية والكلمة هذه ما يقبلهاش الجريدي... بحيث وقت يعمل الحصة متعه السمير متعه تلقاه معناها يتجنب فيها البذاءة ويتجنب الألفاظ السوقية يتجنب الكلمات اللي ممكن تأول في جهة من الجهات وهذا مدرسة. انجم نقلك كأستاذ لبنا باش نقلوه كشخص يستحيل". (سحنون مختار)

<sup>46</sup> See internet source (1).

<sup>47</sup> See internet source (1).

*bābā 'zīz kānit 'andu fikra šāmla 'alā kul il-lahaġāt it-tūnsiyya biḥaytu ya'rif il-kilma hādī rāhi fi tūnis bāhya w-fi ġirġīs mūs bāhya. ya'rif il-kilma hādī ma hīs mtā' gwābsiyya wi-l-kilma hādī ma yaqbilhās il-ġrīdī...biḥaytu waqt ya'mil il-ḥiṣṣa mta "u is-samar mta "u talqāh ma'nāhā yataġannab fih il-badā'a wa yataġannab il-alfāz is-sūqiyya yitġannib ma'nāhā il-kalimāt illī mumkin tu'awwal fi ġiha mi-l-ġihāt w-hādā madras. innaġġim nqullik ka'ustād līnā bās nqaldūh kaṣaḥṣ yastaḥīl. (Suḥnūn Muḥtār)<sup>48</sup>*

The third opinion comes from Al-'Arabī Ibn al-Ḥāġġ Ṣādiq (العربي بن الحاج صادق) "The listener was a farmer, a building man, or he was an employee he had to wait for the program's tales of Abdelaziz El-Aroui and he was influenced so much that he was repeating his words and advice after him. So he had a talent and other power, a divine power".

"المستمع كان فلاح أو كان كان بناي أو كان كان مستخدم لازم يستنى السمير متع عبد العزيز العروي وكان يسمع كلامه. يقول قال عبد العزيز العروي كذا كذا. بحيث كانت عنده موهبة وقوة أخرى قوة إلهية". (العربي بالحاج صادق)

*il-mustama' kān fallāḥ aw kān kān bannāy aw kān kān mustaḥdam lāzim yistannā is-samar mta' 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī w-kān yasma' klāmu. yqūl qāl 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī kaḍa kaḍa biḥaytu kānat 'andu mawhiba w-quwwa uḥra quwwa ilāhiyya. (Al-'Arbī Bilḥāġ Ṣādiq)<sup>49</sup>*

The fourth opinion is that of 'Abd al-Maġīd Būdīdah (عبد المجيد بوديدح) who said: "Si Abdelaziz El-Aroui his language is his voice. His voice has a great role in his success. His speech was very correct. The secret was in his voice in his speech in the style of presentation. This was not for one day or two. This was for many years. People got used to him".

"سي عبد العزيز العروي عنده لهجته صوته. صوته له دخل كبير في نجاحه. والإلقاء متعه سليم جدا. سر كان في صوته في إلقائه في أسلوب تقديمه. موش نهار ولا تنين سنوات. الناس ستانست". (عبد المجيد بوديدح)

*sī 'Abdla'zīz l-'Irwī 'andu lahġtu šūtu. šūtu lahu daḥl kbīr fi naġāḥu wi-l-ilqā mtā'u salīm ġiddan. sir kān fi šūtu w-fi-ilqā'u w-fi uslūb taqḍīmu. mūs nḥār welle t̄nīn sanawāt in-nās stānsit. ('Abd al-Maġīd Būdīdah)<sup>50</sup>*

The final opinion is of Sālim Aṣ-Ṣayyādī (سالم الصيادي). He said: "The language of El-Aroui was the country. What does this mean? It was the symbol of Tunisian Radio. When you speak about Radio, when you say microphone, when you say radio it is as if you say Abdelaziz El-Aroui. It is he who symbolizes the entire Radio. For example, in his tales he gives us lessons from the life. Lessons how the person must behave in society,

<sup>48</sup> See internet source (1).

<sup>49</sup> See internet source (1).

<sup>50</sup> See internet source (1).



how he must live, how he must speak... These lessons were social and moral lessons. It means he had to give us moral lessons to raise the moral level of Tunisian society”.<sup>51</sup>

Most of the opinions relating to the sociolinguistic status of the language used by El-Aroui underline its supradialectal status. For example, Hadi Baligh emphasizes that the language used by El-Aroui was fully understandable and enjoyed by listeners of all over Tunisia, even in the farthest reaches of the country. It refers not only to Tunisian people but also includes the listeners of the neighboring Maghrebian countries. Thus the conclusion is clear, that El-Aroui succeeded in creating a language variety of a supradialectal communicative range, in other words, a supradialectal means of communication. El-Aroui thus understood the importance of such a language variety, which makes a given communicative community more coherent. It should also be stressed that he was very careful in his choice of dialectal expressions. His capacity to remember dialectal words was enormous and it helped him to avoid overly regional vocabulary comprehensible only locally. He is believed to have an extraordinary gift to communicate easily with people of various social groups, whether educated or not.

There are also sporadic voices indicating that his language was rather the dialect of Tunis. Thus, for example, Ben Frağ in his article published on the occasion of celebrating the 37<sup>th</sup> year of the death of El-Aroui, he declared very clearly, that El-Aroui chose the dialect of Tunis to be the language of his tales.<sup>52</sup>

It is not the present purpose to rule on this matter because this presupposes a thorough comparison of linguistic data presented in numerous works of dialectologists concerning Tunisian dialects. I vowed to mention only a few of them<sup>53</sup> to specify my basis in theoretical and practical aspect, which was essential for general characterizing of the tales. It seems however advisable, that before the status of this language can be determined its peculiarities should be identified. This in turn requires a linguistic description. In order to contribute somewhat to this task it is time to turn attention to some characteristic features pertaining to this language. In particular there will be a brief examination of selected issues regarding: vocabulary, phonetics, and morphology.

<sup>51</sup> See internet source (1).

"لغة العروي كانت دولة. أش معناها؟ كانت رمز متع الإذاعة التونسية. وقتاش نقول إذاعة وقت اللي نقول ميكر وقت اللي نقول مزياع كإنك نقول عبد العزيز العروي. هو اللي يرمز للإذاعة كاملة. كان مثلا في الأسمار متاعه وفي الروايات يعطينا دروس من مدرسة الحياة. دروس كيفاش الإنسان يسير في المجتمع كيفاش يلزمه يعيش كيفاش يلزمه يتكلم... ها الدروس هذه الإجتماعية والأخلاق معناها كان يعطينا دروس في الأخلاق باش يرفع من المستوى الأخلاقي متع المجتمع التونسي". (سالم الصيادي)

*luḡat l-'Irwī kānit dawla. aš ma 'nāha? kānit ramz mta' il-iḡā'a it-tūnsiyya. waqtāš tqūl iḡā'a waqt illi tqūl mīkrū waqt illi tqūl miḡyā' ka'innik tqūl 'Abdla 'iz l-'Irwī. huwwa illi yurmu li-l-iḡā'a kāmla. kān maṭalan fi-l-asmār mta'u w-fi-r-rwīyāt ya'fīna drūs min madrasat il-ḡayāt. drūs kifāš il-insān ysīr fi-l-muḡtama' kifāš yilzmu y'īs kifāš yilzmu yitkallim...hā id-drūs hādī il-iḡtīmā'iyya wi-l-aḡlāq ma'nāhā kān ya'fīnā drūs fi-l-aḡlāq bāš yarfa' mi-l-mustawā il-aḡlāq mta' il-muḡtama' it-tūnsī. (Sālim Aš-Ṣayyādī)*

<sup>52</sup> See internet source (3).

"وقد اختار العروي لهجة تونس العاصمة للتعبير عن خواطره وأفكاره وحكاياته".

*wa qad iḡtāra Al-'Urwī lahḡat tūnis al-'āšima li-t-ta'bīr 'an ḡawāṭirihi wa-afkārīhi wa-ḡikāyātīhi.*

<sup>53</sup> See among others the works listed in the bibliography.

#### 4. Some Lingual Features

The aim of this section is not to give a detailed description of the language used by El-Arouï in his tales but just to indicate some selected lingual features of this language, based on some of the lingual data which the author could collect from the radio version. The proposed description of this language should be treated as the first draft to this material. A more thorough analysis would require much more work. The choice of the material was not random but illustrated a collection of linguistic and sociolinguistic problems mentioned in chapters 2 and 3. The sporadic comparison with MSA also serve this goal.

Thus let me restate that the author's purpose was not to analyze the language of Abdelaziz in detail on the basis of his tales but focusing on characterizing only selected aspects of his language. She is aware that comprehensive analysis of his language requires further in-depth research, which she intends to conduct in the future and hopes that results of such a research will throw a brither light on the grammar and vocabulary of the language of the tales by Abdelaziz as a variety of Tunisian dialect.

##### 4.1. Lexical data

Both dialectologists and the native speakers of Tunisian dialects have to notice the enormous efforts of Abdelaziz El-Arouï in the selection of appropriate lexical material, which is rich and diversified at the same time. The words used are above all of Arabic origin but also there occur words from Berber, Turkish, Spanish, Italian, and French. All these words are integrated into the phonetic, morphological, and lexical systems of the General Tunisian dialect so that Tunisian people do not perceive them as foreign words. The meanings of some polysemic words are adapted to the context derived among others from the frequent use of proverbs and phrasiological expressions by the writer. It is difficult here to present all the relevant words used by El-Arouï and to deal with the subjects related to vocabulary. Only some selected words consequently will be devoted attention to in the following:<sup>54</sup>

Words used by El-Arouï	Modern Standard Arabic
<i>barša</i> (< Arabic <i>baršā'</i> ): many, much, numerous	<i>kaṭīr</i> (min): a lot/much of
<i>nāzla</i> : matter, problem	<i>qaḍīyya</i> : matter, problem
<i>mart</i> : wife	<i>zawġat</i> : wife
<i>dillā'a/dillā'āt</i> : watermelon	<i>baṭṭīḥ aḥmar</i> : watermelon
<i>bgar</i> (< Arabic <i>baqar</i> ): cow	<i>baqar</i> : cow

<sup>54</sup> The meaning of the words given here is related to the context in which they are presented. The words can have more than one meaning, but here not all the meanings will be given.

Words used by El-Aroui	Modern Standard Arabic
<i>šīh</i> (< Arabic <i>šayh</i> ): In Tunisian Arabic it was used in a meaning of a man in advanced age who was educated, especially from Quranic school and he had a religion and administrative work especially in the village.	<i>šayh</i> : man in advanced age, a religious man, Sheikh
<i>šniyya</i> : what	<i>mādā</i> : what
<i>‘dam</i> : eggs	<i>bayd</i> : eggs
<i>Kosksī</i>	<i>Kuskusī</i>
<i>mīda</i> : (< Arabic <i>mā’ida</i> ): dining table	<i>mā’ida</i> : dining table
<i>mkab</i> : (< Arabic <i>mikab</i> ): cover, cover pot	<i>gītā’</i> : cover dish
<i>kirwāna</i> : (< Turkish <i>karavana</i> ): pot	<i>qidr</i> : pot
<i>zāda</i> : also	<i>aydan</i> : also
<i>šqāla</i> : bowl	<i>zabdiyya</i> : bowl
<i>šbik</i> : what is wrong with you	<i>mā bika</i> : what is wrong with you
<i>qbāha</i> : (< Arabic <i>qubh</i> ) ugliness, enormity	<i>qubh</i> : beyond the norms of speaking and acting
<i>šāyib</i> : (< Arabic <i>šā’ib</i> ) old man, having a gray hair	<i>šayh</i> : old man
<i>hğir</i> : ( <i>hağr</i> ): bosom	
<i>kwāğit</i> : documents, papers	<i>šahādāt, awraq rasmiyya</i> : documents, papers
<i>mūbilyā</i> : (< Italian): furniture	<i>aṭāṭ al-bayt, mūbilyā</i> (MSA): furniture
<i>sifsārī</i> : old Tunisian womens dress	
<i>sqīfa</i> : (< Arabic <i>saqīfa</i> ) the entrance in traditional Tunisian houses especially in the medina	<i>madhal al-bayt</i>
<i>‘liy</i> : (< Arabic <i>‘iliy</i> (the highest place)): the floor in a traditional house	<i>ṭābiq ‘uhwī</i> : the floor
<i>tofla</i> : (< Arabic <i>tiḡla</i> ): In Tunisian dialects it means young girl but in some cases it used in the meaning of young women, who are not married.	<i>tiḡla</i> : girl, daughter
<i>bnayya</i> : (< <i>bint</i> ): In Tunisian dialects it means girl and daughter but in some cases it is used in the meaning of young women, not married	<i>bint</i> : girl, daughter

Words used by El-Arouï	Modern Standard Arabic
<i>fīz'iyya</i> : (< Arabic <i>fuz'a</i> ): In Tunisian dialect used in the meaning of a large group of people which can be related to making noise.	Old Arabic <i>fuz'a</i> which means panic or dread but also people, crying and asking for help. In some modern Arabic dialects such as the one in Kuwait the second meaning is maintained.
<i>karrūsa</i> : (< French <i>carrosse</i> but probably from Italian <i>carrozza</i> ): ...	<i>'araba tağurruhā aḥšina</i>
<i>fağrī</i> : (< Arabic <i>faqīr</i> ): very poor or pretending to be poor	<i>faqīr</i> : poor
<i>hağğāla</i> : (< Berber <i>tādğālāt</i> ): widow	<i>armla</i> : widow
<i>qillīla hibhib</i> : very poor	<i>faqīra ġiddan</i> : very poor
<i>falīğa</i> : (< French <i>valise</i> ): suitcase	<i>ḥaqība, šanṭa</i> : suitcase
<i>'dūl</i> : a man whose function was similar to that of the sheikh's in the past.	
<i>zdāq</i> : (< Arabic <i>šadāq</i> ): marriage contract	<i>'aqd iz-zawāğ</i> : marriage contract
<i>ṭmāq/tmāq</i> : (< Turkish <i>ṭmāq</i> ): kind of Tunisian womens shoe	
<i>maysālīš</i> : no problem	<i>lā tūğad muškila</i> : no problem
<i>ḥidma</i> : (< Arabic): work, job	<i>'amal, šuğl</i> : work, job
<i>šbābī</i> : (< Spanish <i>zapatero</i> ): shoemaker	<i>šāni' aḥḍiya</i> : shoemaker
<i>balğāğī</i> : (< Berber <i>idūkān</i> ): shoemaker for a traditional shoe balğa	
<i>mallāḥ</i> : (< Berber <i>amllāḥ</i> ): shoe repair	<i>iskāfi</i> :
<i>mziyya</i> : (< Arabic <i>maziyya</i> ): service	<i>ḥidma</i> : service
<i>'zūza</i> : (< Arabic <i>'ağūz</i> ): old woman	<i>imra'a 'ağūz, imra'a kabīra fī is-sin</i> : old woman
<i>maḍabiyya</i> : I would like	<i>biwiddī (an), uḥibbu (an)</i> : I would like
<i>kamša</i> : hand grip	<i>al-qabḍat min aš-šay', mā taḥwīḥ qabḍat al-yad</i> : hand grip
<i>ğodwa/min ġodwīka</i> : (< Arabic <i>ğad</i> ): tomorrow/from tomorrow	<i>ğadan/min al-ğad</i> : tomorrow, from tomorrow
<i>kisra hobza</i> : (< Arabic <i>kisrat ḥubz</i> ): kind of bread in Tunisia	
<i>šfamma</i> : (< <i>aš</i> + Arabic <i>ṭamma</i> ): what happened	<i>māḍā hunāka, māḍā ḥašala</i> : what happened

Words used by El-Aroui	Modern Standard Arabic
<i>mlīḥ</i> : (< Arabic <i>malīḥ</i> ): good, well, no problem	<i>ṭayyib, lā jūḡad muškil</i> : ok, there is no problem
<i>za‘ma</i> : (< Arabic <i>za‘mat</i> ): presumption, by default	<i>faraḡan</i> : by default
<i>ḥšūmāt/ḥšam</i> : (Arabic <i>ḥašam</i> ): noses/nose	<i>unūf/anf</i> : noses/nose
<i>k‘ībāt zītūn</i> : some olives/beads of olives	<i>ḥabbāt zaytūn</i> : beads of olives/some olives
<i>ḥšīra</i> : (Arabic <i>ḥašīra</i> ): traditional Tunisian mat made specially from the <i>Juncus</i> rushes	<i>ḥašīra/ḥašā‘ir, aḥṣur, ḥuṣur</i> : mat
<i>byūt</i> : (Arabic <i>buyūt</i> ): rooms	<i>ḡuraf</i> : rooms
<i>ḥwāyiḡ</i> : (< <i>ḥwāyiḡ</i> ): clothes	<i>malābis</i> : clothes
<i>būlīsiyya</i> : (< French police): policeman	<i>šurṭī</i> : policeman
<i>kūmīsār</i> : (< Spanish <i>comisario</i> or French <i>commissaire</i> ): commissar	<i>ḡābiṭ šurṭa</i> : police officer
<i>šniyya</i> : what	<i>māḡā</i> : what
<i>šwīlqa</i> (< Berber): old clothes	<i>malābis qadīma/ratta</i> : old clothes, cheap clothes

### Verbs

Verbs used by El-Aroui	Modern Standard Arabic
<i>‘fas ‘la</i> : (< Arabic ‘ <i>afasa</i> ): tread	<i>dās</i> : tread
<i>mšāw li-lmaḥkma</i> : (they went to the court). the verb <i>mšā</i> is used in Tunisian dialect in the meaning of movement (to go, to walk, to travel)	<i>mašā</i> : to go, to walk,
<i>yazawwik minnu l-bqar</i> : which makes the cow moo	<i>ḥār/yaḥūr al-baqar</i> : the cow mooing
<i>qa‘writ ḥāk id-dilā‘āt</i> : she made a concave in the water melon. (< Arabic <i>qa‘‘ara aš-šay‘a</i> ): to make a concave in some thing	<i>qa‘‘ara</i>
<i>w wāḥid yboh fīha bi-l-mā</i> : another one squirts her with water. (< Arabic <i>baḥḥa al-mā‘a</i> )	<i>baḥḥa al-mā‘a, rašša al-mā‘a</i> : to spray water
<i>barḡīlna dillā‘a</i> : cut the watermelon for us! (in the form of towers)	<i>qaṭṭa‘a al-baṭṭīḥ</i> : to cut the watermelon
<i>ṭaybīlna la-‘ša kosksi</i> : cook us couscous for the dinner (< Arabic <i>ṭāba aš-šay‘</i> )	<i>ṭabaḥa, ḡahhaza kuskusī</i> : to cook couscous

Verbs used by El-Arouï	Modern Standard Arabic
<i>ḥabbātha</i> : she hid it. (< Arabic origin <i>ḥabbā aš-šay'a</i> )	<i>ḥabbā, aḥfathā (aš-šay'a)</i> : to hide some thing. But the second verb is more in use in MSA and in other Arabic dialects.
<i>yistḥāyil</i> : he thought, he imagined. (< Arabic <i>taḥayyala lahu, ḥuyyila lahu</i> )	<i>taḥayyala lahu, ḥuyyila lahu, ḡanna anna</i> (to think, to imagine, to envisage)
<i>sakkir huwwa bāb il-ḥānūt</i> : he closed the door of the shop. (< Arabic origin <i>sakkara al-bāb</i> ).	<i>ḡalaqa, sadda (al-bāb)</i> : to close the door
<i>ymašmiš fī ḥāk ir-rwīsāt</i> : (< Arabic origin <i>mašša al-'azma, mašša al-'azma</i> "shaking the born" and <i>maššaša al-'azma, istaḥraḡa minhu al-muḥḡa</i> : extract the brain from the born).	
<i>mrātī ḡārit 'liyya wi t'āddāt 'la rizq</i> : (< Arabic <i>aḡār</i> : my wife took everything from me by force)	<i>i'tadā 'alā ṡaḡṡ wa iftakka mumtalkātahu</i> : to take the properties of some one by force
<i>yā bāba dabbir 'liyya</i> : please father tell me what to do. (< Arabic origin <i>dabbara aš-šay'a</i> : to manage)	<i>ašāra 'alayhi bira'y</i> : to give him an opinion
<i>'fašsilha wāḥid 'la ṡmaḡa fī-l-ḡaḡba šramḡulha, šramḡulha</i> (< Berber <i>šarmal</i> ): he ripped her shoe	<i>qaṡṡa'a, mazaqa (aš-šay'a)</i> : to rip
<i>tfarkis tilqāši šbābṡī</i> : she looks for (some one)	<i>tabḡaṡu 'an (šaḡṡ)</i>
<i>traqqa 'liš ha l-frīda</i> : if you can patch ... (< Arabic <i>raqqa'a (at-tawba)</i> )	<i>ašlaḡa, raqqa'a</i> but the first verb is more in use in MSA
<i>maḡabiyya nistaḡsin</i> : I would like to marry. (< Arabic <i>istaḡsana</i> )	<i>arḡabu fī az-zawāḡ/lī raḡbatun fī an atazawwaḡa</i> : I would like to get married
<i>nšūf</i> : I will think about it/ I see (< Arabic <i>šāf</i> )	<i>fakkara, naḡara</i> : to think, to see, to look
<i>ṡammim</i> : she thinks	<i>tufakkiru</i> : she thinks
<i>ṡlaḡfit</i> : (< Arabic <i>ṡalaḡḡafa (bi)</i> ): she wrapped with a quilt	<i>waḡa 'at liḡāf 'alā ra'sihā</i> : she put a quilt on her head
<i>toḡzor</i> : (< Arabic <i>ḡazira</i> ): she looks at/ she looks out of the corner of her eye	<i>tanḡzuru</i> : she looks at
<i>naggiz</i> : (< Arabic): he jumped (out)	<i>qaḡaza</i> : to jump (out)
<i>n-naḡḡim</i> (< Berber): am able to do some thing	<i>qādir ('alā, an), astaḡī'u (an)</i> : am able to

## 4.2. Towards a description of some selected phones

Generally speaking, it is not especially difficult to establish the inventory of phones for the tales by El-Aroui. However, this observation holds true more for consonants than for vowels. The reason for such a situation is dependent on a number of factors, including the exceptional talent of El-Aroui to narrate the stories in a careful pronunciation and appropriate modulation of the voice to account for the dramaturgy of the course of the events depicted, since the texts of the stories are not ordinary oral texts but are intended to cause an appropriate reaction on the part of the listeners. El-Aroui as narrator applied thus various pragmatic techniques as for example, speaking quickly or slowly, which could result in elongation or shortening of some phones. Hence, the identification of some phones requires more effort, since doubts may arise concerning the quality of some phones as for example, the distinction between [ɛ] and [e], the length of vowels, especially in word-final position and in sandhi, or the degree of emphasis. However, we are aware that all the sound diversity can be neither apprehended nor taken into account, and a reasonable reduction of this diversity is advisable.

What is more, the intention here is not to describe the whole phone system operating in El-Aroui's tales, but merely a necessary minimum required for the purposes of this article. In consequence, the following questions will be addressed:

- (i) The opposition [q]/[g],
- (ii) The spirant phones,
- (iii) The imāla.

### 4.2.1. The opposition [q]/[g]<sup>55</sup>

The distinction between the phone [q] (occlusive, velar, voiceless) and the phone [g] (occlusive, palatal, voiced) has serious sociolinguistic consequences. These phones actually specify corresponding dialectal communities: q-community and g-community. In Tunisia the former also is called city-community and the latter the village-community. However this dichotomy should not be generalized, since in the North West and the South of Tunisia even in the cities [g] is the dominant variant<sup>56</sup>.

Both of these two phones appear in the dialect used by El-Aroui. Taking into consideration the list of words, we can conclude the following:

- (i) The appearance of the phone [q] is dominant.
- (ii) Most of the words with the phone [q] are of Arabic origin. This is also true for the verb *qāl* with all its forms of conjugation (*qatlu* "she said to him", *qalhā* "he said to her", *nqollik* "I say/will say to you", *nqūlū* "we say", *qaltihā* "she said to her", *qāllik* "it was said", *qolna* "we said", *qālit* "she said", *qāl* "he said", *qālitlu* "she said to him", *qālhā* "he said to her", *qalha* "he said to her"...).

<sup>55</sup> Most of the scholars who study Arabic dialects including Tunisian like Cantineau, Singer, Marçais, Boris, Baccouche paid a lot of attention to this opposition. This phonological distinction between /q/ and /g/ justifies the socio-linguistic interpretation of some scholars and their distinction between Sedentary and Bedouin dialects in Tunisia. Others call this distinction between *qa:la* and *ga:la* dialects in relation to the root (*qwl*).

<sup>56</sup> For more details see also Gibson 1998.

- (iii) Some words of Arabic origin are pronounced by El-Aouï with [q] as in all Tunisia even in ga:la dialect. *qrā* “he studied/ he read”, *qur’ān* “Quran”, *qarn* “a century”.
- (iv) There are also words with [q] which are not of Arabic origin: *ṭmāq* “woman shoe”, *maqrūna* “pasta”, *tqarniyya*, ... These words are pronounced in all of Tunisia with [q].
- (v) There are also words pronounced by El-Arouï with [q] which are not of Arabic origin. Ex: *qaddāš* (how much, how many, what). These words are pronounced in Tunis above all with [q] but in small towns and villages it is pronounced with [g].
- (vi) The [g] appears sporadically.
- (vii) The phone [g] appears only in words pronounced in all of Tunisia with [g].

Ex:

*garba’ l-flīsāt* (he made a sound by moving the money) from Old Arabic qarqa‘a.  
 to make a sound like the sound coming from one metal to another,  
*dūga dūga* (the sound coming from the step of the horse) from Arabic origin  
*daqqatun*,  
*grayyin filfil* (one pepper),  
*gidmit* (she cut the bread with her teeth),  
*garn* (horn),  
*naggiz* (he jumped (out)),  
*gābis* (Gabès).

#### 4.2.2. The spirant

##### 4.2.2.1. The Phone [z]

The interdental emphatic spirant [z] corresponds to two Old Arabic phones: [d] and [z], in other words it results from the merger of these two phones.

Ex:

*zālim* “wrongful, unjust”, *yoḍrob* “he bits”

In addition to [z] in El-Arouï’s dialect the emphatic occlusive [t] and spirant [s] also occur. These two phones are both inherited from Old Arabic and turn up in words of non-Arabic origin as well. But it seems that the degree of emphatization is weaker than in Old Arabic.

Ex:

*tlāq* “divorce”, *ṭmāq* (a kind of women shoe)  
*šāhib* “freind”, *šbābī* “shoemaker”

##### 4.2.2.2. The phone [ǧ]

The voiced palatal fricative [ǧ] is preserved in El-Arouï’s dialect with the same phonetic features as in the pronunciation of Pan Tunisian. It refers also to the environment of sibilants [s] / [z] where it is pronounced as [z] az example: *zhāz* (< Arabic *ǧihāz*) “the



bride's trousseau"; *nzahhiz* (< *uğahhizu*) "I prepare the bride trousseau", *zūz* (< Arabic *zawğ*) "two". However, in the word *ḥāštu* (< *ḥāğatuhu*) "his need, he needs", *ḥāštī* (< *ḥāğatī*) "my needs" we observe the change [ğ] > [š].

#### 4.2.2.3. The phones [t̪] and [d̪]

The interdental spirants [t̪] and [d̪] are preserved in this dialect as is the case of General Tunisian with the exception of Mahdia and Moknine dialects where these spirants become occlusives<sup>57</sup>.

Ex:

*tlāta* "three"; *tamma* "exist, is"

*dīrrī* "children"; *dhab* "gold"

#### 4.2.3. The imāla

The imāla is the phonetic process resulting in the raising of *a* and *ā* to words *i* and *ī*. However, within this raising two grades, weak and strong, can be distinguished. The former is realized. The former is realized as [æ] or [æ:], and the latter as [ɛ:] or [e:]. The imāla process effects especially the Magrebian but in tunisian dialect it is the most advanced where it has become a distinctive feature. In El-Aroui's dialect this process can also be observed. The imāla does not function the environment of the emphatic phones and q<sup>58</sup>.

Ex:

[*yæhkīw*] "they tell"

[*bɛ:b*] "door"

[*'zūze*] "old woman"

[*qa:l*] "he said"

[*rʔal*] "half kilogram"

[*ʃba:bī*] "shoemaker"

### 4.3. Morphology

#### 4.3.1. Verbs

Inspecting the verbal forms occurring in El-Aroui's dialect it is difficult to establish complete verb paradigms. Nevertheless, based on some available verb forms certain important divergences can be stated, as for instance, the occurrence in the 3<sup>th</sup> Person plural of *-īw* Perfectum and *-āw* Imperfectum with the irregular verbs against *-ū* and *-ū* respectively in other Tunisian dialects.

<sup>57</sup> See Mion 2014, p. 59.

<sup>58</sup> For more details concerning imāla in Tunisian dialect see also Mion 2008.

Ex:

*hiḥkīw* “they racount that...”/ they tell that...”, *mšāw li-l-‘dūl* “they went”, *ḡāw būha wi-ḥwitha* “her father and her brothers came”. *t’aššāw w ṭhamdū wi ṭšakrū* “they ate the dinner they praise God and thank him”.

#### 4.3.2. Pronouns

Regarding the system of independent personal pronouns, and from the imperative, the existence of one form for both genders in the second person Singular can be state.

Ex:

*inti iḡ-zālim* (you M) “you are the one who is wrong/ayya ṭallaqha “you have to agree to divorce her, divorce her”, *ya mmi...ṭol ‘līna* “mama, visit us tomorrow”, *qalha hiz l-bnayya l-ummimitha* “he said to her take the girl to her mother”, *w-inti sīdi w mūla Bīti* “you are my sir and the master of the house”, *āna wi-z-zmān w-inti* “Me and the time and you (you F)”, *w-mā lqīt illa inti illi ṭhoḡ hā l-ḥīrāt il-kol* “and I did not find only you who can get all these goods”.

### Concluding Remarks

To summarize the reasons that drove the author to sketch briefly the world of the folktales created by El-Arouï is to emphasize the intransiency of his valuable contributions and to reflect on various aspects of the culture and language of the Tunisian people, both in diachronic and synchronic perspectives. The main purpose of these tales was not only a pure description of this way of life but, above all, to indicate the way to solutions which could bring into effect necessary changes in order to make the fate of human beings tolerable. Among these changes which he meant there are those of socio-cultural nature, and also changes in mentality. Thus, for example, he devoted a lot of attention to the plight of women in Tunisia, because it was his conviction that the status of women in the society will influence the success of necessary changes. He internally struggled against well-worn stereotypes and convinced listeners that the education of women is neither a religious sin nor a break in social norms.

Avoiding simplicity and boredom in his message he searched for an adequate garment for his narration. In achieving this, two factors played a decisive role, his well-rounded knowledge and incomparable lingual competence. Thus he extensively drew upon both Arabic and world literature. His unique skill in mastering various Tunisian dialects made it possible for him to create a lingual variety of supralectal comprehensibility, a variety rich in vocabulary, phraseology and proverbs, being also a worthy object of research.

The folktales by El-Arouï although located in a Tunisian-specific reality, also convey a general, universal message. His far-sighted goals, both social and lingual are also important today. El-Arouï recognized the necessity of creating a dialogue with people from all social classes to discuss their problems in a means of communication understandable

for all. The situation found today in the Arab word confirms that the ideas voiced by El-Aroui have not lost their currency: This is equivalent to the imperatives:

- (i) speak to the people and
- (ii) use the people's language.

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## Appendix

### Folkstales: Selected Examples

#### 1. *kīd in-nsā kīdīm* (كيد النساء كيدين)<sup>59</sup>

yaḥkīw ‘la tāgīr mitzawwiġ rāgīl mabsūt w-‘andu barša riziq w-ḥīr wi ḥmīr āma rabbi mūs ‘aḥī ‘la qad qalbu. martū ġāt mūs nās mlāḥ mūs bint aṣl. ma qa‘ditlu illa ‘āka r-rzayyiq ḥadāka w-maḍabīha ymūt w-tūrtu. w-rabbi ma rzaqhomš awlād wallāt ḥayfa la-nḥār illi ymid riġlu toḥroġ ḥiyya yidha ‘la rāsha. qālitlu isma‘ ya wildi aḥna ma ġibnāši wlād tawwa nḥār illi tmūt, lab‘ad, aḥlik w-um-malik yqalqūni ‘a-r-rzayyiq wi-yḥarġūni minnu nimliz. iktibli rizqik qbal ma tmūt. la ḥišmit la naddāt la qālit ḥatta ba‘d ‘mor ṭwīl welle la yinkibni fik welle la tnaḥḥi ‘a l-‘īn ma tra welle yġaldik bi-ġlūdik welle ḥyālik ḥīr min kul šay. ayya bdāt bīh kul yūm tiġbidlu fi ha l-hadra ḥadiyya w-huwwa ymanni fiha ḥatta qāl ti āna āš miš niḥsir ti ḥāt niktibḥulha w-nithanna w-nirbaḥ rāḥti. mša ġāb il-‘dūl wi-ktibbilha kul ma ‘andu bi-smha: id-dār wi-l-hinšir wi-l-ḥanūt l-flāniyya wi-l-maḥzin il-flāni wi-s-sānya il-flāniyya, ithannāt. ‘and lūl rawwaḥ bāš yoḥtor yalqa l-bāb msakkir. daq. qatlu škūn. qalha ḥil. qālitlu āš nḥil. qalha ḥil l-bāb. bāb? bāb dārik ḥadā. ayya barra barra imši ‘a nafsik. ‘ġāyib! qātlu ma tiksib m‘āya ḥat šay. yā bintī in‘il iš-šīṭān. qalitlu kān tiksib m‘āya ḥāġa mid kwāġtik. wa ‘la kol ḥāl ma tqallaqnīši yāsir. ḥāhūka l-ḥākim bīnātna. qalha hayya nimšūwlu. rmāt sifsārīha ‘la rāsha w-ḥarġit m‘āh. mšāw li-l-maḥkma. bdāt tibki wi-tṣīḥ w-tindib fi wiġha. yā sīdī āna ġrība w-ma ‘andi wāli w-mrā wliyya ofṣolni min ha-z-zālim ḥadāya rāw ḥānni w- rāw yġīb ‘liyya bi-l-līlīn wi-t-ṭlāta w-yodḥol yodrob w-yoḥroġ yodrob w-qatilni bi-š-šar w- tawwa ḥāw ġāy yqolli iktibli rizqik. mā niktiblūš yā sīdī. šī‘it in-nibiy ‘māt!? ṭallaqni minnu. kīfāš qallu ya wildi ta‘mil ha l-‘mayil m‘a martik. qallu ya sīdī tikḍib‘liyya. ma miḥtaġa ḥatta šay. mākla šārba lābsa fi-l-ḥīr ṭhallit wi-r-rizq rizqi ġibtu āna bi-drā‘i. qāllū lūkān martik mithinniyya m‘āk ḥiyya totlob iṭ-ṭlāq. w-hā r-rizq ḥadāya ḥāw il-kollū maktūb bi-smha. kīfāš tqūl mtā‘i. ya wildi iš-šara‘ yoḥkom bi-z-zāhir inti iz-zālim. ayya ṭallaqḥa welle l-ḥabs. mā bīdu ma ya‘mil msīkin salmilha fi-t-ṭalqa wi-ḥraġ. ġā taḥt il-ḥīṭ w-ḥaṭ yiddu ‘la ḥaddu w-q‘ad yḥammim ‘la ḥīlāt in-nsā wa-‘la ḥbālu illi māšī ya‘ti lāmān li-mra. huwwa ḥakkāya w-mit‘iddi rāgīl kbīr kān šāḥib būh fi-s-sābiq. yā wildī qāllū ti šbīk yiddik ‘la ḥaddik w-inti ṭammim. qallu yā bāba iġa naḥkīlik ‘la ġrībti. rāhi marti ‘amlit fiyya w-‘amlit w-‘amlit w-‘amlit wi-l-ḥākim ḥkom ‘liyya bāš nṭallaqha wi-nsallim fi kul šay. w-ma n-naġġamši nlūm ‘līh welle nqūl ġa m‘āha welle kla ‘liyya l-flūs ‘la ḥāṭir rizqī il-kol ‘māli rabbi bšīrti wi-ktibḥulha bi-smha. wi-š-šara‘ ‘la kul ḥāl yoḥkom bi-z-zāhir. ma ‘andi ma nqūl. ya bāba dabbir ‘liyya kīfāš na‘mil bāš nfahhim il-ḥākim w-ya‘rif illi āna mazlūm. ḥammim iš-šāyib ḥammim ḥammim w-minha qallu ḥadiyya yā wildī ḥadī nāzilt nsā w-ma ynaġmūha illa in-nsā. imši l-mart l-ḥākim illi ḥkomlik fi-n-nāzla w-hiyya ṭalšik. ṭayyib imšā. daq il-bāb ḥarġitlu l-ḥdīma. qalha b-rabbī sallimlī ‘la lilla w-būsli yidhā w-qolhā ta‘mil ma‘rūf taqīflī wrā l-bāb nḥib niḥkīlḥa qīštī w-kīfāš dārit biyya id-dwāyir. rānī maḍlūm w-bāṭil yzawwik minnu l-bgar. ḥarġitlu li-s-sqīfa wiqfītlū wrā l-bāb w-qatlu labās ‘līk yā wildī. šad is-sā‘a bi-l-bka ‘mal ṭārūḥ w-minha ḥkālha qistu. ba‘d ma kammil ḥkāytu qatlu barra ġībli arb‘a dillā‘āt. w-imši l-sūq l-ḥūt iṣrīli arb‘a ḥūtāt ġībhomli. mša šrāhom w-ġābhom. qālit li-l-ḥādīm ṭal‘u li-l-‘li

<sup>59</sup> See internet source (10).

w-qālitlu oq'od tamma w-itšannit āš miš yiğra. w-ğibdit qa'writ hāk id-dillā'āt hađumka. fi kul dillā'a hađit fiha hūta. 'and lūl ġa iš-ših qālitlu ya sidi andra škūn ġāb hađiyya. šniyya hađiyya. qatlu hāw hdiyya arb'a dilla'āt. qāl qoşşilna minha wħida li-l-ftūr. hāt is-sikkina ya tofla. hiyya šaqqit id-dillā'a w-tilqa fi wiştha hūta. 'amlit nfasha t'ağbit šāhit w-tāhit thaddim w-il-'īnīn tğarbit wi mša wiğh id-dinya w-ğa wiğh lāhra. dārū bīha wāhid ġāb miftāh đkar w-wāhid yboħ fiha bil-ma wi-š-ših yaqra fi āyāt il-korsi. ayya qāmit w-qālit yihyi min hyāni w-yoqtol min qtalni. qalha yā bintī hađāka lāzim id-dillā' zar'ūh 'la šaṭ il-bħar hrağ il-hūt bād il-'dam mtā'u fi-nawwār kibritiś hūta fi wost hāk id-dillā' hađāka. ayya ħalli. iğbid barğilna dillā'a ohra. ġibdit it-tānya qaşşitha ħarğit minha hūta kif lūla. it-tālta kif kif . ir-rāb'a bi-l-amtīl. qalha māla ta'rifś kifāś il-līla taybilna la'ša kosksi bi-l-hūt. w-hāwka 'andik is-sfariğil ba'tūhūlna min tastūr. ayya a'mlīlna 'ša bāhi min yiddik il-mlāh. huwwa hrağ w-hiyya taybit kosksi bi-l-hūt hađtātu 'la ġīha w-zādīt taybit kirwāna borğol. ġa fi-l-līl. ayya hāt la-'ša. kirwāna 'a l-mīda fūqha mkab hazzu yilqāh borğol. ah! šnuwwa hāda!/? qatlū šnuwwa māw kosksi bi-l-hūt. qalha hāda kosksi bi-l-hūt ti hāde hāw borğol. qatlū hađāka borğol hāw kosksi bi-l-hūt. āhi šbik hbilt yā rāğil. qalha 'ğāyib hbilt zāda. āna hā l-qbāha hađiyya innağğimha!/? hāw miš n'ayyiğ l-būk yofşolni minnik? mistānsa tqolli l-kilma hađiyya. huwwa hrağ w-hiyya hazzit kirwānit l-borğol ħabbātha w-ħađit fi boq'itha šqālit l-kosksi. hiyya hakkāya w-rağilha rāğa' huwwa wi nsību. tmakkin iš-šāyib b-bintu y'arik fiha wi-ysib. ma tişşimiś lab'id ya şiftik min na'tik. aħna yoħroğ 'līna hāda. aħna nās kbār. qalitlu yā bāba w-rās bāba mazlūma. ir-rāğil ma na'riś aś bīh ha l-līla. b-rabbī hađāya šnuwwa, w-arrātu. qalha kosksī bi-l-hūt. qālitlu yā bāba hađāka qallik borğol. qallu ahāh! 'Tb 'līk yā sī iš-ših. qāllu wallahi tawwa kān borğol. ayya qallu yizzi. 'a kol ħāl hahūka kosksi bi-l-hūt taw walla. şalli 'a n-nbī w-ođkor mūlak w-oq'od it'aşša 'la nafsik w-in'il iš-şitān. ayya tişbħu 'la hīr. hrağ. huwwa hrağ fi ġortu baş ysakkir il-bāb w-hiyya hazzit hāk iš-şqāla hađika ħabbātha w-rikzīt fi boq'itha kirwānit il-borğol. rğa'. āh il-borğol rğa'. taw mūş kānit šqālit il-kosksi. qatlu māla ađāka šnuwwa. yā mrā qālha miś thabbalni miś tharrağni min 'aqli. w-bda y'ayyiğ wi yşih... 'andha wild trađda' fiħ ġibdit mħadda w-qālit āna āš bīni w-bīnik aṭ-tarf l-ħam hađāya hāw. wi rmāt hāk il-mħadda fi-l-bīr. hayya irtahnāşī. il-miskīn yistħāyil wildu tirma fi-l-bīr qāl wū wū wi hrağ yiğri. mša ġābilha būha w-iħwitha. daħlū yilqāwha qā'da 'a l-bank w-ħaṭta wildha fi ħğirha trađda' fiħ wi šqālit il-kosksi bi-l-hūt 'a l-mīda. dħal huwwa lūl šāf l-wlid fi ħğirha qāl wāh šnuwwa hāda. daħlū hūma fi ġortu. qālū mūş qolt rmāt l-wlid fi-l-bīr. qāmit hiyya zahqit bi-l-bka w-qālitlu yā bāba yizzīni mānī bnaytik wi kbīttik hizni ma thallinīś baħda ir-rāğil hađāya rāw hbil miś yoqtilni. ida thallūni ya bāba il-līla rāw yoqtilni. w-şūfū hāhūka l-kosksi w-bāqī yqolli borğol. qāl: i, i, i waqt qomt sakkirt wrāk il-bāb waqt rğa't lqītu borğol. qāllu hađāya hbil miskīn. 'la murād allah. ħsāra. ħazna mi-l-'ilm mşāt. wi tmaknu bīh rmāw 'līh ştiqiyya bāhya w-ħaddūh w rabtūh fi-l-ħit w huwwa yşih. w-qalūlha ġodwa nģu nşūfūh. hūma ħarğū w-hiyya ġābit hađit il-mīda qoddāmu wi mşāt l-bīt ohra sakrit 'la nfisha w-qālit li-ħdimitha qūl li-r-rāğil illi fi-l-'liy yahbiğ yit'aşša. hbağ ir-rāğil ġsil ydīh w-samma bismille wi q'ad yit'aşša w-yadrab fi-l-hūt wi ymaşmiś fi hāk ir-rwīsāt w-'āmil kif w-lāħor yoħzorlu. ba'dma kammil la'ša qalitlu ayya barra tawwa fi lamān wi nhār illi tisma' bīh rğa' li-l-maħkma arğa'lu fi nizltik. w-ğāt lāk il-mağbūn msalsil madqūq fi-l-ħit wi kwātu bi-kra' l-'id mābīn il-'īnīn. min ġodwa iş-şbāħ ġāw būha wi-ħwitha yṭollu 'līha qālhom intūma ħrağtu w-hiyya habtiğli rāğil min bīt l-'liy wi t'aşša māka l-kosksi bi-l-hūt w-āna qā'id noħzor. qālū miskīn tawwa walla rāğil hbağ mi-l-'liy zāda abşir ġodwīka šniyya it-tal'a iğ-ğdīda

illi miš yaṭl'inna bīha. hbil mskīn wi-l-hbāl qā'id kol nhār yitqawwa 'līh. yā ḥsārit il-'ilm mtā'u. w ḥarḡu w-ḥallūh msalsil. yiḡbid 'līha šhar fi ha l-m'addil ḥatta ḥammim qāl ḥaddūma mūs mšadqīnī hāt na'mil nifsi kunt mahbūl bi-l-ḥaq wi mrīd. mi-l-ḡodwīka 'a-š-šbāh nšību ḡa. nhārik mabrūk. šnuwwa ḥwālik? qallu nhārik s'īd. brabbi 'lāš ḥāṭṭīni fi hā l-ḥdīd? qallu māk mrīd. qallu lā labās wa-l-ḥamdu li-llah ma 'andī šay. qāl mū 'la ḥāṭir nāzil il-kosksi bi-l-ḥūt wi-l-borḡol wi-r-rāḡil illi hbaṭ min bīt la'liy. qallu ma fi 'ilmīš. mā fāhim šay. qallu mūs martik rmāt l-wlid fi-l-bīr. qallu 'lāš marti tirmi fi-l-wlid fi-l-bīr. la hiyya mahbūla toqtul wildha. marti 'āqla yirḥam min wlid w-min rabba. qāllu il-ḥamdu li-llah hāw brā. w ḥallūlu la-ḥdīd. ḥraḡ mša li-l-ḥammām. min ḡodwīka šbah fi-l-maḥkma. fi-l-ḥīn sma' ir-rāḡil mša wqof qoddāmu. yā sīdī šrī't in-nibiy m'āk martī ḡārit 'liyya wi t'addāt 'la rizqi. qāl ḡībūha. ḡābūha. kifāš ya binti. qatlu yā sīdī ir-rizq rizqi w-hāka ir-rāḡil ḥadāka yikḏib 'liyya. qāl katfūha. katfūha. qūl il-ḥaq. qālit yikḏib 'liyya. ayya qūl il-ḥaq qalha ḥīrlik. qālit yikḏib 'liyya. aḏrib qāl. habṭūha li-l-'ša. klāt ma kla iṭ-ṭbal nhār il-'īd ḥatta qarrit bi-l-ḥqīqa. wi-r-rāḡil rḡa'lu rizqu l-kol. w-qa'dit hiyya mṭalqa.

## 2. il-'ḡūza wi-l-mallāḥ (العجوزة والملاح)<sup>60</sup>

yaḥkīw 'la 'zūza māšya fi-š-šāra' 'fassilha wāḥid 'la ṭmaqha fi-l-ḥadba šramhūlha. qa'dit timšī sāq bsāq. wi tfarkis tilqāšī šbābṭī welle balḡāḡī ya'mlilha ḡorzṭīn welle yrakbilha warda ḥatta lqāt wāḥid mallāḥ. šbāḥ il-ḥīr. nhārik s'īd. qatlu traqqa'lis ha l-frīda. qalha alla ybārik. ḥdāha min 'andha. qa'dit hiyya 'a l-'atba. raqqa'hālha 'ṭahālha. qaddāš wlīdī. qalha la maysāliš yā mmī. qatlu la ḥūd qaddāš yilzmik? qalha la maysāliš āma ta'milš 'liyya mziyya. qatlu ida kān niqdir 'lāš la. qalha āna rāḡil ḡrīb w-'āzib w-maḏabiyya nistaḥsin tilqalīšī bnayt ḥlāl? qatlu išbīh nšūf l-wildī. qalha lakin nqollik 'a-š-šarṭ min taw. rānī nidfa' kīfīna nqūlu ḥamsīn alf naqd. w-lā ḥāštī la bi-zhāz la b-mūbilya. yib'ṭūli iṭ-tofla kif ma hiyya. w lilit il-'irs la nḥib lā nās lā fi'z'iyya. hāhūka nib'atlik karrūsa w-rakkīb il-bnayya w ḡībha inti bīdik. qatlu nšūf. mšāt hāk la'zūza ṭhammim aškūn māš toḥṭob wa 'la škūn maš ta'mil ha l-mziyya. ḥamsīn alf fāka iz-zmān ḥadāka mūs yaḡnīw fagrī āma yaḡnīw ḥūma kāmla ḥatta tfakrit illi fi zanqitha ṭamma mrā ḥaḡḡāla 'andha ṭlāṭa bnāt šbāya w-ḥazzu iz-zwāḡ w qillīla hibhib lā tiksāb lā ta'lām 'āyša min ḥidmit iš-šūf hiyya wi bnātha mšātilha. qaltilha ta'ṭīšī waḥda min bnātik lūkān min yoḥṭbik. qaltilha idakān yḡīni wild ḥlāl 'lāš lā. il-mrā mayilha illa rāḡil lakin māk ta'rif il-ḥāl ya ḥalti flāna la 'andī lā bāš nzahhiz lā bāš nḥil li'rūsāt. allahomma libbīk. timšī fi ḥwayiḡha fi falīḡa. qaltilha ḥadiyya ithanna minha. ir-rāḡil ḥatta huwwa ma ḥāštu bšay. qāllik illī yoštor yikfī. wi-n-naqd rāhu ḥamsīn . il-mrā qolna qillīla w ḥādī ḥamsīn kif ma nqūlu il-yūm yḡū ḥamsīn malyūn ṭāḥit ḡnāḡimha 'la hāka il-kamša flūs ḥadīka ma kanitīš tiḥlim bīha ḥatta fi-l-mnām qālit ḡāzittu. ayya mšāt la-'zūza ḥabrit ir-rāḡil. mšāw li-l-'dūl kitbu iz-zdāq. garba' il-flīsāt. qāl il-'irs kif ma nqūlu lilit iḡ-ḡim'a. lilit iḡ-ḡim'a ba'd il-moḡrob tkūn la-'rūsa ḥādra wi-l-la-'zūza m'āha tāqif il-karrūsa qoddām id-dār trakkībhom wi twaššalhom. ḥdāt limra hāk liflūs šrāt lilitha ṭlāṭa rṭāl ḥam w-zūz rṭāl maqrūna w 'amlu 'līhim fišṭa. min ḡodwīka ḥarḡit qaššit w-fašlit l-bintha illi yilzim. ḡāt lilit iḡ-ḡim'a la-'zūza mi-l-'šiyya qa'dit ḥdāhom tistanna. ba'd šlāt il-moḡrob woqfot il-karrūsa qoddām id-dār. ṭlahṭit la-'rūsa baqqāt omha wi-ḥwītha b-ḥīr. būs w ta'nīq w ṭarf dmū' wi-l-ḥšūmāt ḥmārit šwayya. ḥarḡit hiyya wi-l-'zūza rikbu. dūga dūga wišlū l-ḥānūt si l-mallāḥ. il-bbayyib mšaqqiq daḥlitha. ayya wildī qaliltu ḥāy l-amāna. inšālla bi-l-hna wi-d-ḡurriyya iš-šālḥa. qālḥa yā mmī ma ṭḡībīš 'līna.

<sup>60</sup> See internet source (11).

ahūka ġodwa l-ħay iṣ-ṣbāh ʔol 'līna. mšāt 'a nifsha. sakkir huwwa bāb il-ħānūt. 'a-s-slāma yā lle. zaritni il-barka. itfazzil. qa'dit toħzor imīnha w-īsarha wīn maš titfađđil? ħānūt mallāh fomha fī qa'hā. hāka iṭ-twīwla illi qadha qad rkāybu w maqsūma wbitāt wbitāt. wħīda fīha il-mšāmīr. wħīda fīha iṣ-šwok. w-l-oħra fīha is-simīnsa. wħīda fīha šway šma' aṣfir qāl l-ġarbī ṭqarniyya. dazzilha korsi klaḥ qalha oq'od hūna yā-lle. ħazritlu hazzittu w-ħaṭṭiṭtu ħazrit l-ħāk il-kursi ayya qa'dit 'la šāftu. ġbidilha min taḥt hāka iṭ-tāwla hađrika šhan fīh ʔarf zīt wi k'ṭbāt zītūn wi grayyin filfil msayyir wi štar līmūna ḥaṭ qoddāmha kīra hobza w qalha it'ašša. mā 'ġibha ḥāl qatlu šib'āna. skit 'la nifsu wi ġbid farda balġa wi q'ad yraqqa' fīha. raqqa'hā ġbid ġirha. kammalha ġbid ġirha. 'qāb il-līl qalha yā lindra yā binfī āna wi-z-zmān w-inti welle āna wi-z-zmān waḥđī. qatlu wḥaytik waḥđik oħḥayti. āna ḥaṭfīni. rīḥik līk. skit 'līha wi q'ad yiḥđim. il-līl il-kol w huwwa ysammir w-yḥayyiṭ wi-ydoq bi-l-mṭarqa w hiyya msadfa 'la hāka il-korsi klaḥ w titṭāwib. zharhā walla 'šā. šabbih iṣ-ṣbāh w rabna il-fattāḥ illi yšalli 'a-n-nibi yirbaḥ daqqit la-'zūza. šbāh il-ħīr. nhārkom s'īd. qālha yā mmī sāmaḥni miš nzīd nta'bik. labās qatlu. qalha a'mil mziyya āqif 'la rās iz-zanqa tit'addāši karrūsa kīf ma nqūlu yit'addāš bībī ġībha. ayya ġābit il-karrūsa. qalha hiz l-bnayya l-ummīmītha. rāhī mṭalqa. rikbit m'āha wašlitha l-umha. ayya qaltilha ḥāy amāntik yā-lle. ūh! šfamma? mū labās? qaltilha uḥḥayti walla mā na'rif wi mšāt 'la nifsha. hayya t'addāt kīf ma nqūlū ġim'a welle 'ašra ayyām welle ġim'tīn ġāt it-ti'dya 'la ħāk il-ħānūt. qalha šbāh l-ħīr ya mmī. qatlu yšabbih bi-l-ħīr. qalha ti ma tšūfīš mrayya uḥrā. ūh! qatlu inti ṭallāq. qalha lā šbīh māw bi-l-maktūb. bda fi ġorritha qatlu mlīḥ nšūflik. qalha rāhu iṣ-šarṭ kīf il-'āda wi-n-naqd kīf kīf zāda. mšāt 'la nifsha. la-škūn miš timši. timši zīd toḥṭob uḥt hāka iṭ-ṭofla hađrika. za'ma omha ta'ṭīha. qālit ayya nimši nšūf škūn ya'rif. imšāt ḥaṭbit iṭ-tānya 'ṭātha omha. kitbū iz-zdāq qabđit il-fīlīsāt. līlit il-'iris hazzitha la-'zūza fi l-karrūsa wašlithālu. yā sīdī illi ġrā fi-l-lūla ġrā li-t-tānya. 'a-ṣ-ṣbāh ḥarġit mṭalqa. noṣ šhar ba'd l-waḥṭ hađāk t'addit zād šadha oḥṭobli mrā. qatlu yizzīni 'ād lūla 'sal wi-t-tānya sman. ḥallīni 'ād ḥallītni ḥāšma m'a l-mrā. bda ylaḥlaḥ bīha ḥatta rđāt. la-škūn miš timši qālit b-rabbī nimši noḥṭob iṭ-ṭalṭa wi nšūf. imšāt l-omhom qaltilha alf wa 'ūdu bi-llah. hađāya ṭallāq āna 'omrī mā 'ot na'ṭīh. qaltilha iṭ-ṭofla yā mmī ti 'lāh tit'arrađlī fi bāb is-sa'd. a'ṭīni āḥī ṭhibni noq'od ḥatta nođfor iṣ-šīb. wūh qaltilha ma šuftīš iḥwtik. qaltilha šbīh 'ād iṣ mdaḥḥalni fi aḥwti. kul ḥad w-sa'du. qaltilha mlīḥ. 'ṭātha. līlit il-'iris ġāt il-karrūsa hazzitha hiyya wi-l-'rūsa. wašlitha laka la-ḥwinīta il-ma'lūma w baqqāthom bḥīr wi mšāt. sallim 'līha kīf aḥwītha dazzilha āka kursi il-klaḥ il-maḥnūn qa'dit. 'a-s-slāma. qatlu ysallim sīdī. itfazzil. qatlu yitfađđil 'andik kul ḥīr. iġbidilha ħāk iṣ-šhan il-ma'lūm w-kisrit il-ḥoboz w qālha ayya t'ašša. iddannāt. qašsit il-ḥoboz bdāt tākol. gidmit garn il-filfil il-msayyir w farġit il-ma mtā'u fi-z-zīt. qašsit ħāk štar il-līmūna w tākul w titbannin w tqūl ma bannu. đūq ya sīdī ti kūl. yāḥī baš tbat il-līla b-lā 'šā. mad yiddu wi kla m'āha. ayya t'aššāw w ṭamdū wi tšakrū w minha qāl yā lindra āna wi-z-zmān w-inti welle āna wi-z-zmān waḥđī. qālitlu wūh 'lāš waḥđik il-loṭof. wīn sāqīk wīn rāsī. w-inti sīdī w-mūla bīti wi-l-māl yaġda wi-r-rġāl tġībḥ w rāsik ḥay bark. w ḥatta īde kān ḥīdmtik kisdit āna sana'ti fi yiddī niḥđim iṣ-šūf w-inta rāġil bīn ir-rġāl mā yi'lim bīk ḥad šnuwwa ḥālik wi šnuwwa illi fi dārik ḥatta titqā'id la-ḥwāl w rāhū mā ydūm ḥāl. qalha rāw mā 'andi kān ha l-ḥwīnta w ħāk tšūf fomha fi qa'hā. ma fammāš ḥatta l-wāḥid wīn ydūr. qālitlu 'ād illi kfā l-wāḥid māw yikfī liṭnīn. iġ-ġūd mi-l-mīġūd w rabbī yġīb ḥīru. waqtha qām ṭamma ubbayyib wrāh mā šāfatūš hiyya mwaqqif 'līh farda ḥšīra daz hāka la-ḥšīra ađīka w ḥal l-bāb w-qalha zūz hūni. qāmit daḥlīt. dār 'zīza w ġālya w ḥašša tfayya' wa-rb'a byūt mitnāzrīn. w-la n'im illa n'im l-āḥra. iṭ-trayyāt twal'iġ wi-z-zrābī wi-l-mūbilyāt l-'zīma w ṭāwla manšūba min hūni l-ġādi w šaf 'la ġīdārū kol wāḥid ykib min ġīha. daḥlūha l-bīt naḥḥawūlha āka la-ḥwāyīġ labsūha mi-d-đhab ḥatta šfārit w-mi-ġ-ġūhir ḥatta byāđit. w ḥlaṭ sī l-mallāḥ lābis kiswa oħra wi



šbāb tozhor minnu lilil is-sūda w qalha yiğ'lik zūğfī dinya w-āhira. ġarrabt w-mā lqīt illa inti illi thož hā l-ħīrāt il-kol. wi-l-mrā bās t'ts m'a ir-rāğil yilzim tirđa b-ħīru wi b-šarru wi t'addi ħatta yğtīb rabbi wiğha li-d-đaw.

### 3. ħkāyit tiqit ir-rġāl fi-in-nsā (ثقة الرجال في النساء)<sup>61</sup>

radditūš bālkom bi-llāhi fin tiħki il-mra 'la rāğil 'mal 'amla fāzda tqūl hūma ir-rāğāl fihom amān. w-īda kān taħkilha 'la mra kifha ħānit rāğilha welle 'amlit m'āh il-'māyil illi ma titihkāš 'morha ma tqūl in-nsa ma yittāmnūš. w huwwa il-mlīħ wi-d-dūni fi-r-rġāl w-fi-n-nsa. āma in-nsa ma yšūfu illa dwānit ir-rġāl. wi-r-rġāl zāda ma yšūfu illa dwānit in-nsa māw il-ħaq. āka il-marra fi-d-dār ħkāwūlna 'la rāğil mabsūt huwwa fi ħīr kbīr lākin martu ma tađnāš qa'dit 'andu ħamsa welle sitta snīn ma zhor 'līha šay. ħāfit la yimši yāhođ 'līha mrā oħra wi yṭallaqha w toħroğ yidha 'la rāshā min hāk ir-rizayyiğ hāđāka taḅħit ir-rāy hiyya w-omha ittafqu m'a qābla bās tšūfilhom šġīr. ba'd ayyām qāltilhom hāw waħda ħibla w-mađabīha tsallim fi šġīrha. mi-nħāritha il-mrā wallāt...titqayya wi ħlāyiqha dāyra w-wiğha šfār. rāğilha ašbīk ya binti? qaliltu mā na'rif iz-zāhra wħam. ifraħ ir-rāğil wi ṭhalħil w-wallālīk yiğri wi-yṭīħ wi-n-nħār il-kol w-huwwa wīn nħoṭṭik ya ṭbaq il-ward. w-hiyya kul yūm tzīd šwīlqa wi tkabbir fi kiršha. il-ħibla fi-r-rāba' w-hiyya fi-r-rāba'. il-ħibla fi-l-ħāmis w-hiyya fi-l-ħāmis. kul nħār tzīd ħāğa wi-r-rāğil ma fi 'ilmu b-šay w mā faṭīn b-šay w mā 'andu ħad la omu la oħtu wħīd la ummālī lā tāli lā wālī ħatta wallāt kiršha kif ma yqūlū ki-t-tinnīn quddāmha. daħlit ya sīdi fi-l-lušhra lo-kbār kif l-oħrā illi bi-l-mingad. inhār 'šiyya mġārīb ir-rāğil dħal li-d-dār w-minha ħrağ. tfakkir qađya rġa'. ma foṭnitiš biħ martu. il-bīt illi hiyya fiha mqābla is-sqīfa yšūf fi nsbu ħū martu daz il-bāb wi-dħal yiğri fisa' qalha il-mra wildit itla' li-l-farš wi-ħrağ yiğri li-s-sqīfa. wqof fi-l-bāb dħal ħrağ 'āwid dħal w-minha daz il-bāb marra oħrā wi-daħlit mrā daħlit omha wi-m'āha mrā oħra il-qābla hāzza ħāğa fi šūrha. omha min woš id-dār šāħit yā rsūlla w-daħlū li-l-bīt qāmit loħra tšīħ. fhim ir-rāğil šniyya in-nāzla taw. naggiz li-s-sqīfa wi 'mal nafsu ħal bāb id-dār wi-dħal āš bīkom āš ṭamma māw labās. ħarġiltu la-'zūza qatlu oq'od oq'od ma tođhołš martik bi-l-ħis rāhi. ayya ya sīdi qāmit iz-zġārīt qāl šnuwwa? qālū wlayyid. idħal bāsha mābīn 'īnīha wi-ħrağ miš yaqđi ma yilzim ġāđīka. ġāb swī'a min zmān w-mā foṭnu biħ illa dāħil wi-m'āh zūz būlīsīyya w-kūmisār wi ṭbīb. qallib in-nāfsa lqāha 'morha mā ħiblit w mā šaqha đnā w mā ta'rifiš il-wlad bilkol. iš-šġīr thaz li-l-mustašfa wi-ğ-ğmay'a hūma w-qāblithom mšāw fi-s-slāsil. āna kammiltha l-ħkāya wi-l-mra qālit w-hūma ir-rġāl fihom amān. 'ġāyib yā lle yibda qad ma 'amlit il-mra lūla wi-t-ṭānya wi-t-ṭālta hiyya w-omrha wi-l-qābla 'āmlīn 'līħ kombay w mā zhor kān huwwa mā fiš amān it-ṭlāta nsa hūma illi mā fihomš amān. āma huwwa 'ārik 'la nīfsu w ma ħabbīš yħallthom y'addūha 'līħ. wi-ydaħlu 'līħ il-barrāni yūrṭu. naħkīlkom ħkāya. famma rāğil... hāk ir-rāğil māt w-ħallā mra w-zūz wlīdāt. il-mra 'addāt il-frūqāt wi-z-zyārāt w-salmit fi-l-wlīdāt l-silfha ħū rāğilha w-ṭārit. imšāt tqūl inti l-nābil willa sūsa willa šfāqiš willa ġābis willa ġūrha. ma 'adnāš fiha. t'adda il-'ām lūl it-ṭāni it-ṭālīt is-sāba' it-ṭāmin haṭ bīha iz-zmān rawħit. inhār silfha dāħil li-d-dār qaliltu martu mart ħūk rāhi ġāt qbīla w-rāy tsallim 'līk. qalha šniyya? iğġāya ta'mil hūni. sāqha ma 'ādiš nħibha thoṭha fi-d-dār sma't welle lā. qatlu mlīħ. min ġodwīka qatlu rāhi ġāt il-yūm zāda. nqollik il-ħaq ya wildi āna ħšimt ma nağġimtiš inṭarradha. mālha illa mart ħūk 'la kulli ħāl. wi wlīdātha maħsūb itāma. tšim 'līhim rīħit rāğilha. qālha 'la kul ħāl ma'ādiš nħib nšūfha. ħlīqitha mā nšūfhāš. wallit il-mra taqrīb kul nħār tġi. marra toṭtor marra tit'ašša. līla waħrit qāltilha ti oq'od bāt w kif ġa huwwa qāliltu nqollik

<sup>61</sup> See internet source (12).

il-ḥaq nqollik w-ma titḡaššiš. mart ḥūk rāhi bāyta il-līla baḥḍāna. hiyya qatlu hakka w-huwwa dawwir. wīn māšī. qalha ma nodḥološ li-d-dār. itḡaššiš ‘ayyit. il-mrā māy tiḡlib skit lākin mā qābilhās hiyya fī bīt w-hiyya fī bīt. wallāt sā’a sā’a tbāt. ayya ṭḥal l-bāb ḥatta welle yqābilha yā sīdī. in-nsa yiḡlbu. wallāw yog’dū yoftrū w-yit’aššāw m’a b’aḍhom. wallāt bāyta šābḥa fī-d-dār ḥatta nhār mi-n-nhārāt li-mra mšāt ḍīfa l-dār būha hazha mi-š-šbāḥ. fī-l-‘šīyya ḡa ydoq ‘līha fī bāb id-dār maddīlha ṭlīqitha mi-l-bāb. āš wqa’. ir-rāḡil rad mart ḥūh illī ma kāniš yḥib yasma’ bīha ḥatta fī-s-sma’ w-ṭalliq il-mrayya. qad mā ‘amlit m’āha il-mlīḥ w-rabbitlha wlādha w-waklitha w-šarbitha w-ma ḥabbitiš ṭtarridha w-‘ārkīṭ ‘līha w-laḥlḥit. bāš kāfātha? ṭayšitha w-šabḥit hiyya fī bītha fī faršha. w-l-oḥra ḥarḡit b-yidha ‘la rāsha. āškūn ḥūnni ma yittamminiš ir-rāḡil willa li-mra. iḡ-ḡmal qālūlū āmā ḥīr iṣ-ša’da welle l-ḥadra qāl na’t-alla ‘līhim liṭnīn.