DABKEH AL DJOUFIEH: EXPLORING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF JORDANIAN FOLKLORE

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1. Introduction

International ethnomusicological research of Jordanian folklore began in the nineteenth century and was carried out by foreign researchers such as: Boneshi, Basset, Canard, and Palgrave. Yet, the local collection and publication of folklore samples, legends, and songs only began in the last few decades. The studies dedicated to Jordanian folklore have focused on four aspects; the *Durub muraqabah* (complex rhythms), the *maqam* system, the structural processes, and a significant share has focused on the direct collection of folk songs. Local ethnomusicological studies have been delayed when compared to similar practices in Western Europe. However, substantial theoretical leaps have come about during the past decades concerning ethnomusicological development in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, later in Jordan, Kuwait, and Oman, which has undoubtedly led to a resurgence of academic interest in Middle Eastern ethnomusicological inquiry.

When discussing Jordanian folklore, one must always take into consideration the geographic position of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and the Bedouin (*badu*) roots of the indigenous populace, the high mobility of the tribes and their family-orientated lifestyle. The Middle East's natural environment, whether it be the sandy desert, rocky hills, or short-lived grassy plains, forced Bedouin tribes to live a life of survival. They were either in constant movement from one place to another, like the nomadic herders searching for grass and water or in perpetual war with each other over scarce resources. Arab merchants wandered to distant countries like China and Spain, in search of wealth and prosperity, far from their desolate homeland. Transfer between folk practices of distant ethnic groups (from the Barbers of the sub-Saharan region and North Africa, Sudan, Persia to China, and Europe) have always been part of local experience. The exchange of knowledge and customs resulted in a cultural hybrid of adopted elements, a mix of their 'own' and 'foreign', a culture that was overly sensitive, uniquely interpreting the world. Yet, the influence of neighboring cultures was significant, and these interrelations can be traced up to today. "These innate characteristics cause

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the Jordanian folk to be a mixture of Middle Eastern and North African motives" [1]. Meanwhile, "the people of Irbid and *Ramtha* (northern regions of Jordan), showed cultural similarities with Syrian folklore" [3]. Simultaneously, Bedouin tribes tend to have closer musical affinities with the folklore of the Arab Peninsula, and precisely Saudi Arabia. As far back as one can go in the history of Arabia, poetry and music present a significant memorial of the locals' way of life and beliefs. More importantly, they were an expression of daily ancient Arab practices and provided the perfect opportunity for observation, comparison, and analysis, as well as being a basis for investigating relations between distant (or not so distant) events. It should be mentioned that the Gulf and Jordan Valley population sought to have "a musical life that rivaled or even surpassed those of Cairo, Damascus, and Bagdad" [2]. The local, old civilizations flourished and produced a variegated cultural heritage that also devised a significant imprint on the regional cultural development. With the spread of Islam, Arab culture adopted, on a large-scale, various customs from remote ethnic populations, spanning from India to Spain, and vice versa, causing these diverse groups to embrace each other's traditions. Thus, the massive impact of external and internal forces constituted a relatively similar cultural heritage within the Arab-speaking region. Synchronously, some Bedouin tribes, less inclined to a nomadic lifestyle, located in the central areas of Jordan, showed a folklore inclination toward more ancestral and ancient Nabataean traditions. This resistance towards foreign cultural influences was caused by "the isolation of these ethnic groups and their detachment from modern society and culture" [4]. Jordanian Bedouin life revolved around the life cycle, mystical interrelations with divine creatures, *jinn* (dark desert spirits), and strong blood and tribal connections. Thus, the perception of nature and its unknowns was highly poetic yet branded with a religious recognition of the world. This magical perception of reality led to the creation of an oral tradition colored with exceptional distinction; and a music that was interpreted as a mediator between the visible world and the one beyond expressions. The echoes of the magical interpretation of existence, interwoven with the emotional experience of harsh, inhospitable surroundings, can be found within local peoples' folklore music and poetry. "The natural and supernatural are not necessarily separate and incompatible domains, but they are often interwoven into the very fabric of human experience" [5]. The connections between culture, religion, nature, and the mechanism of survival as a mode of communication is observed by Sponsel, Naess, Allen, Rappaport, and many others. It should be mentioned that for the Westerner, the sound of the unique Bedouin melodies and lyrics are quite incomprehensible, simple, monotonous, and strange. But for the Arabs, they exist as part of everyday life, proclaiming who they are and what they have, being a bright reminder of the community past. Many of the songs originate in distant times, and "It is not known who created them, who conceived the melody or the lyrics. They have been handed down orally by the generations" [6]. Anonymity of origin and author are often cited as a "prerequisite for any folklore piece" [7]. Through oral transfer, songs travelled across the ages and became subjects of modern interpretation. "This evolutionary process is natural, thus turning even the most ancient songs into a contemporary classic" [8]. Folk chants represent widely shared views, beliefs, experiences, values, and contribute to the unification and solidarity of the tribe. "The songs would be performed locally and were unique to their respective villages, cities, and the region" [9]. The major topics treated in Jordanian folklore are religious worship and wedding rituals. "Folk music is of huge importance for the Arab people, as they are involved in numerous gatherings and holidays" [10]. Because of their tribal culture, Jordanian people based their social life on solid family foundations; gatherings and

holidays, involving all members of the tribe or village, have been the mainstay of strong familial relations. Music accompanied every social event and was an inseparable part of them. In terms of lyrics and melody, Jordanian songs have changed relatively little over time. "Contributing to the non-changeability of the Jordanian song is its organization and simplicity" [11]. Jordanian folk singing is characterized by its simple musical structure, "The melodies are uncomplicated, beautiful, and are the fruit of instinctive striving, man's inspiration to create music" [12]. Jordanian songs are usually performed by small groups, a maximum of five people, and the largest used interval is a fifth. The main classification of Jordanian songs can be described in three main categories.

Bedouin Songs capture the quintessence of ancient Arab culture. They are the music of nomadic tribes indigenous to the region of Jordan, who scour the vast Arabic desert searching for food and water. The Bedouins' songs lack ornamentation; they are monotonous, performed in a slow, deliberate tempo.

Village Songs are the most widespread and originate from the farmlands and parishes of Jordan. These songs moved to the cities along with the migration of country folk. They are quicker and more dynamic than the Bedouin songs. Village music is more melodical and is accompanied by local instruments, which include the: *shababa* (small end-blown reed or metal flute), *rababa*, (a single-stringed bowed fiddle), al-*mijwiz, al-yarghoul* (wind instruments), and *tableh* (single-headed goblet drum). The songs' vocal and stylistic features are often reminiscent of Syrian, Iraqi, Palestine, or Lebanese folk music. *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* is part of this group.

Seaside Songs are the least widespread, as the coastal area in Jordan is limited to one small region, namely, Aqaba. The genre shows much resemblance to Egyptian and Saudi Arabian seaside folk music.

Ethno-musicologists search for the origin of the Jordanian song in the '*Al Hurani*' style of singing in the Horan region, a plain between Jordan and Syria. Ibn Khaldun (1334-1406), a poet, historian, philosopher, and traveler, was the first to mention it, observing that "it had four stanzas, whereby the first, second, and third stanzas differed, while the fourth was in rhyme with the following stanza"' [13]. The Jordanian *Dabkeh* [chain dance] can also be linked to *Gina al Hurani*. *Dabkeh* is a traditional dance, widespread throughout the whole region and known as *Sham* (Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan). "It is usually performed by young men holding each other by the hands, and one of them leading the dance" [14]. In recent years, one can observe the spread of folklore samples arranged in the style of *ethno-pop* under the accompaniment of an *org* (keyboard) or other instruments (violin, guitars) that are not part of the traditional Arab *takht* (small ensemble)."This new instrumental performance and the fresh rendition, help the spread of these folk songs without changing their authenticity'' [15]. Such are the performances of some contemporary Jordanian singers like Metaeb Al Saggar, Mohammed El'Selman, Tawfiq al-Nimri, Salwa, Ismail Khdara, and Sham al-Safadi. Simultaneously with the musical modernization of the songs, the language and lyrics are modified, and obscene words (typical of ancient chants) are discarded. Thus, over the years, some folk *ahazeej* (small, commonly known songs) have been recognized by pop musicians and adopted as melodies, but new lyrics have been added. Such an example is the famous *Bint Ashalabieh* (Beautiful Girl). Indeed, the modern usage of folk chants provide us with clear insight that Arab culture is deeply connected with its heritage, and that "the Arab culture and society is self-sufficient and unchanging" [16].

2. Al Djoufieh in a historical context

In its social context, *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* is a political symbol, providing a discourse of ethnic identity, demonstrating its belonging to a specific cultural heritage. In its form of song and dance, it induces intimacy and solidarity between the members of the society, shapes social relations, and establishes affection between the people. "It is a social and cultural event that is significant for all involved" [17]. *Harakat* (movements) of the *Dabkeh* indicate greater homogeneity and unity. Al *Djoufieh* songs are closely associated with the idea of existential happiness and are performed at different *haflat* (parties), where "the social function for bringing people together prevails" [18]. Performance of the *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* in community gatherings symbolizes joy and identity. *Dabkeh* is a kind of *raqs* (dance), popular in the area between the Gulf countries and Lebanon. It can be found in the *Levant* territory, "and probably originated from the ancient Canaanites" [19]. The *Dabkeh* is a line dance, conducted by a leader, called *laweeh,* who directs the dancers in the steps and movements. The dance is characterized by much advancing and retreating of the participants. These movements are accompanied by a gradual increase in rhythm and emotional intensity. The music escalates and reaches its peak, described by the participants as *hami* (heated). *Dabkeh* can be defined as a highly intensive collective dance, which transforms the participants into a single body, presenting an ultimate unity. Several studies have been made on the *Dabkeh*. One of them is by Shayna Silverstein [20], who has written extensively about its origins within the territory of Syria, and the ancient Levant. Jean Lambert studied it in "The Arabian Peninsula: An Overview" [21] and discussed the fact that *Djoufieh* is a traditional song that can be sung or performed as *Dabkeh*.

The Jordanian *Dabkeh Djoufieh* originates from the *Al Jouf* region in Saudi Arabia. The *Jouf* was once named '*Jouf al-Sirhan'* after the *Sirhan* valley. The researcher Al-Shurman has established a connection between this valley and the *Sirha* in the *Mafraq* region of northern Jordan [22]. Haddad also mentions this fact, reporting that *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* may have evolved out of the *Arde al Bariie* songs (Saudi Arabia) [23]. *Arda* is one of the most important genres of folk poetry known in the Middle East. The specific gestures and weapon movements that accompanied these songs can be considered as theatrical acting of a war song. *Arda* is "'demonstration of force, and is the most famous of the sung dances, typical for Saudi identity" [21] However, the actual performance of *Arda* does not always correspond with war songs, as over time it has transformed into a slower, more modest and religious genre. Ghawanmeh, confirmed a similar assumption concerning the origin of *Djoufieh*: "In the Gulf region and Kuwait, a similar folk melody is called *al Hadwah* and *Arda*" [24]. *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* is traditionally performed in the following way within the frontiers of Jordan: the male performers form a circle interrupted in two points to make two semi-circles. Standing in the center is a girl carrying a sword (often substituted by a wooden stick). The dancing men try to get close to the girl while she wards them off with her sword, not allowing them to touch her[1]. One group takes up the song, and the second repeat what has been sung, which is referred to as *al Djoufieh*. The choreography of the dance challenges us to look at its social significance. The socio-dramatic dynamics provide us with insight that this is an ancient dance, deeply rooted in the local heritage. The uncomplicated dance and the simple steps reveal to us a pre-literate society's ritual, a collective expression of specific interpretation of past events. One can therefore interpret these monotonous advancing and retreating movements as

symbols from the memories of ancient pagan rituals, reflecting particular ethnic descriptions of the former. The choreography, supported by simple melodies and lyrics, tells us stories of heroism, love, and tragedy. The performance recognizes and confirms the essential customs of the tribe: who we are, what we stand for, and our beliefs. *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* is performed during national events and wedding rituals. Its melodies are considered to heighten the enthusiasm with their bright melody and rhythm and are native to a vast region, spanning from Southern Ma'án to Northern Irbid. Moreover, the dance can be performed with a variety of melodies or employing the same tune and switching the texts; *vice versa* applies. Nowadays, *Dabkeh* is performed by groups of men, groups of women, or mixed groups, in the form of a chain dance.

3. Metaphoric and poetic features characterizing *Dabkeh Al Djoufieh*

The role of semantics in music has been studied by Zbikowski [25], Spitzer [26], and Charteris-Black [27]. Metaphor was interpreted as the transmitter of social meanings into music, a tool of cognition that assists in conceptualizing events and worldly experience. Critical Metaphor Theory perceives metaphor as both, lexical and conceptual phenomenon, "linking the cognitive dimension to the social context" [28]. Critical Metaphor Theory, as part of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, probes the intentions and social contexts under the surface of language. According to Charters- Black, metaphor consists of three primary functions: linguistic, conceptual, and communicative. To identify the conceptual and semantic role of the text in *Dabkeh al Djoufieh,* we will base our analysis on the Critical Metaphor Theory to highlight certain cultural specifics and social inclination within the framework of Jordanian folk music.

Delving into the past of the Arab world, one can find poetic metaphor interwoven within musical songs as a witness to every aspect of social life. Poetry, such as *sḥīʾr,* and *nashīd* (a type of chant), coexisted to produce music genres such as *ḥidā,* (war songs) [29], *arda* "one of the most important genres in folk musical-poetry known throughout the Peninsula" [30], and *sāmrī,* performed at night for the entertainment of tribal chieftains. Many researchers have searched for the origins of these songs in the Pre-Islamic period (Burckhardt, Campbell, Heller, El Shawan) and suggested a direct relationship between pagan chants, medieval music, and folklore tradition. In ancient Arab culture, sung poetry interacted with dance as a presentation of the sacral idea of a trance [31], and the text represents a special meaning in the form of symbols implemented into the cultural domain [32]. Therefore, we shall take the liberty of quoting some *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* lyrics familiar to the territory of Jordan. The texts presented will confirm the relationship between the three main poetic genres: epic, religion, and love, which suggest a vital metaphoric manifestation of the most important life-cycle events for ancient Arab society. In the discourse analysis, it will be demonstrated that *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* is not characterized by narration; the songs, rather, represent a cut in time or outpouring speech associated with the instantaneous experience. "Song text language tends in many cases to differ from ordinary discourse, to be a 'secret' language known only to a certain segment of the society" [33]. In the performance of Arabic folk chants, some syllables are traditionally contracted, while others are accentuated, which is associated with preliterate traditions, and pagan religious ceremonies. (Nelson, Ong, Zwetttler). *Dabkeh*

al Djoufieh is performed in the *Lug'ha A'miieh* (spoken language) rather than in *ālfūsha* (the literary form) of the Arab language. In *Dabkeh al Djoufieh,* refrains are mostly absent. The lyrics run uninterrupted with a single repetition of each stanza separately.

These folk songs tell us stories about life-struggle, love, and specific historical events. Yet, Arab *hunijat* (songs) are open to multiple interpretations; linguistic, moral, historical, and social. Therefore, old Arabic poetry (*al shi'r, nashid, inshad, qasida*) had a dual function: religious and social. These communal experiences have survived and transformed into simple folk narratives, retelling individual stories, passing memories, preserving collective reminiscences. Thus, as a result of the aspiration of maintaining ethnic remembrance, two different literary genres were created, classical poetry and folk culture. "With the creation of the enormous Arab-Islamic empire, classical culture, including its musical expression, came under various influences, making the gap deeper between "literary poetry"' and the original Bedouin poetry that survived through oral tradition" [30]. The information concerned with the essence of folk heritage came to us from old authors such as Al Kindi, Al Isfahani, and others, who mentioned the existence of popular culture, based on local tongues, and composed of metrical and rhythmical verses, different from those of classical poetry. As mentioned earlier, since folk songs are not delivered in the prestigious literary Arabic, Arab scholars have neglected their study for a long time. Nevertheless, the translation of Jordanian folklore into English, has been conducted in recent decades by Al Azzam and Al Quran [34], and Al Azzam and Al Kharabsheh [35]. The translations have highlighted the difficulties associated with the word-to-word translation compared to freer interpretations. Researchers who were working with an adaptation of Arabic to English pointed out the specific language markers of Aran poetry. These highly expressive and symbolic markers bear cultural implications, meaning potentials, and hidden social connotations, familiar only to locals. Many folk songs are linked to certain narrative elements and occurrences, demonstrating connections to actual events or historical, geographical, and cultural settings. These events are sometimes lost, making it difficult to trace the specific buried connotations within the communal memory. The stories of the songs are familiar for the locals, they identify ties with specific events, recognize the chronology of biographical situations, and interpret the moral context of the narrative, according to the tribal code [36]. Being primarily oral, this poetry, with its intonation, rhythm, and specific sound, fitted naturally into Jordanian folk music and became a vital part of the local heritage.

The folk songs presented in this research are collected from the territory of Jordan or local academia. Assembled texts suggest that the human memory is not literal, and many of the chants appear to be reconstructed or transformed. It was observed that some of the melodies emerged attached to the uniform text, but sometimes the phrases were restructured, and the pattern of repetitions varied. Nettle [37] commented similar shifts between texts and melodies, stating that folk songs "show basic interactions by means of constant melodic correspondence, and presumably owning their mutual likeness to dissent from a single air, that has assumed multiple forms through the process of variations, imitations and assimilations." Nevertheless, some texts and tunes appeared more stable than others and showed further solid characteristics. Precise analogous and immutable folk texts will be examined. Hereafter, the presentation of the texts will follow Seeger, Stross, Gossen, Hymes, and Nettl. The first example relates *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* to specific military campaigns [14].

Example1.

Arabic text:

يا بو ديه‌رش انبلق‌ل‌يوم حروـج   حرج قيـمغ الاشحـلبا ويظلتسم

اوابج الخطيـب ونددم على اللوح   قلت اخرب لأمل يريـعش يطلي

جاني عشيري مقدام الثوب مسطوح   لـمّا يريـعش يا يريـعش الدلـدال

اهاناعطو من عمان للجوف   ومن الككرك لحدود الطفيـله

كنيو اللي انيا‌للي حوانيـف بتحوف   ريت كبيـلق‌لي ما يشفي غليـله

الخوف ما تعرف اللي والنننشامى   انا رجال للحمول الثقيـله

انفبـسي يخلي الدم لالش   انفيسي ولا يربي بهويـوص

English version (authors' translation):

Father of Rashid, our heart is wounded | with a deep, bleeding wound.
A fiancé has been brought and was laid on a board[2] | I said: I'll be calm until my lover comes back

My lover did come with his clothes, | my beloved, oh, love of my life!
We forced all to submit, from Amman to Jouf | from Karak to the Tafileh border.
Where are You who are around us?[3] | May my boiling heart not heal?
The valiant heroes | we are the men carrying the burden,
Our sword makes the blood a torrent | our sword, which is faultless.

The presented text is a prime example of how folk songs display a 'secret' language, a metaphor which only natives may understand. The wording adopts a metaphor that does not operate with the underlying meaning of the lexemes but has a hidden sense. This approach can be described as a lexical feature of local origin, a lingual riddle, comprehensible only for the people from the tribe. In this song, the epic subject, the man who lost his life in battle, is interwoven with the woman's grief for her beloved fiancé. Her tribal family answers her mourning calls for revenge. By the law of blood duties, if anyone of the tribe is killed, the warriors of the clan have to search for immediate blood revenge. Yet, the text provides a significant perception about interlocking clan relations and group kinship which need to receive complete social homage. Similar folk tales present incorporated riddles; therefore, "performers have more or less an abstract representation of the songs in their memories" [38]. The story is telling us an important fact, when a member of the community is in a difficult situation, her/his plea for help will be heard and answered by the tribe. The other main topic in the song is the love story. Love in Arab culture should be spoken out, and personal emotions should be directed toward social concord and approved by the group. Simultaneously, the feelings are addressed to God, who is always present in everyday life and witnesses every emotional or social event of the Arab people.

The following is a lyrical text originating from the Ma'an region, in which erotic implications have not been substituted. This fact provides us with the trace that the song has deep ancient roots.

Example 2.

Arabic text:

اح تف وتقول خوي يا وخدودها   للمشتهيها الشام من تفاحة

حنشان وتقول خوي يا وشعورها   علية الخلاعاشان براض حنشان

رمان وتقول خوي يا ونهودها   مستوية امها على رمانة

English version (authors' translation):

Her cheeks, brother, are an apple   an apple from Sham[4], for the hungry,

Her hair is like a snake,   living on dry earth,

Her breasts, brother, are like a pomegranate,   a juicy pomegranate, on its mother.[5]

Ancient Arab folklore can strike with its erotic hints springing from the everyday life of the tribe. Since times and behavior models have changed, many of the older habits and use of voluptuous expressions have become outdated and are now obsolete. The presented text employs naïve, sensual euphemisms that are ingeniously expressive and simple-hearted. The storyteller is a passionate young man who has shared his emotions with his clan friend. This song can be associated with physical beauty, and idealization of the subject of the love. The vocabulary used is simple, related to everyday dialect. It can be observed as a jocular metaphor, which does not apply to the underlying meaning of the lexemes but presents a colorful and frivolous sense of an intimately shared story.

The next text is associated with the metaphor of heroism and honor, related to the epic genre [23].

Example 3.

Arabic text:

الجندليه حرب يوم ظني هذا   الحمايل وعيال الفرسان ذبحة

بالحميه صيحوا صويت عيال يا   القبايل سبع عدوكم واذبحوا

English version (authors' translation).

This is my thought on the day of the *Jandaliie* war,   the horsemen and the clansmen were massacred,

Oh, children of *Swait*, scream furiously,[6]   and wipe out your enemy, the seven tribes.

Here we see another example of the unity of historical events and tales about bravery and courage. This song presents the traditional life of Arab tribes, the life of constant wars in a struggle for wealth and power in the desert between Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Middle Eastern folklore is rich with historical tales, showing the tribal path of migrations, presenting the battles they fought, and the price of triumph. These stories provide us with information about specific events, incidents, details, and clues about their importance to the community. The first and third samples illustrate the folk epic genre (*khurafi),* a reminiscence of the tradition of constant tribal raids within the Arab desert. They can be defined as a "memorial genre" [39], and as part of an oral *turath sha'bi* (folk legacy, heritage).

The following is a lyrical text combined with religious elements from Northern Jordan:

Example 4:

Arabic text:

طواني إللي طواك ما عطيه يا	علىّه خلي طوى اللي طواك ما
ليالي عني غبت لن غشيري يا	علىّه غلوك من حولين من عدّ
تايب ثمّ لك تايب إني الله يا	علىّه تكتب لا البيض خطايا عن
الترايب أجو اللحد تحت من خوفي	يدىّه ومسبّل لله ساجد

English version (authors' translation).

Oh Attiyih, [7] what draws us apart   does not take my thoughts off you

My beloved, when you are far for a day,   it is like missing you for two whole years.

Oh, God, forgive me, forgive!   Do not write down my small mistakes[8]

I fear the grave under the dirt;   I bow and cross my hands[9].

Islamic religion has left its imprint on the lifestyle of the people from the region. Religion is not just a symbol of faith; it represents a daily task and call. Religious feeling and duties are part of a person's life, and immutable factors in the local culture and folklore. This sample is in the form of *qus'sa* (narration), which encompasses a wide variety of emotions, sorrow, fear, and dismay from divine justice. These types of *qusas* can be associated with intimate reports of love stories, labeled by religious beliefs and are a reminder of constant wars and losses. There is the realization that all men and women are subject to inexecutable external forces (social and divine).

The next example presents *Dabkeh al Djoufieh*, accessible in southern *Ma'an*, based on a heroic theme, part of the war between Israel and Jordan, thus it implies that historically the text was composed in the last century.

Example 5.

Arabic text:

الله ذكر القول أول ... الله ذكر القول أول   نخزيها والشياطين ... نخزيها والشياطين

الميمة حلوة ديرتي ... الميمة حلوة ديرتي   يا المحا خمشوره خةشمخ يا ... خةشمقةصوره قا

العربية فلسطين .. العربية فلسطين   دويهيلادنع .. دنع .. مأسورة عنهيلادنع مأسورة

العربية فلسطين .. العربية فلسطين   اخنت بابش ةبورعلا .. اخنت بابش ةبورعلا

الأردنية شباب يا .. الأردنية ياشباب   يا المعانيةعانية يا ... شبابالمعانيةعانية

وانمورة اسباع كلمهم ... اسباعوانمورة كلمهم   أردنية والدبابات .. أردنية والدبابات

مقهورة اسرائيل منها .. مقهورة اسرائيل منها   مقهورة اسرائيل منها .. مقهورة اسرائيل منها

نشميمة كل زغرتت .. نشميمة كل زغرتت   مستورة كل فـرّعت.. مستورة كل فـرّعت

English version (authors' translation).

By our first words, let us mention Allah x2   and condemn the Devil, x2

My neighborhood is lovely x2   Oh, how unshakeable it is x2

Palestine is Arabic, x2   prisoner of the Jews x2

Palestine is Arabic, x2   calling on the valiant Arab men x2

Oh, Jordanian valiant men x2   Oh, Ma'an valiant men x2

All the wolves and tigers x2   The Jordanian tanks x2

Israel is enraged by them x4   and every maiden, *Zaghratat*[10] x2

And everyone, uncover her face[11] x2

Most of the songs related to military campaigns show dominant notes related to hate, faith, and sorrow. They capture warriors' confidence in the tribe's might, and the weakness of the enemy. In the present song, the image of the tribe is replaced with the power of the army.

Arab folk songs can be short and contain one or two couplets, even only two to three lines, which are repeated multiple times. They can also be long, including seven or more stanzas. In the presented samples, rhymes occur at the end of the line or the end of each hemistich. Nevertheless, these structural and strophic structures vary from song to song and do not follow the strict norms typical of classical poetry. At the linguistic level, metaphors implemented in the folk songs can be found in correlation with a target domain (the society, the group), and association with a contextual surface (meaning and genre). As evidenced by the texts, one can conclude that *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* has been associated with the two primary styles, epic and love. The outstanding

presence of the military subject is a consequence of the historical destiny of the people from the region, who had been almost constantly at war during their evolution. The religious topic appears in both indicated genres. In the epic songs, the religious metaphor relates to the prayer and hope of physical survival with the glorification of the Lord. In the case of the love songs, the Lord's patronage is sought. His wisdom, power, and protection are asked to supervise and instruct the lovers. The lyrical songs are tinged with a slight erotic element, typical of archaic Arab folklore. These songs tell us about love thrills in the singular, while at the same time, the group, the tribe, is informed of what is taking place. In this way, the feelings become public and socially significant. The lyrics of Jordanian folk songs are recited in a slightly slurred way, making the pronunciation a little indistinct, the result of pagan culture primordially related to mysticism. For that reason, we register a specific prolongation of the last but one word of every stanza.

4. Rhythmical representation of the *Dabkeh Al Djoufieh*.

The greatest challenge for Jordanian musicologists seems to be the indication of the time signature and beat pulsation of the rhythm in the *Dabkeh al Djoufieh*. In Arab melodies, the *tableh* accompaniment seldom coincides with the first strong beat, and "some folk songs have unusual metrical accents, and are hard to determine" [14]. In this context, we shall take the liberty of presenting a few *Dabkeh al Djoufieh*, quoted by the local academia.

Dabkeh Al Djoufieh 'Rashid's father' in two variants [23]:

Example 6:

Example 7:

In example 7, one can notice that the first strong metric beat in the first bar begins with C, and the musical phrase winds up with the first strong beat, quarter note, D, in the fourth bar. The beginning of the second phrase starts in the fourth bar, second weak beat with a repetition of the same sentence. In this notation, a shift of the metrically strong beat occurs in the second phrase, which can be marked as an error.

Most Arab folk songs are performed in a simple time signature of 2/4 or 4/4 [40]. In a study published by Ali Sharman, while referring to the *Dabkeh Al Djoufieh* the author comments that "it can be heard mostly in a 4/4-time signature" [22], without, however, adding a notation in confirmation of the statement.

Dabkeh al Djoufieh in another version presented by Haddad [23].

Example 8:
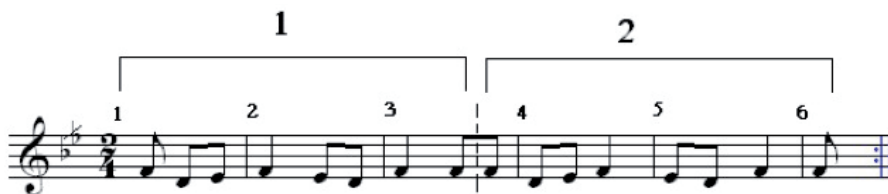
This example is notated in 2/4-time signature, whereby the first phrase begins with F, in a weak first half beat, eighth note, and ends in F, in the same beat of the third bar. The second phrase begins in a third bar, on the second half, weak beat, and repeats the first sentence literally with a shifted metric accent. The second phrase ends with a Tonic in the first beat of the sixth bar.

We shall take the liberty of presenting a notation of the same song by the authors of the paper. This melody is famous in Jordan and can be found supported by different texts, as presented by the text examples numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. The lyrics are shifted according to the regions or occasions on which the song is performed.

Example 9:

Below are two examples of *Dabkeh al Djoufieh*, also presented by Haddad [23]:

Example 10:

Example 11:

sai fe na   y kha li da   mi sha lal

لال شل م   الد لي خل ي   نا فِ سي

In conclusion, let us sum up a few significant features characterizing *Dabkeh al Djoufieh,* in terms of rhythm. Most of the familiar folk songs are performed in the time signature of 2/4 and 4/4, whereby the melodies often start with an upbeat, the weak beat. The prevailing rhythmic values in the songs are quarter and eighth notes. The tempo is fast, movable, and well-suited to the performance of the *Dabkeh* dance.

## 5. Musical characteristics of the Jordanian *Dabkeh Al Djoufieh*[12]

The songs, quoted in this research as samples of *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* found in the territory of Jordan, were collected through groundwork, and local research. It was found that sometimes the melody is identical, and texts have been shifted. Simultaneously, different tunes can be registered, attached to one text. Yet, many varieties in the tempo in rhythm can be observed. This diversity can be attributed to the development and adaptation of folk music; when a text won popularity, it was shifted to another melody which was more famous in a specific area, and *vice versa*. Simultaneously, people transmit the songs through oral means as messages from one generation to the next, from one region to the next, and from one singer to the next. In this transfer, the text or music can be transformed or even change completely. Aberrations and additions appeared through such a journey. Research in music cognition shows that in oral transmission, a melody passes not as a literal sample, but is "reconstructed and recreated" [41]. Folk tradition allows the appearance of many versions of the same tune, while at the very same time enriching it with different texts, rhythmical models, tempos, modes, and musical colors. Arab folk songs are relatively simple as rhymical values, in contrast to the *tarab* music. Musiqa *tarab*, cannot be easily translated into English. The context of the word could be narrowly defined as making music, employing the *maqam* mood, accompanied by percussions or heterogeneous ensemble. *Tarab* can be defined as a specific connection between listeners and performers who share emotions. *Fan al tarab*, (the art of *tarab*), or *alam al tarab* (the world of *tarab*), is acknowledged as a unique urban culture. Broadly conceived, a *tarab* experience was described by Racy as culture which "embraces a wide variety of components: visual, semantic, physiological, mental, and associative" [32]. Arab folk music, on the other hand, can be associated with local *al thurathyia* (heritage music). Simultaneously, heritage music navigated and linked all parts of the concord from Islam lands, from Azerbaijan to Spain, producing a mixture of different cultures. The correlation to distant cultures explains the internal and external influences that are absorbed, thereby creating one vivid, distinct style of music. It was noticed that Bedouin folk traditions are born out of the needs of everyday life and the social events of the tribe or village. Songs reflected the historical, social events, and echoed the military spirit of the warrior campaigns and personal stories. Simultaneously, the folklore adopted features from religious chanting,

and was highly influenced by Islam. In this regard, one should mention the influential work of Talal Asad [47], who discussed the categories in Arab music, defining them as sacred and secular. Middle East musical tradition binds religious faith with the every-day life of each member of society. *Qura'a islami* (spiritual chanting) and *musiqa sha'bi* (folk music) transmitted features and borrowed musical expressions from each other. Both categories shared similar *maqamat*, simple melodic lines, a relatively stable rhythm (in contrast to *musiqa tarab*), and a highly emotional and uniform monophonic style of performance.

It was mentioned that in the process of transmitting folklore chants, considerable variations were observed, such as shifts in melodies and texts, variations in melodic range, rhythmic mode, number, and combination of phrases, and so on. Yet, principal components can be found, and it is precisely these major clusters that provide the distinctive features of *Dabkeh al Djoufieh*, which can be defined as:

Mode: Dabkeh Al Djoufieh is most often performed in *Jins*, (tetrachord) *Al Bayat* with a D as Tonic, and a key signature E half flat and B flat, and *Jins Al Rast* with a C as Tonic, and key signature E half flat and B half flat.

Mode range: limited, from tetrachord to hexachord.
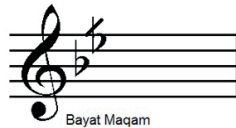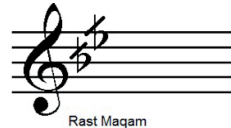
Bayat Maqam   Rast Maqam

Interval amplitude: maximum perfect fifth, in most samples reaching minor third and perfect forth.

Rhythm: simple rhythm, dominated by quarter and eight notes.

Meter: mostly duple or quadruple. In the case of an upbeat beginning, the metric accent is placed on the first quarter note in the second bar.

Tempo: mostly fast, lively.

Texture: Monophonic.

Timbre: No indication. The songs are performed mostly by men: baritones or tenors.

Intensity: Quite loud.

Dynamic: mezzo forte, and forte

Structure: The melodies consist of a single phrase, bright, with restricted scope, no ornamentation included.

Melodic line: The tendency of the melodic line is towards the Tonic center.

Tonality orientations: more often tending to the minor.

Melodic contour: generally undulating, with gradual ascending or descending.

Form: Sections are easy to separate, predominantly arranged in Rondo form. The melodic phrases are short, not exceeding eight tones, which are repeated. "The reason for the constant repetitions is a typical musical approach, corresponding to the idea of an easier remembering of the music" [48].

6. Conclusion

The origin of the *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* is yet to be known with certainty. There is little evidence of documentary records concerning the genesis or ethnographic portrait of this folk sample. There are some speculations about its historical path, but one can

accept them only as a hypothesis. The researchers were able to recognize and embrace only the idea of proximity or affinity with other similar styles, such as *Arda* and *Al Horani*. Nevertheless, it would be proper to state that this folk song stemmed from the deep ancient past. Whatever the actual origin of the songs, they remain meaningful, alive, and popular among the people of Jordan. The narrative style of *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* is distinguished by three main thematic topics –heroism, religion, and love. The presented folk texts are performed in the ancient mother tongue and provide some hints as to "secret" speech and metaphors, both of which are familiar to the performers and communities who have taken part in their inception. The samples show how their transmission and re-experience migrate through generations and areas, adapting their tunes and texts as they advance. From a musical point of view, the songs are similar in mode, with melodic lines and rhythm. Hence, in short, the character and musical features of *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* show similarities and a unique style. They can be described as an echo of the routine of the tribal society, in which every individual is part of the whole, and every personal event is strictly connected with community life and the group's approval. *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* is part of Jordanian folk heritage, a reminder of an old musical poetic culture, that is still vital and alive today.

Notes

[1] According to Arab customs, only men of the closest family kin may touch the maiden's robe.

[2] The loved one was 'stretched on a board' because he had been killed.

[3] The singers are addressing the Lord.

[4] Syria.

[5] The mother is the tree.

[6] A tribe on the territory of Jordan.

[7] *Jaatieh* (*attiyih*) is someone close to me.

[8] According to Islam, the mistakes of each person are written down by an Angel in a book, by which he/she will be judged on the Last Day of Judgment.

[9] Hands are crossed for prayer.

[10] A tongue movement producing a specific loud sound, made by the women during weddings or joyful events.

[11] Every woman discloses her face by removing her headscarf to show sublime happiness.

[12] The musical analyses of the presented samples will be proposed according to Sharp [42]; Schinhan [43]; Bartok and Lord [44]; Christensen [45]; Nettl [46].

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Summary

The authors of this paper analyze the *Dabkeh al Djoufieh (Dabkɛ ālǧwofyɛ)* in its capacity as an inherent part of Jordanian folklore that has been seldom studied. Whereas contemporary Jordan has experienced a rapid burst of cultural globalization, the rural song and dance of *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* can be observed as a highly dynamic manifestation of belonging and as a symbol of national solidarity. One of the defining features of the *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* is that it is immanent in every social event in Arab communities. Secondly, as a sample of folk music, *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* continues to be a vibrant resource for contemporary audiences. The paper focuses on the main musical and poetic characteristics of *Dabkeh al Djoufieh*. The qualitative analysis applied integrates ideas concerning semantics as a representation of the social context and ethnic identities, whereas music is viewed as an indicator of local heritage. This paper probes the questions: What is *Dabkeh Djoufieh?* Where does it originate? And how is it implemented in Jordanian folklore culture?

Furthermore, the study discusses the social power found within poetic folk verse, specifically, the role of the metaphor as a tool for expressing communal realities and individual experiences. Likewise, the study analyzes the musical features of the traditional *Dabkeh al Djoufieh* and how it moved across generations, sacred and social boundaries, becoming a symbol of Jordanian folk tradition.

Riassunto

Gli autori di questo articolo analizzano il Dabkeh al Djoufieh (Dabkɛ ālǧwofyɛ) come parte intrinseca del folclore giordano studiato raramente. Mentre la Giordania contemporanea ha vissuto una rapida esplosione di globalizzazione culturale, il canto e la danza rurali di Dabkeh al Djoufieh possono essere osservati come una manifestazione altamente dinamica di appartenenza e come un simbolo di solidarietà nazionale. Una delle caratteristiche distintive del Dabkeh al Djoufieh è che è presente in ogni evento sociale nelle comunità arabe. In secondo luogo, come esempio di musica folk, Dabkeh al Djoufieh continua a essere una vivace risorsa per il pubblico contemporaneo. L'articolo si concentra sulle principali caratteristiche musicali e poetiche di Dabkeh al Djoufieh. L'analisi qualitativa applicata integra idee riguardanti la semantica come rappresentazione del contesto sociale e delle identità etniche, mentre la musica è vista

come un indicatore del patrimonio locale. Questo articolo pone le domande: Cos'è Dabkeh Djoufieh? Da dove proviene? E come viene implementato nella cultura folcloristica giordana?

Inoltre, lo studio discute il potere sociale che si trova nei versi popolari poetici, in particolare, il ruolo della metafora come strumento per esprimere realtà comuni ed esperienze individuali. Allo stesso modo, lo studio analizza le caratteristiche musicali del tradizionale Dabkeh al Djoufieh e come si è tramandato attraverso generazioni, confini sacri e sociali, diventando un simbolo della tradizione popolare giordana.