

ГЕОКУЛЬТУРНЫЕ ПРОСТРАНСТВА И КОДЫ КУЛЬТУР СТРАН АЗИИ И АФРИКИ

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The Cries of Street Vendors as a Folklore Genre and Example of Oral Advertising in Iraq

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The article is devoted to the review of the cries of street vendors as a kind of folk genre used in Iraq. The tradition of shouting short texts, praising goods to customers, has a long history. Skillful mastery of the word, the ability to poetically improvise has always been very appreciated in the Middle East. It is no wonder that poetry tournaments emerged and gained wide popularity in the region. The functions of cries are similar to the functions of advertising: to attract the attention of the customer and to convince him or her to purchase the street vendor's goods. Street vendors in Iraq use dialectal Arabic words and expressions including Turkish and Persian words. As a rule, their language is rich in various metaphors, epithets or lines from famous folk songs. Often, a seller's cry that was successfully invented was then borrowed by other merchants of related goods. A similar thing also happened when a merchant's son, adopting his father's profession, inherited a saying with which he continued to appeal to potential buyers. Currently, this phenomenon is becoming increasingly rare, but, nevertheless, continues to exist, which can be observed during religious and public holidays. Some examples of verbal advertising have become catchy slogans on product labels.

Keywords: the Arabic language, Baghdad dialect, folklore, Iraq, cries.

The cries of street vendors or hawking should be seen as a genre of folklore belonging to urban culture and as a type of early oral advertising. The tradition of shouting short texts, praising goods to customers, has a long history. It is known that street vendors used similar messages back in ancient Greece and Rome to sell not only things, but also slaves, to call spectators to gladiator fights or performances by jugglers or buskers [1, p. 23].

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Folklorists have also been studying this phenomenon for a long time: the first collection of Street Cries of Paris by Guillaume de Villeneuve appeared in the 13th century [2, p. 349], Cries of Rome in the 16th century while Street Cries of London came out in 1608 [3, p. 183].

In Russia, similar verbal advertising was also widespread, however, folklorists only began to record and collect street cries in the early twentieth century, despite the fact that in the post-revolutionary period this tradition began to fade away.

Some scholars emphasize the direct connection between the calls of street vendors and the cries of the barkers who shouted before the start of the performance to attract the attention of the public [4, p. 208]. The ability of the barkers to improvise was especially appreciated. Skillful mastery of the word, the ability to come up with poetic improvisation has always been very appreciated in the Middle East. No wonder poetry tournaments emerged and gained wide popularity in the region.

The functions of hawking are similar to the functions of advertising: to attract the attention of the customer and convince him or her to purchase the street vendor's goods.

The call of a wandering merchant, eloquently praising his goods, is one of the types of folk art common in Iraq. Street vendors use dialectal Arabic words and expressions including Turkish and Persian loan words. As a rule, their language is rich in various metaphors, epithets or lines from famous folk songs.

So, a cotton candy seller compares his goods to thick female hair, and a flower merchant shouts out the lines of a song:

ya ward min yešterik w lil-habib yehdik
Oh, flower, who will buy you and give to his beloved?! [5, p. 123]

These are the most common hawking words:

1. Toponyms where the product was produced or grown:

A seller of pomegranates may try and attract potential buyers in this way:

rumman mandeli ya helu!
Sweet pomegranate from Mandali!¹

A fig dealer would say:

yaziri ya tin akl l-hawatin!
A fig from al-Uaziriyi² is the food of the queens!

A seller of oranges will advertise his product with the words:

purtukal baaguba!
Oranges from Baguba³!

Praising his dates, a date merchant would not forget to mention that the dates were from Basra, famous for its date groves:

¹ *Mandali* is a town in Diyala Governorate (Iraq) near the Iranian border.

² *Al-Uaziriyya* is a district of Baghdad.

³ *Baguba* is a town in Iraq and the center of Diyala Governorate. Baguba is known for its orange plantations.

tamr l-basra asabi l-arus
Dates from Basra are like the fingers of a bride!

2. Street vendors often use vocabulary borrowed from other languages, mainly from Turkish and Persian, but also from other languages, e. g.:

A seller encouraged customers to buy his salt peas with this adage:

malih w tayyib lablabi / hoš zlema hal-čalabi
Salty and tasty peas / This gentleman is a good man.

The word *hoš* (*good*) came to the Baghdad dialect from the Persian language.

The word *čalabi* is also a borrowing, but from the Turkish language. It has several meanings: *lord, prince, noble*. This nickname used to be given to the Sultan's sons.

A boiled turnip seller touted his product in this way:

har w helu w may duwa an-našla / darman as-sadr ya šalgam
Hot, sweet, melts in your mouth / Cold medicine and bronchitis medicine — turnip!

The word *darman* (*medicine*) is borrowed from the Persian language.

A watermelon merchant may cry out:

kand helu / fina ya yalad
Sweet as sugar! / Red as a fez!

The word *kand* (*lump sugar*) is borrowed from Persian, while the word *fina* (*fez*) (the *fez* has traditionally been red) is borrowed from Turkish.

A cucumber seller praises his goods using the following words:

išmatla ya hyar
The freshest cucumbers! (Just collected!)

The *išmatla* lexeme with the meaning of *taking off, collecting* is borrowed from the Assyrian language.

An ice cream seller invites customers with a saying:

kaymagli donderma!
Ice cream (fat), like sour cream!

In this appeal, both words were borrowed from the Turkish language. The word *kaymagli* means sour cream, and *donderma* means freeze.

A fig dealer says this rhyme:

akl al-hawatin ya tin
Figs are the food of the queens!

The word *hawatin* is a plural form from *hatun* (*queen, mistress*). It came to the Baghdad dialect from Indo-European languages.

A pear dealer says this rhymed line:

yabu rukba l-mayla w min l-aasl sayla ya armut
Oh pear, your neck is leaning to the side with sweetness.

The word *armut* (*pear*) came to the Baghdad dialect from the Persian language.

Besides common vocabulary, Iraqi street vendors also use set phrases to advertise their goods:

1. A direct appeal to the product, e. g.:

ya ward min yešterik w lil-habib yehdik
Oh, flower, who will buy you and give to his beloved?!

Phrases, such as the above, combine the classical Arabic poetic address *oh, so and so* and an ironic component. The latter is based on the fact that such a reference is used in relation to a common object.

2. Often one could hear fragments of famous poems or songs that street vendors had changed to better tell about their ware.

Scholars of Iraqi folklore point to the use of the following stylistic devices in hawking:

1. Hyperbole.

A merchant of black grapes extols his goods with the words:

aswad lel w habbak hel
Black as night! And your seeds are like cardamom grains!

2. Imperative

A fish seller called out to potential buyers by saying:

wenhum ahl a-dagt fattih šaraiin galbak bzet l-gattan
Where are those with high blood pressure?! Expand the vessels of your heart with fat fish gattan⁴!

An ice dealer said the following phrase:

wagrat d-denya ya salğ / barrid galbak bisaldğ
The air is very humid (from the heat), oh ice! Cool your heart with ice!

3. Metaphor

A seller of cucumbers compared his goods with a neat pencil, small in size and even:

kalam kalam ya hyar nabi safi ya hyar
Like crayons, oh cucumbers! (Similar) to a clean spring, cucumbers!

A fruit seller could describe his product like this: “*peach dyed with henna, fragrant peach!*”, “*Black as night, fragrant like cardamom, what a grape!*”

4. The use of diminutive forms.

A seller of boiled peas or chickpeas often used a rhyming phrase:

ya lablabi ya lablubi / baana tarsi l-ğuyub
Oh pea-pea, for just one small coin your pockets will be full of them!

Often, the seller’s call-up successfully invented by one seller was then borrowed by other merchants of similar goods. A similar thing also happened when the merchant’s son,

⁴ Gattan is kind of fish.

adopting his father's profession, inherited a saying with which he continued to appeal to potential buyers.

Interestingly, only certain types of people tended to sell certain types of product. For example, a Bedouin who came to the city carrying bags of salt on a camel or cart would work as a salt seller. Fried corn was often sold by an elderly woman who, praising her goods, did not forget to mention that her corn was brought from Syria — the variety of Syrian corn was considered of the highest quality [6, p. 76].

Of course, in such appeals, as in modern advertising, psychological methods were often used that could generate increased interest from potential buyers. Some of these techniques are discussed below:

1. Foreign origin as a sign of a product's undoubted quality.

For example, Syrian beans were considered tastier and better, so the merchant usually mentioned their origin using this refrain:

šamiya w min aš-šam / bağilla ġdida
Syrian beans from Syria, a fresh crop of beans!

A seller of a special kind of white apples that had been brought from Iran pronounced this rhyme:

habb l-hawa w remak / loma l-hawa ma čan ġibnak abyad ya ađimi
The wind blew and dropped you / If it weren't for love, you would not have been brought to me, oh fair-skinned foreigner!

2. The special healthy qualities of a product were also emphasized.

A seller of pickled vegetables invited customers with these words:

turši šalgam hyar hamuz li-doha diwa
Pickled turnips and pickled cucumbers — a cure for dizziness!

The soft drink merchant called Namlet repeated the rhyme:

namlet barid yhalli l-ağuz ttarid
Cold Namlet will give strength even to old women!

3. Street cries were usually rhymed prose, which was well and effortlessly remembered, long remaining in the memory of a potential buyer. Often, a street seller, praising his goods, was followed by children, repeating the merchant's phrases.

We also note that street vendors could offer not only goods, but also their own labor. So, for example, among such professions there were often a knife grinder, a copper pan cleaner, a repairer of broken dishes, a person sorting cotton blankets or pillows, etc.

Currently, this phenomenon is becoming increasingly rare, but, nevertheless, continues to exist, which can be observed during religious and public holidays. Some examples of verbal advertising have become catchy slogans on product labels.

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Призывы уличных торговцев как фольклорный жанр и пример устной рекламы на территории Ирака

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Статья посвящена обзору выкриков-призывов уличных торговцев как одному из видов народного творчества, распространенному на территории Ирака. Традиция выкрикивать небольшие тексты, расхваливая товар перед покупателями, имеет давнюю историю. Искусное владение словом, способность к мгновенной импровизации, выраженной в стихотворной форме, всегда очень ценились на Ближнем Востоке. Недалеко именно там возникли и получили широкую популярность поэтические турниры. Функции призывов уличных торговцев аналогичны функциям рекламы: привлечь внимание покупателя и убедить его приобрести товар. В подобных призывах, как и в современной рекламе, нередко использовались психологические приемы, способные вызвать повышенный интерес потенциальных покупателей. Языковые формы, используемые иракскими торговцами, реализуются на диалекте арабского языка и нередко имеют заимствования из турецкого и персидского. Как правило, эти формы богаты разнообразными метафорами, эпитетами или строками из известных народных песен. Нередко удачно придуманную одним продавцом присказку-призыв заимствовали другие торговцы аналогичным товаром. При этом тот или иной товар часто продавали определенных типажи людей. Уличные торговцы могли предлагать не только товар, но и собственный труд. В настоящее время это явление становится все более редким, но тем не менее продолжает существовать, что можно наблюдать в дни религиозных и народных праздников. Кроме того, некоторые примеры устной рекламы впоследствии перешли на этикетки продуктов в виде запоминающихся слоганов.

Ключевые слова: арабский язык, багдадский диалект, фольклор, Ирак, призывы.

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