

during periods of internecine fighting. In sum, the lack of leadership from the central government in Iraq with regard to landmine removal in the Kurdistan region has been appalling.

While the horrific facts are well researched in Heshmati and Khayyat's work, the chapters are very short, frequently subdivided, and appear choppy. The book is extremely data-driven, full of charts, lists, and graphs that tend to serve a very esoteric audience. In addition, it seems that the authors could have benefited from a more rigorous editing process. In essence, Heshmati and Khayyat's work provides scientific audiences with a detailed resource guide, and specifically focuses on informing a readership with an interest in protocols and processes linked to parameters of landmine removal. The segments of the book that address health concerns, injuries, and educational outreach and programming are particularly informative. It must be pointed out that the available academic literature on landmines in Kurdistan is extremely thin, which enhances the significance of this contribution by Heshmati and Khayyat. Few scholarly articles have examined the devastating results of landmines in Southern Kurdistan, except for regular NGO reports that address the economic repercussions of landmine injuries or the social consequences for disabled persons.

What is missing in this scientific study is the inclusion of the human toll of landmines. What should be done to reduce the disturbingly high numbers of young Kurdish boys who are killed and maimed by landmines while they guard and herd their families' animals? What is the fate of landmine survivors in Southern Kurdistan? Victims typically are unable to find employment and often cannot access most buildings since even recent construction fails to consider the needs of disabled members of society. Heshmati and Khayyat's work represents an important starting point for detailed studies related to the long-term consequences of landmine usage in Kurdish communities following decades of war.

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Estelle Amy de la Bretèque, **Paroles Mélodisées: Récits épiques et lamentations chez les Yézidis d'Arménie** (Melodised speech. Heroic songs and laments among the Yezidis of Armenia), Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2013, 230pp., (ISBN: 978-2-8124-0787-1).

At the core of this impressive work is the following observation: the kilamê ser (words about) are neither song or music (stran) nor daily speech (axaftin). Kilamê ser is a form of speech with specific sound forms and uses. Estelle Amy de la Bretèque in *Paroles Mélodisées: Récits épiques et lamentations chez les Yézidis d'Arménie* analyses this specific form of speech: What is this specificity and what does it tell us? Why do the Yezidis in Armenia use this form of speech that the author calls the "melodised speech"?

The reason is to be found in the expression of emotions, shows the author, throughout a thorough, finely articulated, and extremely richly illustrated argumentation. The stran expresses joy (şabûn), together with the sound of these two instruments, the zurna (a kind of oboe) and the dohol (a kind of drum). The stran is generally danced upon, in weddings, and associated to swift vertical movements of the shoulders. The melodised speech expresses sorrow, sadness, and grief (xem). It is associated to the sound of the duduk, which the voice seems to imitate (or the other

way round), and to horizontal movements of the upper bodies. The melodised speech expresses grief and sorrow at funerals, during graveyard feasts in cemeteries, but also in private settings when people talk about painful matters, and in particular the pain and suffering caused by death or exile, elicited by absence. The words are also melodised to talk about the heroes (*kilamê ser mêraniê*) as told by the bards and sometimes studio-recorded. These laments are melodised speech because they were originally laments on the death of the hero (or the heroic death), argues the author, who illustrates this through colourful examples, such as that of the young soldier, Gago Şerif, killed in 1993 in the Karabakh war, or of Çeko Xidir, a famous Yezidi outlaw from the Muscovite “Kurdish mafia” killed in 1996. The author shows that the laments and the clip shot on Xidir’s tomb do not differ much from the laments said during funerals and video-recorded by relatives to be sent to family members abroad: they just have gained a wider, non-localised, audience.

If the book provides a lively soundscape of contemporary Armenia (chapter 3), and describes the characteristics of both the *stran* and the *kilamê ser* (chapter 5), as the title indicates – it focuses mainly on the melodised speech. Concentrating on this melodised form of speech, it presents an interesting reflexion on the emotional and social uses of sounds. It also questions what one could call the “borders of music”. Indeed the author notes that, “sounding like music to Western ears”, and studied by the (ethno)musicologist, the laments or the melodised speech are not considered as such by Armenian Yezidis. Presenting a thorough reflexion on the use of sound and on the category “music”, this book certainly makes an important contribution to ethnomusicology. It will definitively play an important role in enriching and deepening studies of “oral traditions” or studies of the so-called Kurdish “bards” (*dengbêj*) that currently develop in Kurdish studies, anthropology, and ethnomusicology.

Written by an ethnomusicologist who is also a fine anthropologist, the book is about more than the words and the sound realm alone. Dealing with the specific use of this vocal intonation and its role in people’s lives, it is more broadly a book about the ways people deal with emotions, suffering, and sorrow, how we manage the human condition. Accompanied by the words of the laments, the author underlines throughout the book (and more particularly in the last two chapters) that exile and foreignness (*xeribi*) are central to the expression of suffering among Armenians Yezidis, who share this vocabulary of suffering with people from the region stretching from the Balkans to the Caucasus and Persia. Death, exile, foreignness: one could speak of the suffering of separation. The laments both express and feed the separation of the multiple exiles lived by the Yezidis of Armenia: the exile from the Ottoman lands during WW1, the more recent migration to the Soviet and Russian cities, the exile of the young woman who gets married and leaves the family home, and finally, the exile of the one who dies. In this sense, the book makes a beautiful contribution to the anthropology of emotions. It is also of great interest for those studying migration and exile, an important element of both Kurdish societies and Kurdish studies.

Why then do people melodise the speech? *Kilamê ser* has a non “iso-chronic rhythm”; their “melodic lines are quite free, but generally follow a descending path”. The pitch is quite low (p. 78-81; p. 198-99). The melodised speech gives prevalence to the meanings of the words which, together with its resemblance to the sound of cries and laments, expresses and engenders sorrow, adds the author. The melodised speech is “fragmented”; it presents a “series of images”, somehow disconnected, and offers multiple points of view: through the use of reported speech, the orator makes the others speak (p. 91). The melodised speech encompasses the living and the dead,

those present and those absent: the dead and their relatives during the funeral, those present in the room and those relatives long-dead or in exile. Like a “net”, through which emotions move and circulate, it creates an “affective geography” (p. 97). This weaving seems to also create a community of emotions in which all with his/her private pain relates to the others’ pain. This emotional universe is sonic but also visual: the sound connects the dead and the living, the author recalls that it is said that the dead continue to hear up to three days after death. The sight also plays a role of connector: the funerals are recorded and sent to those leaving far away, pictures of those passed away are hung on living room walls, and images of the dead are engraved on the gravestones. These make the dead and the absent omnipresent.

The omnipresence of death and sorrow enables the author to speak of the “desire for pain” and “the pleasure of suffering” among the Yezidis of Armenia: this pleasure would be illustrated when some affirm for instance that they want to keep the suffering alive forever. However, although the author stresses that the melodised speech is not necessarily cathartic, the fact that it makes possible the detachment from one’s painful emotions - through the use of the reported speech, and the suppression of intonation for example - is striking. The melodised speech enables one to express the unutterable. This would be my only query regarding the author’s argument about the community’s “desire for pain”: are we facing a “desire for pain”, a “pleasure of suffering” or rather a specific way of dealing with painful emotion?

This sonic and visual emotional universe described and analysed by the author is very-well rendered by the actual form of this book. Some pictures and many transcriptions of the kilamê ser, often beautifully translated, are interspersed in the writing. The reading is also punctuated with references to 62 audio and video recordings (hosted on <http://www.ethnomusicologie.fr/parolesmelodisees/>) which reproduce and make the reading a real multisensory experience. Though extremely rich and dialoguing subtly with the ethnomusicology and anthropology literature, the book is, if one might say, embodied through five years ethnography (2006-2010) in the Yezidi villages of Armenia, by the videos of the dead and living, as well as by the portraits of the enunciators of the laments (professionals or old women with “burning hearts”). This work is therefore very stimulating reading for anyone interested in the culture and society of the Kurds of the Caucasus, in Yezidi traditions and rituals, but also in ethnomusicology, or the anthropology of emotions.

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Diane E. King, **Kurdistan on the Global Stage: Kinship, Land, and Community in Iraq**, *New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 2014. 286 pp., (ISBN: 9780813563534).*

This is a very readable, insightful anthropological study that will be welcomed by all those interested in the Kurds and how Kurdish political actors affect regional and even international politics. The author tells her readers that she started her research in Kurdistan in 1995 (p. 223) “as an anthropologist traveling in the widest possible social circles in the region” (p. 217). She further explains that what she presents in her book mainly comes from “being there” (p. 43). She terms her methodology “embodied research. Such research involves the greatest immersion that is practical in local daily