

Oral Composition vs. Written Composition: Structural Consequences

Oral Baseline Poem: “Tea with Milk”

- 1) Tea with milk, tea with milk
- 2) From the hand of the beauty whose build is slender
- 3) If you sipped it, it's better than the doctor
- 4) It enters the body and extinguishes the burning.
- 5) I spoke the truth, my nature is not that of one who lies
- 6) I want to pay out her price, [she of] precious pedigree.
- 7) And Wādī Faḡam that stretches up to where it disappears
- 8) The riverbed in its breadth is the channel for the flood
- 9) Where beauty lives, I might cultivate grapes
- 10) And build up a tower with many storeys all furnished for her
- 11) That faces the sea breeze and has a wall around it
- 12) With servants to serve her so she might rest at ease.
- 13) Give up, my heart, let it go! Be more reasonable
- 14) It's not appropriate for your age and they don't desire you
- 15) For one, you're old and further, you are not from around here.
- 16) I'm just talking nonsense like a bona fide prattler
- 17) There's still passion in me and it is deeply woven
- 18) I love the beauties even though I'm grey.

Written Poem: “Desire” (*Dīwān Ḥājī Dākōn* #9)

- 1) My lungs and heart // today are fluttering
- 2) Desire has filled them // they have been filled to the brim
- 3) They haven't yet settled down // from anxiety and excitement
- 4) Between my ribs // they are shivering.
- 5) I've seen that desire // is dangerous and troublesome
- 6) If it becomes rooted // and settles in its cavities
- 7) It blocks the breathing // and you become a wreck
- 8) You are agitated // quick to anger and impatient
- 9) Like a dry palm frond // with fire on its fibres.
- 10) My patience has finished // and my condition is weak,
- 11) All my emotions // have been torn to shreds.
- 12) O little falcon! // Go quickly! Fly!
- 13) Go at dusk, travel all night // from Mḥayfif,
- 14) Keep my order in mind // and act faithfully in my stead.
- 15) After the greetings // have been exchanged twice-over
- 16) Say: “After you // I'm like a man all used up.”