

Today on the ELAR blog, we are featuring the newly-released eBook '[Selim and the Dom-Fruit](#)'. The ebook is in [Mehri](#), as spoken by Bayt Qhoor, a sub-tribe of Bayt Thuwar in Central Oman. The book was made in Salalah. It was first written by Abdullah al-Mahri and Janet Watson in October 2017, and completed with photographs in 2018. Abdullah produced the voice over. Janet, an ELDP grantee, is here on the blog today to share a few words on the book:

The origin of the story came when we were preparing for a presentation on medical herbs in Qatar. We had already produced three e-books in Mehri during 2015 – one about a milkbowl, one about a cradle, and one an alphabet. In 2017, we decided to produce a series of short stories, of which this is the first, based around a little boy called Selim. Selim is the name of Abdullah's nephew, who I have known since his birth. Selim is very pleased that we are writing short stories with his name.

This particular story is about Selim hearing his grandparents talk about a fruit called giireem – small berries with relatively large stones. He decided to look for giireem, so he went to the frankincense tree and asked her. She sent him on to four other plants, and he asked each plant what it was called and whether it produced giireem. Eventually he finds giireem and eats until he is full, then returns to the cave to his grandparents.

Here is the book's English translation:

20180206_Selim and the dom-fruit
Selim and the dom-fruit.

Selim heard his grandparents talking about dom-fruit, and he hadn't yet tasted it. He went towards his friend, the frankincense tree: *Boswellia sacra*.

He asked her, he said, 'Are those things shining on you dom-fruit?' She said, 'No, they are not dom-fruit, that is frankincense, and frankincense isn't tasty like dom-fruit.'

He said, 'You have been here a long time and you know the whole wadi, where are dom-fruit?' She said, 'Before you are four trees, one on them produces dom-fruit.'

He walked and walked and walked and walked.

He arrived at a tree. He asked it and said, 'What sort of tree are you, and are the things hanging down from [your branches] dom-fruit?' It answered and said, 'I am *Acacia tortilis*, and those that are hanging from [my branches] are pods, and pods are just eaten by goats. Keep going and you will find dom-fruit among [one of] those [trees].'

He walked and walked and walked and walked.

He came to a tree, and asked, 'What sort of plant are you, and what is that in your centre? Do you have dom-fruit?' It said, 'I am just *Nannorrhops ritchiana*, and that in my centre is maaniin, and I did have fruit, but I don't produce dom-fruit.'

The *Nannorrhops ritchiana* said, 'People have eaten all my fruit, go to the plant in front of you and ask it about dom-fruit.'

He walked and walked and walked and walked.

He said, 'I'm tired of walking. What sort of tree are you? Do you have any dom-fruit?' It said, 'I am *Zizyphus leucodermis*. I did have dom-fruit, but the goats have eaten them all up. If you go on you will find dom-fruit.'

He walked and walked and walked and walked.

He reached a tree. He said, 'I am finished! What sort of tree are you? Do you produce dom-fruit?' It said, 'You have arrived. I am *Zizyphus spina Christi*. If you want dry dom-fruit, you will find it beneath me, and if you want fresh dom-fruit, eat from my branches.'

Selim ate and ate and ate and ate until he was full.

And then he returned to the cave to his grandparents.

The ebook was produced without funding. However, the initial books were produced with funds from the Leverhulme Trust who funded the Documentation and Ethnolinguistic Analysis of Modern South Arabian project from January 2013 – December 2016.

Here are the three [ebooks](#), with voice overs for the first two by Abdullah al-Mahri and Janet Watson.