The presentation follows two adaptations of Heidi for Arabic-speaking audiences – one from 1968 and the other from 2008. In 1968 Heidi was translated into Arabic by the international radio service of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation (today: swissinfo.ch, part of the SRF Swiss national TV and radio broadcaster). As far as I could find out, the radio series was the first translation of the children's books into the Arabic language. The 1968 version of Heidi is an example for the attempt to present Swiss culture to a listener group which was largely unfamiliar with the country's culture. By using excerpts from the program and referring to oral history interviews with the producers I will focus on three points which mark the transformation of the written story into sound:

- the new form and narrative structure of the story
- the oralization (oral adaptation) of the story
- the musical setting and sonic adaptation of the story to make it more «Swiss»

Due to the story's function as a transcultural mediator between Switzerland and the Arabic-speaking listening community, its religious contents were maintained and its «Swissness» stressed. One of the examples is mentioned in the abstract title. In Johanna Spyris version of the story, neither Heidi nor any other of the characters yodel or play folk music. In the radio version made by Tunisian and Egyptian radio employees, Swiss yodelling and other folk music elements become a particular feature of the child and ultimately of the broadcast as such. I understand this as a form of «culturalisation» (or «Swissisation») of Heidi, which stands in conspicuous contrast to an Arabic Heidi childrens book from 2010. Swiss author Peter Stamm made its content «more universal» by omitting its religious and Swiss-appearing elements. I would like to discuss the intertwining of sonic and cultural-political implications of the two narrative tendencies that show up in mediating Heidi to Arabic audiences. I assume that the narrative and sonic transformations of Heidi sketch also a transition in a Swiss self-understanding when facing the Arab world. In addition, the inclusion or exclusion of specific sounds, such as Heidi’s (imagined) different answers to «can you yodel, my child?», offers an interesting perspective on the transformative lifeworld of Heidi.