MANNERISM IN ARABIC POETRY

A structural analysis of selected texts

STEFAN SPERL

Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization

Mannerism in Arabic poetry

A structural analysis of selected texts (3rd century AH/9th century AD –
5th century AH/11th century AD)

Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization

Titles in the series

Mannerism in
Arabic poetry

A structural analysis of selected texts (3rd century AH/9th century AD – 5th century AH/11th century AD)

STEFAN SPERL

To my father

Contents

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Stimulated by the debate on mannerism in literature which followed the appearance of E. R. Curtius's celebrated work *European Literature and Latin Middle Ages* (1953), this book attempts to identify elements of mannerism and classicism in medieval Arabic poetry.

Mannerism in Arabic has usually been linked with the appearance of an ornate rhetorical style caled *badī'* which became characteristic of poetry and prose from the fifth century AH/ninth century AD onwards.[1] This study, however, is not so much concerned with the discussion of rhetorical devices as manifest in selected passages and individual lines of poetry; rather, it seeks to attain its objective through a structuralist analysis of *whole poems*. This makes it necessary to address the much-debated issue of the unity of the individual poem in Arabic.

The inquiry, therefore, begins with the formulation of a hypothesis on the structural coherence of a cardinal form of poetic expression – the poly-thematic, panegyric ode or *qaṣīda* (see Glossary). In chapters two and three this hypothesis serves as a basis for structuralist analyses of poems by Buḥturī (d. about 284 AH/897 AD) and Mihyār al-Daylamī (d. 428 AH/1036 AD). Chapters four and five turn to ascetic poetry. Selected works from the *Zuhdiyyāt* of Abū l-ʿAtāhiya (d. 213 AH/828 AD) and the *Luzūmiyyāt* of Maʿarrī (d. 449 AH/1058 AD) are examined in the light of the same hypothesis. The texts of all works analysed appear with translations and brief commen-taries as an appendix to this book. After reviewing the debate on mannerism in Arabic literature, the final chapter proceeds to describe mannerism and classicism as contrasting styles in which the individual poem relates in fundamentally different ways to the literary convention from which it arises and the subject matter it portrays. The texts analysed in chapters two to five are then discussed as manifestations of these styles in medieval Arabic poetry.

While this study is thus concerned with the stylistic range of a poetic tradition, it does not attempt to provide an historical analysis of stylistic development. What is intended is best clarified by reference to the views S. Ḍayf and W. Heinrichs have expressed on the development of style in Arabic poetry. In his work *al-Fann wa-Madhāhibuhu fī al-Shiʿr al-ʿArabī*, S. Ḍayf

1

(1969) traces in the history of Arabic poetry three stylistic methods or schools (*madhāhib*):

–*Ṣanʿa*, a style of simple and straightforward diction which springs from the creative endeavour (*jahd fannī*) underlying all art (*ibid.*, pp. 22, 41). The term is closely linked to Ḍayf's view of poetry as a craft (*ṣināʿa*) with rules, constraints and conventions to which the poet must adhere in his effort at artistic creation.

–*Taṣnīʿ*, defined as the *badīʿ* school, a style which adds to the basic properties of the craft a methodical emphasis on rhetorical devices for the sake of elegance and embellishment (*ibid.*, pp. 9, 176). In the works of some poets, particularly Abū Tammām, such devices become the means for poetic expressions of profound insight which mark the crowning achievement of medieval Arabic poetry (*ibid.*, pp. 241f).

–*Taṣannuʿ*, a stylistic school marked by excessive constraint, affectation and complexity. It is occasioned by cultural decline and characterized by loss of creative and expressive power (*ibid.*, pp. 9, 277f).

According to Ḍayf, Mihyār al-Daylamī's panegyrics and Maʿarrī's *Luzūmiy-yāt* represent the school of *taṣannuʿ* with all its failings. Mihyār's poems are pallid and repetitive reformulations of 'well-worn thoughts and inherited ideas' (*ibid.*, p. 362), the style of the *Luzūmiyyāt* is 'feeble, almost devoid of artistic beauty and novelty' (*ibid.*, p. 396), it abounds in instances of repetition, 'deficiency and weakness of construction' (*ibid.*, p. 395). Propelled by his great philological erudition, Maʿarrī is said to have imposed formal constraints on his poetry which aim at a display of skill and learning by means of linguistic complexities and terminological riddles (*ibid.*, p. 402).

While I have used Mihyār's panegyrics and Maʿarrī's *Luzūmiyyāt* as examples of mannerist style, the term 'mannerism' as developed here is quite distinct from Ḍayf's concept of *taṣannuʿ*. *Ṣanʿa*, *taṣnīʿ* and *taṣannuʿ* denote stages of an historical development, whereas my textual analyses aim at the identification of stylistic principles which are not exclusively linked to the historical periods discussed by Ḍayf. Moreover, *taṣannuʿ* is essentially linked with lack of creative power and cultural decline. Contrary to this, the poems of Mihyār and Maʿarrī, analysed below, do not appear as the result of inferior or misguided attempts, but as expressions of a positive and independent artistic endeavour. According to Adūnīs, one of the tasks of poetry consists in 'opening paths to that hidden world which lies beyond the world of appearances' (Adūnīs, 1971, p. 58). These poems do indeed give expression to such a 'hidden world'; however, it does not lie in any perceptible reality language might mirror, but in the texture of literary language itself.

In his article entitled 'Literary theory – the problem of its efficiency' (1973), W. Heinrichs outlines another view on the stylistic development of Arabic poetry. He, too, sees its history marked by three 'impulses each of which in turn fashioned its own kind of poetry'. The first of these is 'the start of the Ḥijāzī

school of love poetry around the year AD 650'. It is characterized in particular by 'the anecdotic description of actions and reactions of persons interspersed and enlivened with direct speech' (*ibid.*, pp. 24f). The second impulse 'may be labelled *badī*' and 'may be described as rhetorical embellishment which is consciously sought after by the poets and thus gradually evolves as a principle of art' (*ibid.*, p. 25). 'The emergence of "phantastic" poetry' is the effect of the third impulse, occasioned by 'a shift of the poet's attention from the level of reality ... to the level of imagery'.[2]

The reason behind the development of both the *badī*' and the 'phantastic' style lies in the 'traditionalism of Arabic poetry with regard to its content' which compelled the poets to give exclusive attention to the form of their product. In the case of 'phantastic' poetry, this often leads to an 'elaboration and combination of known *badī*' figures' (*ibid.*, pp. 24f). A function of this development is mannerism: 'complicated or intricately constructed figures of speech (and combinations thereof) ... are the outcome, or rather the expression, of the increase of mannerism (the term used in a descriptive sense) in later Abbasid poetry' (*ibid.*, p. 52). In an attempt at demonstrating the medieval critics' incapacity to describe such complex constructs, Heinrichs cites two examples: a line by Ma'mūnī containing a combination of rhetorical figures, and one by Mutanabbī exhibiting an intricate combination of traditional motifs (*ibid.*, pp. 48, 52).

While Heinrichs thus seeks to develop an historical (diachronic) view of mannerist style through tracing motifs and rhetorical techniques as elements of mannerist 'combination', the present study aims at a (synchronic) description of its structural properties as discernible in poems as a whole. The combinations of different rhetorical figures or motifs, observed by Heinrichs in individual lines of poetry, then appear as manifestations of a general 'exploration of combinatory potential' observable on every level of the structure of a poem, or, indeed, in the case of the *Luzūmiyyāt*, of an entire *dīwān* (see Glossary).

My emphasis on the analysis of whole poems necessitates some preliminary remarks on the question of unity in medieval Arabic poetry. As stated by Gelder, 'classical Arabic poems have been described as lacking unity ever since Western critical standards were applied to them' (1982, p. 14). Certain features of the Arabic poetic corpus have given rise to this impression, in particular the relative syntactic independence of the individual line, and the seemingly arbitrary or enigmatic amalgam of themes in the formal ode (*qaṣīda*). Kowalski's theory of 'molecular structure' formulated in 1934[3] is the most notable example of such critical views: Arabic poems are seen as an array of self-contained statements in loose, if not random, succession, strung together only by rhyme and metre. Views such as these were, for a long time, widely accepted among scholars.[4] Since 1970, however, a marked reappraisal has taken place. With the help of methods derived from modern literary criticism, contemporary scholars have begun to show that the constituent units of

medieval Arabic poems do appear to relate in a meaningful and well-balanced manner. The independence of the individual line was found less strict than had been presumed, and the thematic sequence of the *qaṣīda* was seen to follow familiar ritualistic patterns.

The structuralist analyses presented here have a close bearing on this topic. With the help of a method principally derived from the critical works of R. Jakobson,[5] it has, I believe, been possible to show that the texts concerned are coherent units that do exhibit quite a number of discernible features. These observations confirm the findings of scholars who have, with different methodologies, engaged in similar studies of classical Arabic poems. Some of the most significant points of agreement are the following:

Repetition and variation: A poem's structure may be marked by the repetition, often in contrasting contexts, of certain linguistic features, whether lexical, phonological, morphological, syntactic or semantic. That this is also valid for medieval Arabic poetry has by now been frequently observed, as can be shown by pointing to comments on, for example, lexical repetitions. The role of such repetitions in the thematic development of Arabic poems has already been noted by R. Jacobi in her study of the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda* (1971, p. 185). In discussing the *Muʻallaqa* by Imru' al-Qays, Abu Deeb shows how major structural developments within the poem can be illustrated through the contrasting contexts in which certain lexical items recur (1976, pp. 12, 32, 51). In discussing Abū Tammām's famous ode on the conquest of Amorium, Badawi mentions the repetitions of the word *bīḍ* which elucidate the dichotomies underlying much of the poem's imagery and symbolism (1978, p. 48). Cowell has pointed out in his discussion of a work by Ibn 'Abd Rabbih how the repetition of one lexical item as initial and final rhyme word 'serves to frame the poem'; the changing contexts in which the word appears do indeed illustrate the beginning and end of the poem's thematic development (1974, p. 77). The texts examined in the present study exhibit similar features. Indeed, the tracing of word repetitions has been used as a veritable 'discovery procedure' for structural patterns in the discussion of texts I and III, while, with respect to texts II and V, repetitions of lexical items are there to confirm the structural features examined.

Elements of repetition of significance to the entire work are often introduced in the first two lines of a poem. This applies not only to lexical but also to relevant thematic and conceptual features, as has been shown by K. Abu Deeb in his studies of the *Muʻallaqāt* of Labīd and Imru' al-Qays (1975, 1976). Discussing the *aṭlāl* convention (see Glossary), Abu Deeb remarks on the fact that 'different poets bestow different attributes on the *aṭlāl*'; he proceeds to ask whether these are merely functions of a 'conventional device' imposed by the 'demands of tradition', or whether they relate 'structurally to the other constituent units of the poem and are imposed by the essential vision of reality of which it is an expression'. With respect to the poems he analyses, Abu Deeb conclusively proves the relevance of the latter: 'The properties of the *aṭlāl* . . .

possess a symbolic value no less essential to the . . . statement of the poem than any other section' (1975, p. 164); indeed, 'the features of the *aṭlāl* section permeate the whole poem'; they introduce all the fundamental 'oppositions and dualities' (1976, p. 12) which inform the development. Similarly, M. M. Badawi has drawn attention to the fact that some of the fundamental antitheses which permeate Abū Tammām's ode on Amorium are, on the levels of concept, imagery and lexicon, introduced in the first two lines; moreover, he finds that the content of the first two lines is resumed in the two final lines to bring the poem to a well-rounded conclusion (1978, pp. 47f). Cowell's analysis of a poem by Ibn 'Abd Rabbih yields similar results: the initial two lines introduce a thematic parallelism which is investigated and elaborated in the remainder of the poem (1975, p. 51). D. Latham, in discussing Mutanabbī's ode on the conquest of al-Ḥadath also shows how the first two lines set the scene for the entire work (1979, pp. 7ff). Every poem analysed in the present study was found to exhibit similar features. The initial sections of the poems contain thematic, lexical, morphological, phonological and syntactic material which is developed and frequently resumed in the remainder of the work. This is illustrated with respect to imagery and conceptual themes in the analysis of poems by Buḥturī and Mihyār, with respect to morphology and syntax in the analyses of poems by Abū l-'Atāhiya and Ma'arrī.

Sectional parallelism: The development of medieval Arabic poems often proceeds in groups of verses of roughly similar length which may stand in parallel or contrasting relationship to each other. This has been carefully demonstrated by R. Scheindlin who writes on the poetry of al-Mu'tamid b. 'Abbād: 'Just as we find parallelism between members of the single verse, and parallelism betwen whole verses, we may also find a loose degree of parallelism unifying groups of verses' (1974, p. 139). A similar type of parallelism has also been observed by R. Jacobi in the 'Dayr 'Abdūn' poem by Ibn al-Mu'tazz (1975, pp. 48ff). Abū Tammām's ode on Amorium exhibits similar features: as shown by Badawi, the initial section clearly contrasts with the conclusion 'whereas Section IV, the encomium of Mu'taṣim, contrasts with Section V in which Theophilus is satirized' (1978, p. 47). Abu Deeb has identified a related phenomenon when he speaks of oppositions between units of one poem. He defines the semantic function of such oppositions in the following terms (1975, p. 167):

The units may be related as open, parallel structures, which are fundamentally repetitive – not linguistically, but on the level of the relations they consist of. The open structures, thus, possess the same properties, and the effect is one of intensification and heightening of the vision of the poem, but, more important, is also one of 'universalization' of the essential experience of the poem.

Parallelism between groups of verses – henceforth called sectional parallelism – has been observed also in virtually every poem analysed in the present study. It has been found to be manifest not only as a semantic feature but, as in the

examples analysed by Scheindlin, can be seen to pervade every aspect of the grammatical structure of the passages concerned (see also Abu Deeb, 1976, pp. 38ff). The poems by Abū l-'Atāhiya and Ma'arrī in particular (texts V and VI) illustrate Abu Deeb's point on the 'intensification and heightening of vision' which can be achieved through the technique of sectional parallelism.

Some poems have, moreover, been found to exhibit a remarkable degree of symmetry in their thematic sub-divisions. As Abu Deeb says, the true significance of this feature can be ascertained only by 'extensive analysis of the corpus of poetry'. Suffice it to remark that Abu Deeb observed the divisibility of the *Mu'allaqa* by Imru' al-Qays into two 'gross constituent units' of nearly equal length (*ibid.*, p. 4); these in turn consist of four 'constituent units' each, which stand in complex but symmetric interrelation. A comparable degree of symmetry, i.e. a division into two halves of nearly, or exactly, equal length, coupled with a contrasting interrelation of discernible subsections, is shown in the analyses of texts II, III, V, and VI (see below pp. 38, 49f, 85, 132).

The points listed above are certainly no comprehensive survey of structural features observed by different critics,[6] nor do they allow us to reach firm conclusions on the principles of construction underlying medieval Arabic poetry. However, the large measure of agreement between the different studies cited seems to suggest very strongly that such principles do, in fact, exist. In view of these findings, one might conclude that the molecularist notion of the Arabic poem is no longer a valid concept. While it is certainly no longer accepted as originally stated, the case for the unity of the classical poem is not settled yet. In a penetrating and extensive inquiry, Gelder has shown that, despite many theoretical considerations on the subjects of unity and cohesion, medieval Arabic critics devoted their attention principally to the individual line or passage and did not in any detail address the compositional techniques involved in the construction of whole poems. His book concludes with a warning against giving too much attention to the unity or integrity of the individual poem. Indeed, the 'mode of existence' (Gelder, 1982, p. 195) of the Arabic poem is characteristically fragmentary; whether in anthologies, works of criticism, prose, narrative or other works, a poem is normally cited in selected extracts only; rarely is there evidence of any interest in 'the work as a whole'. 'Once the poem had served its initial *gharaḍ* [see Glossary], as a panegyric, a satire, a request or a threat, it was allowed to disintegrate. Poet–critics quoting themselves are no exception' (*ibid.*, p. 203).

Gelder's observations show that 'unity' in medieval Arabic poetry has many facets. Poems may be validly and meaningfully divided up according to many different criteria, and the unity 'of particular fragments singled out for criticism or appreciation' (*ibid.*, p. 202) may be no less significant than the unity of poems as such. However, this does not mean that whole poems must lack coherence or be devoid of a unified message to which all its parts equally

contribute; nor can the existence of compositional techniques underlying larger structures be cast into doubt because medieval criticism has passed them over in silence. It may be argued that the methods of modern literary criticism were necessary for the description of such techniques, just as the ritualistic symbolism of the pre-Islamic ode could not have been verbalized without the concepts of modern anthropology. This point, addressed in greater detail in chapter 1, will lead us to a hypothesis of fundamental importance for the understanding of all poems here discussed, be they classical or mannerist.

CHAPTER 1

The Islamic panegyric

Much of the medieval Arabic poetic corpus consists of poems written in praise of rulers and notables of state. Some works of this type have been selected to provide examples of the literary styles with which this study is concerned. Before any stylistic analysis, however, it is advisable to consider in general terms the form and function of the panegyric mode in Arabic.

A remarkable feature of classical Arabic panegyric poems is that they do not only contain eulogy. The topic of praise usually appears last, preceded by a varied sequence of traditional themes which do not appear to relate to it directly. In a much cited passage, the medieval critic, Ibn Qutayba, described such a typical sequence of themes and attempted to explain its constitution.[1] He mentioned *dhikr al-diyār* (henceforth referred to as *aṭlāl*), *nasīb, raḥīl* and *madīḥ*. The passage is quoted here again, since it gives perhaps the best – and certainly the most celebrated – introduction to this peculiar and unique poetic form:

I have heard from a man of learning that the composer of Odes began by mentioning the deserted dwelling-places (*aṭlāl*) and the relics and traces of habitation. Then he wept and complained and addressed the desolate encampment, and begged his companion to make a halt, in order that he might have occasion to speak to those who had once lived there and afterwards departed; for the dwellers in tents were different from townsmen or villagers in respect of coming and going, because they moved from one water-spring to another, seeking pasture and searching out the places where rain had fallen. Then to this he linked the erotic prelude (*nasīb*), and bewailed the violence of his love and the anguish of separation from his mistress and the extremity of his passion and desire, so as to win the hearts of his hearers and divert their eyes towards him and invite their ears to listen to him, since the song of love touches men's souls and takes hold of their hearts, God having put it in the constitution of His creatures to love dalliance and the society of women, in such wise that we find very few but are attached thereto by some tie or have some share therein, whether lawful or unpermitted. Now, when the poet had assured himself of an attentive hearing, he followed up his advantage and set forth his claim: thus he went on to complain of fatigue and want of sleep and travelling by night and of the noonday heat, and how his camel had been reduced to leanness. And when, after representing all the discomfort and danger of his journey (*raḥīl*), he knew that he had fully justified his hope and expectation of receiving his due

meed from the person to whom the poem was addressed, he entered upon the panegyric (*madīḥ*), and incited him to reward, and kindled his generosity by exalting him above his peers and pronouncing the greatest dignity, in comparison with his, to be little.[2]

As pointed out by Gelder (1982, p. 44), Ibn Qutayba in this passage may have intended to illustrate the outline of the polythematic ode, the *qaṣīda*, by giving a schematic description of one particular version, namely the panegyric. For, in pre-Islamic times, other forms of the *qaṣīda* were prominent as well, such as those termed by R. Jacobi *Erinnerungsqaṣīde* and *Botschaftsqaṣīde* (1971, p. 204). His choice is not fortuitous, however, since with the rise of Islamic statehood, the panegyric becomes the principal version of the formal ode (Badawi, 1980, p. 7).

In trying to understand this poetic form, one's attention is drawn to the relationship between the parts outlined by Ibn Qutayba – a relationship that is far from obvious. Ibn Qutayba tries to explain it historically and psychologically:[3] the *aṭlāl* section is a reflection of the bedouin life-style; the *nasīb* is designed to arouse the listener's feelings through the mention of love, and the poet's tiresome journey, the *raḥīl*, will hopefully invite the compassionate concern of the sovereign, thus paving the way for praise and reward. Modern critical writers on Arabic poetry, however, did not pursue this line of argument. Rather, they were content to see the *qaṣīda* as a loosely connected and purely conventional entity.[4] The poet, it was thought, devoted his creative attention only to individual lines and there was, in the words of Heinrichs, 'keine bewusste Gestaltung des Gedichtganzen' (1969, p. 31).

In recent years, however, significant critical works have appeared which agree on portraying the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda* as 'a coherent complex of conventional acts that, in their relationships, embody the model of an order in the world' (Hamori, 1974, p. 22, n. 25). While I am concerned with the panegyric *qaṣīda* in Islamic times, these studies are relevant to the argument, for the Islamic *qaṣīda* is very much a descendant of its pre-Islamic ancestor. The close relationship between the two has been aptly summarized by Badawi, who terms the former 'secondary' and the latter 'primary' *qaṣīda* (1980, p. 3).

In his book, *The Art of Medieval Arabic Literature*, Hamori describes the pre-Islamic ode as a ritualistic expression of the view of life of the ancient Arabs. His view centres on the 'heroic model', the paradigm of pre-Islamic moral values. The heroic model is of an equilibrium 'produced by the will to be caught up in all encounters, joyful and lethal alike' (1974, p. 12). Two contrasting principles characterize it, *kenosis* ('emptying') and *plerosis* ('filling'). *Kenosis* represents the 'voluntary relinquishment' of extreme generosity, of the abandonment of all property for transitory pleasures; it denotes the act of severing the relationship with the beloved on leaving the campsite and, finally, the valour and recklessness with which the hero faces death in perilous desert journeys and in battle. *Plerosis*, the opposite principle, represents the boundless and sensuous enjoyment of the fruits of life whenever they present themselves: love-making, drinking and reaping the spoils of war. But, in his

every attempt at exorbitance and extremity, the hero ultimately – and voluntarily – approaches death as the final boundary. 'Facing death head-on [is] the first task of the *qaṣīda*' (*ibid.*, p. 8).

Hamori sees the whole of the poetic form in terms of the dualism of *plerosis* and *kenosis* and suggests that it influenced the parallelistic composition of the ancient poetry. His interpretation leads him to a new and significant view of the connection between *nasīb* and *raḥīl* (*ibid.*, p. 19):

Lady and camel – icons of the *nasīb* and of the camel-section – play significant roles, the contrasts between them pointing up the two principles of organization in the *qaṣīda*. First, they illustrate metaphorical re-enactment: the lady is an emblem of involuntary movement towards emptiness through time, the camel of voluntary movement towards emptiness through space. Second, they illustrate the attaining of an equilibrium by the use of contrasting pairs: the lady stands for a life of ease, the camel for stress and exertion; the one is deliciously plump, the other hard and gaunt. *Plerosis* and *kenosis*.

Hamori then draws a number of important conclusions. He sees the 'extreme conventionality, repetitiousness, and thematic limitation' (*ibid.*, p. 21) of the *qaṣīda* as occasioned by the ritual function of this form of poetry: 'these poems, rather than myths or religious rituals, served as the vehicle for the conception that sorted out the emotionally incoherent facts of life and death' (*ibid.*, p. 22). Hamori also makes some significant comments on the panegyric section of the poem: 'donor and recipient engage in a ritualistic performance, acting out a segment of the total organization of experience according to the heroic model' (*ibid.*, pp. 23–4). The author concludes: 'in a morally capricious universe, the heroic model allowed a view of the totality of experience as balanced and coherent' (*ibid.*, p. 29).

Abu Deeb subjected the *Mu'allaqāt* of Labīd and Imru' al-Qays to a detailed structural analysis with a method derived from Lévi-Strauss's analysis of myth (1975, 1976). Of particular interest are Abu Deeb's findings on the work of Labīd which, in its sequence *aṭlāl-nasīb-raḥīl*-tribal *fakhr* (see Glossary), is more evidently akin to the panegyric than the work of Imru' al-Qays; moreover it provides, according to Abu Deeb, 'a vision of reality central to pre-Islamic poetry as a whole' (1975, p. 150). In the course of his study, he establishes beyond doubt the internal coherence of the work in question and concludes emphatically: 'The poem must be examined as a total, meaningful structure . . . embodying an individual way of viewing reality' (*ibid.*, p. 180).

The author's argument culminates with his discussion of the 'open structure' of the poem (*ibid.*, p. 181). The *qaṣīda* does not move from one moment of time to another. All time is present-time because it is a multi-layered re-enactment of one fundamental structure in terms of symbolic experiences and descriptions. The different layers of the poem are marked by its 'formative units', i.e. the subsections of the *aṭlāl*, the wild ass, the wild cow, etc. A number of these possess parallel structures 'or rather, manifestations of what is fundamentally

the same structure of experience in the whole poem' (*ibid.*). This consists of a movement of deliverance from hardship by means of an arduous journey. In the case of the poet, the negative relationship he has with his beloved Nawār is overcome in the harmonious relationship between himself and his tribe at the end of the poem; in between lies the journey, the *raḥīl*. This interpretation thus explains the significance of the poem's thematic sequence. Ultimately the structure contains an assertion of life in the face of death. However, 'in none of these units does the movement end with a total resolution of the tensions' (*ibid.*) with which it starts. Just as the encampment is a place of both desolation and renewed fertility, so man is never freed entirely from the hidden dangers threatening his existence: even within the tribe, symbol of stability and moral uprightness, there are *li'ām* ('mean people').

So there is no absolute beginning and no absolute end to the movement; this is reflected in the timelessness of the open structure of the poem (*ibid.*, p. 177):

Labīd's vision of reality ... is a vision of the world as a universe of contradictions and paradoxes. Almost every object, every living entity, is of a double nature, in which the seeds of death and the seeds of life grow together and exist simultaneously. They are entwined and interlocked in an eternal struggle. Man's existence is one of constant tension, an existence on the edge of a sword: life and death glitter on either side of the blade. But man does not submit to death, nor does he immerse himself in a total celebration of life. In the midst of one, he is intensely aware of the presence of the other. Death is not at the other end of a journey which man goes through celebrating life, until the moment of the death of vitality comes: man moves in the context of death at all moments of his existence.

Here, the author's interpretation of the view of life expressed by Labīd's ode recalls Hamori's heroic model. Both stress the immanence of death as essential to the vision of the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda*.

Finally, the comparison between the *qaṣīda* and myth in Abu Deeb's essay allows for conclusions which agree with Hamori's idea on the *qaṣīda* as ritual. About the repetitive nature of the poetic form, Abu Deeb says, in the words of Lévi-Strauss: 'the function is to render the structure of myth [or of the *qaṣīda*] apparent' (*ibid.*, p. 181). Hamori, in the same context, speaks about the *qaṣīda*'s ritual affirmation of a mode of life through the repetitive 'replay of prototypal events' (1974, p. 22). The difference Abu Deeb traces when stating that the *qaṣīda*, as opposed to myth, possesses 'an external formal unity', can be seen as an expression of its ritualistic character.

Similar views on the ritualistic function of the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda* have since been expressed by other scholars. Badawi calls it 'a ritual more akin to Greek tragedy, a re-enactment in recital of the common values of the tribe, with similar cathartic effects' (1980, p. 7). Even the thematic sequence of the *qaṣīda* has been explained by reference to ritualistic patterns. Thus, Stetkevych finds in the rite of passage 'as formulated by modern anthropology ... a paradigmatic or metaphorical model for the thematic and poetic structure of the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda*'. She points to an obvious 'analogy between the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda*'s abandoned encampment/departure of the women of the tribe,

raḥīl/desert journey, *fakhr*/praise of the tribe, and van Gennep's separation, liminality and aggregation' (Stetkevych, 1983, pp. 98, 107). In introducing these concepts, she undertakes a review of critical writings on the *Mu'allaqāt*, and proposes a number of reinterpretations concerning the *Mu'allaqa* of Imru' al-Qays in particular.

The phases of the rite of passage as described also by Eliade in his *Rites and Symbols of Initiation* do indeed appear to underlie the structure of panegyric poems which follow the model outlined by Ibn Qutayba. According to Eliade, the first phase of such rites is often marked by a symbolic retrogression to chaos and the ritual subject's separation from his mother (1975, pp. 4ff). This might be seen to correspond to the desolate ruins of the *aṭlāl* and the poet's separation from his beloved in the *nasīb*.

The *raḥīl*, which Stetkevych identifies as the 'liminal' state, may also signify the initiatory ordeal as such. Eliade observes that a common initiatory pattern consists in 'individual withdrawal into the wilderness and the quest for a protecting spirit' (*ibid.*, p. 130). If, when weeping over the encampment the poet becomes a child once more, forsaking the virtue of *ṣabr* (see Glossary), the determined move with which he leaves the site is a re-enactment of his becoming a hero, a man in the full sense. As he is being put to test in the hardships of his journey, the spiritual values of the heroic model are experienced and reaffirmed. Reintegration into society is marked by the panegyric: the 'protecting spirit' has been found in the figure of the sovereign. The latter represents both society as a whole, as well as the societal values the poet himself has acquired as the fruit of his transition.

That initiatory symbolism could thus be at the root of a literary form does not appear unusual. Eliade remarks that (*ibid.*, p. 126):

The majority of initiatory patterns when they had lost their ritual meaning ... became ... literary motifs. This is as much as to say that they now deliver their message on a different plane of human existence, addressing themselves directly to the imagination.

The Arabic *madīḥ* and Islamic Kingship

Probably the most significant change to have taken place in the Arabic-speaking world between 600 and 800 AD was that from a nomadic tribal society to an intertribal, indeed 'international' society, based in cities and guided by the precepts of Islam. At the centre of the Islamic state stood the Caliph, who received his power by divine sanction. It was his duty to provide religious and worldly guidance, to protect and nourish his subjects, and to defend and extend the realm of religion.

The author of the *Kitāb al-Tāj*, a manual of conduct for rulers dating from the ninth century, defines the relationship between the sovereign and his subjects as follows:[5]

sa'ādatu l-ra'iyyati fī ṭā'ati l-mulūki wa-sa'ādatu l-mulūki fī ṭā'ati l-māliki wa-minhā anna l-mulūka humu l-ussu wal-ra'iyyatu humu l-binā'u wa-mā lā ussa lahu mahdūmun

The happiness of the subjects lies in obedience to Kings and the happiness of Kings in obedience to the Lord. It follows that Kings are the foundation and [their] subjects the building. Whatever has no foundation is doomed to destruction.

This vision of the role of Kingship is not peculiar to medieval Islam alone. It was shared to varying degrees by all the kingdoms of the ancient Near East, and the Caliphate has been seen, even in its own time, as the continuation of the Sassanian monarchy.

In accordance with this change, the Arabic *qaṣīda* was to extol the virtues of the new social order. From being the ritualistic medium of *muruwwa*, pre-Islamic *virtus*, it became the hieratic expression of the relationship between ruler and ruled in the Islamic kingdom. The form of panegyric poetry and the picture of Kingship it portrays suggests that this was its function.

There are a number of symbols, concepts and formulae which one may call the 'archetypal epithets of Kingship' since they reappear, in different guises, in many civilizations with a monarchic structure. The particular character such epithets assume in a certain society throws a telling light on the nature of the society as a whole and its view of worldly and divine authority.[6] Panegyric poetry is the medium in which these archetypal epithets are found in early Islamic civilization. I shall mention a few of them and show how they can be seen to define the role of political authority in Islam. Discussing the form of the panegyric in general may then make it possible to locate their position in this structure.

In most ancient civilizations, the King was conceived as the mediator between the supernatural and the natural world. The order which he upheld was ultimately identical with the order of the cosmos. Any act of injustice on the part of the King, any transgression of the taboos shaping his power, any negligence had disastrous consequences, not only for the stability of the state, but for the prosperity of life as a whole. Diseases and natural catastrophes afflicted a society whose King had ceased to be its spiritual centre. In Sophocles's tragedy, the sacrilege committed by Oedipus, when unknowingly killing his father and marrying his mother, renders him incapable of upholding the order of his realm. His guilt has severed the link between him and the gods, and disaster strikes Thebes:

Sorrows beyond all telling –
Sickness rife in our ranks, outstripping
Invention of remedy – blight
On barren earth,
And barren agonies of birth –
Life after life from the wild-fire winging
Swiftly into the night.

Beyond all telling, the city
Reeks with the death in her streets, death-bringing.

(Sophocles, 1974, p. 30)

Similarly, the ailing King Amphortas in the saga of the Holy Grail is not the only one to suffer: the whole realm is turned into a wasteland, life will not renew itself. The Holy Grail, symbol of the spiritual centre, is the only salvation – through it Kingship can re-establish the cosmic balance.

In contrast, the rise to power of a just King not only brings happiness to his subjects. The whole of organic life blossoms in renewed prosperity and the gods are pleased. An ancient Egyptian song celebrates the accession of one of the Pharaohs, Merenptha, in such terms (Frankfort, 1948, p. 58):

Rejoice, thou entire land, the goodly time has come.
A lord is appointed in all countries . . .

The water standeth and faileth not,
The Nile carrieth a high flood.
The days are long, the nights have hours,
The months come aright.
The gods are content and happy of heart, and
Life is spent in laughter and wonder.

Similar images appear in the Islamic panegyric. In their contrast to the more ancient examples just quoted, they elucidate the difference between monotheist and polytheist religion, between ethical and mythical thinking.

In the mythical view, the righteousness of the King as the spiritual centre affects the balance of the whole universe: he is the reason for the prosperity of the land and the orderly succession of the seasons. That is why 'the months come aright' on the accession of Merenptha. In the Islamic view, man is guided by moral principles which are not derived from the order of nature. The life of nature is of an inferior order because it does not possess morality. That means also that it is not affected by the righteousness or injustice of man. Only God has power over it. Natural prosperity is thus not caused by the King, it is merely a reflection of his spiritual qualities as a divine instrument.

So in the imagery of the *qaṣīda*, the prosperity of the land is only a sign of the prosperity of society under a just King. Moral and natural qualities mirror one another but the former are preponderant. One of many examples is the poem Farazdaq wrote on the accession of the Caliph Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik. The tyrannical methods with which Ḥajjāj subjected Iraq[7] have rendered the land 'infertile'. The population has come close to extinction under oppression and injustice. It is like dead fields that have been deprived of water. Three emphatic lines then express the resurrection brought by the new Caliph:[8]

kunnā ka-zarʿin māta kāna lahū
    sāqin lahū ḥadabun mina l-nahrī
ʿadalūhu ʿanhu fī mughawwilatin
    lil-māʾi baʿda jinānihi l-khuḍrī
aḥyaytahū bi-ʿubābi munthalimin
    wa-ʿalāhu minka mugharriqu l-dabrī

*aḥyayta anfusanā wa-qad balaghat
     minnā l-fanā'a wa-naḥnu fī dubrī
aḥyayta anfusanā wa-qad halikat
     wa-jabarta minnā wāhiya l-kasrī*

Like a dead land we were that once had a water bearer
Who drew from the river's abundant swell.
They diverted it away from him into a waterless waste
After its gardens had been full of green.
You revived it [the land] with a surge [as though] from a broken dam
And through you came a tide which drowned its very hillocks.
You revived our souls which had come
To ruin as we had reached the end;
You revived our souls which had perished
And you restored our shattered limbs.

The irrigation of the wasteland is here a metaphor for the revival of human welfare under Sulaymān.

Abū Tammām has connected the themes of fertility and royal justice most explicitly in a poem composed for the Caliph Mu'taṣim (1951, vol. II, pp. 191–7). The first twenty lines contain a moving description of the beauties of Spring. The land is covered with plants and multi-coloured flowers after the winter rains have passed. The blossoms 'almost make the hearts of men bloom' (*ibid.*, line 14). Abū Tammām continues (*ibid.*, lines 22–4):

*khuluqun aṭalla mina l-rabī'i ka'annahū
     khuluqu l-Imāmi wa-hadyuhu l-mutayassirū
fī l-arḍi min 'adli l-Imāmi wa-jūdihī
     wa-mina l-nabāti l-ghaḍḍi surjun tazharū
tunsa l-riyāḍu wa-mā yurawwiḍu fi'luhū
     abadan 'alā marri l-layāli yudhkarū*

Spring rained [upon us] with a temper
like the Imam's and his auspicious guidance.
The Imam's generosity and justice and the succulent plants
fill the earth with shining lights.
The gardens shall be forgotten but what his deeds have forged
will, throughout the eons, be remembered.

The essential qualities (*khuluq*) of Spring are like those of the Caliph. Yet they are not the same. The justice and righteousness of the ruler are of a higher order because they are moral qualities; their glory will outlast the deeds of Spring. The beauty of the natural world is but a mirror of the purity of religious virtue. Nevertheless, the poem is not a description of Spring with a *madīḥ* attached to it in loose juxtaposition. The two parts are most intimately connected. The progress from the sensual to the spiritual is an intrinsic reflection of medieval thinking. It forms part of the panegyric structure in general.

For the ancients, living in conformity with the rhythm of divine life meant living in harmony with nature – since the gods were immanent in nature. In the Islamic view, the divine principle is of a different order altogether. The natural world is but the result of the majesty of God who created it. God supplies the principles of guidance to which the Caliph, as the representative of divine power, must adhere. Thus, all the benefits brought to society by a just ruler are ultimately nothing but the gifts of God. Buḥturī has portrayed this relationship between sovereign and God most succinctly in the concluding couplet of one of his panegyrics to Mutawakkil. Possessing the world, the Caliph is an ocean of sustenance for the needy. This he can only be, because God granted him the world 'by a right of which He saw him worthy':[9]

39.   *mā zilta baḥran li-'āfīnā fa-kayfa wa-qad*
       qābaltanā wa-laka l-dunyā bi-mā fīhā
40.   *a'ṭākahā llāhu 'an ḥaqqin ra'āka lahu*
       ahlan wa-anta bi-ḥaqqi llāhi tu'ṭīhā

You are forever a sea of sustenance for the needy among us;
how can this be since you face us owning the world and all it holds?
God granted it to you by a right of which he saw you worthy;
and you by the right of God grant it to us.

A line of Abū Tammām expresses a similar idea:[10]

ramā bika llāhu burjayha fa-haddamahā
    wa-law ramā bika ghayru llāhi lam tuṣibī

God smote through you [the Caliph] the twin towers of her [the city of
    Amorium]
and had other than God smitten through you, you would not have hit the
    mark.

The fertilization of the wasteland is a prototypal image of the royal panegyric. Yet in the Islamic context, the Caliph does not revitalize nature by acting in accordance with its divine rhythm. He is the servant of the monotheistic God who supplies His laws by the written word. Nature is but an inferior reflection of His majesty.

   Among the archetypal symbols, formulae, and concepts of Kingship, there are many others that appear in the Islamic panegyrics. They seem to follow the same pattern: what is an expression of sacred truth in mythic times becomes a literary motif. The association of sovereignty and light is taken up in the Arabic tradition. Hardly a panegyric is devoid of a reference to it in one of many different forms. In this sense, the Abbasid Caliph ranks with Pharaoh and Le Roi Soleil:[11]

idhā ghibta 'an arḍin wa-yammamta ghayrahā
    fa-qad ghāba 'anhā shamsuhā wa-hilāluhā
Were you to leave [this] earth and move to another,
it would be without its sun and its moon.

Even a pagan rite like the *hieros gamos*, the sacred marriage of the monarch, finds a distant echo in the Arabic poem. The relation of the sovereign to his office, *al-khilāfa* or *al-wizāra*, is frequently described as a male–female relationship. Some poems portray the two as linked to one another by marriage. The significance of this will appear more clearly below.

The panegyric tradition also furnishes ample illustration of the double nature of Kingship which G. Dumézil has investigated for the Indo–European context in his work *Mitra Varuna*.[12] In Abū Tammām's Spring panegyric, Muʿtaṣim is described as 'Mitra', the peaceful and benevolent ruler. Other poems by the same author praise his qualities as 'Varuna', who embodies the martial aspect of Kingship.

An exuberant poem on the defeat of Bābak and his sect starts as follows (Abū Tammām, 1951, vol. III, p. 132):

2.   *ghaḍiba l-khalīfatu lil-khilāfati ghaḍbatan*
       rakhuṣat lahā l-muhjātu wa-hiya ghawālī
For the sake of the Caliphate the Caliph flew into a rage
to which life-blood is worth but little, while it is held dear.

The anger of the King is dreadful to his enemies. One is reminded of Abū Tammām's famous fire description in the poem on the conquest of Amorium (*ibid.*, vol. I, p. 40). The Caliph kindles a fire in the city which devours both wood and stone. Its flames light up the dark as though the sun has risen at night, while the smoke produced by the fire obscures the sun during the daytime as though it is about to set. As Mitra, the Caliph is like the life-giving freshness of Spring. As Varuna, he inverts the very course of nature in his destruction: day is turned into night and night into day.

Buḥturī has poignantly summarized this double nature of sovereignty in a passage which earned the praise of later critics:[13] the *Wazir* ('minister'), al-Fath b. Khāqān, is described as one:

tanaqqala fī khuluqay suʿdadin
     samāḥan murajjan wa-baʿsan mahībā
Who moves in the two traits of lordship: magnanimity
to be hoped for and power to be feared.

In this context it is not necessary to pursue any further the many associations between the Islamic panegyric and other sources. However, an in-depth study of the meaning which these omnipresent symbols and concepts of Kingship convey in medieval Islam may well provide an added insight into the way political authority was viewed. It would probably confirm that Arabic panegyric poetry was not a stagnant medium fettered by convention, but one well-suited to its task as a prime repository of political ideals. The fact that a great many of the relevant motifs of the Arabic tradition had earlier appeared in pre-Islamic odes does not mean that their persistence in Abbasid times is

purely conventional. The changing cultural situation has given them a new meaning which is reflected not in a change of motifs, but of style.[14]

The relationship between *aṭlāl/nasīb* and *madīḥ*: a structural model

In order to gain a more precise picture of the Islamic *qaṣīda* and inquire whether the form still possesses a ritualistic function as in pre-Islamic times, its overall structure must be taken into account. It is here that *aṭlāl* and *nasīb* are of particular importance. If the poem's structure is to be meaningful, then all its parts must contribute equally to that meaning. By drawing up a structural model of the panegyric poem, it can, I believe, be shown that this is the case. In the course of this attempt, not many examples are cited since the model proposed will be tested in the following chapters. Variations of the same fundamental structure are contained in virtually every work to be discussed. All the motifs mentioned are typical of the panegyric poem, but they do not always occur. Some others, no less common, have been omitted. Nevertheless, I hope that my selection is sufficient to allow one to penetrate to the fundamental relationships which give the poem its coherence.

By no means all panegyrics were written in praise of the head of state, the Caliph. The great majority were dedicated to notables or to heads of virtually independent dynasties. This, however, has only a limited effect on the content, and the identity of the different addressees does not affect the basic structure. They were all, in one way or another, representative of the authority of state, persons in power, chiefs of men.

The relation between *aṭlāl* and *nasīb* on the one hand and *madīḥ* on the other is essentially antithetical. A very large number of binary oppositions relate and contrast the two parts. Some are oppositions of concepts and motifs, others of imagery and in some poems there are oppositions of phonetic and grammatical structure.

The *aṭlāl* and the *nasīb* portray a situation which is altogether negative to the poet, the main protagonist. His beloved has left him, she did not keep her promises, and all he can do is bemoan a past love. They are both victims of the vicissitudes of Fate which rule life and against which they are powerless. The ruins of the campsite and the greenery which has returned to it, remind him of the relentless passage of time. He is an old man: his hair has turned white, his powers have weakened.

The *madīḥ* is the antithesis. Here, the individual is protected from all evil by the sovereign. In contrast to the beloved, the latter keeps his promises and gives nourishment to the needy. In his bounty, he rejuvenates his subjects and dispels all danger. His acts are at one with divine ordinance; his dynasty is rooted in a sacred past and faces a glorious future.

This simple juxtaposition of some common features of *aṭlāl/nasīb* and *madīḥ* suggests a structure which moves *per aspera ad astra,* from affliction to redemption. The relationship between the two consists in a sheer juxtaposition

of opposites, a structural feature of the parallelistic style of Arabic poetry. The polarities between them are best illustrated by isolating and evaluating the contrasting qualities of their protagonists or their main thematic entities. There are three pairs: the figure of the beloved and that of the ruler; the power of Fate and the power of the ruler; the *aṭlāl* and the state.

The beloved and the ruler

The following are the most obvious points of contrast between the two:

Beloved	*Ruler*
Physical attributes	Moral attributes
Physical beauty	Moral beauty
Breaks her promises	Keeps his promises
The hopes she raises are unfulfilled	He fulfils every hope
Causes unhappiness	Brings happiness
Creates emaciation	Gives nourishment
Imaginary closeness (*khayāl*)	Genuine closeness
She is virtuous but virtue prevents her fulfilling her lover's demands	He is virtuous; his virtue makes him fulfil the wishes of his subjects
Separation between her and her lover	Unification; he integrates society and his subjects are close to him
Sterility	Fertility
Past	Present and future

We must guard against the mistake of seeing in the *nasīb* an account of the poet's personal experience. The beloved is not a specific individual who at one stage enters the poet's life and now haunts his memory. The stereotype repetition of the same form by many different poets renders such an idea unreasonable. The contrasting relationships illustrated above suggest that she rather symbolizes a particular segment of human experience. She may represent the isolated attempt of the individual to find salvation away from society: namely in a passionate attachment for the sake of which all else is sacrificed. In the ideology of the *qaṣīda*, such an attempt is doomed to failure because of its antisocial nature. Fulfilment in life can only be found by integration into the community, be it the tribe or the state, and by acceptance of its demands and laws.

The fact that, traditionally, the beloved is a member of a tribe other than the poet's, symbolizes the antisocial nature of passion. It attempts to cross tribal or societal boundaries and threatens to upset the established order. Passionate obsession is anarchical by nature. It seeks obstacles in order to defy them and thereby experience its own vehemence more intensely. In the last resort, 'l'amour-passion'[15] cannot and will not seek fulfilment in this life. Marriage and procreation are not of its aims. Accordingly, the beloved of the *nasīb* is not

the poet's wife but remains a distant figure. Her particular identity is of no consequence. 'L'amour-passion' is not a link between two individuals, it is a principle which dictates a way of life.

The true nature of passion emerges in the story of '*Udhrī* love (see Glossary), as it does in the saga of Tristan and Isolde in the Western context. As they break the order of society, the lovers willingly exclude themselves from it. In return, they are unilaterally rejected; Jamīl is outlawed (Hamori, 1974, pp. 40–1), Tristan condemned by the King. Their love is a terrible, destructive power which finds its fulfilment only in death: 'Aimer, au sens de la passion, c'est le contraire de vivre' (de Rougement, n.d., p. 240).

It might have been irrelevant to mention this aspect of passion in a discussion of the panegyric poem had the topoi of the *nasīb* not given rise to the poetry which celebrates '*Udhrī* love. The rejection of society and its ordered continuity, which is engendered by passion, is reflected in the poetic form by the absence of that part of the *qaṣīda* which celebrates the societal values and virtues.[16] For that is the function of the *madīḥ* in the panegyric poem. As has just been shown, the figure of the ruler exhibits qualities which contrast with those of the beloved in every respect. Her beauty is countered by his moral stature, her breach of faith by his faithfulness. She disappoints the hopes of her lover while he fulfils the hopes of all his subjects. In her, even virtue is a cause of suffering as she denies herself to her lover. His virtue is unfailingly a cause of happiness and prosperity. The passion for her leads to the lover's isolation, while adherence to the King's rule is rewarded with integration into society. She denies every wish, he grants every wish. Association with her is all severance, isolation and suffering – the King bestows union, prosperity and renewal. The memory of her evokes the painful sensation of the passing of time, of the inevitable disappearance of youth and the approach of old age and death. The King offers happiness and future continuity under divine guidance, his moral virtues are a cause of renewal and rejuvenation. In the ruler, all the failings of the beloved are countered by virtues, all her virtues sublimated by higher virtues. In turning to him, the individual leaves behind a sorrowful and potentially destructive passion in favour of integration into a justly ruled society.

The type of contrast between the two figures suggests that the *nasīb* need not be seen in the light of its extreme conclusion, '*Udhrī* love. It may also be considered as expressing the sorrow man inevitably has to suffer under the burden of existence; life passing away with rapidity, leaving the memory to bemoan unfulfilled desires and vanished happiness. Royal justice gives solace as it enables life to continue in prosperity. New hopes are raised and man is drawn into the comfort of a society protected by the King. Whether the *nasīb* contains the antisocial leanings of a latent passion or whether it evokes life in its instances of misery, it is an integral part of the panegyric structure. In both cases, the ruler is the positive antithesis to the unhappiness created by the

beloved. Through him and his virtues the values of society emerge triumph-ant.

Lastly, an apoatrophe is meant to emphasize one particular pair of oppositions between the two figures. This is the contrast between the physical attributes of the one and the moral attributes of the other, a contrast which recalls the development of Abū Tammām's Spring poem discussed above. Physical beauty enslaves the mind without offering satisfaction or happiness. Virtue gives solace and help to fellow men. Beauty decays, virtue is everlasting.

In the *nasīb* of a panegyric to Fatḥ b. Khāqān, chief *Wazir* of Mutawakkil, Buḥturī says to his beloved (1963, p. 2243):

2.   *Wa-anta l-ḥusnu law kā-*
          na warā'a l-ḥusni iḥsānū
You are beauty; would there
but be *beneficence* behind (that) beauty.

At the end of the poem, he turns to the *Wazir*:

19.   *laka l-naʿmā'u wal-ṭawlu*
          wa-ifḍālun wa-iḥsānū
You possess grace, bounty,
kindness and *beneficence*.

The next and last line presents the other great protagonist of *nasīb* and *aṭlāl*:

20.   *wa-akhlāquka anṣārun*
          'alā l-dahri wa-a'wānū
And your moral traits are helpers
and allies against Fate.

The power of Fate and the power of the ruler

The following are the main oppositional pairs between the two:

Power of Fate[17]	Power of ruler
TOPOI	
Rules the world arbitrarily; human beings are powerless	Rules the world in conjunction with God; his subjects are protected and nourished
Creates life (plant and animal life on the *aṭlāl*) and brings death indiscriminately	Brings forth life within his realm; brings death to his enemies
Construction and destruction cancel each other out	Construction and destruction are used to the furtherance of justice
Not guided by any spiritual principle	Guided by morality: God and virtue
CONCEPTS	
Time	Eternity

Senselessness	Meaning
Uncertainty	Certainty
Chaos	Order
Rules over the amoral realm	Rules over the moral realm

The polarities in this list resemble the type of antitheses which link the lady and the sovereign. Again, negative qualities in the one counter positive qualities in the other.

Fate is the ruler over the world of the *aṭlāl* and the *nasīb*. It is the mover of the endless cyclical succession of life, death, and renewal of life. The ancient campsite is deserted and ruined while animal and plant life continue. Fate brings the poet and his beloved together and separates them again, scattering them in distant lands. Its rule is blind, indiscriminate, and men are but the helpless victims. The continuity it establishes is neutral and meaningless: in time, life and death, construction and destruction, cancel each other. Between the two, man is ground to dust, his hopes thwarted, his beliefs questioned.

The opposing set of relations, the qualities contained in the sovereign's power, once more emphasize the preponderance of spirituality over matter. The ruler exerts his power not indiscriminately, but in accordance with divine decree and highest virtue. So his rule, unlike that of Fate, is ordered and meaningful. His power is such that it may equal, or even overrule, the power of Fate. To achieve this, he possesses Fate's most essential weapon: the capacity to bring forth and to destroy life. The analysis of one of Buḥturī's panegyrics will show how the sovereign puts to use these powers: not indiscriminately, like Fate, but for the benefit of the society he leads. With the life-giving powers he nourishes his subjects, with the death-bringing powers he turns against the enemy(see below pp. 30f). His rule is guided by the principle of morality while the rule of Fate knows no principle. The realm under the power of the sovereign is the 'moral realm'; the dominion of Fate, the world of *aṭlāl* and *nasīb*, the 'amoral realm'.

Divine guidance and virtue enable the sovereign to wield the weapons of Fate and make them his own. The nature of these virtues reveals their origin in the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda*. They were part of what formed *muruwwa*, the ethic base of the heroic model. The martial virtues enable the sovereign to defeat the enemies of state, and he caters for the needs of his subjects by virtue of his boundless generosity. *Ṣabr*, the equanimity with which the hero bore the vicissitudes of Fate, is now the quality that makes the ruler bear the weight of his office.

However, the relationship between Fate and the sovereign has what Hamori calls 'an elegiac counterpoint'. Unlike Pharaoh, the Islamic monarch can make no claim to divinity. Even though he assumes its powers, he can never ultimately defeat Fate. Like the pre-Islamic hero, he is enmeshed in constant warfare – unceasingly he is forced to reaffirm the divine order in the face of erupting chaos. In this constant struggle, the panegyric *qaṣīda* has its place. In

it, Fate is every time defeated anew, the sovereignty of the monarch reasserted, his ultimate victory made tangible.

The aṭlāl *and the state*

Aṭlāl	State
TOPOI	
Ruins	The 'House of Glory' (the palace)
Rain has fallen on them or rain is being wished on them by the poet	The sovereign bestows the 'rain' of generosity
Tears of the poet	Dew, rain or sea of the sovereign's generosity
CONCEPTS	
Temporality of matter	Eternity of virtue
Decay	Becoming

Not all poems which start with a *nasīb* contain a section on the *aṭlāl* as well. But its presence or absence has no great effect on the structure of the *qaṣīda*: the *nasīb* alone is sufficient as an antithesis to the *madīḥ*. Where it occurs, the famous motif of the campsite aligns itself with the basic movement of the structure. The poet's ancient dwelling-place falls victim to Fate which ruins it and scatters its inhabitants. The antithesis is the present and future dwelling-place; namely, the state of which he is a member and in which he is nourished and protected from all threats by the sovereign. He greets the ruins and wishes the blessing of rain upon them, thus treasuring the memory of the past and wishing it to come to life once more. But clouds and rain are under the unpredictable command of Fate, and offer no consolation. The new life they create only reminds the poet of his age and death.

The ruler, on the other hand, is an abundant source of the 'rain' of generosity which he bestows on his subjects. This generosity does not only take the form of gifts. It is foremost the capacity of preserving the moral continuity of human life by upholding the order of the state. Under his care, it will not vanish, Fate will not ruin it. The survival of the state depends not so much on the mere survival of its institutions. Its essence is the moral virtues upon which it is built, and survival depends on their unconditional preservation. They are the only weapon with which to confront chaos and ultimate death. In return, the sovereign reaps *majd*, 'glory' and 'fame', which outlast the ages.[18]

Thus the true antithesis to the *aṭlāl* is not so much the state as an institution. Its true counterpart is the body of spiritual values which create the order of the state and are the preconditions of its survival. The ruins of the campsite are sublimated by the everlasting 'House of Glory', *bayt al-majd*, the fruit of virtue whose 'builder' is the sovereign.

In some poems, a palace description or a description of some other great creation of the sovereign (a garden or lake) functions as antithesis to the ruins of the *aṭlāl*. These monuments are symbols of tne ruler's glory.[19]

The reproachers

The reproachers, the *'awādhil*, are figures in the iconography of the *qaṣīda* which arose in early Umayyad poetry.[20] In the *nasīb* they scold the poet for the excess of his grief or for his passionate attachment to his beloved. The *madīḥ* also makes reference to them. The motif aligns itself with the structural model if one assumes them to be representative of certain negative aspects of society. They pose as guardians of virtue when blaming the poet for forsaking equanimity, *ṣabr*, and letting himself be ruled by passion, but do not always mean well. They have nothing to offer in return for their demands and sometimes their 'virtue' is no more than a mask of envy, *ḥasad*. In some poems, they are downright evil: they appear as *wushāt* ('calumniators') who delight in slandering the poet by spreading rumours about his love so that he must be on his guard. There is no defence against them. He can only ignore them. In the *madīḥ*, the situation is rectified. Those ready to share out blame whenever virtue is infringed are reduced to silence by the perfection of the sovereign. The malicious ones and the calumniators are destroyed. In the *nasīb*, even society appears in a negative light: interfering, envious, malevolent. The sovereign is the remedy. His virtue silences all slander, his power quashes the vicious. So he not only defends his realm from the enemies outside, he also purges it of evil within.

The antithetical structure of the panegyric *qaṣīda*

The model developed so far affirms the impression that the structure of the Islamic panegyric is based upon the opposition of a number of contrasting notions. Not every poem contains all the motifs mentioned, but on the selection of motifs the coherence of the individual poem depends. Each work exhibits a different set of antitheses between *aṭlāl/nasīb* and *madīḥ*, but all revolve around the same basic concepts. In some works, *aṭlāl/nasīb* are replaced by other introductory themes, but the same structure still obtains. It follows that the selection of motifs for the introductory section is likely to influence the structure of the whole work, a feature which has been frequently observed in classical Arabic poems and which is again illustrated in the texts analysed here.[21]

In order to dispel the notion that the parts of the *qaṣīda* which precede the *madīḥ* are merely introductory, and in order to express their antithetical relationship to the *madīḥ*, I propose to call the constituent units of the panegyric 'strophe' and 'antistrophe'.[22] The symmetrical nature of the model makes it possible now to locate the place of the *madīḥ* themes mentioned above in connection with their analogies to archetypal epithets of Kingship. In the *qaṣīda*, the Mitra — Varuna dualism (see p. 18) in the character of the monarch is expressed in the ruler's relation to Fate. He acquires Fate's power over construction and destruction and uses it in accordance with the precepts of

virtue. As a peacemaker, he gives life to his subjects (Mitra); as harbinger of death, he destroys his enemies (Varuna).

In poems where the image of the 'sacred matrimony' between the sovereign and his office occurs, it can be seen to contrast with the *nasīb*. The beneficent and enduring relationship in which the two engage overcomes the unfulfilled love and the separation of the poet and his lady. In the work by Mihyār al-Daylamī analysed in chapter three, the *Wazir*ate 'offers herself' to the new *Wazir* without any proposal on his part, in sharp contrast to the lady of the *nasīb* who is unresponsive to her lover's advances (text II, lines 104ff).

The association between sovereignty and light appears in many different forms in the *qaṣīdas*. Most of them align themselves with the antithetical structure: the darkness dispelled by the radiance of the sovereign is the darkness of the 'amoral realm' and the gloom of the distressed poet.

Where it occurs in panegyric poems, the *rahīl* fits into the structural model. Located between the *aṭlāl/nasīb* and the *madīḥ*, it shows the poet with his camel enduring the suffering of an arduous journey. Moral and physical stamina are tested to the extreme in the heat and cold of a barren wilderness. The monarch relieves this suffering: he provides shelter and protection, and the 'rain' of generosity brings forth a fertility in which the barrenness of the desert is overcome. Again, there is the antithetical movement from hardship to deliverance.

But in many early Abbasid panegyrics, the desert journey is, if at all, only alluded to in a few lines.[23] The antithesis between the peril of the journey and the reception by the sovereign is maintained, but the section is drastically shortened. The reason for the neglect of the *rahīl* is that, more than any other part of the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda*, it conveys the essence of the heroic model. In the *rahīl*, the hero faces danger and death while, in the stories of the wild cow and the wild ass, the fundamental realities of heroic existence are re-enacted. As Hamori points out, in the old poems which end with the *rahīl*, the camel, rather than the sovereign, is the counterpart of the beloved (see above, p. 11). These differences, mostly due to the shortening of the *rahīl*, point to the fact that the Abbasid panegyric presents a vision of reality which differs in essential points from its pre-Islamic forerunner. The heroic model, even though it lives on in the works of the poets,[24] has disappeared in the Abbasid panegyric *qaṣīda*. The sovereign assumes the heroic virtues in his quality as guardian of society, as guardian of the religion which now governs the life of the individual.

The panegyric *qaṣīda* is, therefore, a formal testimony of the legitimacy of political authority. In its movement from chaos to order, from affliction to deliverance, from isolation to integration, the glory of the social order is proclaimed. Society and its values, present in the person of the ruler, are recreated triumphantly by the replay of symbolical events and the utterance of liturgical formulae of praise. Therein lies the significance of the structure of the panegyric. It is also the reason for its repetitious character and formalism: like any liturgy, it follows a preordained, impersonal pattern.

The Abbasid *qaṣīda* is thus not a conventional reproduction of the unsurpassed masterpieces of the desert bards. The ancient themes have preserved their power but acquired a new meaning: the formal recitation of the *qaṣīda* is still a ritual act, celebrating no longer the heroic model but the model of political authority in Islam.[25] One may summarize the social function of the ritual as follows:

(a) Official affirmation of faith in the righteousness of the reigning sovereign. (Magnificent praise increases the authority of the praised.)
(b) Official affirmation of the existing values of society.
(c) Official denigration of the enemies of the state.
(d) Incitement and admonition to the sovereign to fulfil the obligations of government.
(e) Providing the occasion for the sovereign to demonstrate his generosity publicly by rewarding the poet. The reward is a symbol of his beneficence. 'Donor and recipient engage in a ritualistic performance' (Hamori, 1974, p. 23).

It follows that the exalted position of the court poet is due to his official function. He does not simply provide the ruler and notables with civilized and flattering entertainment; he is a craftsman who fulfils a public duty of great importance. His personal feelings, his sincerity or insincerity are secondary to the execution of his task.[26] If the basic form of medieval Arabic verse, the *qaṣīda*, is liturgical in character, then originality cannot have been a prime virtue of poetry. The development of new forms of expression cannot have been a pressing task as long as poetry kept its official function and the old forms remained meaningful.

The value of the individual poem must then be sought, not in its thematic inventiveness, but in the power and subtlety with which the author managed 'to render the basic structure apparent'.[27] The stylistic development of Arabic verse reflects the changing efforts of the poets to achieve this aim.[28]

Buḥturī

Panegyric to the General Muḥammad al-Thaghrī

Buḥturī wrote the *qaṣīda*, cited as text I in the appendix, at the age of twenty-six (229 AH/843 AD) when living at the court of Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Thaghrī al-Ṭā'ī in Mosul. The poem, it sees, received great praise from Abū Tammām; it is said that at line 28,

28.   *fī maʻrakin ḍankin takhālu bihi l-qanā*
      bayna l-ḍulūʻi idhā nhanayna ḍulūʻā
In a tight battle where one thought the lances,
when they inclined between the ribs, were ribs,

the master stood up and kissed Buḥturī on the forehead 'out of joy for him and pride in the tribe of Ṭayyi'.[1]
    The strophe of the poem consists of three thematic units, one of two lines and two of three lines. The antistrophe (*madīḥ*) is made up of two symmetrically constructed parts of thirteen lines each, with an introduction of three lines and a finale of one line:

		Sections	Number of lines
STROPHE	A	The reprovers (1, 2)	2
	B	The *aṭlāl* (3–5)	3
	C	The *nasīb* (6–8)	3
ANTISTROPHE	D	Introduction to *mamdūḥ* (9–11)	3
Part one: general praise	E	First section of general praise: the ruler's virtue (12–15)	4
	F	Second section of general praise: the ruler as warlord (16–19)	4
	G	The ruler and his tribe (20–4)	5
Part two: the ruler at war	H	The ruler and his enemies: first section on Bābak (25–9)	5

I   Second section on Bābak (30–3)   4⎤
J   War against the Byzantines (34–7)   4⎦
K   Finale (38)   1

(— denotes sectional parallelism)

Relations between strophe and antistrophe

Relation of concept

3.   *yā dāru ghayyarahā l-zamānu wa-farraqat*
        'anhā l-ḥawādithu shamlahā l-majmū'ā
O abode which Time has altered and whose gathered
folk the Fates have separated from it.

5.   *lā takhṭubī dam'ī ilayya fa-lam yada'*
        fī muqlatayya jawā l-firāqi dumū'ā
Do not ask for my tears to be betrothed to you
for the pain of parting has left none in my eyes.

9.   *li-Abī Sa'īdi l-Ṣāmitiyyi 'azā'imu*
        tubdī lahā nuwabu l-zamāni khuḍū'ā
To the firm resolves of Abū Sa'īd al-Ṣāmitī
the vicissitudes of Time offer surrender.

10.   *malikun limā malakat yadāhu mufarriqun*
         jumi'at adātu l-majdi fīhi jamī'ā
A king who divides what his hands possess
while in him all implements of glory are united.

The conspicuous repetition of words and/or roots in these lines contains the origin of two contrasting conceptual themes which are a leitmotif of the poem. One might call them the concepts of unity and division or, in Arabic, the concepts of *jam'* and *tafrīq*. The Arabic name is more appropriate since the word *jam'* has a double meaning: it means both 'joining, integrating' and 'crowd, multitude'. Both meanings are equally important in the context of the poem. They are present in the lines quoted above: *al-majmū'* in line 3 refers to the tribe of the beloved which was gathered at the campsite. *Jumi'at* in line 10 refers to 'the implements of glory' which are joined together in the person of the King. In both lines the root *jm'* is contrasted by a derivative of the root *frq*: *farraqat* in line 3 and *mufarriq* in line 10. The two antitheses symbolize the two aspects of the conceptual themes *jam'* and *tafrīq*: the division of a group (3) and division as opposed to integration or unity (10). The meaning of the concepts is revealed by the thematic relationship between the lines. Line 3 depicts the rule of Fate (*al-zamān, al-ḥawādith*) over man. Fate is the divider. It scatters the tribe of the beloved from the campsite where it had gathered. The separation (*al-firāq*) between lover and beloved is Fate's work, with the suffering it entails.

However, the virtue of the ruler's resolve breaks the might of Fate and forces it into submission (9). The antithesis in line 10 symbolizes the fruits of this victory. The sovereign acquires the power of division by which Fate ruled man and uses it for the benefit of his subjects: he divides his wealth amongst them. Simultaneously, 'dividedness' as such is overcome in his person: all the resources of glory are unified in him.

In the remainder of the poem, the ruler's action with respect to his subjects and his enemies is described in terms of integration and division. Both qualities he uses for the good of his people and to the detriment of his enemies. He divides his wealth among the poeple and he divides the throng of his enemies; he is the link between his tribe and virtue, and the link between his enemies and death. An analysis of the poem shows this clearly. The root *jm'* recurs in lines 26 and 27. As in line 3, it refers to a group of people which will be divided and scattered: the great mass of Bābak's army. The King destroys the army by distributing its soldiers between the swords and lances:

26. *lammā atāka yaqūdu jayshan ar'anan*
    yumshā 'alayhi kathāfatan wa-jumū'ā
27. *wazza'tahum bayna l-asinnati wal-ẓubā*
    ḥattā abadta jumū'ahum tawzī'ā

When he came to you leading a teeming host
so densely gathered one could walk upon it
You divided them up between the tips [of lances] and the cutting edges [of
    swords]
until you annihilated their gathering through division.

The lines illustrate the first aspect of the conceptual theme: the division of a crowd. By means of division, the King scatters the army of his enemies as Fate scattered the tribe of the beloved.

The ruler's interaction with Banū Nabhān is the subject of lines 21 and 22:

21. *nabbahta min Nabhāna majdan lam yazal*
    qidman li-maḥmūdi l-fa'āli rafī'ā
22. *wa-la-in banayta dhurā l-'ulā lahumū lamā*
    nfakkū uṣūlan lil-'ulā wa-furū'ā

You have reawakened in Nabhān a lofty glory
forever reserved for those whose deeds earn praise;
Yet if you built the peaks of eminence for them,
they do not cease to be the roots and branches of [that] eminence.

The ruler integrates his tribe both in a temporal (historical) and spatial sense. He reawakens the glory of the past and so establishes temporal continuity, and on a spatial level he integrates them into one organic whole by building for them the peaks of high endeavour (*al-'ulā*).

The phrase *nabbahta majdan* in itself brings back the theme of integrating

since the word *majd* last appeared in line 10 in reference to the 'implements of glory' (*adāt al-majd*). The concept of division is expressed in the choice of the words *lamā nfakkū* (lit. 'they are not disjoined') and in the image of the roots and branches. It implies an orderly, organic division: Banū Nabhān all belong to one stem – *al-'ulā* – which is 'built high' by the King. Bābak's army, on the other hand, appears as a shapeless mass of people, clumsy and disorderly in its multitude (26). Thus the two groups are contrasted in their condition: the former are integrated in their dividedness, the latter confused in their unity. The ruler's action towards them symbolizes his power of integration and division. By awakening past glory in his subjects and setting them a high example, he unites them; he destroys the enemy by dividing their army and killing them.

This antithetical parallelism of themes between the two couplets 21/22 and 26/27 is not an isolated feature. It forms part of the pattern of thematic and grammatical parallelism which links the equally long central sections of the antistrophe (sections G and H). An outline of the pattern shows how the relationships formed by the conceptual themes are in its very centre.

The first line of both sections is introduced by the injunction *lillāhi darruka* followed by an image which anticipates the ruler's function in the context:

20.   *lillāhi darruka yā bna Yūsufa min fatan*
         a'ṭā l-makārima ḥaqqahā l-mamnū'ā
How excellent you are, Ibn Yūsuf, a hero
who gives noble actions their unattainable due!

25.   *lillāhi darruka yawma Bābaka fārisan*
         baṭalan li-abwābi l-ḥutūfi qarū'ā
How excellent you were on the day of Bābak, a knight
and hero knocking at the gates of death!

In line 20, the ruler restores the rights of the moral virtues, which foreshadow his reawakening of past glory. In line 25, he is a heroic knight knocking at the door of death on the day of battle; the image anticipates the destruction of the enemy. Neither line 20 nor line 25 mentions Banū Nabhān or Bābak's army. Their interaction with the ruler is depicted in the second and third lines of the two sections. These are the two couplets discussed. In the remaining lines of the sections (23/24 and 28/29) the ruler is not mentioned. The lines dwell on the result of his action, depicting the intrepidity and courage of Banū Nabhān and the destruction wrought upon the enemy.

Lines 23 and 28 both begin with indefinite nouns and contain a *radd al-'ajz 'alā l-ṣadr* (rhetorical figure denoting the anticipation of the rhyme word in the line):[2]

23.   *qawmun idhā labisū l-durū'a li-mawqifin*
         labisathumū l-a'rāḍu fīhi durū'ā

A people such that if they wear armour for a purpose
the honour [at stake] wears them as an armour.

28.   *fī ma'rakin dankin takhālu bihi l-qanā*
       bayna l-dulū'i idhā nhanayna dulū'ā
In a tight battle where one thought the lances,
when they inclined between the ribs, were ribs.

The pivot words *durū'* and *dulū'* are related in sound and meaning, the coat of
mail, *dir'*, being designed to protect chest and ribs, *dil'*. There is a contrasting
continuity in the imagery of the two lines: it develops from the tribe of Nabhān
– *qawm* – who in battle become (defensive) weapons – *durū'* – to the (offensive)
weapons – *qanā* – which become the ribs of the slain enemies – *dulū'*. This
double metamorphosis of human body and weaponry powerfully depicts
invincibility and defeat. It may be a reason for Abū Tammām's interrupting
the recitation of the poem with his praise at this point.

   The two final lines of the central sections both start with a verbal sentence in
the negative:

24.   *lā yutmi'ūna khuyūlahum fī jawlatin*
       in nīla kabshuhumū fa-kharra ṣarī'ā
They don't drive their horses to flight
if their leader is seized and falls down as a victim.

29.   *mā in tanī fīhi l-asinnatu wal-zubā*
       li-tulā l-fawārisi sujjadan wa-rukū'ā
And the tips and blades never tired
prostrating and bowing to [reap] the riders' necks.

Their imagery is also related; the falling of the leader (*kharra ṣarī'an*) reflects
the weapons bowing and prostrating (*sujjadan wa-rukū'an*) in 'adoration' to
capture the necks.

   The conceptual themes thus provide the structural frame of the central
sections of the *madīḥ*. In the battle description, they are closely linked with
another theme which concerns the relationship between ruler, enemies and
death. It is first mentioned in a phrase in line 12 (*aṣbaḥa lil-'idā ḥatfan yubīdu*,
'he is to the enemies a death that annihilates'). The words *ḥatf* and *abāda* are
repeated in different forms at the beginning of the battle description. *Ḥatf*
recurs in the plural in the opening line of the war section (*li-abwābi l-ḥutūfi
qarū'ā*, 'knocking at the gates of death (pl.)', 25). *Abāda* has been encountered
in line 27 (see above p. 30) which establishes a connection between the theme of
death and one of the conceptual themes: it is by means of division (*tafrīq*) that
the general kills his enemies. In lines 31 and 32, the theme of death is
approached from a different angle. *Tabaddadat ārā'uhum* ('their minds were
scattered', 31) is a variation on the theme of division: *baddada* is similar in
meaning to *farraqa* and *wazza'a*. The image depicts the ruler's 'divisive power'
on a heightened level. In line 27, the scattering was his action, here he does not

act: the very sight of him confounds the enemy and kills their leader. In line 32, however, the act of killing is portrayed not as an act of division but of integration. The King is the link between death and his enemies: he calls them to their death and they all hasten to him in humiliation. Line 36 expresses the same idea with greater intensity, showing the King most clearly as 'integrator' between death and enemies: he is their path to death – when they are trapped on the battlefield, he frees their souls by interceding on their behalf with death.

Thus in the war sections, the concepts of *jamʿ* and *tafrīq* become two metaphorical ways in which the ruler annihilates those who face him in battle: he divides them up so as to kill them (27), he scatters their minds to call them to their deaths (31/32), he frees them from their wretched lives by uniting them with death (36):

27.   *wazzaʿtahum bayna l-asinnati wal-ẓubā*
            ḥattā abadta jumūʿahum tawzīʿā
You divided them up between the tips [of lances] and the cutting edges [of swords]
until you annihilated their gathering through division;

32.   *fa-daʿawtahum bi-ẓubā l-ṣafīḥi ilā l-radā*
            fa-atawka ṭurrān muhṭiʿīna khushūʿā
So you called them to death with the cutting edges of the blade
and they all came hurriedly and humble.

36.   *kunta l-sabīla ilā l-radā idh kunta fī*
            qabḍi l-nufūsi ilā l-ḥimāmi shafīʿa
You were the road to death, nay when the souls
were entrapped you were their intercessor with death.

The thematic progression in the three lines has a counterpart on the lexical level. In their wording, the prepositional clauses reflect the rhetorical movement:

bayna l-asinnati	*wal-ẓubā*
between the tips	and the edges
bi-ẓubā l-ṣafīḥi	*ilā l-radā*
with the edges of the blade	to death
ilā l-radā	*ilā l-ḥimāmi*
to death	to (with) death

The instruments of death, the weapons, fade out of the imagery to be replaced by death itself.

Another element linking the three lines is the similarity of their syntactic position. They are all preceded by a *lammā* clause (*lammā atāka*, 'when he came', 26; *lammā raʾawka*, 'when they beheld you', 31; *lammā ramayta*, 'when you hurled', 35), and are followed by a general description of the battlefield (*fī*

ma'rakin, 'in a battle', 28; *fī waq'atin*, 'in a combat', 37) dwelling on the result of the sovereign's action (the destruction at *al-Badhdh*, 33; the vultures feeding on the slain, 37). These observations confirm the impression that even a first reading of the poem gives: the three lines are its climax.

Relation of imagery

The thematic development of the strophe centres on the image of tears. It divides the strophe into two units of four lines (1–4, 5–8), marking the beginning and end of each:

1.   *Fī-mā btidārukumū l-malāma walū'ā*
         a-bakaytu illā dimnatan wa-rubū'ā
Why do you hasten to blame [an] ardent love?
Did I bemoan anything other than campsite remnants and spring abodes?

4.   *law kāna lī dam'un yuḥassinu law'atī*
         la-taraktuhū fī arṣatayki khalī'ā
Had I but tears still to adorn the agony of my love
I should leave them outcast in your twin courtyards;

5.   *lā takhṭubī dam'ī ilayya fa-lam yada'*
         fī muqlatayya jawā l-firāqi dumū'ā
Do not ask for my tears to be betrothed to you
for the pain of parting has left none in my eyes.

8.   *kādat tunahnihu 'abratī 'azamātuhā*
         lammā ra'at hawla l-firāqi faẓī'ā
Her resolute strength when she saw the dread
of parting to be gruesome, nearly restrained my tears.

These lines suggest that the composition of the strophe contains a sectional symmetry not unlike that of sections G and H, and I and J. The formal symmetry is stressed by the phonological (and to some extent semantic) resumption of *walū'* ('ardent desire') in *law'a* ('agony of love') which links the *first* hemistichs of lines 1 and 4. It is balanced by the repetition of the word *firāq* ('separation') in identical metrical position which links the *second* hemistichs of lines 5 and 8. The sounds of *walū'* and *law'a* are echoed in the determinants of *firāq*, *jawā* ('pain'), and *hawl* ('dread'). Despite the 'pain of separation' and the 'terror of separation', the lover is hardly able to cry: he has no tears left with which to water the campsite and thus even this link is made impossible. The words he addresses to the *aṭlāl* – 'do not ask for my tears to be betrothed to you' – stress the emotional relation between the ruin of the campsite and the lover, a relation itself dissevered by the grief of separation. In line 8, it is the steadfastness of his beloved, who bears the terror of separation with resolve, which 'almost restrains his tears'. So the flow of tears is twice impeded: at the moment of separation and at the time of his return to the *aṭlāl*.[3]

The lover's incapacity to cry is contrasted in the panegyric section of the poem by the imagery which depicts the ruler as an ample source of fluid:

16.   *talqāhu yaqturu sayfuhū wa-sinānuhū*
        wa-banānu rāhatihi nadan wa-najī'ā
You meet him with his sword and lance
and the fingers of his palm, dripping dew and blood.

The motif of the flow of moisture is here made symbol of the life-giving and death-bringing powers of the King. The two central sections of the *madīh*, G and H, are introduced by the injunction, *lillāhi darruka*, which can be translated literally as 'how abundant is the flow of your milk!'[4] The image aligns itself with line 16 as the ruler's fortune is again described in terms of a flow of liquid. In the last line of the poem, the imagery takes up this motif for the third time:

38.   *hādhā wa-ayyu mu'ānidin nāhadtahū*
        lam tujri min awdājihī yanbū'ā
So there – what enemy do you defy
without causing a spring to gush from his jugular vein?

As in line 16, water and blood are brought into relation: a spring gushes forth from the jugular vein of the victim.

Thus, the relation between strophe and antistrophe brought about by the imagery resides in the contrast between the impeded flow of tears and the abundant flow of water, milk, and blood, the one depicting the intensity of the lover's sorrow, and the other the greatness of the ruler's power. This relation can also be seen as an aspect of the themes of integration and division: by separating lover and beloved, Fate obstructs even the flow of tears. The ruler, by killing his enemies and safeguarding his subjects, causes water and blood to flow. In dripping with the dew of generosity and the blood of the slain (16), he contrasts with the lover who cannot cry; in causing a spring of blood to flow (38), he contrasts with Fate which obstructs the tears.

Line 16 clearly reveals the sexual connotations in his imagery. Sexual potency is a common symbol of the power of the ruler. It depicts both his role as a giver of life to his subjects and as a harbinger of death to his enemies. Buhturī's teacher, Abū Tammām, resorts to sexual imagery in his panegyrics, for instance in the famous poem on the capture of Amorium: the conquered city is a virgin deflowered by the Caliph after having resisted the approaches of all other princes. Contrasted with the ruler's potency is the suggestion of impotence in the impeded flow of tears.

Relation of protagonists

As in the case of the relation of concepts, the device of word repetition is the key to the relation between the protagonists of the strophe (lover, beloved and reprovers), and the ruler. The first line of the antistrophe,

9.   *li-Abī Saʿīdi l-Ṣāmitiyyi ʿazāʾ imu*
        tubdī lahā nuwabu l-zamāni khuḍūʿā
To the firm resolves of Abū Saʿīd al-Ṣāmitī
the vicissitudes of Time offer surrender;

contains two roots that also appear in the strophe: *ʿazama* ('to resolve', see *ʿazamātuhā* in line 8) and *badā* ('to appear', see *tabdū fa-yubdī* in line 7). The connection they establish is more than one of sound and meaning as the contexts in which they occur are related: *ʿazamātuhā* denotes the firmness with which the beloved faces the terror of separation; *ʿazāʾim* are the powerful resolutions of the ruler which drive the vicissitudes of Fate to surrender. Both *ʿazāʾim* and *ʿazamāt* are moral qualities with which beloved and ruler face misfortune; but the former has no power to avert it, while the ruler defeats the very source of misfortune.[5]

The use of *badā* implies a further parallelism between the two protagonists: her appearance makes the lover wilfully divulge (*fa-yubdī*) his secrets, while the ruler's resolve makes Fate offer (*tubdī*) surrender. The beloved succeeds in disconcerting her lover, the ruler is victorious over Fate. The meaning of this relationship is elucidated by the root *trk* in lines 7 and 33: the beloved 'leaves' the steadfast one confounded (*tattariku*, 7), the ruler 'leaves' the city of the enemies cast low (*taraktahu*, 33). Again the moral victory of the beloved over her suitor is countered by a victory of the ruler, this time his victory over the enemy. The same configuration relates lines 7 and 31:

7.   *tabdū fa-yubdī dhū l-ṣabābati sirrahū*
        ʿamdan wa-tattariku l-jalīda jazūʿā
At her sight the lover wilfully reveals his secret
and the steadfast one is left confounded;

31.   *lammā raʾawka tabaddadat ārāʾuhum*
        wa-ghadā muṣāriʿu ḥaddihim maṣrūʿā
When they beheld you their minds were scattered
and the defender of their valour was cast aground.

Her mere appearance disconcerts the lover, the mere vision of him confuses the enemy.[6]

Thus, both beloved and ruler are depicted in terms of warlike virtues. However, in the panegyric, the sovereign sublimates the qualities of the beloved: as we have seen, his virtue and prowess safeguard his subjects and protect them from their enemies, while the virtues of the beloved are a cause of pain for both her and her lover. She is oppressed by his desires which she cannot fulfil because she is virtuous; in the virtues of the sovereign, however, the needs and quests of his subjects are fulfilled:

12.   *mutayaqqiẓa l-aḥshāʾi aṣbaḥa lil-ʿidā*
        ḥatfan yubīdu wa-lil-ʿufāti rabīʿā

Alert in his innermost being, he is to the enemies
a death that annihilates and a season of spring to the supplicants.

It follows that the relationship between ruler and beloved, and ruler and Fate
is similar in structure: in an act of mythic metamorphosis, he assumes their
identity by adopting their powers. These were sources of suffering and divi-
sion in their hands – he uses them for the benefit and protection of his sub-
jects.

As to the lover, he is a victim of the vicissitudes of Fate and the sternness of
his beloved. His inability to weep is a symbol of his wretchedness: he has not
even a tear to leave behind (*la-taraktu*, 4), as opposed to beloved and King who
'leave' their victims confounded. He is only released from his plight by the
advent of the ruler who overcomes his tormentors and uses their power for his
benefit.

However, the lover is made to suffer by a third force: the reproachers or fault
finders (*'awādhil*), with whose presence the poem opens:

2. *'adhalū fa-mā 'adalū bi-qalbī 'an hawan*
        wa-da'aw fa-mā wajadū l-shajiyya samī'ā
They reproved but did not restrain my heart from love;
they called but found no listener in the afflicted one.

This theme, is also subject to contrasting relationships between strophe and
antistrophe. While the poet can counter the chiders with no more than
disregard, the ruler defies them openly through his noble deeds (*lil-'awādhili*
'āṣiyan fī l-makrumāti, 13). Moreover, the use of *sami'a* ('to hear') and *da'ā* ('to
call') in line 2 leads to an interplay of further links. The afflicted one (*al-shajiyy*)
does not hear the call of the chiders; the ruler hears those who call for help in
battle:

17.   *mutanaṣṣitan li-ṣadā l-ṣarīkhi ilā l-waghā*
        li-yujība ṣawta l-ṣārikhi l-masmū'ā
He hearkens to the echo of the cry to battle
to answer the crier's well-heard voice.

On the other hand, the call of the chiders receives no response, while all
the enemies willingly come forward when the general calls them to their
deaths:

32.   *fa-da'awtahum bi-ẓubā l-ṣafīḥi ilā l-radā*
        fa-atawka ṭurran muhṭi'īna khushū'ā
So you called them to death with the cutting edges of the blade
and they all came hurriedly and humble.

As in the contrast of imagery, a situation of obstruction, of absence of
movement and communication, is resolved in the *madīḥ*: the sovereign both
responds and is responded to.[7]

Panegyric to the Caliph Mutawakkil

Poem number 915 (text II), written in the year 247 AH/861 AD, contains the famous description of Mutawakkil's lake in Samarra. Ibn al-Mu'tazz saw it as a masterpiece. On the strength of this poem, together with those on Kisrā's arch and Ibn Dīnār's sea battle, he considered Buḥturī the greatest poet of his age.[8] The analysis below will show that the work not only contains a description of nature, full of beauty and power, but, in its unity, it also gives the medieval concept of Kingship a timeless poetic reality. However, this unity and, as a consequence, the meaning of the work, cannot be understood without taking the initial sections into account. All the major themes of the poem are introduced there, and, by contrast and congruence, the development of the later sections is anticipated. The poem combines several different modes: *aṭlāl*, *nasīb*, *khamriyya*, *waṣf* (see Glossary), and *madīḥ*. The forty lines can be subdivided as follows:

		Sections	Number of lines
STROPHE		*Introduction* (1)	1
		Poet and encampment (aṭlāl) (2–4)	3
		Poet and beloved (nasīb) (5–6)	2
		Poet and courtesan (khamriyya) (7–10)	4
ANTISTROPHE			
I	*Waṣf* Part one	*The lake as a wonder*, portrayed through its relation to symbols of natural power (the river Tigris, wind, sun, rain) and symbols of spiritual power (Caliph, Solomon's *jinn*, Bilqīs):	
		Introduction of the lake (11–16)	6
		Lake description (a) external: water (17–20)	4
		Central line: the lake reflecting the cosmos (21)	1
	Part two	*The lake as a sanctuary of life* representing the Caliph's realm and his life-giving powers (portrayed through its architectural features and the life it harbours):	
		Lake description (b) internal: fish (22–5)	4
		Landscape around the lake; conclusions (26–31)	6
II	*Madīḥ*	*Caliph and Caliphate* His splendour overshadows the natural world (32–4)	3
		Caliph and state Of sacred descent, he restores justice and righteousness (35–8)	4
		Caliph and God His virtue and status as function of divine sanction (39–40)	2

The symmetry is noticeable at a glance: the nine lines describing the lake itself are at the centre of the work, between the introduction and the conclusion of the *waṣf*, which consist of six lines each. The two outer sections, strophe and *madīḥ*, consist of ten and nine lines respectively and have a similar thematic structure.

The analysis proceeds by relating the three sections of the strophe to *waṣf* and *madīḥ*.

The aṭlāl *section and its relations*

In the first triad of the strophe, the poet describes how wind and weather pass over the ruins of the campsite and destroy its beauty:

2. *yā dimnatan jādhabathā l-rīḥu bahjatahā*
    tabītu tanshuruhā ṭawran wa-taṭwīhā
3. *lā zilti fī ḥulalin lil-ghaythi ḍāfiyatin*
    yunīruhā l-barqu aḥyānan wa-yusdīhā
4. *tarūḥu bil-wābili l-dānī rawā'iḥuhā*
    'alā rubū'ika aw taghdū ghawādīhā

O campsite remnants whose beauty the wind vies to tear away
spending the nights between concealing them and laying them bare.
You do not cease to be clad in ample garments [of vegetation] brought by
       rain,
of which lightning weaves the weft at times and at times sets the warp.
The evening clouds pass over your spring abodes
bringing abundant showers, or the morning clouds move by.

Three pairs of verbs portray the repetitive action of wind, lightning, and clouds: *tanshuruhā/taṭwīhā* ('unfolding'/'folding') – *yunīruhā/yusdīhā* ('weave the weft'/'set the warp') – *tarūḥu/taghdū* ('pass in the evening'/'pass in the morning'). Nature appears in senseless repetitiveness: one event counters or cancels the other in eternal succession.

In *waṣf* and *madīḥ*, the themes of nature and beauty assume a different and contrasting form.

Waṣf

The landscape created by Mutawakkil harbours nature in its fullest beauty: not even the river Tigris can rival the Caliph's lake. The repetition of *ṭawran* ('sometimes') and the paronomasia of *ṭā'* and *wāw* make line 13 echo line 2:

13. *mā bālu Dijlata kal-ghayrā tunāfisuhā*
     fī l-ḥusni ṭawran wa-aṭwāran tubāhīhā
How dare Tigris like a jealous rival vie with it
in beauty at times and at others compete with it in glory?

There is also a relation of content: by 'folding and unfolding' the remains of the site, the wind struggles to destroy its beauty. In contrast, the beauty of the Caliph's lake cannot be harmed or rivalled, however hard the Tigris may try (compare the element of struggle and continuity in the III form verbs: *jādhaba*, 2, *nāfasa/bāha*, 13. The lake is built by the 'builder of glory', and protected by

the 'protector of Islam' (14). It has divine blessing and cannot be approached
by jealous rancour. As a re-creation of Solomon's crystal palace (15, 16), it is
rooted in sacred tradition.[9] (Note the alliteration between Islām, 14 and
Sulaymān, 15.) The struggle between wind and *aṭlāl* is resumed in the 'contest'
between wind and royal lake. Unlike the *aṭlāl*, the lake is not without 'defence':
when 'mounted by the easterly breeze, it displays ripples (or rings of metal,
ḥubuk) like coats of mail with polished fringes' (19).

The *aṭlāl* section is also echoed in line 20 which portrays sun and rain vying
with the lake in laughter and weeping:

20.   *fa-rawnaqu l-shamsi aḥyānan yuḍāḥikuhā*
          wa-rayyiqu l-ghaythi aḥyānan yubākīhā
The sun's glamour vies with it in laughter at times;
at others the drizzling rain vies with it in tears.

As in the case of lines 13 and 2, lines 20 and 3 are linked on the lexical level by
the repetition of a temporal particle which appears once in the *aṭlāl*, twice in
the *waṣf* line. Here it is *aḥyānan* (at times), there it was *ṭawran/aṭwāran*
('sometimes'/'many times'). Rain and sun in line 20 balance rain and lightning
in line 3.

The interaction between encampment and lake on the one side, and the
forces of nature on the other, follows a consistent pattern: the *aṭlāl* are their
victim, the lake is their equal. Thus while the latter faces the wind with 'coats of
mail', the *aṭlāl* are covered with 'ample garments' (of vegetation) woven by rain
and lightning in repetitive monotony. By comparison with the lively reflection
of the weather in Mutawakkil's lake, the 'garment' of the *aṭlāl* is like a shroud
woven for a dead land.

In the concluding section of the *waṣf*, the palace gardens and the royal lake
become a world of their own, boundless in extent and independent from the
workings of nature outside it. The gardens spread far and wide, beautiful as
peacock feathers. Since the lake irrigates them with oceanic abundance, they
need no rain (again, the situation of the *aṭlāl* is overcome; compare lines 3/4
with 26/27). The image in line 30 expresses these widened dimensions:

30.   *wa-dakkatayni ka-mithli l-shiʿrayayni ghadat*
          iḥdāhumā bi-ʾizā l-ukhrā tusāmīhā
And two esplanades vying in height as they face
each other like Sirius and Procyon.

The concept of rivalry resumes the river's jealousy of the Caliph's lake in line
13, where rivalry between an artificial and a natural object is expressed: the
artificial lake is shown to be superior to the river because the Caliph has
created it. In line 30 we are within the Caliph's artificial world: the two
esplanades are his creation, and the natural world can only supply a simile to
depict its greatness.

The last line draws the conclusion from the boundlessness of the Caliph's landscape: no *waṣf*, however great, can approach its splendour;

31. *idhā masāʿī amīri l-muʾminīna badat
     lil-wāṣifīna fa-lā waṣfun yudānīhā*
When the endeavours of the Prince of the Faithful appear
to those who describe them, no description can do them justice.

Madīḥ

Nature is overturned and vanishes in all its beauty when confronted with the moral and spiritual world. The *maḥāsin* (beauties) of nature turn into *masāwī* ('blemishes'), when exposed to the Caliph in his virtue (34); and the glory of religion raises the valleys of Mekka higher than the surrounding hills (35). Retracing the transfigurations of the root *ḥsn* in *waṣf* and *madīḥ* makes the movement clear:

11. *yā man raʾā l-birkata l-ḥasnāʾa ...*
O, whosoever sees the lake of *beauteous* sight ...
13. *mā bālu Dijlata ... tunāfishuhā fī l-ḥusni ...*
How dare Tigris ... vie with it in *beauty*
34. *... raʾat maḥāsinahā l-dunyā masāwīhā*
[When facing the Caliph] the world sees its *beauties* as blemishes
36. *... raʿiyyatan anta bil-iḥsāni rāʿīhā*
... a flock whose shepherd by *beneficence* you are
37. *... aṣbaḥa ḥusnu l-ʿadli yurḍīhā*
... a community the *beauty* of justice now renders gratified

The Caliph's lake is beautiful, more so even than the river Tigris (11, 13), but all natural beauty vanishes when confronted with his person (34). He gives the concept of beauty a new meaning, a meaning in the moral sphere; he rules his subjects with beneficence (*iḥsān*, 36), and replaces the ugliness of tyranny (*qubḥ al-jawr*) with the beauty of justice (*ḥusn al-ʿadl*, 37).

The development of the theme of nature in its three stages in *aṭlāl*, *waṣf* and *madīḥ*, reveals the overall meaning of the poem. Outside the moral realm, nature is senseless and soulless in its workings, rejecting empathy and destroying man-made beauty. In the gardens and the lake, nature is recreated by the Caliph. This creation is beautiful and beyond harm because it is the fruit of his spiritual power and protected by it. Only within this realm can life unfold itself in freedom and innocence. Thus the water bursts into the lake like stampeding horses, the fish swim freely like birds in the open air, and the gardens and meadows blossom brightly like the feathers of the peacocks that dwell in them (see 17, 23, 29).

In its paradisiac nature, the royal landscape symbolizes the realm of the King and the happiness and peace he brings his subjects. The magnificent central line of the *wasf* (21) captures the universality:

21.   *idhā l-nujūmu tarā'at fī jawānibihā*
           laylan ḥasibta samā'an rukkibat fīhā
When the stars gaze at themselves in its sides at night
you would think a firmament had been built into it.

But this world is only given reality by the moral world from which the Caliph derives his power. Nature sinks back when confronted with it. The King stands in the moral world between God and his subjects. From this position he rules and through this position he can allow life to expand and blossom (39/40).

The nasīb *and its relations*

The beloved and her relation to the poet are the subject of lines 5 and 6:

5.   *inna al-bakhīlata lam tun'im li-sā'ilihā*
           yawma l-kathībi wa-lam tasma' li-dā'īhā
6.   *marrat ta'awwadu fī qurbin wa-fī bu'udin*
           fal-hajru yub'iduhā wal-dāru tudnīhā

The ungenerous one did not respond graciously to her questioner
on the day of the sand-dune, nor did she listen to her caller.
She remains distressful in distance and proximity;
separation removes her and the abode brings her close.

The absence of communication between lover and beloved is resolved in *wasf* and *madīḥ* according to a pattern encountered in the panegyric to Muḥammad al-Thagrī (see above p. 35f). Three related concepts are involved: question and answer, calling and hearing, wish and fulfilment.

   The question theme of the *nasīb* starts in line 1 where the poet proposes to ask the campsite about its former inhabitants:

1.   *mīlū ilā l-dāri min Laylā nuḥayyīhā*
           na'am wa-nas'aluhā 'an ba'ḍi ahlīhā
Let us turn to Laylā's abode and salute it;
yes, and question it on some of its folk!

It is resumed in line 5. The beloved does not respond: she is miserly and does not fulfil the poet's desires. This contrasts, as expected, with the King's great generosity:

38.   *bathathta fīhā 'aṭā'an zāda fī 'adadi l-*
           'alyā wa-nawwahta bi-smi l-jūdi tanwīhā
You have scattered gifts over it which increase the noble exploits in number
and you have greatly exalted the name of generosity.

The Caliph's name is a special adornment of the royal lake:

28. *wa-zādahā zīnatan min baʿdi zīnatihā*
     anna smahū ḥīna yudʿā min asāmīhā
Its beauty is further embellished by his name
which ranks among its names when it is called.

His name carries fame and glory; when it is called (*ḥīna yudʿā*), not only he but everything associated with him responds to it. This again contrasts with the beloved to whose name nothing responds, not even she herself (*lam tasmaʿ li-dāʿīhā*, 5).

The four lines singled out by the theme are marked by certain significant repetitions: line 5 resumes the roots *nʿm* and *sʾl* in the same order in which they appeared in line 1; lines 28 and 38 are linked by the repetition of the words *ism* ('name') and *zāda* ('to increase'). In their development from strophe to antistrophe (marked by the repetition of the root *dʿw*, the contrast between *bukhl*, 'miserliness' (5), and *jūd*, 'generosity' (38), and, last but not least, the spiritual preponderance of *ʿalyā*, 'high exploits' (38), over *kathīb*, 'sand-dune' (5)), frustration and absence of communion are resolved in communion and fulfilment.

However, the resolution of the theme has yet another aspect. Laylā, poet and encampment are mirrored and overshadowed in the image of Solomon, Bilqīs and *al-ṣarḥ* (the 'glass palace'). The connection is made explicit in the links between lines 6 and 16:

16. *fa-law tamurru bihā Bilqīsu ʿan ʿurudin*
     qālat hiya l-ṣarḥu tamthīlan wa-tashbīhā
If Bilqīs were to pass by its side she would say
'It is the glass palace in image and in simile!'

The verb *marra* refers to Laylā and Bilqīs; *ʿan ʿurudin* echoes *fī buʿudin*; *dār* ('abode') contrasts with *ṣarḥ*. The difference between Bilqīs and the beloved is significant: the latter remains silent and unresponsive, while the former (when faced with the Caliph's splendid creation) speaks and responds.

Yet the separation between lover and beloved is fully overcome only in the marriage of Caliph and Caliphate (see above p. 18):

32. *inna l-khilāfata lammā htazza minbaruhā*
     bi-Jaʿfarin uʿṭiyat aqṣā amānīhā
The Caliphate as her rostrum trembles [under his weight]
has in Jaʿfar been granted his highest hopes.

This line, too, is linked to the strophe by distinct phonological features. Lines 5 and 32 are the only ones of the poem to start with *inna*; in both lines, it introduces the female partner of the relationship: *bakhīla* and *khilāfa*. *Lam tunʿim li-sāʾilihā* and *lammā htazza minbaruhā* are related by contrast: the

former denotes the beloved's refusal to give herself to her lover, the latter figuratively portrays the Caliphate being posessed by the Caliph.

The sexual undertones of the lines are evident in the *double entendre* in *kathīb* (5) and *Ja'far* (32). *Kathīb*, meaning sand-dune, is a common metaphor for hips and buttocks; while the Caliph's name literally means 'stream, rivulet' (compare, furthermore, the associations of the root *mny*: *manna*, i.e. 'to ejaculate', *minan*, i.e. 'semen', etc.). The sexual union between Caliph and Caliphate is, however, an image which reflects a spiritual event: the realization of the ideal hierarchy, the source of all natural fertility in the realm.

In the same way as the relation between poet and Laylā, Solomon and Bilqīs is consummated on the spiritual level in the marriage of Caliph and Caliphate, so also their place of encounter – the campsite, the royal lake – reaches its apotheosis in a spiritual form: the valleys of Mekka, 'raised higher than its hills', origin of the Caliph's glory and power (35). The link to the strophe is once more indicated by the repetition of a particle at the beginning of the relevant lines introducing the respective theme: *yā* dimnatan ('O *campsite remnants*'), 2; *yā man ra'a* al-birkata ('O whosoever sees *the lake*'), 11; *yā ibn* al-abāṭiḥi ('O son of *the valleys*'), 35.

Line 6 is also the source of an important structural axis, the notions of space. The poem describes them in terms of proximity and distance, height and depth, as well as confinement and openness. It develops in three stages.

Nasīb

Laylā is a source of torment for her lover. Her actual presence or absence is only circumstantial and does not diminish the suffering she causes. She is everywhere, she cannot be escaped; whether she is near or distant, her presence is unchanged (6).

Waṣf

Space and time imprisoning man in their very endlessness – this is the characteristic situation of *aṭlāl* and *nasīb*. In this poem it is resolved in the royal landscape of Mutawakkil's lake:

22.   *lā yablughu l-samaku l-maḥṣūru ghāyatahā*
          li-bu'di mā bayna qāṣīhā wa-dānīhā
23.   *ya'umna fīhā bi-awsāṭin mujannaḥatin*
          kal-ṭayri tanfuḍu fī jawwin khawāfīhā
24.   *lahunna ṣaḥnun raḥībun fī asāfilihā*
          idhā nḥaṭaṭna wa-baḥwun fī a'ālīhā

The fish it contains cannot reach its limits
because of the distance between its nearest and its furthest point.

They swim therein with wings on their waists
like birds whose feathers [lit. coverts] flutter in the air,
Having a wide basin in its lower regions
when they descend and ample space in its upper reaches.

The lake is a sanctuary of life; within its boundaries there is freedom for the living creatures. The fish swim in it like birds in the open air and nothing obstructs their movement. The spaciousness of the lake is reflected in the vastness of the gardens (*basāṭīnuhā l-qaṣwā*), the height of the esplanades and finally, on a metaphorical level, by the inapproachable greatness of the Caliph's achievements (31).

Madīḥ

The *madīḥ* marks the third stage in the development of the theme. In the *nasīb*, space is described by the notions of proximity and distance, the *waṣf* adds the dimensions of height and depth as the fish explore the lake vertically and horizontally. In the last section of the poem, space is only described in vertical terms: it is a metaphorical entity containing the hierarchy of the moral world. Religious glory lifts the valleys of Mekka higher than the surrounding hills (35) – the Caliph showers his gifts upon his subject; he heightens the name of generosity (38). The use of *aqṣā* in line 32 symbolizes this: in the person of Mutawakkil, the furthest hopes of the Caliphate are fulfilled. In him the limits are reached, and through him the material world is contained in the static peace of the unchangeable divine order.

The 'khamriyya' and its relations

The *khamriyya* anticipates, on the individual level, the innocent self-assertion of life in the *waṣf*: Laylā is unattainable but the poet is still young and forceful and dedicates himself to sensuality, wine, and forgetfulness (7–10). This isolated idyll is overcome in the luxuriant thriving of life in the realm of Mutawakkil. The abundant flow of water in the lake overshadows the flow of wine, and the beauty of the royal landscape puts to shame the beauty of the poet's consort. The image in line 10 and its response in line 27 capture the contrast:

10. ʻāṭaytuhā ghaddata l-aṭrāfi murhafatan
        sharibtu min yadihā khamran wa-min fīhā
I poured it out for a maiden lightsome and tenderlimbed
and drank liquor from her hand and lips.

27.   ka-annahā ḥīna lajjat fī tadaffuqihā
        yadu l-khalīfati lammā sāla wādīhā
As it persists in its abundant flow, it is as if it was
the Caliph's hand when its river bed is flooded high.

The hand of the girl is but a source of wine for the poet; the hand of the Caliph is the inexhaustible source of the water of life. The development follows a familiar pattern: the Caliph assumes the function of a character in the strophe, abolishing his shortcomings and raising his qualities to a higher dimension.

There are thus four male–female relationships in the poem. Each is marked by a different water-image which symbolizes their fertility. The progress develops from an unfulfilled ideal of the past:

> *poet-Laylā* (water image: rain on the *aṭlāl*) via a sensuous union:
> *poet-courtesan* (water image: wine) via the evocation of a sacred archetype:
> *Solomon-Bilqīs* (water image: lake)[10] to the realization of a present and future ideal:
> *Caliph-Caliphate* (water image: the potency of the Caliph, evident in his name (Ja'far, 32), in his being the 'son of the river valleys' (*ibn al-abāṭiḥ*, 35), in his being a sea for the supplicants (*baḥr*, 39); see also line 27)

In the relation between Caliph and Caliphate, the sensuality of the relation between poet and courtesan is lifted to a higher plane and endowed with the sacred element anticipated in the Solomonic image. Thereby the lost ideal of love with which the poem begins, is regained and transubstantiated; and the realm endowed with fertility.

The *khamriyya* is a focal point of another structural axis closely linked with these relationships but also encompassing most other themes. It concerns the various types of interaction between objects and persons and, since it always involves two entities, I call it the theme of reciprocity. It is most evident in the frequent juxtaposition of identical verbs in different number and gender which depict the reciprocity from the angle of subject and object:

8. *qad aṭruqu l-ghādata l-ḥasnā'a muqtadiran
       'alā l-shabābi fa-tuṣbīnī wa-uṣbīhā*
Commanding youth, at nightfall I may visit
a comely maiden I delight in and who delights in me;

9. *fī laylatin lā yanālu l-ṣubḥu ākhirahā
       'aliqtu bil-rāḥi usqāhā wa-asqīhā*
In a night beyond dawn's reach
I grasp the wine I'm offered and offer in turn;

29. *mahfūfatun bi-riyāḍin lā tazālu tarā
       rīsha l-ṭawāwīsi taḥkīhi wa-yaḥkīhā*
It is surrounded by gardens you forever see
peacock feathers reflect and reflected in;

33. *abdā l-tawāḍu'a lammā nālahā ri'atan
       minhu wa-nālathu fa-khtālat bihī tīhā*

When he won her, he displayed humility in modest restraint
whereas she won him and strutted about in pride.

40.   *a'ṭākahā llāhu 'an ḥaqqin ra'āka lahu*
            ahlan wa-anta bi-ḥaqqi llāhi tu'ṭīhā
God granted it to you by a right of which he saw you worthy
and you by the right of God grant it to us.

Reciprocity in the *khamriyya* concerns the relationship between poet, wine,
and girl. The three are joined together in the last line of the strophe and form
an interlocking unity of giving and taking (10).

Reflection and rivalry are the types of mutual relationship in the *waṣf*
section of the poem: the statue reflects the fish (25), the peacock feathers and
the gardens mirror one another (29); the two esplanades rival in height (30)
echoing the rivalry of the river Tigris with the Caliph's lake (12, 13). The Caliph
himself is too exalted to enter into any mutual relation with an object of the
sensual world. His peer is only to be found on the abstract moral level: it is the
Caliphate itself (33).

The last line of the poem marks the resolution of the theme. The repetition of
a'ṭā ('to give, grant') in two different forms (*a'ṭakahā/tu'ṭīhā*, 40) resembles the
other verb repetitions. But the relationship expressed here is not mutual but
consecutive: God gives the world to the Caliph and the Caliph in turn gives it
to his people. The objects of the world reflect one another, rival one another,
give to one another, take from one another, but in their mutuality all these
relationships remain entities within themselves. They are only given reality
and existence through God who stands far above them; in His oneness He has
no peer. Through the Caliph, He bestows the bounty of the world and this
relationship is the key to all reciprocities: it has no reflection.

Conclusion

From the preceding analysis of two poems by Buḥturī the following points
emerge:
(a) Both poems are coherent statements to which every thematic unit makes a
contribution. The semantic structure of the poems, as evident in the
resumption and transformation of imagery and theme, is marked by instances
of repetition: lexical, phonological, syntactic, or morphological. The repeated
elements are mostly introduced in the initial section of the poem, the strophe,
which thus has a prime structural function.
(b) The thematic development of the poems agrees with the structural model
of the panegyric posited above. The great differences between them suggest
that the panegyric is not as narrowly delineated a form as has sometimes been
supposed. No single relation of concept, protagonist, or theme lays down the
use of identical motifs, or requires the antithesis between strophe and
antistrophe to be based on identical combinations of motifs. It is rather a case
of different combinations made to reflect a single underlying structure.

Mihyār al-Daylamī

The most conspicuous feature of Mihyār al-Daylamī's *Dīwān* is the length of the poems it contains: many of them have about eighty lines and some well exceed a hundred lines. On closer scrutiny, the reader will discover, interspersed between the long poems, small clusters of short pieces of verse: 'ecphrastic epigrams' as Bürgel calls them (see Bürgel, 1965), witty, riddle-like portrayals of disparate objects. Of these two types, it is the long poems that are of concern here. Most of them are panegyrics written in praise of the notables of the Buwayhid state. The poem which appears as text III in the appendix is a characteristic example. It illustrates Mihyār's comprehensive style which provides the reason for the length of many of his works: the tendency to integrate all traditional topoi of court poetry in one poem. Apart from the *nasīb*, which includes a section on hoariness and old age, the work contains a *fakhr* (see Glossary), as well as a camel description and a desert journey. There are two *madīḥ* sections which include passages on the *mamdūḥ*'s tribe, his enemies, and the duties of the *Wazirate*, a metaphorical description of a tribal banquet, and many lines of general praise full of historical references. It all culminates in the congratulation for the New Year festival and ends, in the vein of Mutanabbī, with a return to the *fakhr* theme and a laudatory section on the excellence of the poem itself.

Construction

Far from being a lengthy catalogue of themes merely connected by their conventional sequence, the work is shaped by a multitude of complex relationships. It abounds in instances of pictorial and lexical harmony, of thematic developments, resumptions of themes, and sectional parallelisms, all of which bear witness to careful planning:

Thematic chart

FIRST HALF (1–69)	Sections	Number of lines
Part A		
Aṭlāl, nasīb, shayb (see	Tears and campsite (1–7)	7
Glossary), *fakhr*: separation	The beloved (8–14)	7
and isolation (strophe)	Imperatives and apostrophe in 13, 14, reflect 6, 7	
	Old age (15–21)	7
	15–16 transition; blood in 15–16 reflects tears in 1–2	
	Resisting fate (22–8)	7
	22–3 transition; 22 reflects 2, 28 reflects 7	
	Stoic acceptance (29–36)	8
Part B		
First *madīḥ*	Introduction (37–43)	7
(antistrophe)	37–8 transition	
	Revival of life and virtue (44–52)	9
Part C		
Riḥla (strophe)	Camel description (53–8)	6
	Hunter and wild ass (59–66)	8
	66 transition	
	Desert description (67–9)	3
SECOND HALF (70–138)		
Part D	Arrival at *Wazir* (70–6)	7
Second *madīḥ*	70–1 transition resuming the poem's	
(antistrophe)	beginning: night journey and eyes	
(1) General praise	reflect clouds and eyes in 1, garment of darkness reflects garment of greenery in 2	
	The *Wazir*'s guests (77–83)	7
	The *Wazir's* tribe (84–91)	8
	Two four-line sections: (a) (84–7) First ascent: *'alā, tasallaqū*; then descent: *istanzalū* (b) (88–91) Resumption of praise and second ascent: *samaw, yaṭla'u, mā nhaṭṭū*	
	The *Wazir's* uniqueness (92–3)	2
	Contrasting intermezzo in the middle of sections on the *Wazir* in relation to other people	

	The *Wazir*'s enemies (94–101)	8
	Two four-line sections: (a) (94–7) The enemies as a multitude in open warfare (b) (98–101) The enemy as a single hidden spy	
Part E Second *madīh* (2) *Wazir* and office	*Wazir* and office – introduction (102–7). 102–3 transition; the lines reflect the transition to part B	6
	The *Wazir*ate restored to glory – fate vanquished (108–17). Part E is sectionally parallel to part B; cf. number of lines and sequence of themes	10
Part F Finale: reintegration (resuming themes of strophe and antistrophe)	Nayrūz and *Wazir* (118–22)	5
	Poet and *Wazir* (1) (123–30) 124–6 reflect 120–2; rejection of poet contrasts with reception of Nayrūz	8
	Poet and *Wazir* (2) (131–8) Imperative in 131 resumes 118 and 123; 131–3 reflects 120–2 and 124–6, marking reintegration of poet. Praise of the poem as recompense for reintegration; anticipated in 127–28	8

Proportion of parts

Part A (1–36)	36 lines	
Part B (37–52)	16 lines	
Part C (53–69)	17 lines	first half: 69 lines
Part D (70–101)	32 lines	
Part E (102–17)	16 lines	
Part F (118–38)	21 lines	second half: 69 lines

Defeat of Fate

The transition from strophe to antistrophe incarnates the ritual significance of the panegyric ode also in Mihyār's work. Accordingly, the poem celebrates the establishment of a just order which overcomes the arbitrary rule of Fate and the misery it breeds. In the amoral world of Fate the individual is subject to misfortune and his only defence resides in the preservation of his personal honour. Turning to Fate, Mihyār says in a pun on *mā' al-wajh*, an idiom for honour, which literally means 'water of the face':

28.   *da' mā'a wajhī māli'an ḥawḍahū*
            wa-kul samīnan nashabī wa-shrabī
Leave the basin of my honour [lit. my face's water] full
but eat and drink the fat of all I own!

Fate may strip him of all material possessions, but he will hold on to his pride and self-esteem. Mihyār ends the *fakhr* by concluding that in order to survive in this world (*al-dunyā*), one must be flexible: in difficult times one will accommodate and give way, in times of abundance, when Fate by chance pursues a righteous path, one will reap the benefits. All this is expressed in pastoral terms: first *al-dunyā* is a camel to be milked, then a herdsman who restores control over his erring flock:

32.   *rākhi 'alā l-dunyā idhā 'āsarat*
            wa-in atat musmiḥatan fa-jdhibī,
33.   *wa-lā ta'assaf kadda akhlāfihā*
            fa-rubbamā darrat wa-lam tu'ṣabī
34.   *hādhā awānu staqbalat rushdahā*
            bi-waqfati l-mu'tadhiri l-mu'tibī
35.   *wa-rtaja'at mā ḍalla min ḥilmihā*
            min bayna sarḥi l-dhā'idi l-mu'zabī

Let go the tether of this world when she's refractory –
when she submits to you then pull!
Don't randomly strain her teats [by trying to milk her by force];
sometimes she does yield milk without having to be tied;
At such time she accepts to act with righteousness,
in apologetic posture and desirous to make amends,
Retrieving her forbearance which had strayed,
into a flock whose protector was pushed far aside.

Salvation from this uncertain condition lies in the moral realm established by the praised ruler. Here it is Abū l-Qāsim al-Maghribī, chief *Wazir* of the Buwayhid state.

   The first section of praise solemnly proclaims his rule and the ensuing celebration of the resurrection and restoration of the old virtues brings the poem to its first climax. Here there is hardly a line devoid of contrasting associations with the *nasīb* and the *fakhr*. Line 49 echoes line 35 in the quotation above:

49.   *wa-rtaja'at Qaḥṭānu mā bazzahā*
            min Dhī l-Kulā'i l-dahru aw Ḥawshabī
And Qaḥṭān retrieved what Time
seized from Dhū l-Kulā' or Ḥawshab

The repetition of *irtaja'at* is the key to the relation. In line 35 it refers to *al-dunyā*, the realm of Fate. Its 'flock of forbearance' has gone astray and injuriously invaded another herd whose owner is hard pressed and tries to

chase away the intruders. *Al-dunyā* comes to his victim's aid and calls back
what is his, thus righting the injustice. The corresponding line, 49, is one of
a sequence which celebrates the newly found life under the *Wazir* in a series of
historical images. The resurrection is explicit in the verbs themselves: *'āda* ('to
return', 47), *qāma* ('to arise', 47), *'āsha* ('to live', 48), *irtaja'a* ('to retrieve', 49),
rudda ('to be restored', 50). *Irtaja'at* here refers to the tribe of Qaḥtān, which, in
the wake of the *Wazir*'s glorious rule, regains what Fate has taken from their
King, Dhū l-Kulā'. The relation between the two lines illustrates the nature of
the amoral and the moral world, the stage of all panegyric hymns. In line 35,
the individual is at the mercy of Fate which, at times (*rubbamā*, 33), will offer
redress for some iniquity. But he is powerless and without protection, and can
only resort to stoic detachment ('*azfa*, 29). The just ruler vanquishes Fate and
strips it of its power. Under his care, the individual is nourished in
a community which he leads to inevitable victory (compare the use of *ghalaba*
in 29, 39 and 123): Qaḥtān do not regain their glory by luck, but by a force
stronger than destiny. Thus moral necessity triumphs over chance and
arbitrariness, and life is restored and rejuvenated. All the heroes of the past are
resuscitated, all fear and doubt removed, and death itself seems overcome:

50.   *wa-rudda baytun fī Banī Dārimin*
          Zurāratun min ḥawlihī muḥtabī
50.   *kullu karīmin aw fatan kāmilin*
          wa-fā'ilin aw qā'ilin mu'ribī
52.   *fal-yawma shakku l-sam'i qad zāla fī*
          akhbārihī bil-manẓari l-aqrabī

And an abode has been returned to Banū Dārim
by which Zurāra[1] sits again draped in his garment;
Every generous one, every accomplished hero
and man of deed or eloquent word [is here restored],
And today, all doubt of reports heard about him
is dispelled by [the proof of] closest sight.

Like a musical theme, Mihyār re-exposes the motif of revival to lead the poem
to its focal climax (112–18). Significantly, the verb *irtaja'at* reappears again
followed by *rudda* (cf. 50) and *kull* (cf. 51):

113.   *wa-rtaja'at minka rijālātihā*
           kulla muṭīlin fī l-nadā murghibī
114.   *rudda Banū Yaḥyā wa-Sahlun lahā*
           wal-Ṭāhiriyyūna Banū Muṣ'abī

So she retrieved her greatest men in you,
all those of ample dew, who rouse [our] hopes:
Banū Yaḥyā and Sahl were returned to her,
and the Ṭāhirids, sons of Muṣ'ab.

Due to Abū l-Qāsim al-Maghribī, the *Wazir*ate is restored to its former glory.

In him it regains all the famed ministers that lived once, the Barmakids, Sahl b. Hārūn, the Ṭāhirids: the great past is resurrected.

Mihyār concludes with the traditional exhortation of the ruler which often marks the end of the panegyric hymn (115–17). Here, *ḥilm* (see Glossary) and *dunyā*, first related in line 35, appear in a new configuration which marks the final stage of the development. Mihyār exclaims:

117.   *wa-mdud ʿalā l-dunyā wa-jahlātihā*
          ẓilāla ḥilmin laka lam yaʿzubī
And cast over the world and its ignorant folly
the shade of your ever present forbearance.

Whatever *ḥilm* this world may have possessed, whether it goes astray or follows the right course, it now belongs to the *Wazir*: the shadow of his steadfastness and wise forbearance will spread over the world and its follies.

The occurrence of *ʿazaba* puts lines 35 and 117 in an even more explicit relation: in 35, the erring flock of *ḥilm* pushes the victim away into the distance (*muʿzab*); in 117 the *Wazir*'s *ḥilm* is there never to depart (*lam yaʿzub*). Thus the development is sealed: the *Wazir*, uniting all virtue in his person, rules the world.

So far, the analysis has, I believe, already revealed something about the nature of Mihyār's architectural genius. Following the three occurrences of one word, *irtajaʿat*, has led into the centre of this long and complex work, to uncover the thematic relationships most characteristic of the panegyric hymn. Furthermore, each of the three sections of the poem brought into relation by the word mark the conclusion of one of its parts: the first concludes the *fakhr*, the second concludes the first *madīḥ*, the third concludes the second *madīḥ*. Were one to doubt the integrity of Mihyār's poetic composition, here is proof to the contrary.

Rise of hope

The end of the *fakhr* contains the seed of yet another theme of importance for the structure of the poem, a theme which aligns itself, in more senses than one, with the *per aspera ad astra* progress of the work. Describing Fate's arbitrary rule, Mihyār says:

36.   *wa-rubbamā ṭālaʿa wajhu l-munā*
          min sharifi l-yaʿsi wa-lam yuḥsabī
And sometimes hope's countenance will unexpectedly shine
[like a star] from the very peak of despair.

The minor tonality of the image is transferred into a ringing major in the *madīḥ* (cf. the repetitions of *ṭlʿ*, *shrf*, *shms*):

43.   *lam taʿlifi l-abṣāru min qablihā*
          an taṭluʿa l-shamsu mina l-Maghribī

The eyes had not been accustomed before
to see the sun rise in the West!

85.   *wa-lā ʿalā bnun minhumū ṭāliʿan
          min sharafin illā warāʾa l-abī*
Nor did a son of theirs ever rise to fame, ascending starlike
from ancestral honour, without succeeding a father [of similar rank].

90.   *samaw wa-aṣbaḥta samāʿan lahum
          yaṭluʿu minhā sharafu l-mansabī*
They rose and you became their heaven
from which the honour of their lineage shines forth.

The anticipated rise of hope has become manifest in the rising sun of the Prince amidst his tribe (43). Continuity is established where there was arbitrary interruption: the generations of the *Wazir*'s tribe rise gloriously one after another, like stars, not from the promontory of despair but from nobility and honour (85). The *mamdūḥ* is their sky in which their noble lineage radiates with astral splendour (90).

The image depicting the permanence of this constellation of life is more striking still since Mihyār resorts to a telling pun upon al-Maghribī, the name denoting the Moroccan origin of his Maecenas. He introduces the idea in an indirect manner in line 43 and, at the very end of the *madīḥ*, gives the image its full due (118). Turning to Abū l-Qāsim, he exclaims:

118.   *wa-ṭluʿ ʿalā l-Nayrūzi shamsan idhā
          sāqa l-ghurūbu l-shamsa lam taghrubī*
And rise upon Nayrūz like the sun! When
'setting' propels the sun it shall not set.

Ghurūb ('setting') refers to the setting of heavenly bodies and is of the same root as *maghrib* ('west', or 'Morocco') the home of the celebrated *Wazir*. In this, the final stage of its development, the image of the ascending luminary returns to the context in which it first appears: as in line 36 it follows the motifs of *ḥilm* and *dunyā* (117). Thus the transfigurations of one image, through various stages, once more reflect the typical development of the panegyric: from the uncertain rise of hope to the rise of an everlasting 'western sun' – *per aspera ad astra.*[2]

Defeat of enemy

19.   *aflaḥa illā qāniṣun ghādatan
          madda bi-ḥabli l-shaʿari l-ashyabī*
Success fails a flourishing maiden's hunter
who hopes to trap her with a rope of white hair.

The splendid conceit portrays the failure of the ageing lover. Many lines later, towards the middle of the poem, the theme appears again in a different guise.

The sturdy camel, journeying to the *Wazir* through a hostile landscape, is compared, in archaic fashion, to a wild ass. A hunter (*qāniṣ*) is stalking him, driven by hunger and thirst:

60.   *ṭāmana fī l-ramli lahū qāniṣun*
            a'jafu lam yuḥmiḍ wa-lam yurṭibī
A hunter lies in wait for him in the sand,
lean, not fed on dates nor [even] bitter shrubs.

The same image, transformed, reappears a third time in the *madīḥ* section which describes the *Wazir*'s supremacy over his enemies:

98.   *wa-rubba ṭāwin ghullatan bā'itin*
            min jānibi l-sharri 'alā marqabī
Many's the conspiring villain who spends the night
on an outlook with evil intent.

But the enemy's scheming powers are checked and his ruse is outwitted by Abū l-Qāsim al-Maghribī. The *Wazir*'s vigilance, 'more cunning than the scorpion', checks his every move in the very darkness and the evil-doer is rendered powerless. Confounded at his failure, he believes he has been enchanted and resorts to the aid of a magician (*rāqī*). But it is of no avail: Abū l-Qāsim's subtle cunning and vigilant omnipresence are beyond sorcery (100–1).

The image of the hunter and its transformation depicts changing stages of man's contest with Fate and time, thereby illustrating the contrast between the moral and amoral realm. Each time it occurs, the aggressor's hopes are frustrated and he is unable to obtain his objective; the reasons, however, differ significantly. In the first case, the hunter uses an inappropriate weapon: with 'a rope of white hair' he cannot capture his prey; old age (the effect of time) thus causes the lover to fail in his advances. In the *raḥīl* section, the poet is no longer in the role of the helpless victim: he is confronting Fate and time through his alliance with a sturdy camel with whom he defies the wilderness. Its prowess is, traditionally, depicted in the image of the wild ass threatened by hunters and other dangers. Again, the hunter's weapon has been subjected to the effects of time: his quiver has not been emptied of its arrows for two years ('*amayni lam tunkabī*, 61). Here, however, time does not make the hunter ineffective as in the first occurrence of the theme, but renders him more dangerous: having starved for so long he is most eager to kill to feed himself (62). The wild ass, however, manages to escape, illustrating the tenacity and strength of poet and camel as they journey to the *Wazir*.

In the moral realm, the struggle is overcome, death is kept in check, and life is allowed to prosper. A sacred hierarchy is imposed and anyone counteracting it cannot but be evil – for him the powers of destruction are reserved. Accordingly, the watcher in the *madīḥ* lies in wait, *min jānibi l-sharr* ('from the

direction of evil'). However, the change of fortune he hopes for is 'not decreed by the pen of Fate' (*bi-qalami l-aqdāri lam tuktabī*, 99), and his wicked designs are frustrated by the cunning of the *Wazir*. Thus, the three transformations of the image convey the tripartite progress of the panegyric poem: from oppression (old age), through heroic confrontation (*raḥīl* and wild ass), to deliverance at the hand of the sovereign.

Tears and beloved

The poem's thematic material contains many more pictorial and conceptual transformations of the same nature. The great scale of Mihyār's poetic architecture will be evident enough if I just point to two more. The poet's only possessions are his tears. Yet they are abundant enough to irrigate the land and water the camels:

2.   *na'am dumū'un yaktasī turbuhū*
      minhā qamīṣa l-baladi l-mu'shibī
Yes! Tears through which its soil now dons
the garment of the grassy land.

7.   *da'i l-maṭāya taltafit innahā*
      talūbu min jafnī 'alā mashrabī
Let the mounts turn hither as they wish
to drink from the well of my eyelid.

A related image portrays emaciation and hardship: the destitute eat their own flesh, the camel feeds on its own fat:

38.   *wa-qā'idin ya'kulu min laḥmihī*
       tanazzuhan min khabathi l-maksabī
And the widow who feeds off her flesh
so as to shun impure gains.

53.   *ilā l-wazīri 'taraqat nayyahā*
       kullu amūnin wa'rati l-majdhabī
To [reach] the *Wazir* every sturdy she-camel
who is tough to restrain consumes the fat [of her hump];

In the first *madīḥ*, relief and consolation are brought to the miserable by the *Wazir*. They are invited to pitch camp on his fertile ground (46) and the sea of tears is overcome in his translucent water (45).

   The real antithesis to distress and poverty, however, is the reception with which Abū l-Qāsim receives the exhausted traveller. Preparing the ground for the great counterpoint, Mihyār paints the desert in its most gruesome barrenness: extreme heat alternates with extreme cold, it offers no relief of any kind, even the *qaṭā* birds, experienced desert-dwellers, are exhausted and cannot find their water holes. A profusion of images celebrates the arrival in Abū l-Qāsim's camp. Their very accumulation conveys the

lavishness and abundance with which the *Wazir* meets the needy (72–9). The image of the poet's copious tears, as well as the picture of his camel forced to feed on its own fat during the desert journey, are resonantly countered in the form of Abū l-Qāsim's giant cauldrons, symbols of his generosity:

75.   *lahu majāwīfu 'imāqun idhā*
          mā l-qidru lam tūsi' wa-lam turḥabī
76.   *kullu rabūḍin 'unquhā bārizun*
          mithlu sanāmi l-jamali l-anṣabī

He has deeply hollowed [cauldrons ready for use] when
the cooking pot lacks space and width [to feed the needy],
All great and heavy with necks sticking out
like humps of tall camels;

As in Buḥturī's panegyric on Mutawakkil so, in many of Mihyār's panegyrics, the office of state assumed by the *mamdūḥ* is metaphorically depicted as a woman. The same is the case here. The *Wazirate*'s 'acceptance' of Abū l-Qāsim contrasts with the beloved's refusal of the poet (cf. 13–14 with 104–5). She is not only inflamed with love for the *Wazir*, but without proposal on his part offers herself to him in marriage, her previous marriages and births now being null and void. Again there is a characteristic development: from frustration to fulfilment.[3]

Other leitmotifs

The construction of Mihyār's panegyric seems to follow Buḥturī's pattern but there are certain differences, the most conspicuous being a difference in scale. While Buḥturī's poems revolve around a limited set of themes, Mihyār, in an attempt at comprehensiveness, fills his work with a dazzling number of concurrent thematic relationships. The climaxes of his poems build up over many lines in towering accumulations absent in the work of Buḥturī. Some of the morphological features of the panegyric to Abū l-Qāsim al-Maghribī reflect Mihyār's tendency to massiveness and accumulation. The imperative is commonly used in Arabic poetry from the earliest times; but in this poem it occurs with unusual frequency. Some of its more dramatic sections are marked with clusters of imperatives: see, for example, lines 6, 7, 14, 28, 31–3, 44–6, 115–23, 131 and 132. A return to the thematic chart (see above pp. 49f) throws light on their structural function: the imperatives mostly occur at the end of a section where some kind of conclusion is drawn from what has gone before. Three of the four seven-line units of the poem's introduction are marked in this way and a string of imperatives leads the focal climax of the work to the Nayrūz congratulation:

115.   *fa-ḍrib 'alayhā bayta thāwin bihā*
          qablaka lam yu'mad wa-lam yuṭnabī

116.   *wa-stakhdimi l-aqdāra fī ḍabṭihā*
           wa-stashiri l-iqbāla wa-staṣḥibī
117.   *wa-mdud ʿalā l-dunyā wa-jahlātihā*
           ẓilāla ḥilmin laka lam yaʿzubī
118.   *wa-ṭluʿ ʿalā l-Nayrūzi shamsan idhā*
           sāqa l-ghurūbu l-shamsa lam taghrubī

So pitch on her your predecessors' tent,
one without ropes or poles [for it is made of glory],
And reduce Fate to servitude by curbing her
and consult with good fortune and make it your consort,
And cast over the world and its ignorant folly
the shade of your ever present forbearance,
And rise upon Nayrūz like the sun! When
'setting' propels the sun it shall not set.

The imperative is resumed in line 123 to mark the beginning of the following
section:

123.   *wa-smaʿ li-maghlūbin ʿalā ḥaẓẓihī*
           law annaka l-nāṣiru lam yughlabī
Lend your ear to one stripped of his luck by force;
had you been [his] helper, he would not have succumbed.

The use of this form is in itself nothing new, but the frequency with which
Mihyār resorts to the device calls for attention. The same applies to the
incessant repetition of the negative formed by *lam* and the jussive: like
a morphological refrain it occurs – again in clusters – no less than
seventy-seven times in various combinations.
    A unifying factor in the composition of the poem is the use of archaic desert
motifs. Mihyār has a special predilection for them and they are much more
common in his works than in the *dīwāns* of Buḥturī and his contemporaries.
Camels, horses, and scenes of desert life, provide the majority of his similes and
metaphors. The most disparate objects are placed in a pastoral setting or
referred to in terms of a riding beast. In his destitution, the poet is like a mangy
camel (*ajrab*, 27), while Kingship in the days before Abu l-Qāsim was limping
like 'a camel with an injured shoulder' (103). The world has 'udders' (33), and
the *Wazirate* can only be ridden 'with firmly twisted reins of endurance' (109).
Pitching camp at an oasis and travelling in the desert are symbols of life in the
moral and amoral worlds. 'After the barren land' we are invited to settle in Abū
l-Qāsim's fertile ground (46) and the archaic theme of the desert journey,
complete with the wild ass, *qaṭā* birds, and the icy nights of *jumādā*, precedes
the lavish tribal banquet where one finds camp-fire, firewood, pots and
cauldrons in a country setting.
    Desert imagery is a tradition common to the whole of old Arabic poetry and
there are few poems devoid of pastoral motifs. In Mihyār, however, they
became a prime vehicle of poetic expression in ways they had not been since

Umayyad times. At one point, the allusion to the ancient style affects the very working of the line:

59. *ka-anna ḥādhayhā ʿalā qāridin*
       aḥmasha masnūni l-qarā aḥqabī
It is as though the rear of her thigh [against which the tail falls]
     belonged to a wild ass of clotted fell
with slender shanks, pointed back and white lines on his flanks

In their parallelistic composition and detailed portrayal of physical features, the indefinite adjectives describing the wild ass echo the archaic animal descriptions:[4]

qaṭaʿtuhū ghudwatan mushīḥan
     wa-ṣāḥibī bādinun khabūbū
ʿayrānatun muʿjadun faqāruhā
     ka-anna ḥārikahā kathībū
I have passed on to it swiftly at dawn,
my comrade a great she-camel swift of foot
Swift as a wild ass, strongly knit her backbone,
with withers rounded and smooth like a sand hill;

Mihyār was not a desert poet. Most of his life was spent in Baghdad and it is unlikely he was inspired by any personal experience of nomad life. The recreation of the rural world in his work is a device of literature and has little to do with any representation of reality.

The similarities between Mihyār's panegyrics and the poems by Buḥturī are due to the structural model underlying the panegyric rather than to stylistic affinity. Since imagery is probably the most fruitful point of comparison between their works, the next section of the chapter is devoted to a study of Mihyār's metaphorical style in contrast to the imagery of Buḥturī.

The nature of *Mihyār's* imagery

Technique

Metaphor dominates Mihyār's poetry at the expense of simile: forms like *ka, mithl*, and *kaʾanna* are rarely used and in some of his poems never appear at all. Whatever he describes is transformed by a metaphorical inversion: concepts and inanimate objects become animate, animate objects inanimate, animals are humanized, humans appear in the guise of animals; even the role of cause and effect is inverted. All is lifted into an artificial universe, structured and delineated by poetic tradition.

There is hardly a line in the panegyric to Abū l-Qāsim which does not illustrate this process in some way: at its beginning, the land of Ghurrab, the ruins of the campsite, and the 'rainstorms of Arcturus' possess human qualities, and in their multitude the lover's tears are riders climbing the croups

of their mounts (2–4). The *Wazir*ate is variously portrayed as a woman and a riding beast, *al-dunyā* is a shepherd and a camel (32–5). On the other hand, the *Wazir* in the first *madīḥ* is described in inanimate terms: as a raised banner (39), as the sun (43), and as a sea containing precious pearls (44–5). The poet depicts himself as a mount led by virtue which his chider may ride (17), while the camel in the desert journey is endowed with human qualities: it possesses a sense of honour (56), and engages in the pursuit of high endeavour (57).

The last examples illustrate how moral qualities and concepts are similarly transformed: *ḥazm* ('forbearance') is personified (17), *al-ʿalyā* (as the meaning of the word suggests) are high mountains (57). Indeed, any part or aspect of an object, whether moral or material, can be extracted from its context and made the subject of such a metaphorical conversion. Line 58 provides a particular example:

58.   *yakhuṭṭu fī l-arḍi lahā mansimun*
             dāmin matā yumlī l-surā yaktubī
Her bleeding hoof draws lines upon the ground,
writing what the night journey dictates.

There is a double inversion here: the night journey is personified and the camel's foot, detached from its organic compound, becomes a pen, something inanimate. The metaphor links the elements of description: the power of the night journey is made tangible by reducing the camel's foot to a mere object under its command. On the other hand, the image expresses the animal's tireless and unfaltering acceptance of its fate, in spite of its suffering: like a dead object, it moves without complaint.

The poetic realm becomes uniformly metaphoric. Whatever is absorbed therein is taken apart, transformed or inverted according to the same process. Rather than highlighting the extraordinary, Mihyār's metaphorical register makes extraordinariness the norm. The uniformity is increased by the limited stock of motifs from which the metaphors are drawn. The poem, in the very comprehensiveness of its *aghrāḍ*, absorbs the elements of description into a traditional, even deliberately archaic, set of motifs which, in their frequent reiterations, inform the development. A multitude of different elements, whether tears, wind, the *Wazir*ate, Fate, or even the poet himself, are integrated by one context – the image of rider and mount. The length is extended, the developments prolonged, the themes increased in number, but the imagination does not pour forth accordingly into a new dimension – it is as though it was turned inward, intent on integration by reduction to sameness. The morphological repetitions, the imperatives, the incessant refrain of *lam yafʿal* are but part of the same phenomenon. The result is an abundance of internal echoes, an extreme reduction and condensation despite the profuse flow of images.

However, such extendedness and thematic diversity exhibited in the poem can only be integrated by such restriction if the motifs that encompass it are

stretched to the limits of their expressive capacity, and interest can only be sustained if repetition and accumulation create rhetorical tension to relieve the uniformity. Mihyār achieves both. By means of conceits, extended metaphors and a peculiarly dense pattern of harmonic imagery, he stretches the scope of a single motif and makes it express the multifarious and unexpected. The technique can be subsumed under three headings: dislocation, variation and extension.

In his conceits, traditional motifs are dislocated from their ordinary setting by being linked to one another through the process of metaphorical inversion:

19. *aflaḥa illā qāniṣun ghādatan*
        madda bi-ḥabli l-shaʿari l-ashyabī
Success fails a flourishing maiden's hunter
who hopes to trap her with a rope of white hair.

Every motif of this line is a stock-in-trade in the Arabic poetic tradition. Its distinct impact is the result of their combination, which dislocates the white hair from its organic unit and places it in an entirely different and yet, with respect to the motifs, familiar context. The commonness of the motifs creates an illusion of direct speech which is negated by the extraordinariness of their combination.

Variation can be divided into two categories of equal frequency and importance: (a) cases where different images express variations of one context, and (b) cases where different contexts are expressed by variations of one image. The former is evident in the section on hoariness of which the line discussed above forms part (18–21). Grey hair first appears as a military figure, which bars the poet's access to love's dominion, and prevents him from tracking down its refuge (18). In the following line (19), hoariness is turned from agent to instrument of obstruction: it is a hunter's snare. Finally, line 21 presents a different image yet again: grey colour is the one blemish of the 'steeds of love' which cannot be condoned. The second type of variation is exemplified in all the transformations of images and themes referred to in discussing the poem's construction.

Among the many instances of pictorial metamorphosis, two variations on the theme of vegetation in lines 2 and 22 illustrate poignantly and simply how the metaphorical register stretches the scope of motifs, and makes them create complex relationships between things disparate. The tears of the unhappy poet make the desert wear a garment of grass while he himself is 'denuded of foliage' like a leafless tree:

2. *naʿam dumūʿun yaktasī turbuhū*
        minhā qamīṣa l-baladi l-muʿshibī
Yes! Tears through which its soil now dons
the garment of the grassy land.

22. *amā taraynī ḍāwiyan ʿāriyan*
        min waraqi l-multaḥifi l-mukhṣibī

Don't you see me emaciated and denuded
of the foliage that envelops those who prosper?

The antithetical relationship between the two lines is created by turning greenery into a garment: the desert wears it, the poet is deprived of it.

Extension, the third principle of the metaphorical register, is relatively less frequent. It denotes passages where the new context, into which metaphorical inversion places an object or an idea, is explored in some length or detail. This applies, for instance, to lines 32–3 where *al-dunyā* is seen as a camel to be ridden or milked (for other examples, see 34–5, 44–5, etc.).

Mihyār's strained treatment of traditional motifs has its counterpart in the hyperbolical tone of his verse. There is no moderation, all feelings and qualities are pushed to their extreme. The poet is utterly downcast by his unhappy love (9, 10), old age has rendered him close to death, his misfortunes have stripped him naked (22, 23); the *Wazir* approaches divinity in his majesty (41–3), his ancestry is a model of human perfection, in his virtue and glory, the great dead are resurrected – and the poem itself is *afṣaḥu mā qīla*, 'the most eloquent ever pronounced' (138).

Mihyār's hyperbolical tone and his use of metaphor have much in common: both are applied with uniformity and characterize everything that is said, and both lift the phenomena onto a higher plane of existence which, because of the all-pervasiveness of the register, becomes the norm. As a result, the metaphorical world becomes more real than the reality it claims to reflect. The motifs are detached from the meaning they are normally expected to represent and assimilated into a separate sphere.

Buḥturī and *Mihyār*

The *dīwāns* of Mihyār and Buḥturī contain two ship descriptions which lend themselves well to comparison. Both pieces are representative of their authors' style and artistic achievement. The contrast between the way the two poets approach their subject illustrates the difference in their poetic expression, and sheds new light on Mihyār's use of metaphor.

Buḥturī

The poem by Buḥturī, which contains the excerpt, is quite exceptional in that it is the only Arabic poem which describes a sea battle – at least according to al-'Askarī. Today it is considered one of the most famous of its author's works, and in medieval times too, it met with praise. Ibn al-Mu'tazz thought it among the three *qaṣīdas* which made Buḥturī the greatest poet of his age (see Buḥturī, 1963, pp. 983f). Six lines describe the flagship of the victorious Muslim admiral, Aḥmad b. Dīnār, as it sets out to sea (*ibid*):

1.   *ghadawta 'alā l-Maymūni ṣubḥan wa-innamā*
        ghadā l-markabu l-maymūnu taḥta l-muẓaffarī

2. *aṭalla bi-'iṭfayhi wa-marra ka-annamā*
      tashawwafa min hādī ḥiṣānin mushahharī
3. *idhā zamjara l-nūtiyyu fawqa 'alātihī*
      ra'ayta khaṭīban fī dhu'ābati minbarī
4. *yaghuḍḍūna dūna l-ishtiyāmi 'uyūnahum*
      wa-fawqa l-simāṭi lil-'aẓīmi l-mu'ammarī
5. *idhā 'aṣafat fīhi l-janūbu 'talā lahā*
      janāḥā 'uqābin fī l-samā'i muhajjirī
6. *idhā mā nkafā fī habwati l-mā'i khiltahū*
      talaffa'a fī athnā'i burdin muḥabbarī

You set out on al-Maymūn in the morning; and indeed,
the fortunate (*maymūn*) ship [only] sets out under the victor.
He gazed over its two sides from on high and moved as though
looking down from the back of a famous steed.
When the helmsman clamoured on its castle
he seemed a preacher on the peak of the rostrum.
They lowered their eyes before the captain,
and the glorious [commander] installed above the ranks.
When the South wind raged over it, it deployed two eagles' wings
flying high in the sky in the midday heat.
When it leaned sideways in the water's spray it seemed
draped in the folds of an embroidered garment.

The description unfolds the scene as though on film: first there is the admiral
aboard his ship (1, 2), the two a powerful unit. Then helmsman, captain, and
sailors appear, and the admiral is shown in authoritative command (3, 4).
Finally, the angle widens and the ship as a whole is seen sailing in a stiff breeze,
rocked by the waves (5, 6).

   The underlying relation which structures the whole description is the
contrast between high and low, introduced by the antithesis in the first line:
Ibn Dīnār is on his ship ('*alā*), the ship is under him (*taḥta*). *Aṭalla* and
tashawwafa in line 2 imply the same relationship, the admiral looking down
over the sea from his vessel as though on horseback. In lines 3 and 4, the
dimensions of high and low are both literal and figurative. The helmsman is in
an elevated position, standing on the ship's castle, like a preacher 'on the peak
of the rostrum' (3), and the men lower their eyes before Ibn Dīnār who is high
above the ranks: *fawqa l-simāṭ*. *Dūna* and *fawqa* reflect '*alā* and *taḥta* in line 1.
The contrast between high and low creates the antithesis between the last two
lines of the *waṣf*. They portray the ship in relation to the elements; first the
wind above, then the sea below. Wording and imagery stress the opposition:
when the south wind blows, its sails are set high, travelling through the sky like
wings (*i'talā...fī l-samā'*, 5); when it is engulfed by the foam it leans over
sharply in the water (*inkafā...fī l-mā'*, 6).

Mihyār

Mihyār's ship description is an extract from a poem he sent to a friend in Nahrawān, Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Hammānī. He expresses his desire to see him, and asks his friend to send a ship so he might undertake the journey to him. This is the ship Mihyār describes in a *waṣf* which has six lines and is thus as long as the extract from Buḥturī (Mihyār al-Daylamī, 1925, vol. III, p. 355):

1. *nashadtuka qarrib lī muʻawwadata l-ṭawā*
        ʻalayhā siwā l-māʼi l-ʻalīqu ḥarāmū
2. *idhā ẓahru ṭirfin lam yuṭiq ghayra fārisin*
        fa-fursānuhā l-mustabṭinūna ziḥāmū
3. *tasarraba shaqqa l-aymi fī l-turbi ṭurqahū*
        lahā zabadun min shiddihā wa-lughāmū
4. *kaʼanna ṣafāʼa l-māʼi yanfariju l-qadhā*
        bihā ʻanhu wajhun ʻuṭṭa ʻanhu lithāmū
5. *mina l-ḥabashiyyāti llawāti idhā ntamat*
        asarra lahā Sāmun wa-aẓhara Ḥāmū
6. *idhā raḥalat bil-shurʻi marrat kaʼannahā*
        jawāfilu min ṭardi l-shamāli naʻāmū

I implore you send me [a mount] used to hunger
which may not partake of fodder other than water.
If a steed's back takes only one rider
her belly can take a whole crowd.
She creeps along like a snake cutting its path through the dust,
emitting froth and foam in her effort [like a camel].
In its purity, the water, cleansed of every speck through her [passing],
is like a face from which a veil has been rent lengthwise.
She is one of the Ethiopian girls who, if their origin be traced,
descend in secret from Sām and in appearance from Ḥām.
When she sets out under sail she moves
like ostriches fleeing the north wind's chase with wings outspread.

The six lines are divided into two parallel sections of three lines each. Lines 1 and 4 depict the ship's relation to water in metaphorical terms: in one case, it is a mysterious beast which feeds only on water; in the other, the water is compared to a face being unveiled, as its surface is stirred up by the passage of the ship. The imagery creates an antithetical relation in its play with the organic and the inorganic: in line 1 the ship is animate, the water inanimate; in line 4 it is the reverse: the water is made animate while the ship, as a background motif, retains its natural form.

A similar relationship links the central lines, 2 and 5. The antitheses in line 2, between exterior and interior (*ẓahr* and *mustabṭin*), and singular and plural (*fāris* and *fursān*), are resumed in the imagery of the corresponding line. The first antithesis provides for a witty Biblical concetto. The vessel is an Ethiopian

girl whose black skin Mihyār ascribes to her ancestor Ḥām, father of the African race, while hidden inside her is a trace of Sām, Ḥām's brother and father of the brown-skinned Semites. The blackness portrays the ship's tarred exterior, while Sām's hidden presence relates to the unstained wood in its interior.[5] The reflection of *ẓahr* and *aẓhara* stresses the relationship to line 2 on a lexical level. The second antithesis, the *muṭābaqa* between singular and plural, reappears in relating al-*ḥabashiyyāt*, a multitude, to Sām and Ḥām, two individuals.

Lines 3 and 6 are related in subject and imagery: both portray the ship's movement, and both compare it to animals. But there is a contrast too, as one line depicts the ship ploughing through the water while the other depicts it sailing before the wind.

Comparison

(a) In his *waṣf*, Buḥturī is concerned with the particular identity of the ship at a particular time. It is very much the flagship of a victorious fleet setting out to deal its enemies a crushing blow, in an encounter the outcome of which is a foregone conclusion. The statuesque picture of the admiral on horseback, the description of military discipline, and the powerful image of the eagle's wings all go to create a martial impression. The poet thus highlights the special nature of the vessel and makes it something unique, an object *sui generis*. The ship's name itself is a guarantee: being called *al-Maymūn*, it has fortune on its side.

Mihyār al-Daylamī's concern is a different one. The particular circumstances that prompted him to the description supply only a background: al-Hammānī, the *mamdūḥ*, is mentioned to give the ship the sacrosanct character which all objects of the *madīḥ* acquire through their connections with the *mamdūḥ* – to make it worthy of poetry in the first place, in other words, not to emphasize its singularity. It is the form of a ship as such that gives rise to Mihyār's imagery: its size, colour, relation to water, the peculiarities of its movement. All is described in such a way that it may apply to any riverboat.

Thus Buḥturī endows his object with the special meaning suggested by the circumstances of its use (it is victorious by nature), in contrast to Mihyār's depiction of the play of forms which detach the object from the specific occasion of its mention.

(b) The second point of difference is almost a necessary consequence of the distinction drawn above. It is the dynamic nature of Buḥturī's *waṣf* as opposed to the static nature of Mihyār's. It is not that Buḥturī portrays more movement than Mihyār, but his imagery conveys a feeling of action. The admiral looking over the sea, the officer shouting commands, the men lowering their eyes in obedience, all contribute to expressing a readiness for war with urgency and proud confidence. Wind and sea even gather in their might to endow the ship with warlike power. So the description draws all elements together to build

a dynamic drive of anticipation and preparedness which is to culminate in the sea battle.

This is not the case in Mihyār's poem. Since he portrays the form of a ship in general terms, he draws attention to its various qualities on an abstract, static level, which can apply to all ships of similar complexion. The forward drive in his *waṣf* is not the result of a gathering, unifying force in the elements of description, but resides in the rhetorical accumulation of attributes which create the need for a conclusion or release. This feature is reminiscent of similar accumulations in the poem on Abū l-Qāsim al-Maghribī.

Nevertheless, Mihyār does depict movement. A. Hamori writes: 'A detailed description is static in the absence of action and it remains static if it only includes such actions as serve to embody a quality that is being described' (1974, p. 244). The qualities Mihyār describes are the peculiar pattern of the ship's movements (3), and its speed (6). Two aspects of the pattern are selected: the vessel's ploughing through the waves, which is expressed in the image of the snake winding its way across the sand, and its heavy advance as the water foams beneath its bow; this is reflected in the froth it emits (*lughām* refers in particular to the froth of camels). Thus the imagery portrays the form of movement in general rather than its significance at any particular time: the description is static.

Line 6 on the ship sailing before the wind resembles Buhturī's line of the same idea, as both poets compare the speeding vessel to birds. The difference between the two, however, is here seen most clearly. In Buhturī's line 5, movement is endowed with the special significance of the occasion: every word conveys not only speed, but power. Anyone who has seen birds of prey circling in the sky at the height of the midday heat will feel the savagery of his image. Placing the warship into this context anticipates the coming battle. The impressionistic judgement of the line is confirmed by the Arabic tradition. Birds of prey are part of the arsenal of imagery for war descriptions: they follow the army to feed on the slain. An example from Abū Tammām:[6]

wa-qad ẓullilat 'iqbānu a'lāmihī ḍuhan
   bi-'iqbāni ṭayrin fī l-dimā'i nawāhilī
The eagles on his flags were overshadowed in the forenoon
by flying eagles that feed on blood.

Mihyār, on the other hand, compares the speed of his ship under sail to a flock of ostriches chased by the wind. The image is as old as Arabic poetry itself[7] and in Mihyār's time would have been an emblem for speed rather than an immediate expression of it. By portraying his ship in these terms, he accentuates the quality of speed as such rather than any particular significance it may imply. Used in this formulaic way, conventional imagery conveys a static impression.

The contrasting dynamics of the two descriptions are reflected in their

structure. The continuous unfolding development of Buḥturī's piece contributes to the impression of build-up and gathering power. He gradually extends the vertical dimension around which his description revolves, from the admiral above his ship, to the vessel rising up into the sky and plunging down into the sea, preparing for the sudden inclusion of the horizontal plane as the battle begins (Buḥturī, 1963, p. 983):

wa-ḥawlaka rakkābūna lil-hawli 'āqarū
    ku'ūsa l-radā min dāri'īna wa-ḥussarī
All around you there are men, clad in armour or bare,
riding on dread and vying to drain the cups of death.

So the continuity of development gives expression to the dynamic nature of the poetry.

The device of sectional parallelism, on the other hand, is ideally suited to Mihyār's static description. It structures the play of forms in a neutral way and so emphasizes the abstract nature of the description. Dualism in itself becomes a source of the static quality of the poetry. This is evidenced in the relation between lines 2 and 5, where Mihyār, in a structural feat, links two double antitheses. The contrasting relationships in the two lines and between the two lines balance each other to create a compactness which is essentially static.

(c) Buḥturī's imagery resembles Mihyār's in its pattern: there is also a metaphorical inversion which transubstantiates the objects of description, making them assume the form of a conventional motif; the ship is compared to a horse (2), its sails are eagles' wings (5), it appears draped in a garment (6). However, there is a difference: Buḥturī's imagery does not transform the objects of description to create an impression of estrangement or dislocation. On the contrary, his similes and metaphors bring to the surface innate qualities in the objects he is describing so that their unique character is stressed, and their identity appears in an intensive light. The image in line 5 is an example as it expresses the martial vigour of the ship and anticipates its role in battle.

In order to capture the difference between the two styles in more general terms, one may start from the premise that poetry is an ordering of experience. In Buḥturī's style, the prime experience is the object with regard to its function in a context requiring praise or blame. His imagery endows it with the meaning that arises from its function and makes this meaning an innate quality with *a priori* existence. Thus the ordering process is directed towards the object: being given meaning, it is assigned a place in a hierarchical universe.[8]

In Mihyār's style, the body of motifs which constitutes the element of poetic expression is made to have *a priori* existence, and the ordering process is directed towards it rather than towards its referent. The latter is a catalyst around which the motifs crystallize densely in a pattern, which does not endow it with a meaning that arises from its function, but rather detaches it as a form.

The way in which the two poets introduce the vessel illustrates this best. In one case, the ship appears in its linguistic reality, its very name embodying the innate quality Buḥturī wishes to express: it is victorious by nature. As a result, it assumes its place within the hierarchy of existence: *tahta l-muẓaffar* ('under the victor', 1). In the other, the ship is so much transformed by metaphor that it is hardly recognizable as such. Around the idea of the vessel's relationship to water, the motifs of the metaphor conglomerate in a humorous configuration of riddle-like character. This configuration is the actual substance of the line. It does not endow the ship with any meaning in Buḥturī's sense, but gives it the gem-like glitter of extraordinariness, uniformly shared by all things in the metaphorical universe (1). This ornamental pattern of traditional motifs around a formal catalyst exemplifies how the poetic ordering process in Mihyār's style is directed towards the heritage of poetry, rather than towards the object of description. Finally, the lexicon of the two passages goes to underline this same difference. In his description, Buḥturī uses the words *ishtiyām* and *nūtī* which rarely occur in poetry but appear to have been contemporary naval terms.[9] Mihyār's lexicon, on the other hand, is drawn exclusively from the traditional poetic stock.

Conclusion

Returning to the panegyric addressed to Abū l-Qāsim, one finds the observations resulting from the comparison with Buḥturī confirmed. The treatment of the theme of tears with which the poem begins reflects the static and formal character of Mihyār's style. The reader is not moved by the suffering the tears imply, nor is it Mihyār's aim to endow the tears with any such meaning. The emotional tone of the piece supplies only the background. It is taken for granted, due to its place in the conventional structure of the *nasīb*: the prevailing mood is one of dejection. Instead, Mihyār, delighting in the mechanics of portrayal, makes the tears subject to patterns of imagery which achieve their effect by combining the known to create the unexpected. The reader is not to sympathize with misery, he is to marvel at the play of forms. The microscopic image in line 3, suspended betwen the *jinās* of *sāribatan* and *tasrubu*, makes the tears independent objects detached, not only from the face of the poet, but from the emotion that creates them. In this removal from time and place resides the static nature of the image:

3.   *sāribatun tarkubu ardāfahā*
         mu'allaqātun ba'du lam tasrubī
Flowing [tears], on the croups of which others mount
which are suspended [from the eye] and have yet to flow.

Mu'allaqāt refers to the tears being suspended (*mu'allaq*) from the eye. Used in this extraneous manner, the word does not place the tears into a human context; it dehumanizes the eye.

There is a *nasīb* by Abū Tammām in which the theme of tears appears in a manner which differs fundamentally from Mihyār's treatment.[10] The piece is one of Abū Tammām's perfect poetic creations and cannot be done justice here without deviating from the argument. I wish only to illustrate how the aesthetic foundations of the earlier style differ from those of the later (1951, vol. I, p. 356):

1. *saʻidat gharbatu l-nawā bi-Suʻadī*
      fa-hiya ṭawʻu l-ithāmi wal-injādī
2. *fāraqatnā fa-lil-madāmiʻi anwāʼ-*
      un sawārin ʻalā l-khudūdi ghawādī
3. *kulla yawmin yasfaḥna damʻan ṭarīfan*
      yumtarā muznuhu bi-shawqin tilādī
4. *wāqiʻan bil-khudūdi wal-ḥarru minhū*
      wāqiʻun bil-qulūbi wal-akbādī

Remote destinations are well pleased with Suʻād;
for obediently she travels to Tihāma and Najd.
She's abandoned us, and rain pours from the tear-ducts
travelling night and day over cheeks.
Each day they shed new tears from clouds
dissolved into rain by ancient sorrow.
They drop on the cheeks but their heat
drops on liver and heart.

In a psychological manner, the imagery of the piece explores the emotion of suffering. The metaphor in line 2 does not detach the tears from their emotional context. Their travelling day and night reflects the aimless wanderings of the abandoned spirit, and provides a sombre counterpoint to the distant journeys of his beloved. Timeless continuity of suffering is the subject of the next line: the image of *yumtarā muznuhu* embodies the continued presence of grief which transcends time, the passive form of the verb expressing the helplessness of the individual faced with his affliction. The concluding line is masterly as the imagery suddenly enters the inner sphere, making the tears on the cheeks burn liver and heart. They reflect the very essence of suffering and their meaning is dramatically heightened.

While Abū Tammām explores the prescribed mood of the *nasīb* to its core, Mihyār takes the emotional tone as a background to configurations of motifs upon the formal aspect of tears, practically denuding them of their sensual value while delighting in the play of forms. The difference between the two pieces resembles the difference between the two ship descriptions. Buḥturī, like Abū Tammām, endows the object with an innate meaning. In both writers the poetic ordering process is directed towards it, their imagery subservient to this aim.

One must conclude that Mihyār's style represents a form of poetry which is fundamentally different from the art of his early Abbasid predecessors. It exists

in its own right and cannot be considered a mere imitation of earlier models. To judge it on the basis of an aesthetic derived from the work of the ninth century will result in a distorted picture. Shawqī Ḍayf's criticism of Mihyār's poetry is, I think, the result of such an approach. He feels that Arabic poetry was stagnating in Mihyār's time, and that the latter's works are an unsuccessful, even unpoetic, attempt at literary imitation without depth and originality. In concluding his chapter on Mihyār he writes (1969, pp. 373f):

We do not criticize Mihyār and other poets [of his time] for their use of traditional images and inherited concepts in the panegyric; we criticize them for their inability to add to these images and concepts a wealth of ornament rooted in intellectual and emotional creativity (*tharwatan zakhrafiyyatan mina l-taṣnī'i l-'aqlī wal-ḥissī*) as was the case with Abū Tammām.

The poetic qualities he is searching for, the kind of depth, thought, or musicality, belong to a style which Mihyār's work does not represent. The merit of his poetry is different. It represents an expansion of the combinatory potential inherent in the panegyric form, and observed in the discussion of the two poems by Buḥturī. The multitude of motifs of the literary tradition are crystallized in ever new patterns of infinite variety. Seen from this angle, the length of Mihyār's poems, severely criticized by Ḍayf, is, perhaps, explicable. Their comprehensive dimensions create the breadth for the numerous motifs in variation. With its many concurrent thematic relationships, the panegyric on Abū l-Qāsim supports his interpretation. It is of such richness, intricacy, and fineness of construction, that it has a beauty of its own reminiscent of an oriental rug in its complexity of design. Whether one likes it is finally not a question of judgement but of taste.

Abū l-'Atāhiya

The early Abbasid writer Abū l-'Atāhiya was admired for his panegyrics and love poetry, but was most celebrated for his *zuhdiyyāt* (see Glossary). To the study of some of these, this chapter is devoted.

Like the panegyric *qaṣīda*, the *zuhdiyya* expresses a thematic canon from which every work of its type derives its elements. The canon of the *zuhdiyya* is somewhat more limited in scope, and the octastich cited in the appendix as text IV contains all the major themes of the genre. This poem is the main point of reference throughout the chapter, and I will refer to it as the Paradigm. The first three lines recall two *aṭlāl/nasīb* topoi discussed above. There is the word *bahja* which refers to beauty as it falls victim to the passing of time. In the panegyric on Mutawakkil, discussed in chapter two,[1] Buḥturī uses the same word in the same context:

yā dimnatan jādhabathā l-rīḥu bahjatahā
    tabītu tanshuruhā ṭawran wa-taṭwīhā
O campsite remnants whose beauty the wind vies to tear away
spending the night between concealing them and laying them bare.

The other is the topos of unity and division (*jamʿ* and *tafrīq*), which was found to be a structuring element in Buḥturī's *qaṣīda* on Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Thaghrī (see above pp. 29f). Again, Fate is the divider, but here is intended not the separation of lovers but the separation caused by death. In the following three lines, the analogy with the panegyric poem seems to disappear. Where a *madīḥ* might have begun, where a sovereign might have been urged to restrict the painful workings of Fate, there is the praise of God and the admonishment of mankind. Many a *madīḥ* ends by voicing hopes for a future of prosperity and well-being under the sovereign. It is as if there was a contrasting echo to this in the final couplet of the Paradigm as Abū l-'Atāhiya confronts himself and his readers with the futility of the hopes entertained by man.

This quick survey suggests a kind of relationship between *zuhdiyya* and panegyric *qaṣīda*, both in their structure and in their themes. In the first part of this chapter, I try to verify this impression by tracing the origins of the *zuhdiyya* canon as it appears in the works of Abū l-'Atāhiya. In this way I hope

to place the *zuhdiyya* in the context of the literary tradition, and define its relationship to the panegyric.

Zuhdiyya canon and pre-Islamic poetry

The *zuhdiyya* preaches renunciaton of transient, sensual pleasures so that man's soul may remain pure and he may be rewarded with eternal bliss in the hereafter. In order to make man realize that the other world is his true destination, the *zuhdiyya* admonishes him by reminding him of the inevitability of his death. The canon thus centres around a few, often repeated, principles which I will try to summarize (the Arabic words in parentheses convey the corresponding concepts in the *Dīwān*).

The world (*al-dunyā*) is full of deceit (*ghurūr*) to which man falls victim because of his ignorance (*jahl*). As a result, he goes astray (*ḍall*), is subject to greed (*ḥirṣ*) for wealth and stature, and so humiliates himself (*adhalla*) by committing acts of evil (*sharr*). He acquires wealth through the misery of the poor[2] and spends his time in laughter and amusement (*maraḥ, ghibṭa*). On the Day of Reckoning he will be cast into hell-fire (Abū l-'Atāhiya, 1969, p. 196, lines 6ff). The one, however, who is not deceived by the temptations of this world, who is satisfied with little (*qunū'*), and does not strive to acquire more because he knows that God provides him with all he needs (*rizq*), is in possession of knowledge (*'ilm*) which will guide him (*hudā*) to the only righteous life a man can lead: a life of piety in the fear of God (*taqwā*), spent in doing good works (*khayr*). He will triumph in the end (*fawz*), and leave the 'house of impermanence' (*dār al-zawāl*) for the 'abode of eternity' (*dār al-qarār*). Between the two extremes, between *qunū'* and *ḥirṣ*, *jahl* and *'ilm*, *khayr* and *sharr*, *taqwā* and *maraḥ*, lies the soul of man. An easy prey to sinful passions (*hawā*), it is not strong enough to abandon the world and wavers between sensuous temptation and fear of damnation. Incessantly it must be admonished (*wa'ẓ*) and reminded of death (*tadhkīr*). Sudden eruptions of disaster, sudden painful bereavements, cemetery descriptions, burial scenes, remembrances of the countless numbers who have perished without trace, all go to confront the soul with its inevitable end. More than anything else, these sombre passages characterize Abū l-'Atāhiya's *zuhdiyyāt*.

Central to the ethos is also the relationship between God and Creation, even though less space is devoted to it. The following line summarizes the view presented in the *zuhdiyyāt* (ibid., p. 292, line 9):

wal-khalqu min khalqi rabbin qad tadabbarahū
    kullun fa-musta'badun wa-llāhu mawlāhū
Mankind stems from the creation of a lord who devised it;
all is enslaved and God is the master.

'All is enslaved', man's soul is *muṣarrafa mudabbara* (ibid., p. 143, line 2), 'manipulated and regulated', Kings and beggars are equally laid low by the vicissitudes of Fate; God alone commands power in the world.

All these themes are as familiar in Christian Europe as in the Islamic Near East and it is not surprising that they share a common origin. In his *Islamstudien*, C. H. Becker traces the history of one formula found both in medieval Europe and in the *zuhdiyyāt*.[3] It is the rhetorical question (borrowed in this form from a medieval German students' song), *ubi sunt qui ante nos in mundo fuere*? The answer, of course, is that they have all perished, have turned into mud and dust, are extinguished and forgotten as though they had never been. Becker traces the formula from Shakespeare and the European Middle Ages, and from contemporary Cameroon and medieval Islam back to Hellenistic Alexandria, suggesting that it entered the Arabic literary tradition through Christian preachers. As an example, he quotes a passage with the same topos by the pre-Islamic poet, 'Adiyy b. Zayd, who appears to have been a Christian. It is likely that other motifs of the *zuhdiyya* canon can be traced back to early Christian, and ultimately Biblical and pre-Biblical forms. The literature of ancient Babylonia abounds in pessimistic contemplation of the transience of life, the imagery of which is still echoed in the *Dīwān* of Abū l-'Atāhiya. It follows that the *zuhdiyyāt* are an Islamic version of a certain kind of Wisdom (*ḥikma*) literature, the elements of which are much older than Islam.

In the Arabic context, the occurrences of the themes in question are not limited to the *zuhdiyyāt*, nor do they first appear in the works of Abū l-'Atāhiya. The ideas and, indeed, many words and phrases characteristic of the *zuhdiyya* canon are also found frequently in the Qur'ān and the early religious sermon (*khuṭba*). The phrase *qurratu 'ayn* in line 6 of the Paradigm, for instance, appears to make reference to Quranic formulations such as these (Qur'ān 32/17):

fa-lā ta'lamu nafsun mā ukhfiya lahum
    min qurrati a'yunin jazā'an bi-mā kānū ya'malūn
Now no person knows that delights of the eye
are kept hidden [in reserve] for them – as a reward for their [good] deeds[4]

Of particular interest in this context, however, are the antecedents of the *zuhdiyya* canon in pre-Islamic poetry. An example is found in the famous *mujamhara* (see Glossary) of 'Abīd b. al-Abraṣ (for text and translation, see Lyall, 1913, pp. 5f):

fa-kullu dhī ni'matin makhlūsun
    wa-kullu dhī amalin makdhūbū
wa-kullu dhī ibilin mawrūthun
    wa-kullu dhī salabin maslūbū
wa-kullu dhī ghaybatin ya'ūbu
    wa-ghā'ibu l-mawti lā ya'ūbū

All that is pleasant must be snatched away,
and everyone that hopes must find his hopes belied;
Every master of camels hands them on to an heir,
and everyone that gathers spoil is spoiled in turn.

Every one that is absent may come again,
but the absent in death returns no more.

These lines are so reminiscent of Abū l-ʿAtāhiya[5] that, were it not for the remainder of the *qaṣīda*, one might be hard put to assign them to a period. They contain everything: the general pessimism, the frustrated hopes, the ruined happiness, the sinister finality of death; and all is expressed in the repetitive sequences so frequent in the *zuhdiyyāt*.

The extract figures in a prolonged section (11–24) of general considerations on the nature of life in the style of ancient Semitic Wisdom poetry. But, however similar these verses may be to the *zuhdiyyāt*, they are followed by a section on the poet's camel and horse in a manner characteristic of the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda*, and far removed from the works of Abū l-ʿAtāhiya in its violence. In this context, the Wisdom section represents an expression of the pre-Islamic ethos celebrated in the ancient *qaṣīdas* in general. This is illustrated by the organic way in which the central part develops out of the *aṭlāl*, and by the conclusion of the *qaṣīda*.

The *aṭlāl* section of the poem is a gloomy one: there is no idyllic portrayal of plants and animals peacefully living on the ancient site. It focuses on the dispersal and destruction of its former inhabitants; the wild animals returning convey a feeling of dread, and the poet is afflicted with 'the stain of hoariness'. After four lines which reflect the flow of tears in varied imagery, the *qaṣīda* returns to the themes of the *aṭlāl*:

taṣbū fa-annā laka l-taṣābī
    annā wa-qad rāʿaka l-mashību
wa-in taku ḥālat wa-ḥuwwila ahluhā
    fa-lā badīʿun wa-lā ʿajību
aw-yaku aqfara minhā jawwuhā
    wa-ʿādahā l-maḥlu wal-jadūbu
fa-kullu dhī niʿmatin makhlūsun ...

Thou thinkest of youth and love; and how canst thou dally –
how, when grey hairs have already warned thee?
If these lands be changed and their people vanisht,
they are not the first nor is there cause to marvel;
Or if the broad strath be desolate of them,
and Famine and Drought have come there to dwell –
All that is pleasant must be snatched away...

This extract is followed by the lines previously quoted, and it is obvious that they are a response to the gloom of the *aṭlāl*. The sorrow evoked by the ancient ruins is the starting point of these considerations on the transience of existence. The vicissitudes of Fate are themselves an admonishment for man as they remind him of the true nature of life: instability, transience, and injustice. Contemplating human destiny in general helps the poet to overcome his personal grief.

In chapter one, I have described the journey (*raḥīl*) section of the *qaṣīda* as the embodiment of the heroic model, and the transition to it from the *aṭlāl/nasīb* as a reassertion of the heroic virtues in the face of suffering and lost love: the heroic image grows out of, and in defiance of, the confrontation with death in the *aṭlāl/nasīb*. The same applies to 'Abīd's *qaṣīda* as the *riḥla* follows on the *ḥikma* section. Despite suffering and death, despite the destructive forces that govern life, the poet remains courageous in his struggle, undefeated by the odds. His camel and horse, in their excellence and their plight, picture the virtue of his life. The note of gloom on which the poem starts remains, however, until the end. The simile of the eagle reveals in the poet himself a power to kill like the cruellest of fates. And yet, the image not only portrays the unrelenting vigour with which the hero slays his enemies, it also refers to his own ultimate defeat: surely, some day, he will himself be struck down like the fox and be a prey to death. The sinister end thus aligns itself with the dark tone of the whole *qaṣīda*. Significantly, the only image of undisturbed beauty it contains develops out of the sequence on the poet's tears. As image follows image, from the 'water-skin full of holes' (7), to the 'runnel under the shade of date palms' with 'its water murmuring as it runs alone' (10),[6] memories of happier moments reappear to mingle with the sorrow of the present. But the vision, evoked behind the flow of tears, is there only to be cut by a sarcastic question (11).

The search for the background of the *zuhdiyya* canon thus leads into the world of the ancient Arabic *qaṣīda*, a world removed from the ethos of the *zuhdiyyāt*. In 'Abīd's poem, man's ultimate destiny is not the hereafter, nor will God redress the injustice of this life: He only appears as a spiritual support to the solitary fighter who, like the pre-Islamic *ṣu'lūk* (see Glossary), rejects the companionship of unworthy men to rely only on himself (23). So the poem sees human existence in terms of this world only. It describes man's bitter struggle and grieves over his inevitable defeat in death.

'Abīd's work is no exception in its description of man's fate. It may be unusually pessimistic, but many pre-Islamic *qaṣīdas* contain parts in which the transience of life is portrayed in similar terms.[7] Mostly, such lines supply the background against which heroic determination and recklessness are thrown into relief in deliberate challenge to man's ineluctable destiny.

In the following pages, I hope to show that the *ḥikma* in 'Abīd's *mujamhara* – namely these general statements about the nature of life which anticipate the *zuhdiyyāt* – contains the 'theoretical foundation' of heroic existence. To have understood the *wā'iẓāt al-dahr* ('the admonishments of destiny', see Bustānī, 1966, p. 252), to derive from these the principles of one's own behaviour, is *'ilm* ('knowledge') in the ancient Arab sense.

A poem by 'Adiyy b. Zayd should illustrate this further (see Bustānī, 1966, pp. 251f) just because he gives expression to his belief in an afterlife, while adhering to the pre-Islamic ethos in the form and content of his work. After a short *aṭlāl* section, the poet is confronted by an *'ādhila*, a reproacher, who chides him for the intemperance of his grief.[8] There follows a long section in

which the poet counters her criticism and justifies himself by pointing to the weakness of the human condition (6, 7), and by showing that he is aware of the transience of life and of the reality of heaven and hell. He states that as a result, he has restrained himself and curbed his desires (9). He ends the passage with a vision of his death, which may strike him 'on that very day or the forenoon of the next' (10). He concludes:

> . . . *fa-trukī ʿitābī*
>   *fa-innī muṣliḥun ghayra mufsidī*
> . . . so stop reproaching me
> for I am a righteous man, not an evil doer.

As in ʿAbīd's *qaṣīda*, the vision of death develops out of the situation of the *nasīb*, and it becomes clear how the awareness of mortality is the source of virtuous behaviour. That is why such awareness can be a defence against the reproaches of the *ʿādhila*.[9]

In line 16, ʿAdiyy resumes his defence by pointing to his experience and old age and, as if to prove it, devotes the remaining twenty lines of the *qaṣīda* to general advice on virtuous behaviour within a social context. The poem ends with a return to the anticipation of his death:

> *sa-aksibu majdan aw taqūmu nawāʾiḥun*
>   *ʿalayya bi-laylin nādibātun wa-taghtadī*
> *ynuḥna ʿalā maytin wa-aʿlanna rannatan*
>   *tuʾarriqu ʿaynay kulli bākin wa-musʿadī*

I shall reap glory, or wailing women will attend
to me, lamenting at night and in the early hours,
Bemoaning a dead person and letting go screams
which rob the sleep of all, distressed or fortunate.

But this time it is different: while in line 12 he saw himself abandoned in the wilds, buried or unburied, here his death is greatly bemoaned in public so that everyone, far and wide, will grieve, knowing that a great man has been lost.[10] The build-up towards this end lies in the many virtues and items of wisdom which the poet takes possession of by enumerating them thus in his poem. These are the source of the self-confident ending in which he sees himself either as a reaper of glory, or as one of the famous and revered dead.

This kind of poetic development has little to do with the *zuhdiyyāt*: in pre-Islamic fashion, the *qaṣīda* appears here as the ritual custodian of societal values. As in ʿAbīd's poem, the virtue that is born out of the knowledge of death acts out its function and achieves its fulfilment in the context of this life. God and the hereafter, even though more prominent in ʿAdiyy's poem, remain in the background; in no way does the poetic development lead up to them as in some of the *zuhdiyyāt*. ʿAbīd's *qaṣīda*, though, tends towards the tragic aspect of *muruwwa* when, taken to its extreme, it turns against society and finds itself

only in the most solitary fighting spirit. The initial perception which gives rise to this ethos is a particularly sinister view of life. ʿAdiyy's poem is more temperate. Virtue does not reach its apotheosis in facing a final tragedy, after which one is left lying dead in the wilds. Its function consists of maintaining social continuity through the upkeep of *sunna* (see Labīd, *Muʿallaqa*, line 81, in Bustānī, 1966, p. 112), the social customs and traditions. The key phrase in ʿAdiyy's *qaṣīda* is in line 18:

fa-nafsaka fa-ḥfaẓhā ʿani l-ghayyi wal-radā
   matā tughwihā yaghwa lladhī bika yaqtadī
As for your soul, preserve it from sin and perdition:
if you mislead it, those guided by you will go astray.

Here the social responsibility of the individual is unmistakably expressed: the man of virtue is an example to others, his uprightness is not only a support but also an instruction for those who follow him. This strong sense of social cohesion and continuity dominates the whole *qaṣīda*. The awareness of death and the virtuous stand taken in the face of it, lead ʿAdiyy to the reaffirmation of a belief in human society, a conclusion opposed to that in ʿAbīd's poem. In both works, though, the incentive which dominates the heroic resolve is not the threat or reward of the hereafter. The resolve is directed towards this world, to culminate in the apotheosis of a solitary tragedy, or in the glory reaped by protecting and preserving human society.

The formulae on the transience of life, which anticipate the works of Abū l-ʿAtāhiya, also form part of the strand of Arabic poetry most concerned with death: the elegy, the *rithāʿ*. Again, the arbitrary rule of death provides the background against which the virtuous struggle of the deceased is thrown into relief. Examples of this are contained in the elegy which Suʿda Bint al-Shamardal, an otherwise unknown poetess, composed in memory of her brother Asʿad (al-Asmaʿī, 1967, p. 101). The poem opens rather like a *nasīb* with a section on her tears and grief which keep her awake at night. Like ʿAbīd, she seeks consolation in speculating on the nature of human life. Here the formulae reappear: awareness of the workings of Fate is knowledge (*ʿilm*), the dead of the past are a warning (*ʿibra*) for those still living. But knowledge is not sufficient to overcome her sorrow:

wa-laqad badā lī qablu fī-mā qad maḍā
   wa-ʿalimtu dhāka law anna ʿilman yanfaʿū
anna l-ḥawāditha wal-manūna kilayhimā
   lā yuʿtibāni wa-law bakā man yajzaʿū
wa-laqad ʿalimtu bi-anna kulla muʾakhkharin
   yawman sabīla l-awwalīna sa-yatbaʿū
wa-laqad ʿalimtu law anna ʿilman nāfiʿun
   an kullu ḥayyin dhāhibun fa-muwaddaʿū
a-fa-laysa fī man qad maḍā a-liya ʿibratun
   halakū wa-qad ayqantu an lan yarjiʿū

Past events showed me before
and I do know – were knowledge but to some avail –
That neither fleeting Time nor Death
relent, though the bereaved may cry.
I know that some day all those last in line
will follow those who went before.
And I do know – were knowledge but of use –
that all who live depart and are bidden farewell.
Am I not warned by those who passed away?
They've perished and I'm certain that there's no return.

She then proceeds to celebrate the memory of her brother who, in accordance with the demands of virtue *jāda bi-nafsihi*, sacrificed his life on the battlefield. A first mention of the circumstances of his death is followed by a gnomic line which revolves around the notions of *jamʿ* and *tafrīq* and, in its form, anticipates the Paradigm (1–3) and Buḥturī's *nasīb* in text I (3):

kam min jamīʿi l-shamli multaʾimi l-hawā
    kānū kadhālika qablahum fa-taṣaddaʿū
How many [bands] closely united and of joint intent
were like them before and found themselves scattered?

In the remainder of the poem, she depicts his noble character in sections which alternate with the grief-stricken mention of his death. These alternations highlight the absurdity of life against which the hero struggles only to be defeated and from which he derives his very *raison d'être*. He is courageous, reliable, skilful, and eloquent, only to fall as fortune senselessly turns against him (13–19). He protects his companions in all adversity, alone he penetrates isolated spots of danger in the darkness of night and suddenly faces nothing but the well-trodden path of *al-manāya*, ('death', 20–23). This paradox, highlighted a third time in the closing lines of the elegy (25–30), is the source of the unconsolable grief of the poetess; it is also the source of the hero's glory. Awareness of death as a senseless but inevitable termination of the hero's life (*ḥayāt al-fatā*) – awareness of a paradox which there is no hope of resolving – this is a pre-condition of virtuous existence.

It appears natural that a message of such cardinal importance should also be laid down in those works specially designed to instruct, the *waṣāyā* poems (see Glossary). A closer look at one such work will conclude the search for the origins of the *zuhdiyya* canon in the ancient poetic tradition. It is a short work in which Ibn al-Ḥakam al-Thaqafī instructs his son, Badr, on the precepts of a good life (see Nöldeke, 1961, p. 1). He imparts *ʿilm*, knowledge of the tenets of *muruwwa*, which centres on the awareness of death. The first section of the work contains general rules of conduct, urging Badr to fulfil his social dues so that he may avoid *lawm*, the criticism of those who shamelessly expose the shortcomings of others. The long middle passage (10–19) presents the young man with a description of the tragic nature of life which, in its pessimism,

recalls the *ḥikma* in 'Abīd's *qaṣīda*. It also anticipates the gloomy portrayals of life in this world (*al-ḥayāt al-dunyā*) in Abū l-'Atāhiya's *Dīwān*. Lines 10 and 12 express the same idea as lines 18 and 22 in 'Abīd's poem, and the parallels to the *zuhdiyyāt* are too numerous to mention. Similarities are shown in the following two lines (Abū l-'Atāhiya, 1969, p. 237):

wa-takharraba l-dunyā fa-lā
bu'sun yadūmu wa-lā na'īmū
The world is doomed to destruction; neither
shall misery endure nor happiness

kullu ḥayyin kitābuhu ma'lūmu
lā shaqā'un wa-lā na'īmun yadūmū
The fate of all that lives is fully known;
neither suffering nor happiness shall endure.

Mariḥ in line 22 recalls *maraḥ* in the Qur'ān (see Qur'ān 17/37, 31/18) and the *zuhdiyya* Paradigm. Again, the root has a pejorative meaning. It denotes the foolish jubilation of those who have not understood the meaning of true knowledge and are thus unable to fulfil the duties of manhood and face their death in battle. As in the Qur'ān, *maraḥ* is the carelessness that springs from forgetting the essentials of life. Islamic and pagan tradition meet in the concept of this word.

In the middle part of his *waṣiyya*, Ibn al-Ḥakam al-Thaqafī describes to his son *rayb al-dahr* ('the arbitrariness of Fate'), of which a man must be aware at all times if he is to lead a life of virtue. Otherwise he will be overcome, his determination, his steadfastness, his power will vanish and he will go under, defeated by his own weakness. As in 'Abīd's *qaṣīda*, the sombre sequence is concluded on a warlike note: when faced with the hardship of battle in which man's fate is most in balance, he must be strong, fearless and resolute. Whether he will be victorious or die, he will achieve his glory. Like the conclusion of 'Abīd's poem, the last line of the *waṣiyya* also portrays the horse as symbol and model of the hero's valour:[11]

wal-khaylu ajwaduhā l-munā-
hibu 'inda kabbatihā l-azūmū
The best steeds are those that race
each other as they attack, and bite with vehemence.

Conclusion

The preceding pages have shown how the ancient Arabic *qaṣīda* derives *muruwwa* from the realization of mortality. It is the challenging self-assertion of one faced with the certainty of his undoing. This is the significance of the sudden resolution with which the hero leaves the site of the *aṭlāl*, mounting his camel to ride off into the wilderness. Mortality, however, is also the primary

experience of the *zuhdiyyāt* which describe it in terms of the pagan tradition. But the conclusion drawn from the contemplation of human frailty and transience differs from that of the ancients: not self-assertion, but humility, not fearlessness but fear of God, not *muruwwa* but *dīn* – therein lies the *waʿẓ* (see Glossary), the admonishment of the *zuhdiyya*. In order to understand more fully the difference between the ethos of the *zuhdiyya* and that of the ancient poetry, one must consider the social context within which they played their roles. The hero of many pre-Islamic *qaṣīdas* carries a social responsibility. Part of his glory consists in defending the tribal rights with tongue and sword, and in maintaining a balance of welfare among its members by caring for the needy (*al-arāmil wal-yatāmā*)[12] with his generosity. In that sense, the *qaṣīda*, which incites its listeners to fulfil the demands of virtue, is a custodian of social values.

As illustrated in ʿAbīd's poem, there is yet another type of heroic character praised by the ancient poetry. He is typified by the *ṣuʿlūk*, the solitary hunter, a proud man of indomitable courage, who despises others because of their weakness and moral insufficiency. The intransigence of his *muruwwa* has led him away from society. The ideals presented in many ancient poems are a mixture of both types: as in Bint al-Shamardal's elegy, the hero will be the protector of the community, but he will also brave danger alone. It is important to remember that both heroic characters define their identity in relation to society: the one will be at its very centre, the other at its very periphery.

The social ethos of the *zuhdiyya*, however, is different. In the Abbasid state, power, and as a result, social responsibility, were in the hands of the ruling classes and their bureaucracy. Those at the lower end of the hierarchy, the peasants and the urban proletariat, had no share in the affairs of government. An individual of this class had no social responsibility comparable to that of the members of an independent tribal unit whose protection and nourishment depended, to a greater or lesser extent, on everyone. The majority of the population were poor and, in its contrast with the ancient poetry and the royal panegyric, the *zuhdiyya* is a reflecton of their plight. With its emphasis on the virtue of poverty and the futility of this life, it presented a challenge to those living in luxury and a consolation and encouragement to the destitute. They were made to feel that the enrichment of those in power would serve them nothing: on the Day of Judgement, the balance would be set right, those who had suffered in this life would find redress, those who had wallowed in its pleasures would be punished. This appears (a) in the picture of man which Abū l-ʿAtāhiya presents, and (b) in the direct attacks he makes against those in power:

(a) The ancient Arab ethos saw the value of an act determined by its immediate effect. As long as it coincided with the principles of virtue, tempestuous spontaneity was heroic, whether as ruinous generosity or death defiance. In the *zuhdiyya*, the ultimate outcome determines the value of an act: because of

death, all attempts at leaving an imprint on his world are futile. Only *taqwā* ('piety'), has meaning since it leads to paradise – man's ultimate reward. The following example stands for many others. In one of the *Ḥamāsa* poems, Ta'abbaṭa Sharran boasts of the cunning with which he put his enemies to shame (Abū Tammām, 1967, p. 74). This is the first line:

idhā l-mar'u lam yaḥtal wa-qad jadda jidduhu
*   aḍā'a wa-qāsā amruhū wa-huwa mudbirū*
If a man does not use his cunning when faced with danger
he loses, his cause suffers and he must retreat.

In Abū l-'Atāhiya's *Dīwān*, all *iḥtiyāl* ('cunning') is rendered futile by the hour of death (1969, p. 226, line 13):

wa-ḥtiyālu l-mar'i ta'tī 'alayhi
*   sā'atun taqṭa'u kulla ḥtiyālī*
A man's cunning shall be overcome
by an hour that will cut through all cunning.

If the pre-Islamic hero is thus depicted as *active* in the face of death, man in the *zuhdiyya* is the *passive* victim of the forces of destiny. All he can do is lead a pious life, be satisfied with poverty and wait for the Day of Judgement because to harbour any hopes in this world, and work for their fulfilment, is an act of vanity which may ruin the soul. The central maxim of the *zuhdiyya* summarizes the conclusion (*ibid.*, p. 160, line 10):

laysa zādun siwā l-tuqā
There is no sustenance save piety.

This phrase elucidates the human condition in the view of *zuhd* poetry: contrary to the pre-Islamic hero who defines his identity in view of society, man in the *zuhdiyya* derives his sense of purpose only from God. Society is secondary. Thus the social insignificance of the poor is redeemed, and the high standing of those in power shown to be of no consequence. Kings or beggars, they share the same fate and will be judged by the same law. The struggle of the rich for wealth and power is in vain; it only brings about their own damnation. (b) In a number of poems, Abū l-'Atāhiya is explicit in his attack on the ruling establishment; among them is a short, rather humorous work, which he claims to be his *waṣiyya*. He recommends a simple life in a small room or mosque, far removed from the crowd, feeding only on bread and water, 'contemplating those who passed away over the centuries',[13] as better than the hours spent in the 'high palaces', since their reward will be hell-fire. The awareness of mortality again determines the ethos: since nothing lasts and, since God will deal out punishment and reward, a hidden, anonymous existence in poverty and quietude is preferable to the luxury and glory of the palaces.

In its emphasis on the passivity of man, the futility of his actions and the irrelevance of his social position, the *zuhdiyya* not only differs from the ancient

qaṣīda, but also presents a sharp antithesis to the panegyric poems. These were dedicated to those responsible for the protection of society: the notables and the Caliphs. Since their position was closely linked to their social function, and the continuity of the state depended on their valour, the virtues of *muruwwa*, transformed into the virtues of just government, became the liturgical epithets of their power.

The central point of difference between *zuhdiyya* and panegyric is that the latter portrays the King as victorious in his struggle against Fate, while the former denies man any power whatsoever to confront it. The *madīḥ* praises the glory of the just order created by the King, while the *zuhdiyya* points to the vanity of all the works of man. The *madīḥ* praises the King as the pillar of society, the representative of divine power, the fulfiller of all hopes and needs, whereas the *zuhdiyya* sees in him nothing but a mortal deceived by the illusion of his power. All hopes entertained in this world are ultimately frustrated and relief, security, and bliss only attained in the hereafter through God.

A return to the Paradigm thus confirms the contrasting analogies to the panegyric noticed above (see text IV). The first three lines were found reminiscent of the *aṭlāl-nasīb* section. Indeed, the work sets out to present the *'ilm* ('knowledge') of the ancient poetry, which is also the subject of the *aṭlāl/nasīb*: the realization of mortality. As has been shown, the formulae that describe the treachery of *al-dunyā* originate in the Wisdom passages of the old poetry which portray the transience of life. The next three lines contain the conclusion that arises from the awareness of death: it is not the resolution of *muruwwa*, nor the refuge sought with the power of sacred Kingship, but the precepts of religion as they are presented in the Qur'ān and in the early *khuṭba* (see Glossary). The analogies to Qur'ānic language in the praise of God and the mention of paradise, heighten the religious feeling of the lines. The topos of the concluding couplet also has a long past in the poetic tradition. The ancient bard was ready to meet his death 'on this day or the forenoon of the next' (*fī l-yawmi aw fī ḍuḥā l-ghadi*, 'Adiyy b. Zayd as quoted in Bustānī, 1966, p. 251). But the spirit of Abū l-'Atāhiya's lines is different: the realization is not an incentive to fulfil the duties and demands of this life so as to achieve glory, nor is man to expect fulfilment of his hopes from a royal guarantor of continuous prosperity who will overrule Fate; he is to renounce the world in order to face his judgement after death and achieve the triumph of paradise.

Analysis

The next specimen (text V) provides some illustration of a number of points made in the first part of this chapter. It has been chosen as an example of Abū l-'Atāhiya's method of poetic construction, and will be analysed in some detail in the following pages. The poem also seemed suitable because, with thirty-eight lines, it corresponds in length to Buḥturī's panegyrics treated in chapter two. One can thus make some comparative references.

The work begins with the *aṭlāl* motif as the poet, in traditional pose, questions the ruins of a deserted site. Only the foundations of the dwelling places remain and their former inhabitants have disappeared (1–3). As in 'Abīd's *mujamhara*, the spectacle of the *aṭlāl* gives rise to reflections on the transience of life. Six lines (4–9) describe how Fate, like an all-powerful enemy, routs all those who dare oppose it and finally destroys them at will. As an example of Fate's power over man, the next nine lines (10–18) depict the death of a King in humiliating detail. From being proudly surrounded by cavalry guards, 'hoped for and feared', pleased with his power and standing (cf. *maraḥ*, 12), he is seen succumbing to death, his limbs slackening, his corpse washed and prepared for the grave amidst the tears of wailing women. The contrast to the panegyric here is most deliberate. Instead of the King defeating Fate, he is crushed by it, a weak and self-deluded figure. Lines 19 and 20 conclude the scene with reflections of a general nature, and in line 21, the second half of the poem begins. It contains a funerary passage of the type alluded to above (see p. 72). The poet starts with a vision of his own grave (21–4) the description of which leads him to remember all those who have already been interred. Repetitive accumulations evoke their number, expressing the despair of those left behind to witness death brutally suppressing all human activity. Lines 34 and 35 conclude with the contemplation of man's mortality. This long *wa'ẓ* on the inescapable terrors of death paves the way for the last three lines. They disclose the only manner in which man may overcome the vale of tears in which he lives: to be aware of the existence of God and the final judgement, and to spend his life in doing good. As in the Paradigm, the lines that touch on religion make allusion to the Qur'ān (Qur'ān 39/9, see also 6/50, 13/16, etc.):

36.   *la-'amruka mā stawā fī l-amri*
        'ālimuhū wa-jāhiluhū
By your life! Not equal in this matter
are the knowing and the ignorant!
hali stawā lladhīna ya'lamūna wa-lladhīna lā ya'lamūna
Are those who know and those who do not know equal?

The knowing and the ignorant are not the same; the one will ultimately prosper, the other must suffer.

Gnomic couplets

In the previous chapters it was found that, in their subdivisions, the *qaṣīdas* of Buḥturī and Mihyār al-Daylamī exhibit some common features, namely a degree of symmetry in the arrangement of lines and themes. Furthermore, in Mihyār's panegyric, as well as those of Buḥturī, the subsections, in mutual reflection, revolve around the central lines of the poems (see above, pp. 28, 38, 50). These characteristics are also found in this *zuhdiyya* of Abū l-'Atāhiya.
    The first indication of the poem's overall structure are three gnomic couplets

located at strategic points (see diagram 1). The first (I) is in lines 4 and 5. It draws a general conclusion from the desolate site of the *aṭlāl*, and prepares the sequence in lines 6–9, which illustrates the invincible power of Fate. The phrase *mu'raḍatan maqātiluhu* links it morphologically to line 1 (*mu'aṭṭalatan manāziluhu*) while, in its nominal sentences, the couplet contrasts with the verbal sentences of the following lines. The second couplet (II) comprises the two central lines of the poem, 19 and 20. It presents the moral of the King's story in the previous section: many are the vain hopes frustrated by death, and *al-ḥaqq*, the essential truth of mortality, is there for all to see. Being '*mariḥ*', the King had ignored it until his vain pleasures deserted him at the approach of death (13). He has become one of the *wā'iẓāt al-dahr* (the 'warning monuments of time'), On the lexical level, *wa-kam qad* in line 19 is a resumption of the same phrase in line 10, while *ra'aytu* ('I saw') in line 20 anticipates *fa-nẓur* ('so look') which starts the second half of the poem in line 21. The third couplet (III) is in lines 34 and 35. It follows the funerary sequence (21–33) with a general conclusion on the mortality of man. Like the other two couplets, it is linked both with what precedes it and what follows it. Like *kam* in lines 10 and 19, so *alā* in line 34 resumes the beginning of line 21. The antithesis between the 'first and last' which are equally annihilated by death (35), anticipates the beginning of the finale (36). There the opposite notion prevails: the knowing and the ignorant are *not* equal in their standing:

35. *awākhiru man tarā tafnā*
        kamā faniyat awā'iluhū
36. *mā stawā fī l-amri*
        'ālimuhū wa-jāhiluhū

The last you see will vanish
like the first have vanished.
By your life! Not equal in this matter
are the knowing and the ignorant!

On the semantic level, the three couplets differ in one important point from the remaining sections. Each of them expresses a fact of general truth by means of topoi well established in the poetic tradition. Multiple examples could be adduced from earlier works for lines like:

4. *wa-kullun li-'tisāfi l-dahri*
        mu'raḍatun maqātiluhū
All is exposed to deadly blows
through the random force of Time.

34. *alā inna l-maniyyata man-*
        halun wal-khalqu nāhiluhu
Behold, death is a fount
from which all creation drinks;

In particular, the image of the last line has the quality of a stock-in-trade in the poetic inventory.[14] The remaining central sections of the poem, however, are more exceptional in their imagery and diction. They contain prolonged developments on certain themes which give the poem its particular identity and special character such as it could not derive from the gnomic couplets. Thus it seems fair to say that they are markers in the thematic development, summing up what has gone before and preparing the sequel. This is borne out by their position in the poem. Couplet I follows the tristich on the *aṭlāl*, couplet II occupies the centre, and couplet III precedes the tristich of the conclusion. Between them lie, in symmetrical blocks, the remaining sections of the poem: lines 6–9 on the action of Fate, lines 10–18 on the death of the King, lines 21–4 on the poet and his tomb, and lines 25–33 on the dead in their tombs. There are four parts, two of four lines and two of nine lines. The symmetry of the poem's structure appears clearly in diagram 1.

The substance of the poem's structure lies in the relationship of its four central parts (ABCD), relationships semantic, morphological, syntactic, and phonological. The thematic transition between the parts gives a first impression of these relationships. All four portray the human being in the face of death. Section A shows Fate crushing man; the development concludes with the picture of a people (*qawm*) suffering under the burden of Fate. Out of *qawm* rises *malik*, the 'King', whose life and death are the subject of section B. In C, the King is replaced by the poet who stands for the 'common man' facing the

	Part one				Part two	
	(First half)				(Second half)	
Couplet/section			*Number of lines*	*Number of lines*	*Section/couplet*	
(1–3)	Prelude		3			
(4–5)	Couplet	I	2	2	Couplet II	(19–20)
(6–9)	Man Fate	A	4	4	C Poet Tomb	(21–4)
(10–18)	King Death	B	9	9	D Dead Tomb	(25–33)
(19–20)	Couplet	II	2	2	Couplet III	(34–5)
				3	Finale	(36–8)

—·—·—·— horizontal relation

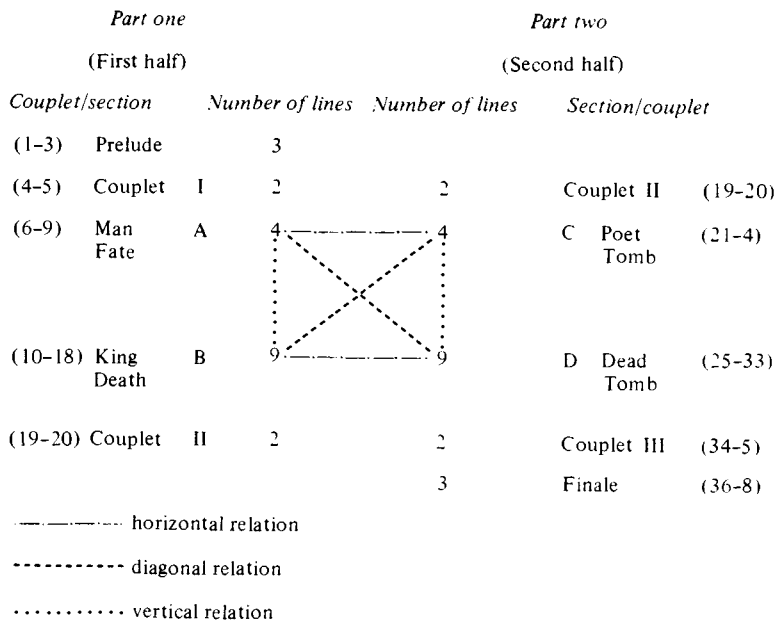----------- diagonal relation

·········· vertical relation

Diagram 1

vision of his death. Section D finally turns to the dead in their graves. One sees how the poem proclaims its sombre message in logical succession: it moves from those still living and hopelessly fighting their fate, via the death of their master, the King, and the 'common man's' vision of his own end, to the multitudes already in their tombs.

Different aspects of the poetic structure are revealed by geometrically aligning the subsections as they appear in the diagram. They can be related horizontally (A and C – B and D), diagonally (A and D – B and C), and vertically (A and B – C and D).

Horizontal relations

The horizontal relation is the most obvious because A and C, B and D are equally long. One pair has four, the other nine lines.

(a) *A and C*

In A, man faces Fate; in C, the poet faces his tomb. Both A and C initially focus as much on man as on his counterpart, but gradually, his presence and the role he plays fade away to be superseded by the overpowering might of Fate, and the gruesome vision of the tomb. In section A, the process is brought about by the interaction between predicates and subjects. There are nine verbs in lines 6–8, three with the subject *man*, referring to humanity, and six with the subject *dahr* or *rayb al-dahr* (see 4 and 5). *Kalākil* in line 9 is the only noun in the section which functions as a subject and as rhyme word; the predicate is *nazalat*. Finally there is *kafāka*.

6. *yaṣraʿu/yuṣārīʿu*	*yanḍulu/yunāḍilu*
7. *yunāzilu/yahummu*	*yukhātilu*
8. *yuʾakhkhiru*	*yuʿājilu*
9. *kafāka/nazalat*	

In line 6, two III form verbs portray man actively fighting, even though without hope. With *yunāzilu* in line 7, *dahr* becomes the subject of the III form, and it is as if the switch of subject portrayed Fate's victorious progress. Only one verb is left to describe the activity of man (*yahummu bihi*), and in lines 7b and 8 he is nothing but a passive victim, while Fate is in complete control; *yukhātiluhu, yuʾakhkhiruhu, yuʿājiluhu*. Line 9 sums up human impotence in a general image: when Fate, like a camel, kneels upon a people, it is sufficient to bring ruin.

Thus the development of lines 6–9 is brought about by the eclipse of one subject and the gradual domination of another. Two stages mark the progress: the 'conquest' of the III form by the second subject, and the repetition of *aḥyānan* in lines 7 and 8. The latter leads to the display of Fate's omnipotence in lines 7b and 8. The two instances are also vital factors in the continuity of the section's development:

6a	*yuṣārĭu*
6b	*yunāḍilu*———
7a	*yunāzilu*———
7b	*aḥyānan*———
8a	*aḥyānan*———
8b	*tārātin*———
9a	*idhā* ———

The morphological/lexical resumption of *yunāḍilu/aḥyānan* (6b/7b) at the beginning of the subsequent lines (7a/8a) creates a pattern which still governs the relationship between *tārātin* and *idhā* (8b, 9a).

Section C, the opposing set of lines, contains a process similar to section A, as the vision of the tomb gradually dominates the lines to the exclusion of the poet. Line 21 focuses only on him and his soul; line 22 introduces the tomb; in line 23 the tomb is described more fully and the poet only referred to by a preposition; while line 24 focuses on the tomb only, without mentioning the poet. Here, however, the crucial factor of the development is not the succession of verbs (there are only two finite forms, *unẓur* and *ruṣṣat*) but of nouns. The rhyme words are all nouns as opposed to the III form verbs of section A, and their parallelistic succession illustrates the development as a whole. Lines 21 and 22 end on active participles, preceded by a personal pronoun, *referring to the poet*. The second participle introduces the relationship between him and his grave: *anta ḥāmiluhu* (21), *anta nāziluhu* (22). The rhyme words of the following two lines refer not to the poet but *to the tomb*: its rocks, which will suffocate him, and its narrow access: *janādiluhu* (23), *madākhiluhu* (24). The syntactic development of the lines is determined by the clauses subordinate to *li* in line 22 (a resumption of *li* in line 21):

22. *li-manzili waḥdatin*/for a lonely abode
23. *qaṣīri l-samki*/with a low roof
24. *ba'īdi tazāwuri l-jīrāni ḍayyiqatin madākhiluhū*
    [too] remote for neighbourly visits and with narrow points of entry

Li-manzili waḥdatin, originally subordinate to *ḥāmiluhu* is the starting point of parallelistic phraseology describing the tomb which finally dominates the section. A semantic reflection of this process is the increasing passivity of the protagonist. First he is carrying 'provisions',[15] then he sees himself descending into his grave, and finally he has stones piled upon him – the impersonal passive of *ruṣṣat*, stressing his isolation and helplessness. Furthermore, the exclamation *fa-nẓur li-nafsika* ('look at yourself') introduces a note of self-consciousness from the very beginning.

The parallelism of development between sections A and C is clear. One depicts man overpowered by Fate, the other depicts the poet overpowered by the vision of his tomb. In both, the human element disappears, overshadowed by the forces of doom. This is in keeping with the view of the human condition
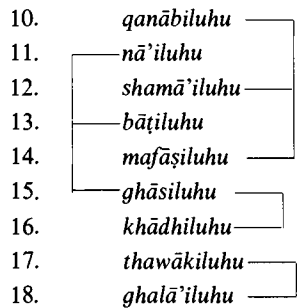
expressed in the *zuhdiyyāt* in general: man is a passive victim at the mercy of death.

(b) *B and D*

The morphological contrast between sections A and C – one being predominantly verbal, the other predominantly nominal – has an equivalent in the relation between B and D. In section B, the King's life and death are vividly portrayed and the angle of description varies throughout. Section D enumerates the severed links between the living and the dead in repetitive sequences which never change perspective except for the last lines. This opposition between diversity and uniformity-by-repetition is borne out by the grammatical particularities of the two sections. The following list summarizes the main features:

B	D
1. Except for *jahhaza* and *ghammaḍa*, every verb has a *different grammatical pattern*. There are no III form verbs.	1. Except for line 33, all verbs have the *same grammatical pattern* (kunna plus 1st pl. imp. of the III form). *Ḥalla* in line 33 is also repeated.
2. All objects *differ* lexically and morphologically.	2. The object of the thirteen relative clauses in 25b–32 is *man*, repeated thirteen times.
3. With the exception of 15b–16a and the final couplet, the subject *changes from line to line*. With the exception of the final couplet, the subject also *changes from hemistich to hemistich*.	3. From 25a–32, the subject *remains the same*. The only alternation is in 33.
4. The nouns that function as subjects *are stated* in eleven out of fifteen verb phrases; they *vary* greatly in form.	4. From 25a–32 the subject is *contained in the verb*. There is only *one* noun functioning as subject: *ḥabā'il* (33).
5. All rhyme words are *nouns*. In 10–15, Ist form active participles *alternate* with plural nouns of the vocalic pattern *mafāʿilun*. From 15–18 they succeed in pairs:	5. Except for *ḥabā'il*, all rhyme words are *verbs* of a *single* morphological pattern.

10.	*qanābiluhu* ──┐
11.	┌──*nā'iluhu* │
12.	│ *shamā'iluhu*──┤
13.	│ ──*bāṭiluhu* │
14.	│ *mafāṣiluhu* ──┘
15.	└──*ghāsiluhu* ──┐
16.	*khādhiluhu*──┘
17.	*thawākiluhu*──┐
18.	*ghalā'iluhu* ──┘

6. The contrast between unity and diversity naturally also reflects on the metre and rhythm of the two pieces. The following is a survey of the metrical structure (a = ˘ ‾ ‾ ‾, b = ˘ ‾ ˘ ˘ ‾ ‾, recognized variants of the metre *wāfir*):

10.	a	b	b	b		25.	b	b	a	b
11.	a	b	a	b		26.	a	b	a	b
12.	a	b	b	b		27.	a	b	a	b
13.	a	a	a	b		28.	a	b	a	b
14.	b	a	a	b		29.	a	b	a	b
15.	b	b	a	b		30.	a	b	a	b
16.	b	b	b	b		31.	a	a	a	b
17.	b	a	b	b		32.	a	a	a	b
18.	b	b	b	b		33.	b	a	b	b

(i) The metrical pattern is varied: there are seven different patterns in the nine lines. The two repetitions relate symmetrically, lines 12 and 16 echoing the patterns of the initial and final lines. The section is divided into two: lines 10–13 (introducing the King's death) start with a, lines 14–18 (dwelling on his death) start with b.

(ii) b is more frequent than a (25b/11a), particularly in the last three lines.

(i) The metrical pattern is uniform and there are only a few alternations. Of eighteen hemistichs, thirteen share the pattern ab. Lines 25b–30 form one group, lines 31 and 32 another. b provides the first foot in the initial and final lines, the remainder starting with a.

(ii) b and a are equally frequent (18a/18b). First, b is more common, in the last three lines it is superseded by a.

The analysis reveals that in both B and D the last three lines break with the pattern established by the previous five lines. In the case of section B, this means a *reduction in the morphological and syntactical variety*. *Jahhaza* (16) has the same subject as *jā'a* (15) and repeats the pattern of *ghammaḍa*. The final couplet (17, 18) is governed by only one verb (*yuṣbiḥ*, 17), and the threefold repetition of the same construction in 17a–18 differs from all that has gone before in the section. The rhyme words also do not alternate as before but succeed in pairs (*khādhil* echoes *ghāsil*, 15, 16); even the phonological structure is more repetitive (*khādhil→shāḥit→thawākil→nawādib*, etc.).

The last three lines of section D, on the other hand, show the reverse features. They conclude the development by a *reduction in the morphological and syntactical uniformity* of the previous lines. This is obvious in lines 31 and 32. Line 33 stops the momentum of the repetitions in 25a–32 by countering them with a new repetitive sequence of its own: *fa-ḥalla maḥallatan man ḥallahā*. The contrast is maintained in the second hemistich which introduces a passive verb form and ends the line with a noun as rhyme word.

The structural parallelism between the concluding lines of sections B and D, reflects on the nature of the sections' dynamic momentum. The climax is brought about when the elements of rhetorical accumulation turn into their

opposites; diversity turns into uniformity, uniformity into diversity. The grammatical characteristics of the two sections closely reflect their meaning. In B, structural diversity highlights the details of the King's fate from the vanities of his life to his final degradation. In D, a uniform sequence of repetitions evokes the fruitless deeds of the living in the face of the tombs of the dead.

Diagonal relations

So far the analysis has revealed a series of contrasting connections between the pairs A and C, B and D. A different set of relationships appears when the four parts are related crosswise (A and D, B and C). Here, not contrast, but congruence, is the dominant link.

(a) *A and D*

Despite the great difference in length, the two sections share certain features. They mark the first and the last stage in the poem's central development. Section A shows the living confronting Fate, section D evokes the memory of its victims, the dead. There are a number of grammatical and semantic assonances between lines 6–8 and lines 25a–32. In both, nouns are absent while III form imperfect verbs dominate and provide the rhyme (there are no III form verbs in sections B and C, nor in any of the gnomic couplets). The relative pronoun *man* is central to the syntax of both sections, fulfilling the role of subject/object. It is repeated numerous times (three times in A with the pronominal suffixes in 7b and 8 referring to it, and fourteen times in D, where all pronominal suffixes refer to it). Finally, the temporal adjectives *aḥyānan* and *tārātin* in lines 7 and 8, are echoed by *qalīlan mā* and *bil-'amsi aḥyānan* in lines 31 and 32.

There is also semantic and syntactic congruence between the final lines of the two sections (9, 33). Both break the repetitive accumulations of the previous lines by introducing a change of perspective and diction. Both counter the series of III form verbs with a verbal form not found anywhere else in the poem (*nazalat, ṣurimat*), and both rhyme on nouns (*kalākil, habā'il*). One describes the descent of Fate upon man, the other the descent of the dead into their tombs. In both, the metaphors are related, as they draw on desert imagery: *nuzūl* is a short overnight stay, *ḥulūl* a prolonged stay in an encampment.

The congruence between A and D shows that section A introduces some of the grammatical and lexical material which is resumed and developed on a larger scale in section D.

(b) *B and C*

As the uniformity of the poem's last section, D, is anticipated by the repetitions of the first, A, so the structure of the middle section, C, contains reminiscences

of its counterpart, B. Like B, C rhymes on nouns: two active participles of the Ist form verb and two plural nouns. Their order of succession corresponds to the last four lines of section B. The syntactical variety of C recalls B, and the three adjective/noun constructions in lines 23 and 24 echo the participle/noun constructions of lines 17 and 18: *mufajja'atan thawākiluhu/mukhammashatan nawādibuhu/musallabatan ghalā'iluhu/*'his kin bereaved'/'his wailing women tearing their faces'/'his garments of mourning worn' (17, 18); *qaṣīri l-samki/ba'īdi tazāwuri l-jīrāni/ḍayyiqatin madākhiluhu/*'low as to roof'/'remote as to visits by neighbours'/'narrow as to entrance' (23, 24).

Semantically, also, the relationship is explicit. Section B describes the life and death of the most exceptional of men, the King, while C turns to the common man, or the poet himself. B first introduces the mention of the tomb and the dead (17), C centres and concludes with the protagonist's vision of his own tomb.

From the analysis of the diagonal relationships, one may conclude that the two shorter sections, A and C, anticipate and echo the dynamic progress of the longer sections B and D. Section A anticipates the movement from uniformity to variety in D, while C echoes the movement from variety to uniformity in the preceding section B.

Vertical relations

(a) When the four central parts are related vertically (A and B, C and D), many of the relationships that emerge are natural correspondences to the horizontal and diagonal alignments discussed above:

A

1. Rhymes on *verbs*, except for *kalākil*, which anticipates *qanābil* (10).
2. Except for line 9, the syntactic and morphological structure is uniform: the subjects remain unchanged, those of the main clauses being contained in the verb. The objects of the main clauses remain the same (*man*), and there are repetitions, in particular of III form verbs.

B

1. Rhymes on *nouns*.
2. Except for the last three lines, the syntactic and morphological structure is multiform (see above, p. 88). Most verbs have independent subjects, the objects vary and there are no lexical and few morphological repetitions. There are no verbs in the III form and each verb form is different.

C

1. Rhymes on *nouns*.
2. The syntactic structure *varies* in every hemistich.

3. The development is predominantly *nominal*. There are only two finite verb forms, and no verbs in the III form.

D

1. Rhymes on *verbs* except in line 33.
2. Except for the last line, the syntactic structure is *uniform* in every hemistich (25a–30) or line (29–30).

3. The development is *verbal*. Except for line 33, all verbs are in the III form.

(b) In addition to these contrasts, there are certain similarities that link the pairs because semantically and grammatically the anterior sections A and C are a prelude to the posterior sections B and D: the description of the King's death in B is a specific example of the power of Fate described more generally in A; and the vision of the graves in C naturally evokes the memory of those interred in them in D.

Parallel to this, the grammatical features of the anterior sections anticipate the posterior ones. The subtle asymmetrical variations, which restrict the uniformity of A, forestall the grammatical multiformity of section B (*yunāḍiluhu* ending line 6, *yunāziluhu* beginning line 7 with a new subject; *aḥyānan* in line 7b resumed in line 8a).

As to the two contiguous lines (9, 10), I have already remarked on the relations that link them (see above, p. 85). Attention could also be drawn to the phonological association between them based on the repetition of the letter *kāf: kafāka, kalākiluhu, kam, malikin*.

The grammatical link between C and D is established by the anticipation in C of the long enumerative sequence dependent on line 25a:

25.   *a ayyatuhā l-maqābiru fīki man kunna*
O graves, in you are those we...

The equivalent to this is the succession of phrases in apposition to *li* (22–4). In both cases, one grammatical construction dominates the syntax of several succeeding lines.

(c) Finally, there is one aspect of the four central parts of the poem not yet mentioned. This is the alternation between the personal and impersonal mode of description. Couplet I, sections A and B, and the first line of couplet II, all describe events in the third person. The other half of the poem, from the second line of couplet II till the end, address the reader, the verbs being in the first or second person singular, or the first person plural. This reflects on the development of the work: in A and B, the poem portrays the nature of Time and Fate in impersonal terms; with sections C and D, it turns to the individual listener, to strike fear into his heart and remind him that he, too, will not be exempt.

The only exceptions to the personal/impersonal contrast between the pairs AB and CD, are the lines 9 and 33. One contains the word *kafāka* ('it suffices to you'), addressing the listener, the other describes the lot of the dead with verbs in the third person singular: *ḥalla, ṣurimat* ('he alighted', 'it was severed'). The congruence between lines 9 and 33 comes as no surprise, since it has been shown in the discussion of A and D that the two lines are counterparts in the development of the poem (see above, p. 90). Their deviation from the norm of their respective sections is deliberate.

Relating the four main sections of the poem horizontally, diagonally, and vertically, has revealed something of the harmony of the poem's construction. The gnomic couplets provide the pivot points between the two central wings AB and CD. By anticipation, assonance, contrast, and congruence, these parts

develop out of one another, or in opposition to one another, to ensure unbroken continuity in the work's thematic progress.

Inclusion of prelude and finale in the analysis will complete the picture of the work's themes and their development.

The initial tristich

The analysis of two poems by Buḥturī has shown that the strophe of these panegyrics, the *nasīb/aṭlāl* section, contains the nucleus of the major morphological and lexical features of the poem. It also anticipates the basic conceptual themes and introduces some of the poem's key images. To prove this, I based my analysis on the strophe, and traced the relationships between it and the remainder of the poem. Here I have chosen the opposite approach. Concentrating on the main part of the *zuhdiyya* first, I have singled out a number of traits characteristic of its central sections. The following pages will show that the initial and final tristichs align themselves with these traits. This applies particularly to the *aṭlāl* section which anticipates the structural pattern of the work. The first two hemistichs and each of the following two lines reflect individual aspects of the poem's themes and composition.

The combination of the pronoun *man* ('who') with III form verbs has been shown to be characteristic of two of the poem's central sections, A and D. *Man* is repeated also in the third gnomic couplet (35). This morphological refrain is announced in the very first hemistich:

1. *li-man ṭalalun usā'iluhū*
Whose is the ruined encampment I question?

It also establishes a crucial relationship to the finale.

Questioning the ruins of the campsite is an ancient motif of Arabic poetry. Traditionally, the *aṭlāl* do not respond:

fa-waqaftu as'aluhā wa-kayfa su'ālunā
    ṣummam khawālida mā yabīnu kalāmuhā
I stood still to question that site, but how can we question
dumb things, immutable, whose tale is not told in words?[16]

Abū l-'Atāhiya alludes to the motif in the first line of this *zuhdiyya*, and it is understood that his question also remains without reply. In panegyric poems, the antithesis to this condition is brought about by the sovereign in whose response to the people's calls and needs, the severance of death is overcome. In this *zuhdiyya*, however, it provides the substance of the work's development. The poem concentrates on portraying the break of all relationships brought about by death, and shows how all closeness and communication between men must ultimately end. The King's corpse is prepared for the grave (16), the poet sees himself crushed by rocks in his tomb (23) and for the dead all ties are cut forever (33). Thus the poem dwells on the notions of disjunction and interruption which underlie the topos of questioning the ancient ruins that

never answer. The condition is only resolved at the very end, when a different question is being asked:

37.   *li-ya'lam kullu dhī 'ilmin*
         bi-anna llāha sā'iluhū
Let it be known by all who know
that God will ask them (for a reckoning).

In this life, the barriers created by death can never be overcome, but in the hereafter God will turn to man and man will have to respond. Ultimate relief is only found in the relation to God, in the final encounter of the hereafter. The poem thus illustrates another characteristic of the *zuhdiyya*: unlike the panegyric, man's position and purpose is not defined in relation to society, but in relation to God.

   The second hemistich of the poem's first line also introduces a morphological refrain:

1.   *mu'aṭṭalatan manāziluhū*

It is resumed in couplet I:

4.   *mu'raḍatun maqātiluhū*

Two other resumptions mark the end of sections B and C:

17–18.   *mufajja'atan thawākiluhū/mukhammashatan*
            nawādibuhu/musallabatan ghalā'iluhū
24.   *ḍayyiqatin madākhiluhū*

The discussion of the poem's first line shows that it introduces some of the characteristic morphological and syntactical elements of the poem. Furthermore, its hemistichs contrast in their relationships to the remaining parts of the work. The first anticipates sections A, D, and couplet III, the second anticipates couplet I and sections B, C:

1b   1a
li-man ṭalalun usā'iluhū   *mu 'aṭṭalatan manāziluhū*

cI
A
B
cII
C
D
cIII
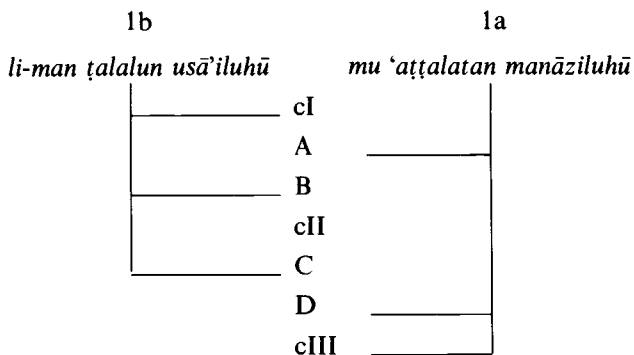
c = couplet

The spatial notion

2.   *ghadāta ra'aytuhū tan'ā*
          a'āliyahu asāfiluhū

That morning when I beheld the ground below
announce the death of those above.

The metaphor in this line is expressed with a conciseness and with typical of
Abū l-'Atāhiya. It also introduces the basic spatial notion of the poem.
Buḥturī's panegyric on Mutawakkil discussed above, is an example of the
structural role spatial notions can play in certain poems. There, the work's
development was accompanied by a progress from the horizontal to the
vertical plane of description (see above, pp. 44f). In Mihyār's long panegyric
it was the movement of ascent which depicted the glory of the ruler (see
above, pp. 53f). The movement is space characteristic of the present poem,
however, is the opposite: descent. The development moves from the razed
and deserted dwellings above the ground to the multitudes in the tombs
below. The theme can be traced through the poem by following up some of
the occurrences of the root *nzl*:

1.   *mu'aṭṭalatan manāziluhū*
its dwellings long abandoned

22.   *li-manzili waḥdatin bayna l-maqābiri anta nāziluhū*
For the lonely abode between graves where you will dismount.

The abodes of the campsite (*manāzil*) are deserted, their upper parts torn down
and man must be prepared to descend (*nāzil*, 22) into his grave where stones
will be piled on top of him. Similar relations are suggested by another
occurrence of *nzl*. In line 9, Fate is likened to a camel which *lowers* itself upon
the people, afflicting them with calamities. The oppressive image shows man
squashed into the ground, and the descent into the grave is the natural sequel.
    One more example may show how the poem's development is structured by
a downward movement. Abū l-'Atāhiya describes the crucial moment of the
King's death in the central line of section B with images that also evoke
a movement in space: the King closes his eyes in front of death, his joints
slackening (14). The images, and the idea of descent in general, bring to mind
the contrasting spatial notions of the panegyric. Ascent and highness are, not
surprisingly, spatial categories of *madīḥ*, epitomized perhaps in the word
al-'ulā (the high endeavours), which are the goal of the King. In this *zuhdiyya*
the opposite is the case: the movement downwards into the grave is the one
that dominates, and the King himself is seized by it.
(d)   The last line of the poem's introduction and its significance within the
thematic range of the poem again stress the contrast to *madīḥ*:

3.   *wa-kuntu arāhu ma'hūlan*
          wa-lākin bāda āhiluhū

I had once seen it inhabited
but its people have perished.

The line could also figure in the *aṭlāl* section of the panegyric, with the difference that here no triumphant societal resurrection is celebrated under a sovereign's shadow. On the contrary, the entire work illustrates the meaning of the line, showing the inevitable end of all earthly things. Human pursuit is fruitless, except for the search for God.

The final tristich

The opposition between panegyric and *zuhdiyya* is highlighted once more by the finale of the poem. It incites the knowing among men to achieve the triumph of paradise by being good in word and deed. The moral tone of the last lines is foreshadowed by all that has gone before: the depiction of the power of death over man, which renders all his endeavours futile and leaves the hereafter as the only salvation. In this context, the King, whose life and death figures largely in the work, is a prime example of an immoral existence. Of all men, he is most involved in earthly pursuits and as a result is most deceived by the vanity of this world. He is *jāhil* ('ignorant') in the full sense: taking pride in his power, unmindful, and frivolous (*'maraḥ'*). The humiliating account of his death sets the seal on his insignificance, and his folly is exposed. He is a reminder to everyone, including the poet, to be aware of transience and mortality. The dead are remembered, and it is shown that those, too, 'with whom we ate and drank, those we honoured and respected' (see section D) were not exempt from a cruel fate. Thus the ruins of the campsite with which the poem begins, become a symbol of earthly existence. All is torn down: King and people alike are seen tumbling towards the grave.

Ma'arrī

The themes of the *zuhdiyya* canon are frequent in Arabic literature. One of the works based on them is the corpus of poems entitled *Luzūm mā lā yalzam* by Abū l-'Alā' al-Ma'arrī. It centres on the traditional principles of *zuhd* poetry but encompasses a wider range than the *zuhdiyyāt* of Abū l-'Atāhiya. Unlike the latter, the *Luzūmiyyāt* are 'learned poetry' and include references and allusions to many facets of culture. They evolve an idiosyncratic moral code so that the meaning of *zuhd* is changed; it is an intellectual creed remote from the simple asceticism of the earlier model. The following quatrain provides a first illustration (Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 227):

1. *iqni' bi-mā radiya l-taqiyyu li-nafsihī*
    wa-abāhahū laka fī l-hayāti mubīhū
2. *mir'ātu 'aqlika in ra'ayta bi-hā siwā*
    mā fī hijāka arathu wa-huwa qabīhū
3. *asnā fi'ālika mā aradta bi-fi'lihī*
    rashadan wa-khayru kalāmika l-tasbīhū
4. *inna l-hawāditha mā tazālu lahā mudan*
    hamalu l-nujūmi bi-ba'dihinna dhabīhū

Be satisfied with the pious man's choice –
life's lawmaker has made it lawful to you.
If in your reason's mirror you perceive what disagrees
with your conscience you will discern it as evil.
Your most exalted deeds are those in search of righteousness;
your greatest words are those in praise of God.
Fate's vicissitudes remain endowed with knives;
the ram of heaven shall be their slaughter victim [too].

Lines 1 and 3, referring to the actions of the addressee, propound the traditional maxims of piety (*tuqā*). The remaining two lines, however, penetrate the sphere of reflection and imagination in an altogether different manner.

The theme of the pious man's contentment with little, expressed in line 1, is familiar from text IV:

lā zayna illā li-rāḍin 'an taqallulihī
   inna l-qunū'a la-thawbu l-'izzi wal-zayn
No beauty save for those content with little;
restraint is honour and beauty's rightful garb.

The roots *rḍy* and *qn'* convey the same meaning here as there. But the easy flow
of Abū l-'Atāhiya's line is countered by rigour and condensation in that of
Ma'arrī. Line 2 portrays the process of ethical self-examination which is at the
origin of a life of piety. It subtly describes the function of reason in the theory of
the *Luzūmiyyāt*: *'aql* is a force capable of distinguishing good and evil, truth
and falsehood, and thus capable of providing man with right guidance in life.
A man who is able to scrutinize the 'mirror' of reason with discernment can
dispense with all other authority. This epistemological premise is a major
point of distinction beween Ma'arrī and Abū l-'Atāhiya. The third line of the
poem appears again to coincide with the *zuhdiyya* ethos: piety, consisting in
doing good works and praising God,[1] is the only worthy principle of human
conduct. Yet in the light of the previous line, *rashad* acquires a more distinct
meaning: it is not a form of conduct dictated by unquestioned precepts but an
integrity of conduct due to the ethical perception of reason.

The thematic range, the learned brilliance and the sombre power of the
Luzūmiyyāt are evident in the last line of the poem. It is unlike anything in the
Dīwān of Abū l-'Atāhiya. Nevertheless, the poem concludes with a theme of
supreme importance in the traditional *zuhdiyya*: the theme of death. In the
Luzūmiyyāt, too, death and transience invalidate every human attempt at
leaving an imprint on the world. That is why, in the context of the poem, the
fourth line logically follows on the third: pious words and deeds are the
only recourse in the face of death. The *Luzūmiyyāt*, however, add new
dimensions to the ancient theme. Many poems, like the one quoted,
culminate in the assertion that not only death but with it a senseless cruelty
are engrained in the fabric of the world. Line 4 puts this with particular
force. The 'ram of the stars', *ḥamal al-nujūm*, refers to the constellation of
Aries: yet *ḥamal* also means lamb, and the vision of slaughter by the daggers
of Fate evokes the ritual sacrifice at Mekka, a practice which Ma'arrī
condemned like all other acts of killing. The connection between death in
the cosmic sphere and religious practice expresses both the victory of the
forces of doom and the folly of mankind. Finally, the nomenclature of
astrology, taken literally, is ridiculed.

The image in the last line also draws attention to a possible double meaning
in the first. *Mubīḥ* in line 1 refers to God as the power which makes lawful what
the pious man may consume. However, according to Fayrūzabādī (Fayrū-
zabādī, 1952), *mubīḥ* may also mean 'lion'. In the context of the line, this
meaning conjures up the picture of scavengers, restrained by their fear (*tuqā*) of
the lion, and feeding only on what he leaves behind (and thus makes allowable
to them, *abāḥa*). The image is found elsewhere in the *Luzūmiyyāt*:[2]

fa-inna l-usda tatbaʿuhā dhīʾabun
      wa-ghirbānun fa-min ʿūrin wa-ʿurjī
Lions are followed by wolves and ravens,
some one-eyed and some lame.

This possible underlying meaning of the first line agrees with the slaughter of *ḥamal al-nujūm*, as well as with the sinister element in Maʿarrī's vision of the divine.[3]

Kremer (1888), Nicholson (1921), and Ṭayyib (1950), have, among others, provided summaries of the great thematic scope of the *Luzūmiyyāt*. The work has so many facets that depending on the approach it may appear as a document of religious asceticism, rational scepticism, or social satire. The similarity of some of the precepts of the *Luzūmiyyāt* to Indian asceticism has been remarked upon by Kremer (1888, pp. 44, 83f). Maʿarrī advocates abstinence from meat, fish, and all animal products including honey, and prohibits the killing of any living being, while praising celibacy and condemning procreation. He sees the constant renewal of life, and its continuous change of forms, as the greatest source of torment, vigorous withdrawal from it as man's only salvation. Like a Buddhist ascetic, Maʿarrī seems to try to ascend beyond the manifold monotony of suffering by negating natural instinct and keeping his gaze fixed unswervingly on his creed. In spite of the many critical comments on religion, the *Luzūmiyyāt* are pervaded by a God-fearing spirit. His abstinence from worldly pursuits, his refusal to harm any form of life and his piety warrant a view of Maʿarrī as a religious figure in the tradition of Eastern hermits and ascetics.

There is now general agreement that, contrary to older opinion, the *Luzūmiyyāt* are not philosophical poems. No philosophical problem is treated *per se* in any detail, and all the multitude of subjects touched upon in the *Luzūmiyyāt* are reducible to a few basic principles that make no claim to philosophical originality. Yet Maʿarrī's deduction of an ascetic life-style from the scrutiny of reason was in the tradition of philosophical practice.[4] This, as well as factors such as the establishment of reason as one of the sources of religious knowledge (*uṣūl al-dīn*) in Maʿarrī's time,[5] warrant a study of the epistemological function of ʿ*aql* in his work in relation to that of his contemporaries.[6]

As to satire, no theological, ideological, or political faction is spared rational or satirical criticism in the *Luzūmiyyāt*. Astrology, theology, Ismaʿīlism, Sufism and philosophy itself, are shown to be but multiple veils that deceive humanity, stirring vain hopes, and averting man's eyes from the coming of death. The *Luzūmiyyāt* thus make a concerted attack on all social or ideological hierarchy. Religious ritual is as much condemned as political authority, pride in tribal descent as much demasked as faith in religious tradition. The only remaining force of order is the medium itself: speech, and with it the cultural heritage of language. It is to this, the literary aspect of the *Luzūmiyyāt* that the present chapter is devoted.

Variety

Ma'arrī concludes the preface of his work with a short discussion of the moral issues raised by the art of poetry (see Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 41, lines 12f). He states that he abandoned poetry after the completion of *Siqṭ al-Zand* 'like the newly born camel its membrane and the young ostrich its eggshell', because the creation of good poetry necessarily requires the aid of 'lies and dubiousness'. He concedes that there is merit to be gained by writing truthful poetry, whose aim it must be to admonish mankind and open its eyes to the evil of the world. However, such verse has, by tradition, been of poor quality: much, in Ma'arrī's opinion, of the poetry of Umayya b. Abī Ṣalt and his imitators (presumably including Abū l-'Atāhiya), is weak. It follows that poetry is an art altogether morally suspect: if truthful, it is bad, if good, it is full of lies. Thus the achievements of the traditional poets have, however great, always been stained by a moral lapse: *taḥsīn al-manṭiq bil-kadhib* ('adornment of speech through lies'). This Ma'arrī considers *min al-qabā'iḥ* ('an evil act'). He thus criticizes them for giving fanciful descriptions of experiences they have never had, like desert journeys and endurance of hardships, when in reality they lead comfortable lives. He also objects to their portrayals of damsels, horses, camels and wine.

If Ma'arrī nevertheless returned to poetry to compose the *Luzūmiyyāt*, it was to write a work free of these short-comings. The *Luzūmiyyāt* are, in his own words, *qawl 'ariyy min al-mayn* ('speech devoid of falsehood'), dedicated to the admonishment and instruction of mankind (*ibid.*, p. 9, lines 1f, 10). In this, Ma'arrī follows the tradition of the *zuhdiyya*, but in his desire to heighten the poetic level of the mode he vastly extends its range. Rather than abandoning the topoi, which the old poets had made the basis of their 'lies', or shunning the stylistic devices with which they had adorned their compositions, Ma'arrī preserves them and makes them his own. With the raw material of the craft of poetry – its linguistic and technical heritage – he proceeds to erect a new edifice. He re-defines every element of tradition in the light of what he considers morality and reason, and assigns it a new function in a new poetic realm, thus freeing it from the propagation of falsehood to which it had been lowered in the past.[7]

Rhyme

The combination of old and new in the *Luzūmiyyāt* is most apparent in its rhyme scheme. In the preface, Ma'arrī has undertaken a thoroughgoing analysis of traditional rhyme technique and terminology, to explain with lucidity the extent to which the *Luzūmiyya* rhyme is a development of traditional technique. One motive for writing the preface in this form may have been an attempt on the part of the poet to justify the newness of his venture by

pointing to its roots in tradition, in order to pre-empt criticism from the quarters of ignorance or exorbitant conservatism. Indeed, he embarks on his discussion of *qāfiya* terminology (see Glossary), because of his fear 'that this book might fall into the hands of someone not well acquainted with these terms' (Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 9).

After explaining the conventional rules of the rhyme and discussing examples of their modification and infringement, the poet states the three additional constraints to which he subjected himself in the *Luzūmiyyāt (ibid.,* vol. I, p. 32, lines 5ff). These determine the form of the composition on three different levels. The first affects the *shape of the work as a whole*: Ma'arrī adopts every letter of the alphabet (including *alif* and *hamza*) as rhyme letter (*rawiyy*) which divides the work into twenty-nine sections, i.e. one each for the twenty-eight letters of the alphabet, plus one for the section on *alif*. The second rule affects the *shape of these sections*: they are divided into four units (*fuṣūl*) each, since every rhyme letter is to appear with the four vocalizations possible in Arabic. The exception here is the section rhyming on *alif* – it can only have one vowel, *fatḥa*. Thus the work consists of altogether 113 units. As to the third rule, it affects the *shape of the individual poems* by requiring each *rawiyy* to be supplemented by an additional letter.

In contrast to the first two constraints which had never before been adopted by any poet,[8] the third one from which the title of the work is derived, is an invention of the past; *luzūm mā lā yalzam* ('the necessity of the unnecessary'), is in fact the rhetorical term for this particular rhyme technique. According to Ma'arrī, Kuthayyir was the first to have composed a poem with a reinforced *qāfiya*.

The adherence to these constraints alone is sufficient to make the *Luzūmiyyāt* an unprecedented poetic creation. The *Dīwāns* of the poets had in the past been collected and ordered according to the rhyme letter of the poems. Ma'arrī inverted the procedure: he extended the traditional method of classification into a comprehensive system, and along these guidelines, composed a complete *Dīwān* as a unit. The manner of phonological classification thus determined the form of the composition.

In Arabic poetry, Ma'arrī's attempt appears to have remained unique, but there are other examples of such a comprehensive and systematic approach to artistic creation. One is the 'Well-tempered clavier' by Johann Sebastian Bach. The composer explored all twenty-four tonalities in his preludes and fugues, rather like Ma'arrī who explored all 113 possible vowelled and unvowelled rhyme letters.

Ma'arrī's three constraints amount both to an extension of range and a restriction of freedom. The scope of the *qawāfī* is extended into regions hitherto hardly explored – certainly not with the same thoroughness. The choice of rhyme words in individual poems, on the other hand, is greatly reduced. However, such a drastic imposition of order and technical difficulty

does not impoverish the poetic range. Its purpose is, on the contrary, to enrich its *variety*. Each of the three rules, in fact, widens the palette of sound in the collection by giving rise to certain new or unusual patterns. Rule one enriches the collection by the inclusion of unusual rhyme letters, like *dhāl, zā', ḍād, ẓā'*, etc. Rule two affects the vowels. It provides variety by requiring the comprehensive declension of all *rawiyys*. The third rule, finally, greatly increases the number of possible monorhymes. Instead of the ordinary 113 (one rhyme letter plus vowel), the imposition of *luzūm mā lā yalzam* creates, in theory, over 5,000 different possibilities. Furthermore, Ma'arrī's rules do not only affect the external shape of the *Luzūmiyyāt*. They have a great influence on the texture of the individual poems. This is evident even on purely theoretical grounds. The reinforced *qāfiya* restricts the lexical choice of rhyme words; by imposing a certain vocalic pattern, it also limits the range of morphological patterns a rhyme word can assume. Both factors have inevitable repercussions on phonology and syntax and all of these affect the semantic structure. This process is particularly pronounced in poems such as text VI where Ma'arrī, due to an alliterative style, restricts his freedom of choice still further. The truth of the axiom can, however, also be demonstrated with the example of the quatrain quoted at the beginning which is not as rich in rhetorical figures.

The structural importance of the rhyme word

That meaning and form of the rhyme words have an important function in the structure of a poem was evident in the *zuhdiyya* of Abū l-'Atāhiya: one may recall the III form verbs as rhyme words in sections A and C of the poem. The same is also the case with Ma'arrī's quatrain. The semantic relationship between lines 1 and 3, and 2 and 4 has been mentioned. This development is marked by the rhyme words themselves. *Mubīḥ* in line 1 refers to God who permits the pious man to cater for his modest needs. *Tasbīḥ* in line 3 describes the relationship between man and God from another angle: God provides, and His glorification is the best man can utter. In contrast to lines 1 and 3 which thus centre on the positive – human piety and divine mercy – the remaining two lines point to the evil in man and the world. The rhyme words *qabīḥ* and *dhabīḥ*, morphologically identical, express the connection also semantically. The former, *qabīḥ*, denotes the depravity of man, while the latter, *dhabīḥ*, illustrates the prevalence of evil in the world as it portrays 'Aries' slaughtered by the daggers of Fate. Thus, there is a symmetrical relationship between the meaning and function of the rhyme words, which reflects the structure of the quatrain as a whole. *Mubīḥ* and *dhabīḥ* express the negative and positive poles of being: the grace of God and the evil of Time. *Qabīḥ* and *tasbīḥ* express the reflection of these poles on the human being, the evil in man, and his submission to God. As has been remarked, this structural importance of the

rhyme word is in itself nothing new. However, due to the rule of *luzūm mā lā yalzam*, the choice of possible rhyme words is drastically restricted. This must considerably increase their influence on the texture of a poem.

Morphological limitation

The morphological structure of the rhyme word is determined by the metrical structure of the poem. In the quatrain it has to agree with the third foot of the catalectic version of the meter *kāmil*, i.e. ˘ ˘ ‾ or ‾ ‾‾ . In case of an ordinary *qāfiya* (e.g. *ḥā' maḍmūma* with *yā'* or *wāw* as choice of *ridf*), the lexical and morphological possibilities are very wide. As long as the third radical is *ḥā'*, the rhyme word can have forms like *fa'īl, fa'ūl, fu'ūl, maf'ūl, taf'īl, fi''īl, mif'īl, fu'lūl, fi'līl, 'īl* (e.g. *rīḥ*), *'ūl* (e.g. *būḥ*), etc. In the case of the *qāfiya bīḥū*, the morphological choice is restricted to five derivatives of the sound triliteral verb, the second and third radicals of which must be *bā'* and *ḥā'* (Fayrūzabādī lists eleven such roots): *fa'īl, taf'īl, fi'līl, mif'īl, fi''īl*. The latter three are rather uncommon and Ma'arrī does not use them. Instead, *fa'īl* occurs twice. The only other morphological and lexical possibilities are some derivatives of the IV form of the hollow verb *bāḥa: ubīḥu, tubīḥu, mubīḥu*. The latter occurs in the poem.

This shows how much both the lexical and morphological range of possible rhyme words is restricted by the rule of *luzūm mā lā yalzam*. Since rhyme words are generally important, a restriction in their choice must increase their dominance. This is especially so in very rare or difficult rhymes, or in long poems where the stock of possible rhyme words is widely explored.

Phonological dimension

Another level on which the influence of the rhyme word can be perceived is that of phonology. The phonological interplay between the line and its rhyme word has two aspects, the second being an extension of the first:
(1) Anticipation of the letter preceding the *qāfiya*. This letter, in fact, becomes a focal point of attention in poems with a *Luzūmiyya*-type *qāfiya*. It is anticipated also in the quatrain:

i *q* ni'	→	'a *q* lika	→	*q* abīḥu	(2)
a *s* nā			→	ta *s* bīḥu	(3)
ta *s* bīḥu	→	ta *z* ālu	→	*dh* abīḥu	(4)

(2) Anticipation of the root of the rhyme word, or anticipation of the rhyme word as a whole. The first line of the quatrain contains an example of this figure (*radd al-'ajz 'alā l-ṣadr*):

a *ḇ* ā ḥ a	→	mu *ḇ* ī ḥ u	(1)

Thus the rhyme word also greatly influences the phonological texture of the poem. This is particularly the case in poems such as text VI where, because of consistent use of *radd al-'ajz 'alā l-ṣadr*, the determining influence of the *qāfiya* is very great on all levels. The sound complex *wār* is repeated forty-seven times, the plural of the active participle of the weak verb (e.g. *bawārī* from *bry*) is repeated fourteen times. Other, similar repetitions could be counted. Furthermore, the combination of reinforced rhyme, and *radd al-'ajz 'alā l-ṣadr*, gives rise to clusters of words of similar morphological and/or phonological pattern based on the letter preceding the rhyme. These can either be dispersed throughout the poem, like the following derivatives of the root *swr*:

	siwāray	*sawārī*	(9)
	(two bracelets)	(travelling at night)	
sawār (assault)	*musāwir*	*uswār*	(20)
	(attacker)	(marksman)	
	aswār (walls)	*aswār* (walls)	(26)

or occur close by in a succession of lines, like the following variations on the letters *ṣād*, *sīn*, and *shīn*:

ṣiwāri (herd of deer)	*ṣuwāri*	*ṣawāri*	(8)
	(musk)	(collecting)	
	siwāray	*sawārī*	(9)
	(two bracelets)	(travelling at night)	
	shiwāri	*shawārī*	(10)
	(saddle utensils)	(trading)	
		mishwārī	(11)
		(showground)	

Such clusters of words illustrate a paradoxical effect of the *Luzūmiyya* style: in its very restrictiveness, it is a source of variety. Due to its constraints, it gives the poet the opportunity to explore the lexical range of the language to new depths, and embellish his verse with a great spectrum of words of similar complexion, so that excitement and colour are created by the dissimilarity of the similar.

Lexicon

General

One of the merits – and also one of the difficulties – of the *Luzūmiyyāt* is the great richness of its vocabulary. This is, in part, the result of the difficult rhyme scheme which requires a full set of the lexical range of the language. Yet in many poems (e.g. text VI), Ma'arrī goes beyond the requirements of *luzūm mā lā yalzam* in his usage of rare and difficult words. Such poems seem designed to bring to the fore the lexical and semantic range of related words. The rhetorical device which more than any other acts as an instrument of search and analysis in this is paronomasia. One can distinguish two forms:

(1)   Paronomasia serving to contrast different meanings of words derived from the same root, or different shades of meaning of one word.
(2)   Paronomasia serving to combine words of a different root, or clusters of words of a different root.
Even though Ma'arrī employs them with unparalleled dexterity, neither of these usages is particular to him. What is special in his poetry is the manner in which these forms of paronomasia become vehicles of a subtle and wide-ranging scrutiny of the meaning of words, and the relationships between them. This is best illustrated by some examples.
With regard to (1):
The word *kūr* with its plurals *akwār, ku'ūr, akwur, kīrān,* occurs frequently in poetry and *ḥadīth* (See Glossary), in the meaning of 'camel saddle' (*raḥl*). This is the meaning it has in the following line (Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 324, line 4):

thalāthu ma'āribin 'ansun wa-kūrun
    wa-nahjun qad abāna fa-hal bukūrū
Three wishes [are common]; a strong camel, a saddle,
and a road clear and plain. For when the departure?

Line 23 of text VI includes the plural form *akwār*:

law fakkarat ṭulubu l-ghinā fī dhāhibi l-
    akwāri mā qa'adat 'alā l-akwārī
If those who crave for wealth but thought of *dhāhib*
al-akwāri they would not remain seated on their saddles.

The rhyme word *akwār* is, as can be seen from the context, most likely to be the plural of *kūr* in the meaning cited above. *Akwār* at the beginning of the second hemistich, however, may have several meanings. It may be the plural of *kawr,* i.e. a great herd of camels. In this sense it balances the word *ghinā* ('wealth'), since herds of camels in themselves represent wealth. So the phrase *ṭulub al-ghinā* ('seekers of wealth'), is antithetically parallel to *dhāhib al-akwār* ('the passing away of wealth'). The avaricious are thus reminded of the transitoriness of the gain they seek by the picture of the vanishing herds. A second meaning of *akwār* which confirms the parallelism of the compound, while giving the line a more subtle undertone, is suggested by the prophetic saying:

a'ūdhu bi-llāhi mina l-ḥawri ba'da l-kawri
I take refuge with God from *ḥawr* after *kawr.*

Ma'arrī uses the phrase himself in the *Kitāb al-Fuṣūl wal-Ghāyāt,* where he explains it as *al-nuqṣān ba'da l-ziyāda* ('reduction after plenitude', see Ma'arrī, 1938, p. 24, line 10). *Dhāhib al-akwār* in text VI then could also be meant to refer to this prophetic saying (*akwār* being understood as the plural of *kawr* in the *ḥadīth*). So the line not only admonishes the avaricious for their lack of insight, but *law fakkarat fī,* ('if they but thought of'), also evokes the prophetic saying and implies censure for their lack of pious restraint. To discuss a third possible meaning of the word – one suggested by the footnote in the edition – it

is best to turn to another line where the poet himself supplies a commentary (Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 337, line 1):

wa-atat 'alā l-akwāri jam'i l-kūri wal-
    kawri l-musarraḥi hādhihi l-akwārū

There came upon the *akwār*, plural both of *kawr*
and *kūr musarraḥ*, these (other) *akwār*.

Akwār in the first hemistich is the plural of *kūr* ('camel saddle'), as well as *kawr*. ('herd of camels or cattle'). The adjective *musarraḥ* ('driven to the pasture ground'), illustrates the meaning of *kawr*.

The rhyme word *akwār* is explained by the commentary of the edition as an astronomical term; its meaning is given as 3,006 years (*ibid.*, vol. I, p. 337, n. 2) or thirty-six years (*ibid.*, vol. I, p. 402, n. 5). I have not been able to find the word attested in precisely that meaning, but it is clearly derived from *kawr*, 'winding', and hence, 'rotation', 'cycle'. In that sense it is probably a synonym of *dawr*, *adwār*.[9] Bint al-Shāṭi' explains the word in this meaning in the *Risālat al-Ghufrān*, where Ma'arrī speaks about a time, 'one or two cycles before the creation of Adam' (*qabla an yakhluqa llāhu Ādama bi-kawrin aw kawrayni*, Ma'arrī, 1950, p. 198, line 8). Thus, in the line above, the eons, the cycles of time, 'annihilate' (*atat 'alā*) their namesakes, the camels and their saddles. This meaning of *akwār* may also apply to line 23 of text VI: the 'seekers of wealth' ignore *dhāhib al-akwār*, the 'passing cycles of time' which will bring them to their deaths.

Ma'arrī's treatment of *akwār* makes clear his technique of lexical and semantic exploration by means of paronomasia. The well-known meaning of the word is contrasted with its obscure counterparts, and the reader, in his attempt at understanding, is made aware of the ambiguities and recesses of meaning contained in the word.

Another aspect of this poetic scrutiny of related words is the technique, already mentioned in connection with the rhyme scheme, of introducing a great number of words derived from the same root into a poem. An example is the four derivatives of the root *ḥwr* in lines 5 and 6 of text VI. The purpose of such passages is not merely the creation of intricate word plays for their own sake. They are part of an exploration of language and meaning which characterizes the *Luzūmiyyāt* as a whole. In the same way as all possible *qawāfī* are brought into play, the vocabulary of the language is given presence in its breadth, and the scope of meaning of individual words is unfolded.

As with the three constraints of the rhyme scheme, the technique of word exploration can result in an effect of richness and variety. Such is the case in another poem rhyming on *rā'*, where Ma'arrī, in the space of five lines, combines eight derivatives of the root *srr*: *surur* ('wrinkle'), *sarrā'* ('joy'), *sirar* ('umbilical cord'), *sarra* ('to give joy'), *asarru* ('camel wounded on the chest'), *sarar* ('wound on the spot of the camel's chest which touches the ground'), *sarāra* ('bottom of a valley'), and *surār* (pl. of *sarīr*, 'throne') (Ma'arrī, 1982, vol. I, p. 315, bottom line f).

With regard to (2):
Subtle investigation of meaning and creation of morphological and semantic variety also characterize the second function of paronomasia: the combination of words of different roots. Text VI contains numerous examples. The paronomasia in line 1b joins two words of different root: *bawār* ('perdition, from *bwr*), and *bawārī* ('emaciating' from *bry*). In spite of their different provenance, the line supplements their phonological identity by associating their meaning. *Bawārī*, the word which describes the gazelles as 'emaciating', also denotes the effect this quality has on the lover: it brings *bawār*, 'perdition'.

An effect of variety, similar to the interplay of the derivatives of *srr* in the poem above, is created by the rhyme words of lines 15, 16 and 18: *ṭawārī* (from *ṭwr*), *ṭawārī* (from *ṭr'*), and *tawārī* (from *wry*). Each word has a different meaning, is derived from a different root, and has a different morphological form, but all are closely related in sound.

Jinās al-tarkīb and *jinās mulaffaq*, paronomasia in which one or both elements are made up of compounds of words, play a similar role. There is one example in text VI: in line 4, *fawārī* in the first hemistich is derived from *fry*, while the rhyme word *fa-wārī* is a compound combining the particle *fa* with the present participle of *wry*.

Technical terms

Another facet of the broad linguistic spectrum of the *Luzūmiyyāt* is the frequent use of technical terms derived from philology, astrology, theology, and other sciences. It gives rise to what 'Abd Allāh al-Ṭayyib critically called 'scholars' verse', yet such passages should not be seen as odd or incidental deviations from an artistic norm, but as an integral part of the poetic venture.

Imagery derived from metrical terminology, for instance, may not appeal to the lyrical sense, but it accords with the all-inclusive exploration of language in the *Luzūmiyyāt*. Also, the use of technical terms not infrequently provides for humour (Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. II, p. 277, lines 6–7):

fa-lā tusri'anna fa-inna l-sarī'a yūqafu ḥaqqan kamā ta'lamū
fa-in qulta thānīhi lā waqfa fīhi qulna wa-thālithulu aslamū
So don't you hurry, for the quick one is in fact made to stop as you know; and if you say there's no stopping the second, we'll say the third has had his ears cut off.

The riddle of this couplet lies in the puns between the normal and technical meaning of words, a rhetorical figure known as *tawjīh*. The first line contains an ironic reference to the fiction with which the grammarians construct the basic form of the metre *sarī'* (lit. 'the quick one'). According to them it is:

<div align="center">

mustaf'ilun   *mustaf'ilun*   *maf'ūlātu*

‒ ‒ �’ ‒ | ‒ ‒ �’ ‒ | ‒ ‒ ‒ �’

</div>

However, no poet is known to have used this form. In defence of their theory,

they assert that the last foot is always *mawqūf* ('stopped'), by losing its terminal short syllable. This is what Ma'arrī refers to when saying that the 'quick one is in fact made to stop': in practice, the metre *sarī'* always loses the final syllable (see Ṭayyib, 1970, pp. 143f).

The second line of the couplet must be read within the same circle of terms: the second form of the metre *sarī'* contains no *waqf*, i.e. it loses no syllable:

$$mustaf'ilun \quad mustaf'ilun \quad fā'ilun$$
$$-\ -\ \smile\ -\ |\ -\ -\ \smile\ -\ |\ -\ \smile\ -$$

The third form on the other hand, is *aṣlam*, a word which in its technical sense means 'shortened with respect to verses' (see Kazimirsky, 1846):

$$mustaf'ilun \quad mustaf'ilun \quad fā'il$$
$$-\ -\ \smile\ -\ |\ -\ -\ \smile\ -\ |\ -\ -$$

An example like this shows how the *Luzūmiyyāt* explore language by unfolding the various meanings of words. In this case, Ma'arrī achieves three things in one: the fiction of the grammarians is ridiculed, technical terminology is led *ad absurdum*, and still the underlying purpose – admonition – is fulfilled. The inclusion of such metrical images as well as others derived from astrology, theology, or jurisprudence, is part of one phenomenon, namely, Ma'arrī's tendency to adduce material from the entire cultural horizon to express the basic set of ideas.

Names

The proper names, which abound in the collection, fulfil a function similar to that of the technical terms. Pre-Islamic tribes, medieval scholars, ruling dynasties, Kings and local governors, as well as geographical toponyms, are all absorbed into the orbit of asceticism. The proper names add to the richness of the lexical and morphological spectrum. Often they form part of a parono-masia, in which their quality as proper names recedes in favour of their quality of sound. Through this technique, of which Abū Tammām is the first master, the use of names becomes another aspect of the exploration of language in the *Luzūmiyyāt*. The following are some examples to illustrate the different contexts in which proper names may appear. In line two of text VI the name of a pre-Islamic shrine occurs:

bīḍun dawārin lil-qulūbi ka-annahā
    'īnun bi-dawwārin-wa-'ayni Duwārī
They are white and prey on hearts as though they were
wide-eyed ones on curving sands and Duwār's holy site

By the time of Ma'arrī, the heathen sanctuary at Duwār would certainly have disappeared. Yet the name lived on as a literary topos, evoking ancient scenes by allusion, for instance, to the *Mu'allaqa* of Imru' al-Qays:[10]

fa-'anna lanā sirbun ka'anna ni'ājahu
 'adhāra Duwārin fī malā'in mudhayyalī
A flock presented themselves to us, the cows among them
like Duwār virgins mantled in their long-trailing draperies.

With the second example, I leave the field of paronomasia for the rhetorical
figure, *ittifāq*, in which the etymological meaning of a name is made the basis of
a word play (Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 396, lines 13f):

aṣāba l-Akhfashayni baṣīru khaṭbin
 a'āda l-A'shayayni bi-lā ḥiwārī

The 'two al-'A'shās' are the poet al-'A'shā al-Akbar (d. 629) and al-'A'shā
Hamdān (d. 702), while the 'two al-Akhfashes' must refer to the grammarians
of that name, of whom there are several: al-Akhfash al-Akbar (d. 793), al-Awsaṭ
(d. 830–5) and al-Aṣghar (d. 928). The names also have a literal significance to
which the wording of the line makes allusion: *a'shā* means 'night blind',
akhfash its opposite, 'day blind'. A literal translation conveys something of the
grotesque humour of the line which, in its riddle-like character, is reminiscent
of the couplet on the metre *sarī'*:

An all-seeing mishap afflicted the two who are blind by day
and dumbfounded the two who are blind by night.

Like the technical terms, the proper names in their number and variety make
the *Luzūmiyyāt* a cultural mosaic. By evoking the sciences, historical events,
and numerous aspects of the literary heritage, the names bring to the fore the
whole spectrum of contemporary learning.

Traditional thematic units (aghrāḍ)

There are two aspects to Ma'arrī's treatment of the traditional thematic units
of poetry in the *Luzūmiyyāt*:
(1) the preservation of the *aghrāḍ* as extended sequences of several lines, and
their adaptation to the doctrine of asceticism.
(2) the break-up of the *aghrāḍ* into thematic elements ('motifs', *ma'ānī*) and
their free combination in individual poems.
With regard to (1):
This approach is somewhat less common. Not many poems begin, like text VI,
with a *nasīb* of several lines, and other *aghrāḍ* are equally rare in a prolonged
form. However, their traditional significance is always changed since it is
reinterpreted in the light of asceticism. The discussion of the leitmotifs (see
below, p. 115) will touch upon the modified function of *nasīb* and *raḥīl*: both
are symbols of the afflicted condition of man: his seduction by the deceptive
pleasures of life, and his suffering during a 'night journey' which ends only in
death.
   Other *aghrāḍ* are similarly revalued; the merry drinking scene of the

khamriyya, for instance, comes to illustrate the folly of mankind: delving into intoxication, man forsakes his most precious possession, reason. A characteristic example of such reinterpretation is the *wasf al-dhi'b*, the wolf description cited in text VII. The theme is not uncommon in Arabic poetry: the most celebrated example is no doubt the wolf description in the *Lāmiyya* of Shanfarā (see Bustānī, 1962, vol. I, pp. 7f). Further occurrences of the theme, including a treatment attributed to Buḥturī, are studied in a recent publication by Ullmann (1981).[11]

In the older poems, the heroic nature of the protagonist is mirrored in the figure of the wolf. His ferocity and resilience, his defiant resistance of hunger and adversity and, in Buḥturī's poem, his courage in the final hour illustrate the moral ideal of *muruwwa*. Ma'arrī, however, approaches the theme from a different angle. The wolf's behaviour is not an image of virtue, but of ignorance and evil:

1.   *law kāna yadrī uwaysun mā janat yaduhū*
        la-khtāra dūna mughāri l-thullati l-'adamā
2.   *fa-inna min aqbaḥi l-ashyā'i yaf'aluhū*
        shākī l-majā'ati yawman an yurīqa dammā

Had the wolf cub understood the crime he committed,
before attacking a flock of sheep he would have chosen to die,
For among the vilest deeds hunger's victim
can ever perform some day is bloodshed.

Like the older poets, Ma'arrī dwells on the solitary resilience of the animal with admiration and awe, but his moral considerations prevail. Two lines in the middle of the poem juxtapose animal nature and ethical spirit in their difference: the wolf steals and devours all he can while man in his penitence must renounce:

7.   *jama'ta fī kulli riyyin sallatan wa-radā*
        nafsin fa-hallā saraqta l-qursa wal-hadamā[12]
8.   *qad yaqṣuru l-nafsa i'ẓāman li-bāri'ihī*
        'alā l-qafāri munībun ṭālama 'tadamā

Each time you feed you combine theft and murder;
why don't you [for once] steal bread and the heat [of the oven]?
In glorification of his creator, a penitent long used to eat his loaf well-seasoned
may restrict himself to unseasoned bread!

The two lines contrast strongly with the ideology of *muruwwa* as it is expressed in the same theme. Traditionally, wolf and hero are not rapacious hunters living out their murderous instincts. On the contrary, both are portrayed living a life of hunger and facing a cruel fight for survival.[13] The contrasting parallelism which has been mentioned above, between *muruwwa* and *zuhd* appears again here. The man of virtue and the ascetic both choose to face hardship, but for different ends. One suffers hunger for the sake of worldly

courage, the other fasts *i'zāman li-bāri'ihi*, in glorification of God. (Buḥturī, 1963, p. 743):

samā lī wa-bī min shiddati l-jū'i mā bihī
    bi-baydā'a lam tuḥsas bihā 'īshatun raghdū
[The wolf] appeared to me in the distance; I was just as hungry as he,
in a wilderness where no life of ease is ever found.

Again, there is the same pattern: the hero, in search of the glory of *muruwwa*, suffers hunger as does the wolf. *'Īshatun raghdu* ('the life of ease and plenty'), is as distant for him as it is for the ascetic.

In Ma'arrī's poem, the mode of behaviour represented by the wolf and man's moral ideal are at opposite ends. The wolf appears as a rapacious creature which kills, not out of necessity, but savagery. It lives its sensuality to the full, and gives way to the passions of animal nature – a conduct without merit. The same applies, by implication, to the conduct of *muruwwa*. Yet there is also, in Ma'arrī's portrayal of the animal's unrestrained vitality, a sense of the burden of moral restraint imposed on man. For virtue is achieved only by the one who curbs his desires, and restricts the inclinations of his self in the knowledge of divine supremacy. Thus hero and ascetic, in their opposition, share a similar fate; both face a solitary struggle, and both shun pleasure and ease in their search for merit. One, however, seeks the metaphor of his ideal in the ferocious resilience of animal nature, the other orientates his ideal towards the divine. Ma'arrī's revaluation of the traditional wolf description illustrates how the literary heritage is absorbed and reinterpreted in the *Luzūmiyyāt*. Topoi and imagery of one poetic tradition are moulded to express contrary moral codes: *muruwwa* and *zuhd*.

With regard to (2):
The break-up of the *aghrāḍ* into thematic elements and their free combination in individual poems is the most characteristic and interesting technique of composition in the *Luzūmiyyāt*. Some of these thematic elements function as leitmotifs (see below, p. 115); while evoking their 'mode of origin', they acquire a new meaning in the context of *Luzūmiyya* ideology. One such motif is the jewelry of the damsels of the *nasīb* which, in the *Luzūmiyyāt*, comes to signify the *'awāriyy* (lit. 'borrowed items'), the human possessions which alone remain when their owners depart (see text VI, 17). The associations such thematic elements evoke with the traditional *aghrāḍ* are an abundant source of poetic richness and subtlety which Ma'arrī exploits throughout the corpus.

This use of conventional imagery gives many passages in the work a symbolist quality. This is because Ma'arrī consistently employs the motifs, not for their mimetic value, but for the significance they have attained in the poetic tradition. Detached from their mimetic base, the motifs become ambivalent and acquire the intangible multivalence of symbols. This gives rise to the mysterious vagueness which veils many a line in the work.

The symbolic nature of the poetic motifs enables Ma'arrī to combine them

freely without having to follow any outward sequence of events. As will be
shown in the analysis of text VI, coherence resides in abstract factors: the
interplay of linguistic forms, and the progress of thought, as it is visualized in
stages through the symbolic content of the motifs. In the following poem
(Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 259), the properties of this technique of composition
are evident in their effectiveness and originality. Each of the first five lines
presents an aspect of the message of asceticism in the guise of an image derived
from a thematic unit of the traditional *qaṣīda*. The last line concludes on a note
of satire:

1. *khumirta mina l-khumāri wa-dhāka najsun*[14]
        wa-ammā min khimārika fa-huwa sa'dū
2. *wa-nafsuka ẓabyatun rata'at bi-qafrin*
        yurāqibu akhdhahā l-mighwāru ja'dū
3. *wa-Zaynabu in aṣābathā l-manāya*
        fa-Hindun min wasā'iqihā wa-Da'dū
4. *jarat 'ādātunā bi-suqūṭi ghaythin*
        tadullu 'alayhi bāriqatun wa-ra'dū
5. *shurūru l-dahri aktharu min banīhī*
        fa-qablu saṭat 'alā umamin wa-ba'dū
6. *ta'ajjala mayyitun bil-hulki naqdan*
        fa-marra wa-'indahū lil-ba'thi wa'dū

Rapt into drunkenness, a shame;
but in your turban wrapped betokens well.
Your soul is a gazelle happily grazing in the wild,
but lying in wait to seize her, the Raider, the shaggy [wolf].
And Zaynab should she be struck by Fate,
well Hind and Da'd were his victims too.
We have long been used to rainfalls
announced by lightning-clouds and thunder.
Still more are the evils of Time than his children
for they fell in the past upon nations and in the future will fall.
The dead man has paid his debt of death cash on the nail
and has passed on, resurrection for him a promissory note.

The first hemistich of line 1 alludes to the mode of *khamriyya* ('wine poetry'),
while evaluating the theme in accordance with the moral code of the
Luzūmiyyāt. By playing upon the words *khumār* ('intoxication') and *khimār*
('turban', 'veil'), honour and dignified behaviour are contrasted with the
hangover of the boon companion. Other, more lengthy, resumptions of the
khamriyya themes explain Ma'arrī's grievances against the drinking of wine
(*ibid.*, p. 215, lines 4f).

   The second line recalls the *waṣf* section of the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda* where the
portrayal of a gazelle attacked by hunter or wolf is a standard theme. The very
wording of the line is reminiscent of ancient models:

bi-aḥizzati l-Thalabūti yarba'u fawqahā
    qafra l-marāqibi khawfuhā ārāmuhā
Up and up he [the wild ass] goes, in the broken country of Thalabūt, to
    the level plateau above it, giving a
broad outlook, but where the cairns fill him with fear.[15]

Labīd's wild ass fears the hidden dangers of the wilderness which also threaten
the life of the gazelle in Ma'arrī's line.[16]

The names Zaynab, Hind, and Da'd, in line 3 evoke the traditional figure of
the beloved. The motif is treated in *Luzūmiyyāt* fashion: the damsels – by
convention young, beautiful and desirable[17] – are portrayed as a flock
shepherded by death.

The rain motif in line 4 is also an ancient part of the poetic tradition. It
frequently figures in the *aṭlāl* mode when the poet describes the rainfalls on the
deserted campsite (see text II, 3). It is also found in elegies (*rithā'*), when rain is
wished on the tomb of the deceased, as well as in storm, spring, and garden
descriptions.

The statement in line 5 is the first and only to belong to the mode of *ḥikma*
proper, evoking the traditional lamentations over mortality and transience, as
well as the Qur'ānic topos of the *umam khāliya* (see Wansbrough, 1977, p. 3).

The varying provenance of the motifs in the first four lines does not create
a lack of cohesion since there is a subtle interrelation of imagery and argument.
Najs and *sa'd* in line 1 refer to an idea alluded to again in the last line of the
poem: *al-wa'd wal-wa'īd* ('the heavenly promise and threat').[18] Purity is a good
omen because it will ensure ultimate bliss, while defilement forebodes evil. The
second line illustrates this meaning. The operative link with the line above is
the word *khimār*. It refers to the veil of protection with which man must cover
his soul to keep 'her' away from the gloating eyes of sinful temptation: she is
like a gazelle innocently grazing, while evil in the form of the wolf is lying in
wait for her. Thus she must be shielded to retain her chastity and purity. Line
2 also has other connotations suggested by the poetic tradition. *Ẓabya* evokes
the beloved of the *nasīb*, and the wolf's attack expresses not only a moral but
also a physical reality: namely the unrestrained sensual urge (alluded to in line
11 of the wolf description, text VI), as well as, in the last resort, the threat of
death. These connotations are taken up in the third line of the poem: Zaynab (a
conventional name of the beloved) appears, victim of the fates of death.

The second tristich of the poem relates to the first in a manner reminiscent of
the techniques of sectional parallelism observed so far. While the first tristich
dwells on specific situations (the aftermath of drinking, the gazelle grazing, the
death of Zaynab), the second makes statements of general validity. In its
sequence, the second tristich resumes notions of the first: the suggestion of
wine in line 1 is reflected by rain in line 4, the suggestion of restraint (veil), by
the notion of release (falling of rain, thunderstorm). The attack of the wolf (2) is
mirrored by the onslaught of time (5), the death of the women (3) by the fate of
the dying man (6). The latter connection is amplified by an active/passive

contrast: the women are driven as a flock (*wasā'iq*), the man, in vain hope, is himself the one to move (*marra*).

The fourth line is perhaps the most important, certainly the most mysterious of the poem. It introduces the general statements of the conclusion: 'as we are accustomed to the falling of rain', so the evils of time will never cease to befall the nation. The line also comments on the tristich that precedes it. It substantiates the statement of line 3 by illustrating it with a general example: if Zaynab dies, so do Hind and Daʻd; in the same way, thunder and lightning bring rain in their wake. Neither of these statements is to be understood in strictly logical terms. Rather they are associations of events which may be expected to occur together.

The real substance of the line, however, does not reside in these purely illustrative relationships, but in the literary allusion of the theme. Not only does it have a long heritage in the poetic tradition, it is also one of the leitmotifs of the *Luzūmiyyāt*. The poems that rhyme on the letters *'ayn-dāl* contain particularly frequent examples, because the word for thunder *raʻd*, pl. *ruʻūd*, figures as rhyme word:

qad badā lī mina l-manāya
*   bāriqatun ādhanat bi-raʻdī*
The fates of death appeared to me
as a lightning-cloud heralding thunder.

(Maʻarrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 290, line 9)

uḥādhiru l-sayla wa-man lī bi-man-
*   jātin idhā asmaʻanī raʻdah*
I fear the torrent. Who will save me
when it lets me hear its thunder?

(*Ibid.*, p. 276, line 10)

These two examples are sufficient to show how the thunderstorm in line 4 must be understood: it is a reference to death. Lightning and thunder are the awesome signs that announce it, and the coming of the rain symbolizes death itself. When expressing fear of the 'torrent' in the line above, Maʻarrī clearly is not thinking of the beneficient, and reviving, spring rain of traditional, poetic, spring descriptions (*rabīʻiyyāt*). What comes to mind at the phrase, '*uḥādhiru al-sayla*, is the catastrophic storms of the type described by Imru' al-Qays in his *Muʻallaqa*.

Line 4 in the poem, however, suggests a different interpretation. *Ghayth* is not a torrential downpour, but, on the contrary, 'rain that is productive of much good' (Lane, 1863). In this sense, the line does not conjure up the fear of death, but expresses longing for it as relief and end to suffering. It is characteristic of the *Luzūmiyyāt* that rain, a motif which often signifies consolation and revival, should here be equated with death.[19]

Line 4 is thus the best example of what can be called the 'symbolist' style of the *Luzūmiyyāt*. It has no narrative connection with what precedes or follows

it, and acquires its meaning exclusively from the general context and the literary echoes it evokes – echoes of other poems within the collection as much as of the literary heritage as a whole.

It is clear that without some knowledge of the poetic tradition, it would be difficult to do justice to this work. The sequence of motifs might appear arbitrary, their meaning dubious. Seen in the literary context, however, the poem is a carefully composed miniature. The ancient motifs are preserved and yet changed. They derive their meaning in the new context by association with the old: each image carries the reverberations of the past into a new sphere.

Variation

Leitmotifs

The 1,592 poems in the *Luzūmiyyāt* centre on one basic set of ideas. 'All things counter, original, spare, strange' (Hopkins, 1918, p. 30) in the universe of language, Ma'arrī has gathered and combined in ever new patterns to express his vision of these essential truths. Frequent repetition of certain concepts and motifs is thus unavoidable, but this potential agent of monotony has been turned into a source of richness. The repetitions, however numerous, are never uniform but tirelessly express the underlying idea in different and contrasting guises, so that the *Luzūmiyyāt* appear like a formidable set of variations with the ethics of asceticism as their theme. The most important elements of these variations are the leitmotifs: certain lexical items, motifs, or concepts which frequently appear in different forms and contexts. Most of these originate in the conventions of poetic tradition, but they are transposed and explored in a distinctly characteristic manner. Tracing and comparing such leitmotifs provides a fascinating entry into Ma'arrī's work. They afford an insight into the nature of its composition while revealing much about its speculative content.

Given the vast scope of the *Luzūmiyyāt*, an exhaustive study of this kind requires a volume in its own right. In the following pages, I have undertaken a very selective analysis, sufficient, I hope, to convey an idea of the types, character, and function of these motifs.

Darkness and light

The adjective *qabīḥ* occurs in the poem cited on page 97 and in text VI; its elative is found in text VII:

2.   *mir'ātu 'aqlika in ra'ayta bihā siwā*
          mā fī ḥijāka arathu wa-huwa qabīḥū
If in your reason's mirror you perceive what disagrees
with your conscience you will discern it as evil.

10.   *Yurqilna fī khalaqi l-shiwāri wa-fawqahā*
      akhlāqu insin lil-qabīḥi shawārī

They hasten with tattered saddles and upon them
sit men disposed to evil trades.

2.   *fa-inna min aqbaḥi l-ashyā'i yaf'aluhū*
      shākī l-majā'ati yawman an yurīqa dammā

For one of the vilest deeds hunger's victim
can ever perform some day is bloodshed.

The adjective is, in fact, a 'lexical leitmotif': it qualifies the wickedness of
animal nature. Together, the lines picture the moral significance of the word in
its context: by means of reason, man can discern the evil side of his nature and
learn to shun and combat it. However, the majority of mankind act like the
travellers in the second example: they are out not to shun 'evil' but to trade in
it.

    Qabīḥ refers to all that is wicked: man's readiness to forsake the guidance of
reason, to indulge in cruelty and greed, and to let himself be deceived by
intoxication and superstition. The achievements of civilization – state,
commerce, religion – Ma'arrī sees as an offshoot of these evil qualities, as
a result also of man's refusal to recognize the principal truths of existence from
which alone morality can spring: his ignorance and his death:

banaytum 'alā l-amri l-qabīḥi khiyāmakum
    wa-ulfītumū 'an ṣāliḥi l-fi'li khuyyāmā
fa-yā mā aḍalla l-nāsu 'an subuli l-hudā
    wa-lal-dahru lam yatruk Iyāman wa-lā Yāmā

You (pl.) have erected your tents on evil ground,
and are found shunning deeds of virtue like cowards.
How far has mankind strayed from the paths of guidance!
Verily, Time has not left [a trace] of Iyām or Yām.[20]

Man's evil disposition is rooted in his nature (*ṭab'*, *gharīza*, *sajiyya*, etc.)
(Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. II, p. 306, line 2):

fal-ṭab'u fī kulli jīlin ṭab'u mal'amatin
    wa-laysa fī l-ṭab'i majbūlun 'alā l-karamī

For nature in all generations is marked by depravity;
nature has no disposition to virtue.

However, man is not alone or unique in this his disposition. His *ṭab'* is
a reflection of the *ṭab'* of the macrocosm (*ibid.*, vol. I, p. 347, line 11):

fī ṭab'inā l-zayghu wal-fasādu wa-hā-
    dhā l-laylu ṭab'un li-junḥihi l-khadaru

In our nature there is *zaygh* and *fasād*;
and this night is a nature whose prime element is darkness.

The line requires some comment. It refers to two things in one: moral depravity and physical decay. This is evident in the meanings of *zaygh* and *fasād*; the former means both 'deviation' (from the right path) and 'decline' (of the sun from the meridian); the latter means 'viciousness', and, as the opposite of *kawn* ('generation'), it means 'decay'. So the line appears to state that man's evil disposition and mortality are innate qualities mirrored in the blackness of night. This is a suggestive image, but it seems clear from the formulation of the line and the deliberate juxtaposition of the *ṭab'* of man with the *ṭab'* of night, that Ma'arrī meant to express something more specific.

The poem from which the line stems does not offer any comment – it features there like an ideogram – but darkness and light occur as leitmotifs in many other works. In their allusion and variation, they clarify what is intended. Speaking of mankind Ma'arrī says (*ibid.*, vol. II, p. 323, line 10):

wa-ka'anna l-sharra aṣlun fīhumū
    wa-kadhā l-nūru ḥadīthun fī l-ẓulam
It is as though evil was their very root;
just as light is more recent than darkness.

This line shows that the image above is more than an impressionistic statement; it conceals a rational judgement on the nature of the world. Just as darkness is the primary element and light secondary, so evil is man's natural disposition and goodness secondary – brought into being, one might conclude, by an act of reason and control. This explains the *moral* aspect of the *ṭab'* of man in its relation to the *ṭab'* of night: *zaygh* and *fasād* ('deviation') and ('evil') are, like darkness, primary in the world.

The significance of the *physical* aspect of *zaygh* and *fasād* is elucidated by another variation of the same leitmotif. Ma'arrī says about 'day' (*ibid.*, p. 306, line 5):

huwa l-jadīdu fa-yaṭwīhi l-zamānu bilan
    wa-yarja'u l-dahru iẓlāman bi-iẓlāmī
It begins as new then Time renders it thin with decay,
and destiny returns bringing darkness upon darkness.

Thus it would seem that the line has a second meaning quite distinct from the first. As far as the moral aspect is concerned, *ṭab'* of man and *ṭab'* of night *correspond* to one another. However, in the physical aspect, they are *contrasted*: the weakness of human *ṭab'* afflicted by mortality is countered by the triumphant blackness of night, the agent of death. The double meaning of the line is supported by the connotations of *layl*: it not only means 'night' in the literal sense, but evokes *al-layāli*, 'the nights' – the passing eons.

The discussion of this line illustrates how the manifestations of the leitmotifs relate to one another in mutual extension, modification, and definition. Having compared three lines on 'darkness and light', the metaphorical

overtones of the following quotation are evident. (*ibid.*, p. 144, line 9):

yarā l-fikru anna l-nūra fī l-dahri muḥdathun
    wa-mā 'unṣuru l-awqāti illā ḥulūkuhā
Thought concludes that light is a novel element in Time;
the basic constituent of time-spans is none but their darkness.

The 'initiate' knows how to understand the metaphor – not only as a factual judgement on the nature of physical time, but as an allusion to the sinister forces that prevail in the world. This is proved by the line which follows it: it is an injunction admonishing man not to strive for power, not to emulate Kings, the 'most miserable of men' (*ibid.*, p. 144, line 10):

fa-lā targhabū fī l-mulki ta'ṣūna bil-ẓubā
    'alayhi fa-min ashqā l-rijāli mulūkuhā
Don't covet sovereignty by rebelling with swordblades
for among the most wretched of men are their sovereigns.
As so often in the poems discussed, the perception of mortality leads to a moral resolve. The darkness/light opposition is the thematic raw material of other motifs in the *Luzūmiyyāt*. Yet, in spite of their difference in meaning, they all reflect one another, and the more poems one reads, the more sensitive one becomes to the hidden allusions of many a metaphor which on the surface may appear simple or vague.

Darkness (*dujā, dajinna, ḥundus, ḥulūk, layl, ẓalām*, etc.) often stands for evil, ignorance, decay and death. It envelops the course of man's life who as *mudlij* ('night traveller') errs in a pathless tenebrous world. Light (*sirāj, ḍaw', nūr, mishkāt*, also *ṣubḥ, kawkab*, etc.) stands for goodness, guidance, and hope; the light (*sirāj*) of reason may help the traveller to find his way.

It is impossible to describe in brief the great range of these related motifs, some of which also allude to the physical blindness of the poet (he lives in perpetual 'darkness'). Certain usages, however, require to be mentioned. Repeatedly, the poet wonders whether there is any salvation for man. One line puts the question in terms of the theme of darkness and light (*ibid.*, vol. I, p. 295, line 2):

a-yughīthu ḍaw'u l-ṣubḥi nāẓira mudlijin
    am naḥnu ajma'u fī ẓalāmin sarmadī
Will the light of dawn help the night traveller's sight
or are we all in eternal gloom?

Such contemplation upon the possibility of an afterlife, or the reality of heaven and hell, Ma'arrī tends to leave unanswered. He repeatedly confesses his ignorance of the where and whither of *rūḥ*, the 'spirit' or 'soul' of man (*ibid.*, p. 211, lines 4f). Certain relief from the torment of life is only found in its termination, and the image of a hoped-for coming of dawn often conceals an allusion to the poet's longing for death. A metaphor of this type figures in

a septistich on page 207 of volume I. The poem sets out to present man's sorrow and to proclaim *tuqā* ('piety') as his only joy during the night journey of life. Then follows the middle line (*ibid.*, p. 207, line 5):

qad 'īla ṣabruka wal-ẓalmā'u dājiyatun
    fa-ṣbir qalīlan la'alla l-ṣubḥa yanbalijū
My patience is at an end and darkness continues in its gloom;
be patient a little longer, maybe dawn will rise.

The pitch-black night which erodes the perseverance of the traveller is none other than life itself: its sorrow, ignorance, and evil. That death is meant with the reference to the coming of dawn is more than likely, especially in view of the poem's conclusion which alludes to the comfort men of wisdom find in the thought of mortality (*ibid.*, p. 207, line 8):

al-alma'iyyūna in ẓannū wa-in ḥadasū
    ẓanantuhum bi-yaqīnin wāḍiḥin thalijū
I do believe when men of reason contemplate and think
they find solace in something evident and certain.

Thus the poem seems to call on man to meet the sorrow of life with piety, to emulate the men of wisdom in their insight, and to find consolation in the thought of certain death. This message agrees with that of many other poems in the *Luzūmiyyāt*.

Frequently the light/darkness motifs are less explicit. Whether the 'light' refers to death, heavenly reward, to the guidance of reason, or merely to temporary relief, is often unclear. The poetic impact of such lines does not lie in any single meaning which may have been intended, but precisely in the ambivalence fostered by associations with similar images in other poems. This means that a line like the following which, taken out of context, may appear dull in its unqualified reference to *nūr ba'da iẓlām*, is given numerous overtones of meaning as the reader invests the phrase with the associations of the leitmotif (*ibid.*, vol. II, p. 307, line 8):

narjū mina llāhi raḥban ithra ḍayyiqatin
    mina l-umūri wa-nūran ba'da iẓlāmī
We hope God will grant us spaciousness after confined
circumstances and light after the coming of darkness.

The equalization of opposites

inna l-anāma wāqi'un fī lujjā
    wa-ẓulmatin min amrihī multajjā
Mankind in its condition has fallen
into fathomless seas and tumultuous darkness.

                                                (*Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 213, line 8)

Here the metaphor of the 'darkness of life' is combined with another leitmotif which also describes the human condition. Its lexical nucleus is the word *lujja*; the fathomless ocean in which man is left to struggle helplessly. The motif occurs in many variations but the basic meaning remains the same: it describes the mortals' helplessness in a world of chaos.[21] In the 'surge' of continuous creation and destruction, man's labour is senseless. The hopes, deeds, and lives of man are no more significant than ripples on the water's surface.

This view has made Ma'arrī hark on a certain notion familiar from the strophe of the panegyric *qaṣīda*: the 'stalemate condition', the description of the world as a place in which good and bad, positive and negative, in short, all opposed values, cancel one another. It represents one of the abstract leitmotifs of the *Luzūmiyyāt* and I have called it the 'equalization of opposites'. The motif concludes text VI:

24.   *wal-nadbu fī ḥukmi l-hidāni wa-dhū l-ṣibā*
            ka-akhī l-nuhā wal-dhimru kal-'uwwārī
25.   *wa-yuqālu inna madā l-layāli jā'ilun*
            jabalan aqāma ka-zākhirin mawwārī

For the genius is no better than the fool, the youthful lover
is like the man of wisdom, and the courageous [hero] like the coward.
It is said that length of time can turn
a sturdy mountain into surging and tumultuous [seas].

In the following distich, the same is expressed in a different form (*ibid.*, p. 140, lines 2–3):

yā thullatan fī ghaflatin wa-Uwaysuhā l-Qa-
        raniyyu mithla uwaysihā ay dhībihā
subḥāna mujmidi rākidin wa-muqirrihī
        wa-mumīri lujjati zākhirin wa-mudhībihā

O unsuspecting flock [of animals and men] whose Uways al-Qaranī
is like its *uways*, that is, its wolf.
Praise be to the one who solidifies what is stagnant and renders it firm
and stirs up the surging sea and makes it liquid.

The conceptual framework of the couplets is remarkably similar even though they differ in orientation. The equation of the mystic Uways with his name-sake (*uways*, i.e. 'little wolf') mirrors the equation of the virtuous and those devoid of virtue in line 24 of text VI. The juxtaposition recalls the antithesis between *zuhd* and *muruwwa*, ethic spirit and animal nature as presented by the wolf description in text VII (see above, pp. 110f). Uways[22] was considered one of the most exemplary of pious ascetics and thought endowed with special powers of intercession.[23] Yet in the face of death, he is no different from the wolf, symbol of unrestrained greed and destruction.

The second line of the two couplets counters the opposition of moral qualities with an opposition of natural elements and their state: water and

earth, liquid and solid. Time turns the one into the other, God creates the one as he creates the other, and neither are superior or more lasting. The compound *lujjata zākhirin* evokes the leitmotif of the dark ocean; *zākhirin mawwārī* strikes the same note. The images bring to mind the condition of life in which man must subsist: an unstable aggregate in which the constant change, 'from liquid to solid', is itself symbolized by the image of the surging sea. Yet there is also a significant difference between the two lines. In text VI, water and earth are seen as subject to time whose action is destructive. In the corresponding couplet, however, the condition of the two elements is attributed to the power of God. Solidity and liquidity are not stations of meandering time, but awe-inspiring signs of divine supremacy, states of God's power. The similarity and difference between the two couplets illustrates the unifying function of the leitmotifs and the different guises in which they may appear. The second line of both couplets views the condition of the material world from two contrasting angles (time-destruction/God-creation), while expressing with the same basic image the inexorable weakness of man.

The leitmotif of the 'equalization of opposites' has numerous facets corresponding to its great prominence in the *Luzūmiyyāt*. It may refer to the wickedness of man whose actions are all equally depraved (*ibid.*, p. 426, line 4):

masājidukum wa-mawākhīrukum sawā'un
Your mosques and your drinking-dens are the same.

to religious and philosophical values which are all equally erroneous (*ibid.*, p. 295, line 1):

masīḥukum 'indī naẓīru Muḥammadī
Your Christ is in my eyes the same as Muḥammad.

as much as to the equality of all in the face of death (*ibid.*, vol. II, p. 316, line 12):

inna wafāta l-niksi fī jubnihī
    mithla wafāti l-fārisi l-mu'lamī
The death of a wretch in his cowardice
is like the death of a knight with his badge of courage.

Generally, the motif has a spatial and a temporal aspect. The latter is illustrated in line 25 of text VI: in time, a mountain may turn into a sea. In the same way, anything that happens is terminated by an event of contrary motion: conglomeration is followed by dissolution, growth by decay, life by death. The spatial aspect is a consequence of the temporal: since all is terminated equally, opposites which exist simultaneously share the same fate: in this respect 'the courageous are no different from the cowards' (text VI, 24).

The following extract gives expression both to the temporal and the spatial aspect of the 'equalization':[24]

ufarraqu ṭawran thumma ujma'u tāratan
    wa-mithlī fī ḥālātihi l-sidru wal-nakhlu

At times I am scattered and at times joined together;
lotus and palm tree are like me in their states.

Jam' and *tafrīq*, the opposing notions, which formed the conceptual theme of Buhturī's panegyric on Ibn Yūsuf al-Thaghrī, here refer to the systole and diastole of organic life: in the progress of time, neither movement weighs more than its opposite. All living phenomena are equally affected and the human being is no different from 'lotus and palm tree'. In the great flow of time, all distinctions vanish: plant and man, death and life are but accidental forms of one matter.

Icons of the nasīb

Lawm al-dunyā ('blaming the world') is a favourite subject of *khuṭba* and *zuhdiyya*. The *Luzūmiyyāt* are no exception: in the preface, Ma'arrī speaks of the collection as *taḥdhīrun mina l-dunyā l-kubrā* (a 'cautioning against the great world' (*ibid.*, vol. I, p. 9, line 8). Ma'arrī has adapted the metaphors of the *nasīb* to give expression to this warning. Generally, the topos of the beloved, evoked by names like Zaynab, Rayyā, Juml, and Nawār, appears as a symbol of the deceptive nature of *al-dunyā*. The maidens' beauty is treacherous, it beguiles reason (*yasriqu al-lubba, ibid.*, p. 214, line 3), it blossoms only to disappear. They enslave their victims with playful craftiness and seduce them with material ornaments, symbols of aberration and greed. The torment of their lovers mirrors the suffering of mankind at the hand of the world.

Prolonged *nasībs* like that of text VI are comparatively rare. Mostly individual topoi are singled out and interwoven with other motifs so that the line alludes to the traditional *nasīb* setting without describing it as a whole. A short poem which portrays the human condition in terms of the 'equalization of opposites' is concluded as follows (*ibid.*, vol. II, p. 144, line 7):

wa-lam ara illā umma dafrin za'īnatan
     tuḥabbu 'alā ghadrin qabīḥin wa-tafrakū
All I see is Umm Dafr [the mother of stench] riding off in her litter:
she is loved despite an ugly betrayal, and she hates [those who love her].

The picture is familiar from the iconography of the *nasīb*: *za'īna* ('a woman riding in a litter') evokes the moment of separation as the beloved, watched by the mournful poet, leaves the site of their meeting. The poet still loves her despite her rejection and despite the promises she has left unfulfilled. In this poem, however, *tuḥabbu 'alā ghadrin qabīḥin* describes the man's attachment, not to a human beloved, but to the 'mother of stench', as Ma'arrī often calls the world. Her 'ugly treason' is the termination in her of any event by the occurrence of its opposite: as the second line of the poem states, the immobile will be made to move, the mobile will be made to stand still – thus the living will be made to die. The lexical leitmotif, *qabīḥ*, qualifies her treason as the most depraved and yet as in unison with the evil in man.

The iconography of the *nasīb* provides for other leitmotifs. One is the jewelry of the damsels, their anklets, bangles, earrings and bracelets, gold, silver and pearls. These, in the *Luzūmiyyāt*, represent what are called in text VI *'awāriyy* ('the borrowed items', i.e. man's material possessions). Man is deceived by their brilliance, lusts after them, hoards them, only to leave the world naked as he came, forced to 'return' what he borrowed. Thus the motif of the damsel's jewelry is frequently combined with a reference to death (*ibid.*, vol. I, p. 205, line 7):

sa-ya'kulu hādhā l-turbu a'ḍā'a bādinin
    wa-tūrathu aḥjālun lahā wa-damālijū
This earth will consume the limbs of a well-rounded maiden,
and her anklets and bracelets shall be left as inheritance.

The *nasīb* of text VI contains a topos which expresses Ma'arrī's bitterness towards the world. In line 6, the damsels' attention to the poet is likened to a mother's care for her young – yet in reality they only mean deceit.[25] The line may be thus interpreted in the light of an image developed more explicitly in the *Luzūmiyyāt*: that of *al-dunyā* as an evil mother who pampers her children only to torment them more cruelly (*ibid.*, vol. II, p. 401, lines 4–5):

'ajūzu khiyānatin ḥaḍanat walīdan
    fa-laddathu l-karīha wa-sharraqathū
wa-adhāqathu shahiyyan min janāhā
    wa-ṣaddat fāhu 'ammā dhawwaqathū

[She is] a treacherous old woman who holds an infant to her bosom
then feeds him a loathful drink and leaves him exposed to the sun(?);
She gives him one of her delicious fruits to taste,
then turns his mouth away from what she made him taste.

The metaphor expresses the poet's grievance against the fate of man: it creates joy only as a measure of suffering and gives life just to take it.

It is no coincidence that the motif is anticipated at the very beginning of the preface and in the first line of poetry he cites. After referring to the *Luzūmiyyāt* as 'a cautioning against the great world', Ma'arrī continues:[26]

[*ba'ḍuhā ... tahdhīrun mina l-dunyā l-kubrā*] *allatī ... stu-jībat fīhā da'watu Jarwal idh qāla li-ummihi: jazāki llāhu sharran min 'ajūzin wa-laqqāki l-'uqūqa mina l-banīnā. fa-hiya lā tasmaḥu lahum bil-ḥuqūq wa-hum yubākirūnahā bil-'uqūq.*

[some of it ... is cautioning against the great world] where Jarwal's prayer was answered [when he said]
    'May God reward you with evil, old woman,
    and let you meet disobedience in your sons'
for she did not grant them their rights, and they forestalled her with disobedience.

As the poet's own commentary suggests, the line can be seen as an image of the relation between man and world. Ḥuṭay'a's curse reflects as much on the cruelty of the 'mother' (i.e. *al-dunyā*) as on the disobedience of the 'sons' (mankind). The latter's evil disposition is caused by, and a reflection of, the evil nature of the world that brought them into being. In the same way, the preponderance of darkness over light, night over day, mirrors the preponderance of evil over goodness in man.

Ḥuṭay'a led an unhappy life. He vainly tried to overcome the stain of his illegitimate birth by associating himself with various tribes, but was universally rejected, not least because of his ugly appearance. His profound resentment and his hatred towards the world are perceptible in the bitter lampoons he cast at his mother. That Ma'arrī should have introduced the *Luzūmiyyāt* by a citation from them poignantly sets the scene for the work. In evoking the poet's miserable fate, he expresses the gloom, injustice, and sorrow of life, qualities which the *Luzūmiyyāt* show to dominate human existence.

Conclusions

The discussion has been an attempt to give an insight into the treatment of certain motifs as factors of unity in the composition. Different types of leitmotifs have appeared: (1) *lexical leitmotifs* consisting of the particular use of a certain word (*qabīḥ, lujja*): (2) *pictorial leitmotifs*, mostly developed from conventional imagery. Their main characteristic is their ambivalence. The leitmotif achieves its poetic impact by allusion to other, not always semantically or lexically identical, occurrences of the same motif. As a result, each individual occurrence may carry a number of hidden overtones of meaning only fully apparent to one familiar with the work as a whole: (3) *abstract leitmotifs*, i.e., expressions of rational judgement. These include also the recurring ethical ideas, the moral guidelines of asceticism. Like the 'equalization of opposites', these abstract motifs, while sharing a common base, are illustrated by a host of different images and viewed from a multiplicity of angles, so that new elements are continually added to the basic core.

The leitmotifs discussed develop a picture which is fundamentally pessimistic: it dwells on evil as a primary quality in nature, on the insignificance of man and his pursuits, and finally, and most essentially, on the ultimate triumph of death. Altogether, they sum up what could be called the *'ilm* ('knowledge') of the *Luzūmiyyāt* as perceived by means of *'aql* ('reason'). From this sinister background, the guidelines of asceticism detach themselves as antitheses, rather as the guidelines of wisdom counter the sorrow of the *aṭlāl* in the poems of 'Abīd b. Abraṣ and 'Adiyy b. Zayd (see above, pp. 73 ff). Indeed, it is possible to divide Ma'arrī's principles of asceticism into two types which seem to correspond to models exemplified by the *qaṣīdas* of 'Abīd and 'Adiyy. One represents the sinister, death-oriented aspect of asceticism, the other presents asceticism as life-oriented wisdom, desirous to instruct and showing

compassion and concern. Both aspects are related in that they aim at counteracting the inclinations of human nature (*tab'*, see above, p. 116) and, by implication, the course of *al-dunyā* as a whole.

As to the first aspect, it is marked by disengagement from society and defiant acceptance of the ultimate triumph of death. In 'Abīd's poem, this is evident in the pessimistic vision of human society and the fate of man (translation by Lyall, 1913, p. 19):

al-mar'u mā 'āsha fī takdhībin
    ṭūlu l-ḥayāti lahū ta'dhībū
Man as long as he lives is a self-deceiver:
length of life is but increase of trouble.

This vision culminates in the dramatic release of the death-bringing forces of nature manifest in the description of the eagle. Ma'arrī, on the basis of an equally pessimistic vision, reaches the opposite conclusion. The release of *muruwwa* is countered by total restraint: the ascetic neither kills nor procreates. Both attitudes, however, share the stance of heroic defiance in the face of death. Here again, as in the discussion of the wolf poem, archaic *muruwwa* and *zuhd* in the *Luzūmiyyāt* share, in their opposition, essential qualities.

The human-oriented aspect of asceticism, on the other hand, the concern for social cohesion and justice manifest in verses of compassion and instruction, is equally prominent in the *Luzūmiyyāt* (Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. II, p. 278, lines 4ff), thus continuing the tradition of models like 'Adiyy's poem.[27] The manner in which the maxims of asceticism develop out of elements of the literary tradition can be illustrated poignantly with the example of one particular topos: the virtuous man's isolation in the midst of a morally deficient society. It figures in the first line of Shanfarā's *Lāmiyya* (Bustānī, 1962, vol. I, p. 5):

aqīmū banī ummī ṣudūra maṭiyyakum
    fa-inni ilā qawmin siwākum la-amyalū
Lift up, sons of my mother, the chests of your camels [and depart],
for I tend more to kinsmen other than you.

An inversion of the same topos marks the beginning of the *Luzūmiyyāt*:[28]

ūlū l-faḍli fī awṭānihim ghurabā'ū
    tashudhdhu wa-tan'ā 'anhumi l-qurabā'ū
Men of virtue are strangers in their own lands,
their next-of-kin shun them and stay away.

The antithetical parentage between archaic *muruwwa* and the *zuhd* of Ma'arrī is evident once more: Shanfarā seeks, and finds, his ideal in the vitality of

animal nature,[29] Maʿarrī in the absolute of spiritual restraint (Maʿarrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 44, lines 6ff).

Rhyme and lexicon

Variation in the *Luzūmiyyāt* is not confined solely to the leitmotifs. Rhyme words (*qawāfī*), and types of paronomasia, also recur in identical form in different poems; and, like the leitmotifs, they are drawn into a new and sometimes contrasting context each time. Variations based on identity of *qāfiya* are a characteristic feature of the sections and units in the *Luzūmiyyāt*. Often, certain rhyme words reappear in different poems, because of their being part of a leitmotif: thus, as has been mentioned, the word for thunder, *raʿd*, *ruʿūd*, provides many a rhyme among the poems with *dāl* as *rawiyy*. The same applies to *tāj* ('crown') in the section on *jīm*, or *ẓalām* ('darkness') in the section on *mīm*.

If several long poems share the same *qāfiya*, the number of rhyme words repeated can be very high. Such works are particularly good examples of the manner and scope of variation, since the semantic relationship between them is often, of necessity, rather close. This applies to the 'sister poems' of text VI: *ajzāʾu dahrin yanqaḍīna* (*ibid.*, pp. 335f, rhyme *wārū*, metre *kāmil*, 19 lines); *awā rabbī ilayya* (*ibid.*, pp. 393f, rhyme *wārī*, metre *wāfir*, 17 lines); *aṣāba al-Akhfashayni* (*ibid.*, pp. 396f, rhyme *wārī*, metre *wāfir*, 12 lines). In the following, I will refer to these poems as RI, RII, and RIII, with text VI as RIV; this order corresponds to their succession in the text.

The relationship between the four poems is determined by the *qāfiya*. The rhyme words of RI are derived from roots with *wāw* and *rāʾ* as second and third radicals, the exception being the rhyme word of line 17 which comes from a *hamza*ted root (*jʾr*). Poems RII, RIII, and RIV, draw on a wider choice of rhyme words. In addition to roots ending on *wr*, there are roots ending on *rw*, *ry*, and *rʾ*.

The parentage of *qāfiya* leads to the repetition of a considerable number of rhyme words in the four poems. Together, they have seventy-four lines, but there are only forty-seven different rhyme words, and these again are derived from only thirty-one roots. Eighteen rhyme words are repeated; some occur in all four poems. Below, is a list of these words and their frequency, following the alphabetical order of the letter preceding the *qāfiya*. Here, too, the linguistic comprehensiveness of the *Luzūmiyyāt* is evident: of the twenty-eight possible letters, only six are lacking (*thāʾ*, *ẓāʾ*, *lām*, *hāʾ*, *wāw* and *yāʾ*). Furthermore, the list presents only a partial picture of the lexical overlap between the four poems. Due to the technique of *radd al-ʿajz ʿalā al-ṣadr* (see Glossary), many words which provide the rhyme in one poem anticipate the *qāfiya* in others. Thus *ṣuwār* ('flock of gazelles'), rhyme word in RI and RII, also occurs in RIV where it anticipates the rhyme word *ṣawārī*. Other words, like *ʿawāriyy*, which lend themselves to paronomasia with the *qāfiya*, occur more than once (RII/3, RIII/8, RIV/17) but never provide the rhyme.

List of rhyme words

Letters	Words	RI	RII	RIII	RIV
hamza	*uwār*	12		6	3
	uwārī		1		
bā'	*bawār*	9	13	3	
	bawārī				1
tā'	*tawārī*		12	10	18
jīm	*jiwār/jawār/juwār*	1	5		13
	jawārī		8	4	19
	ju'ār	17			
ḥā'	*ḥiwār*	2	4	1	6
	ḥuwār	19	6		5
khā'	*khawwār*	15			12
dāl	*duwār*		17		2
	dawwār	14			
	dawārī			5	
dhāl	*dhawārī*				7
rā'	*(dah)ri wārī*			2	
zā'	*zawwār*	4			
	zawārī		10		
sīn	*siwār*	5	9	11	
	sawwār	7			
	sawārī			7	9
	uswār	6			20
	aswār				26
shīn	*shawārī*				10
	shiwār		11		
	mishwār	13			11
ṣād	*ṣiwār/ṣuwār*	11	15		
	ṣawārī				8
ḍād	*ḍawārī*		14	12	
ṭā'	*ṭawār*				15
	aṭwār	16			
	ṭawārī		2		16
'ayn	*'awārī*		3	8	17
	'uwwār				24
ghayn	*mighwār*	10			21
	ghiwār			9	
fā'	*fawārī*		16		
	fa-wārī				4
qāf	*qawārī*				22
kāf	*akwār*	18			23
nūn	*anwār*	3			
	nawār		7		
	nuwwār				14
mīm	*mawwār*	8			25

'Abd Allāh al-Ṭayyib suggests that most of the *Luzūmiyyāt* were composed in the order in which they appear in the collection (1950, pp. 223f). The relationship between the four poems of *warī/warū* seems to bear this out. One can see them as stages in a thorough exploration of the lexical range of the *qāfiya*. RI is the simplest of the four and contains only a few examples of *radd al-'ajz 'alā l-ṣadr*; it is, however, also the one with the most limited choice of rhyme words. RII is more complex and, together with RI, anticipates RIV: they are *qaṣīda*-type poems and the motifs of the *nasīb* figure prominently. RIII is the odd one out. A humorous riddle-like concoction, it portrays Jarmī's grammar book *al-Farkh* ('The Chick'), as an immortal bird which survives its peers and flutters happily through time, untroubled by hunger, thirst, and predators, only damaged by careless readers. A comparison of the figures of paronomasia reveals RIV (text VI) as the linguistic culmination of the four poems. RI and RII in particular appear like studies in preparation of the final canvas.

A comprehensive analysis of the correspondences between the four poems is unnecessary for the present purpose. Three examples are sufficient to illustrate the function of semantic and phonological variation in the *Luzūmiyyāt*. I have chosen the names in RIV as points of reference.

Nawār
The name figures in the *nasīb*s of RI, RII and RIV:

RI/3.   *a-Nawāru mahlan kam thawā min rabrabin*
              nūrun wa-lāḥat fī l-dujā anwāru
         Slowly, Nawār – how many shy gazelles [like you] lived in their herd
              [and died],
         how many lights shone in the darkness [and were put out].

RII/7.   *wa-lā yu'jabka riyyun 'inda Rayyā*
              wa-lā nūrun tabayyana min Nawārī
         Let the fresh beauty of Rayyā not amaze you,
         nor the glow that emanates from Nawār.

RIV/1.   *a-Nawāru tuḥsabu min sanā l-anwārī*
              wa-mina l-bawāri mahan 'araḍna bawārī
         Can Nawār be considered part of the brightness of lights
         when gazelles whose sight emaciates [you] are part of death?

The lines contain variations of the three types of leitmotif discussed above. The *abstract leitmotif* which the lines share is the one well summarized in the phrase *ghurūr al-dunyā* – the deceptiveness of the world. Nawār in her beauty deceives both herself and her lover. Her shining complexion is an enticement which makes her forget mortality and threatens her lover with perdition.

The most important *pictorial leitmotif* is the theme of light and darkness with its associations. Nawār appears as if she was a 'light' – the implication being a 'light of guidance', a light of hope for happiness. In reality, however,

this light leads the lover astray and makes him meet with suffering and sorrow. Furthermore, it does not last but is soon extinguished.

The *lexical leitmotif* marks the pivot point of the variations in the three lines. It is the name Nawār itself, one of the lexical leitmotifs drawn from the conventional names of the beloved of the *nasīb* (cf., Zaynab, Hind and Da'd, Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 259, line 3). The phonological variations in the lines revolve around the root of the name and its assonance with the *qāfiya*. *Nawār* literally means 'shy, timid' (said of animals and young girls; pl. *nūr*), and shares its root with the word for light, *nūr* (pl. *anwār*).

Paronomasia in the three lines:

RI/3.	a-Nawār/thawā	nūr/anwārū
RII/7.	riyy/Rayyā	nūr/Nawārī
RIV/1.	a-Nawār/anwār	bawār/bawārī

In RI, alliteration in both hemistichs is determined by words derived from the root *nwr*: Nawār, *nūr*, *anwār*. *Nūr* in the second hemistich can be understood both as the plural of *nawār* ('shy'), in which case it refers to the members of the flock (*rabrab*), or as the singular of the rhyme word *anwār* ('lights').

The equivalent line in RII is semantically less subtle but the phonological parallelism between the two hemistichs is more evenly balanced. The paronomasia on the root *nwr* is limited to one hemistich, and an altogether different root provides for alliteration in the other. Both, however, contain the letter *rā'*: in one case it is the first, in the other the last letter of the root. There is also a 'phonological antithesis' between *yā'* and *wāw* in the two roots: *ryy* and *nwr*.

In the first line of RIV, Ma'arrī has perfected the sound balance between the two hemistichs by combining the homophony of the four elements of the *jinās* (as in RI/3) with a distinctive paronomasia for each hemistich (as in RII/7). For this purpose, he has taken up the paronomasia beween *a-Nawār* and *anwār* which links beginning and end of line RI/3. The juxtaposition of *bawār* and *bawārī* has also been put to the test before, namely in line 13 of *qaṣīda* RII.

Apart from illustrating the meaning of variation both semantic and phonological, the construction of the three lines suggests that RIV is most likely to have been the last of the three poems. The highly ornate paronomasia of its first line combines elements which were developed in the earlier poems.

Duwār
Dawwār ('rotating'), is rhyme word only once in the four poems, in *qaṣīda* RI:

RI/14. *wa-wanā l-rijālu l-'āmilūna wa-mā wanā*
       falakun bi-khidmati rabbihī dawwārū
       Working men tire, but never
       the firmanent revolving in the service of the Lord.

The word is repeated with a different meaning in *qaṣīda* RII, where it functions as *radd al-'ajz 'alā l-ṣadr* in the last line:

RII/17.   *a-sirbun ḥawla dawwārin nisā'un*
           bi-Makkata aw 'adhārā fī Duwārī
           Are gazelles herding around curving sands
           women in Mekka or virgins in Duwār?

The line is as effective as it is offensive to orthodoxy. In the face of uncaring
time, believers and heathen are the same. Women by the Mekkan shrine, or
virgins by a pagan idol, neither are more distinct than a distant flock of gazelles
in the desert.

   Dawwār and the name Duwār have been employed again by Ma'arrī in the
composition of the second line of RIV. As with the variations on Nawār, this
final version is the most intricate and condensed:

RIV/2.   *bīḍun dawārin lil-qulūbi ka-annahā*
           'īnun bi-dawwārin wa-'ayni Duwārī
           They're white and prey on hearts as though they were
           wide-eyed ones on curving sands and Duwār's holy site.

Dawwār and Duwār are confined to one hemistich and supplied with one
subject (*'īn*) as opposed to two (*sirb*, *'adhārā*). Thus the quotation from Imru'
al-Qays (see above p. 109), which concludes *qaṣīda* RII, is reduced to the mere
mention of the place name. The basic image, however, which supplies the
'theme' to the variations, remains the same in the *Mu'allaqa*, and *qaṣīdas* RII
and RIV: the vision of a distant flock of gazelles or girls encircling a shrine.

   In RIV, the paronomasia between *dawwār* and Duwār is enriched by
a third element: *dawārin*, plural of *dārin* ('lying in wait'). The word has also
appeared before: it provides a rhyme in the third of the four poems. *Al-Farkh*,
the metaphorical book-bird, does not care for picking up seeds and thus
cannot be lured into the hunter's net:

RIII/5.   *wa-lam yahmum bi-laqṭi l-ḥabbi yawman*
           fa-yūjadu rahna ashrākin dawārī
           He is not tempted to pick seeds from the ground some day;
           and then be found in the grip of deceitful snares.

Seeing the context in which this rhyme word reappears in RIV gives the line
certain metaphorical overtones. It is well possible that Ma'arrī did not only
think of the 'bird's' lack of appetite for food, but also of his lack of other carnal
desires – as a result of which he is spared the suffering of passion (note the
consonance between *ḥabb* and *ḥubb*!). This metaphorical parallel continues
into the following line where the rhyme word is *uwār*, the same as in line 3 of
RIV. In one case it refers to the thirst of the birds dying in the desert, in the
other to the lover's burning thirst of passion. One might conclude that
al-Farkh escapes both.

Shāba

Except for the long *fatḥa*, there is little resemblance between the word Shāba
and the rhymes *wārī* and *wārū*. Nevertheless, the name not only occurs in two

of the poems but, both times, in the same metrical position and in conjunction with the same rhyme word: *khawwār* ('soft'). Shāba and *khawwār* are contrasted in one case, juxtaposed in the other:

RI/15. *wa-yakurru min jayshi l-qaḍā'i musallaṭun*
          Thawrun wa-Shābatu taḥtahū khawwārū
          An indomitable victor from the host of destiny will attack;
          under him [the mountains] Thawr and Shāba are soft [like sand].

RIV/12. *ālaytu mā mana'a l-khuwāru awābidan*
          fī haḍbi Shābata wal-naqā l-khawwārī
          I swear, their lowing shall not protect the wild herds
          at Shāba's stony mount and the soft sands.

As in the previous examples, the line of RIV has the more complex sound structure. In RI/15, the *qāfiya* is anticipated only rudimentarily by Thawr, while line 12 of RIV contains a *radd al-'ajz 'alā l-ṣadr* (*khuwār – khawwār*) in addition to the *jinās* of *awābid*.

Both lines have as their subject the destructive power of Time. Their treatment of the theme, however, is contrasting. In RI/15, the first hemistich describes the victor (the host of Fate); Thawr and Shāba in the second hemistich are the victims. In RIV/12, it is the *first* hemistich which portrays the victims (the wild aimals); the second denotes, not the victor, but that which remains after the victims succumb: mountain and sand desert. This meaning recalls a line by Muraqqish al-Akbar in the *Mufaḍḍaliyyāt:*[30]

fa-dhhab fidan laka bnu 'ammika lā
    yakhludu illā Shābatun wa-Iram
Go, may your cousin be your ransom! Nothing
save Shāba and Iram will abide.

The twofold conjunction of Shāba and *khawwār* is characteristic of variation in the *Luzūmiyyāt*. The contexts in which the words appear are different and yet related in such a way as to suggest one line may have been inspired by the other.

Analysis

Introduction

Text VI, the poem chosen for analysis, is a highly ornate recasting of the traditional *qaṣīda* form. Despite the clarity of its message, the thematic coherence of the work is not immediately obvious. Particularly the latter part of the poem appears to consist of couplets carefully constructed within themselves but unrelated to one another by unity of subject matter or chronological sequence. In the course of the analysis, I hope to show that the poem's composition nevertheless follows a sensible course, designed to unfold with growing precision the poet's awareness of mortality.

The *nasīb* presents the maidens as gazelles capturing men's hearts and tormenting the poet (1–4). They chase him, and he falls prey to their charms, yet the hopes they raise remain unfulfilled. The damsels only play with their victim: once they have had their fill of pleasure, they turn away and the poet is abandoned in distress (5–8). In the traditional manner, the experience of sorrow gives rise to a contrasting impulse for action, but the conclusion here differs from the ordinary *qaṣīda*. Instead of portraying himself among a group of travellers in newly found heroic death-defiance, the poet turns away from both maidens and caravan. He discards the girls' rings and anklets, together with the nose-rings of the camels, and depicts the travellers as traders of evil, not models of virtue (9–10). He finds consolation only in the thought of death and the certainty that none will be spared (11–12). Three lines then express pity for men and animals in their fear of death and conclude with a picture of the annihilation it brings: the one who departs is as though he had never been (13–15).

This completes the development of the first half of the *qaṣīda*. Lines 9–15 counter the *nasīb* with the ideology of the *Luzūmiyyāt*: life is but disappointment and suffering, men are evil by nature, so withdraw and understand death as salvation. The poem's second half sets out to confirm this vision by presenting the futility of all labour and aspirations under the omnipresent shadow of death. 'Eagles fly up from their nests', but destiny hovers above them and all man's possessions are returned eventually as he sinks naked to the tomb (16–17). A sombre image then depicts the coming and going of human life: life is no more than ripples on the water's surface (18–19). Two lines conclude, conjuring up the treacherous power of time which will smite even the most valiant (20–21). The final passage of the poem reiterates the same steps. Again a picture of fruitless labour is presented (22–3), and the essence of life's spectacle perceived. All forms of being are trivial and frail: the courageous are no more than the meek, and mountains may be levelled into seas (24–5).

The poem's development as it appears in this summary justifies a subdivision into four movements of three subsections each. The number of lines involved is numerically related so as to form a symmetrical pattern similar to the subdivision of other poems analysed so far:

Sections	A	B	C	D
	(1–8)	(9–15)	(16–21)	(22–6)
(1) (lines)	2	2	2	2
(2)	2	2	2	2
(3)	4	3	2	1
Total number of lines in each section	8	7	6	5

Section A constitutes the *nasīb*, section B its antithesis in the ideology of the *Luzūmiyyāt*. Sections C and D retrace the development of section B to lead to an even more concise formulation of the same conclusion: the annihilation of all being in death. This threefold repetition of one complex of ideas is not an unfamiliar feature. Buḥturī concludes the panegyric analysed in text I in the same manner: three successive battle scenes portray Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Thaghrī as the living link between his enemies and death.

Below, I approach the poem from various levels – semantic, morphological, phonological, and metrical – in the wish to substantiate this thematic subdivision and convey a picture of the poem's unity.

Section A – the 'Nasīb'

Summary

The chart divides the *nasīb* into two couplets and one quatrain (1–2, 3–4, 5–8). The couplets present separately the thematic elements whose interaction is the subject of the quatrain: the maidens and the suffering they cause, and the poet with the suffering he endures. The damsels appear (*'araḍna*) in a visual setting: as rays of light in their whiteness, as wide-eyed gazelles, or virgins surrounding a heathen shrine. The second couplet contrasts this visual scene with a description of hidden torment: the poet is forced to conceal his violent longing; his passion is flaming inside him unanswered and unknown while the calumniators thrive. The following quatrain supplements the static juxta-position of poet and damsels with a picture of dynamic interaction. The poet is pursued, deceived with loving charms and, in the end, deserted.

Ma'arrī's allusive use of motifs as well as the reciprocal definition of leitmotifs are illustrated in the double meaning of lines 5 and 6. *Mithl* in line 5 may refer to *ṣidnaka*, illustrating the maidens' hunt for the poet; it may also refer to *fa-btakir*, illustrating his response. The first meaning, which I take to be the primary one, has been discussed in relation to the *Luzūmiyya* picture of the 'evil mother'. Grammatically and semantically, the interpretation is compatible with the subsequent lines (see above, p. 123).

The second meaning evokes a different context. In the face of the hunters' threat, the poet is encouraged to set out in the morning 'like female camels after their young' who then 'tend them in the evening'. The phrase introduced by *innamā* would have to be understood as causal: 'set out ... because you will only be deceived by false charms'. The reading brings to mind the archaic image of the lone gazelle searching for her young which has fallen behind the herd and been killed by wolves. In the context of Ma'arrī's line, the young one could be an image of the soul, evoking 'Adiyy's words (see Bustānī, 1962, vol. I, p. 252):

fa-nafsuka fa-ḥfaẓhā 'ani l-ghayyi wal-radā
So shield your soul from sin and perdition ...

as well as Ma'arrī's own (see above, p. 112):

fa-nafsuka ẓabyatun rataʻat bi-qafrin
   yurāqibu akhdhahā l-mighwāru jaʻdū
Your soul is a gazelle happily grazing in the wild;
but lying in wait to seize her the Raider, the shaggy [wolf].

The poet thus calls upon himself to shield his soul from temptation. The image expresses the threat of death contained in *ṣidnaka*, resuming also *min al-bawār* in the first line, while maintaining the paradox that gazelles and women, not wolves and armoured men, are here made agents of perdition.[31]

In the former reading, *yar'amna* and *yalʻabna* share the same subject (*ḥawāriyyāt* in line 5a); in the latter the two verbs have different subjects: *yar'amna* refers to *ḥuwāriyyāt* in line 5b, *yalʻabna* to *ḥawāriyyāt*. Since both interpretations of the couplet are meaningful, one may presume that both are intended.

Syntax

The syntactic features of the *nasīb* underline the progress from static presentation to dynamic interaction. The quatrain is syntactically and rhythmically more varied than the two couplets. Lines 2–4 are metrically uniform while each line of the quatrain has a different metrical pattern. *Bīḍ, ʻīn,* and *ammā* create syntactic regularity in the two couplets, while the syntax of the quatrain, as punctuated by *idhā, mithl,* and *innamā*, is intricately dovetailed. The clause *yar'amna saqban* is *preceded* by a conditional clause (*wa-idhā*), followed by *mithl*, while the clause *yalʻabna bil-zuwwāri* is *succeeded* by a conditional clause (*idhā balaghna*), followed by *mithl*. Both structures are concluded by a fourth member linked by verbs in the second person singular: the clause in line 6b and *idhā shamamta ṣuwārahā* in line 8a:

$$
5 \left\{ \begin{array}{l} wa\text{-}idh\bar{a} \\ mithl \end{array} \right. \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{I} \quad yal'abna \\ \text{II} \quad wa\text{-}idh\bar{a} \end{array} \left. \right\} 7
$$

$$
6 \left\{ \begin{array}{l} yar'amna \\ innam\bar{a} \end{array} \right. \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{III} \quad mithl \\ \text{IV} \quad idh\bar{a} \end{array} \left. \right\} 8
$$

So the syntactic pattern of lines 7–8 repeats that of lines 5–6, reversing the order of the first three members. In line 8, the third and fourth members are drastically shortened so that the clause in 8b remains unaligned:

fa-shujūnu qalbika lil-humūmi ṣawārī
thus your heart's desires collect but lasting pain.

This hemistich, however, concludes the *nasīb* with a final picture of the poet's suffering. Its place is thus ingeniously prepared by the syntactic structure.

Sectional parallelism

This has been a device of most poems analysed so far. The semantic and syntactic contrast between the two couplets and the quatrain suggests that the *nasīb* of the poem is similarly structured.

Lines 1–2 and 5–6: Lines 1 and 2 depict the maidens as predatory, as agents of perdition (*mina l-bawār*). Lines 5 and 6 resume this notion with *ṣidnaka* ('they chased you'), but in contrast introduce the image of the female as giver and protector of life: in their deceit, the maidens guard the poet as if they were she-camels tending their young; or, alternatively, the poet facing the threat of temptation guards his soul like a mother her young. Semantic opposition is confirmed by syntactic congruence between lines 2 and 6:

2.   *bīḍun dawārin lil-qulūbi ka'annahā*
      'īnun bi-dawārin wa-'ayni Duwārī
They are white and prey on hearts as though they were
wide-eyed ones on curving sands and Duwār's holy site.

6.   *yar'amna saqban fī l-rawāḥi wa-innamā*
      tabnī 'alā ḥawarin wa-ḥusni ḥiwārī
They give the young male camel tender care at nightfall
Yet all you gain is dazzling eyes and talk of niceties.

The two nouns *bīḍ* and *'īn* are balanced by the verbs *yar'amna* and *tabnī*; *ka'annahā* has the same metric position as *innamā*, and in the second half of both lines, a possessive construction (*iḍāfa*) is preceded by copula, noun, and preposition. The thematic antithesis is explicit in the first hemistich; the gazelles are hunters espying the hearts, while the she-camels are mothers tending their young. The images of the second hemistich revolve around attributes of the eye (*'īn, ḥawar*) and are related in content. The virgins seen in the distance, and the beautiful eyes and conversation of the damsels are equally enchanting and deceptive.

Lines 3–4 and 7–8: The couplets also correspond. The ignorance (*mā darat*) of the *aṭlāl* is supplanted by the callousness of the damsels, the poet's burning desire (*uwār*) contrasted with their contentment (*riḍan*). The images of lines 4 and 8 contrast frustration and fulfilment, sense of hearing and smell. The calumniators find ears to listen, the gazelles, kindling desire with their scent, remain unattainable. Both images precede a portrayal of the poet's suffering:

4.   *ammā fawārī l-mayni 'anka fa-ṣādafat*
      sam'an wa-ammā l-wujdu minka fa-wārī
Those who forge lies about you found a hearing
while your passion flares within you [unrequited].

8.   *mithlu l-ṣiwārī idhā shamamta ṣuwārahā*
      fa-shujūnu qalbika lil-humūmi ṣawārī
Like flocks of deer when you detect their musky scent.
Your heart's desires thus collect but lasting pain.

Apart from the semantic parallelism between individual lines, the contrasting relationship between the two initial couplets is resumed in the antithesis between the two halves of the quatrain: its development moves from tenderness and motherly-care to callousness and exploitation.

The hemistich 8b, singled out by the syntactic structure of the quatrain, relates back to all three parts of the *nasīb*. It sums up the poet's fate. In line 2, the damsels are gazelles lying in ambush for the hearts (*dawārin lil-qulūbi*); they proceed to chase the poet (*ṣidnaka*, 5) and succeed in wounding his heart (*shujūnu qalbika*, 8). Cause and effect are related in the inversion of the sound pattern from *dawārin lil-qulūbi* to *lil-humūmi ṣawārī*.

Line 8b also resumes the imagery of lines 3b and 4b. There, the poet's grief and passion are portrayed as an emotion of internal torment. The image in 8b adds to this the sexual note already implicit in *tabnī 'alā* in line 6: because of the connotations of *ṣarā*, the picture of accumulated sorrow evokes the idea of physical frustration.[32] The interpretation of the image recalls Buḥturī's *nasīb* in text I. The poet's inability to shed tears could be seen as an expression of sexual impotence to be overcome subsequently in the power of the Prince who causes blood and water to flow (see above, pp. 34ff).

The thematic elements and development of this *nasīb* thus follow a well-known pattern. It centres on the isolated suffering of the poet: all ties of communication are ruptured, only evil finds response, and all pleasure is but that of his tormentors.

Sections B, C and D

In discussing the development of the remainder of the poem, I follow the pattern laid out in the thematic chart (see above, p. 132). Sections B, C, and D each consist of three subsections related in their sequence. The first, B1, C1, and D1, pictures the activity of human beings or animals, presenting their unawareness of mortality and exposing man's unthinking belief in profit and gain. The next step, B2, C2, and D2, follows with the poet's contemplation of the manifestation of life. Knowing about death, he sees all its diversity levelled to insignificance by the rule of transience. The third subsection, B3, C3, and D3, expresses the conclusion drawn from this contemplation of karma: time will ravage all.

(a) *The first subsection: B1, C1, D1*

B1
$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \end{array} \right.$
9.   *fa-j'al siwāray ghādatin wa-burāhumā*
           li-burā ghawādin fī l-rikābi sawārī
10. *yurqilna fī khalaqi l-shiwāri wa-fawqahā*
           akhlāqu insin lil-qabīḥi shawārī

So let a maiden's twin bracelets and anklets be
like nose-rings of camels journeying in caravan through morning and
      through night;

They hasten with saddle utensils tattered and upon them
are men disposed to evil trades.

C1
16. *tilka l-nusūru mina l-wukūri ṭawā'irun*
   wa-maqādirun min fawqihinna ṭawārī
17. *inna l-'awāriyya sturudda jamī'uhā*
   fal-rāḥu minhā wal-jusūmu 'awārī

Those eagles fly up from their nests
while fates swoop down upon them suddenly.
Borrowed items must all be returned;
hand and body shall be naked of them.

D1
22. *zajarat qawāriyahā l-zawājiru bil-ḍuḥā*
   wal-ḥādithātu mina l-ḥimāmi qawārī
23. *law fakkarat ṭulubu l-ghinā fī dhāhibi*
   l-akwāri mā qa'adat 'alā l-akwārī

Diviners rouse green birds for early augury,
while Fate's vicissitudes play host to death.
If those who crave for wealth but thought of passing eons
they would not remain seated on their saddles.

Even a cursory glance at these lines reveals their relationship in content. Lines 9, 16, and 22, all have animals as part of their imagery, and all portray one aspect of life depreciated by another. Line 9 achieves this by *jinās*: the maidens vanish as their rings and anklets are associated with the nose-rings of the camels (*burā*), the attractions of *ghāda* ('young woman') are overcome by the plainness of *ghawādi* ('camels'). Similarly, the power of flying eagles (*ṭawā'ir*) is overshadowed by the fates hovering above them (*ṭawārī*). *Jinās* has the same function again in line 22: the *jinās tāmm* (see Mehren, 1853, pp. 154f) between *qawārī* ('birds of augury') and *qawārī* ('giving hospitality') sardonically pinpoints the absurdity of the augurers' hopes.

Lines 10, 17, and 23 also share a common theme. In all three, the imagery draws on commerce to portray the vanity of human possessions: man is trading in evil (10), all his possessions are but borrowed items (17); the riders are 'seekers of wealth' (23). Paronomasia again marks the thematic progression: the words denoting the items of possession are part of a *jinās tāmm* (*shiwār* (10), *'awāriyy* (17a); *akwārī* (rhyme word of 23)). Their phonological counterparts express the relationship between these goods and man: *shawārī* ('trading', 10) refers to his desire for gain, *'awārī* ('naked', 17b), by contrast, points to the loss of all possessions. Both aspects are combined in line 23: *ṭulub al-ghinā* ('seekers of wealth') recalls *shawārī* in line 10, *dhāhib al-akwār* ('passing eons') resumes the suggestion of loss in line 17 (*'awārī*). This treatment of the notions of loss and acquisition is a first indication of the technique of thematic development in the three final sections of the poem: B and C introduce contrasting aspects of an idea which are summarized in D.

Finally, lines 10 and 23 are related in their setting as they portray men as

riders journeying on camels. The spatial notions of high and low link the three couplets:

10.   *fawqahā . . . shawārī* [men sit] *upon* them . . . trading
16.   *fawqihinna . . . ṭawārī . . .* coming *upon* them . . .
23.   *qaʿadat ʿalā l-akwārī . . .* sat *on* their saddles

(b) *The second subsection: B2, C2, D2*

B2
$\begin{cases}
\text{11.} \quad \textit{lā tashkuwanna fa-fī l-shikāyati dhullatun} \\
\qquad\quad \textit{wa-la-tuʿraḍanna l-khaylu bil-mishwārī} \\
\text{12.} \quad \textit{ālaytu mā manaʿa l-khuwāru awībidan} \\
\qquad\quad \textit{fī haḍbi Shābata wal-naqā l-khawwārī}
\end{cases}$

Do not lament, for lamentation is but lowliness!
Truly, the steeds shall show their worth on the showground.
I swear, their lowing shall not protect the wild herds
at Shāba's stony mount and the soft sands.

C2
$\begin{cases}
\text{18.} \quad \textit{ashbāḥu nāsin fī l-zamāni yurā lahā} \\
\qquad\quad \textit{mithla l-ḥabābi taẓuhurun wa-tawārī} \\
\text{19.} \quad \textit{yukhliṭna fīhi bi-ghayrihinna fa-mā maḍā} \\
\qquad\quad \textit{ghayru lladhī yaʾtī wa-hunna jawārī}
\end{cases}$

Men's phantom shapes in Time are seen
appearing and vanishing like bubbles;
They mix together in [the surge of Time] so that what goes
is unlike that which comes [down] as they flow.

D2
$\begin{cases}
\text{24.} \quad \textit{wal-nadbu fī ḥukmi l-hidāni wa-dhū l-ṣibā} \\
\qquad\quad \textit{ka-akhī l-nuhā wal-dhimru kal-ʿuwwārī} \\
\text{25.} \quad \textit{wa-yuqālu inna madā l-layālī jāʿilun} \\
\qquad\quad \textit{jabalan aqāma ka-zākhirin mawwārī}
\end{cases}$

For the genius is no better than the fool, the youthful lover
is like the man of wisdom, and the courageous [hero] like the coward.
It is said that length of Time can turn
a sturdy mountain into surging and tumultuous [seas].

The couplets present a vision of creation under the impact of death centring on the leitmotif of the equalization of opposites. Line 11b alludes to the rule of death: 'the steeds shall be displayed on the showground', meaning that the true core of life – mortality – will inevitably be shared by everyone.[33] Line 12 continues the allusive mode by negative assertion of the power of death: the beasts on mount Shāba shall not escape. The corresponding couplet in section C presents a vision of the coming and passing of humanity: their scintillating multitude is likened to bubbles on the surface of a flowing river. The passive of *yurā lahā* is as if in response to *la-tuʿraḍanna*, presenting what is seen on the showground. In the same way as complaint (*shikāya*) and lowing (*khuwār*)

make no difference to the approach of death, so also the intermingling and
changing 'shapes of man' inexorably flow into disappearance.

The third couplet develops this vision of mortality: in the ceaseless flow of
forms, all individuality and value are rendered meaningless. Significant here is
the equation of *dhū al-ṣibā* and *akhī al-nuhā* ('young lover' and 'man of
understanding'). The two are opposites in the *qaṣīda*'s catalogue of virtue, and
the poet's calling upon himself not to succumb to lowliness by complaining
about his sorrow (*lā tashkuwanna*, 11) can be seen as recourse to understand-
ing, reason (*nuhā*) after the failure of youthful love (*ṣibā*). However, the world
which presents itself to the scrutiny of reason is one in which virtue is perceived
to mean no more than vice, strength and power no more than pliancy and
weakness.

The development of imagery in the three couplets is similar to that in the
first subsection. Again the third couplet resumes and joins together elements of
the first and second. The pastoral scene with the 'crest of Shāba' (*haḍb*) and 'the
soft sand-dunes' (*naqā khawwār*) reappears in line 25 in the sturdy mountain
(*jabal*) and the surging sea (*zākhir mawwār*). Hills and sand-dunes are setting
for the animals threatened by death; in line 25, the inorganic forms of nature
themselves become subject to the power of time.

Line 25 thus refers back to the first couplet. Line 24, on the other hand,
develops the theme of the second which relates to the mortality of man. In the
uniform anonymous progression of humanity through time, vice and virtue,
good and bad, love and reason, cancel each other. Thus couplet D2 sums up
the two previous couplets, seeing man and nature equally levelled by death.

(c) *The third subsection: B3, C3, D3*

B3 {

13. *rī'a l-labību mina l-mashībi li'annahū*
    mā zāla yu'dhinu bi-ntiqāli jiwārī
14. *mā ab'asa l-ḥayawāna laysa li-nābitin*
    asafun bi-mā yabdū mina l-nuwwārī
15. *wa-ka'anna man sakana l-fanā'a matā ghadā*
    lil-qabri lam yanzil lahū bi-ṭawārī

White hair alarms the man of understanding since
it will forever herald change of neighbourhood.
How wretched are animal creatures; no plant
feels grief at the sight of white blossoms.
It is as though the dweller of the yard had never
stepped on its ground when he goes to the grave.

C3 {

20. *a'yā sawāru l-dahri kulla musāwirin*
    wa-ramā l-khalīla bi-ashumi l-uswārī
21. *fa-ḥdhar wa-in ba'udat ghazātuka fī l-'idā*
    qadaran aghāra 'alā Abī l-Mighwārī

> Fate's assault lames all attackers;
> it struck down Abraham with marksman's arrows.
> So beware – even as you foray far against the enemy –
> of a destiny that pillaged Abū l-Mighwār.

D3   26.   *jarati l-qaḍāya fī l-anāmi wa-umḍiyat*
            ṣuduqan bi-aswārin wa-lā aswārī
        [Death]-sentences are passed upon mankind and executed
        justly, with or without defence.

The three subsections all start with a verb in the third person singular perfect (*rīʿa, aʿyā, jarat*) which places man (*labīb, musāwir, anām*) in the context of death (*mashīb, sawār al-dahr, qaḍāya ... umḍiyat*). The difference in tone reflects the stages of the poem's development: the awareness of mortality is unfolded, from sorrowful allusion (B3), to tragic certainty (C3), and cynical detachment (D3).

The tristich B3 resumes the allusive mood of the two previous couplets, developing the theme of mortality from, and in response to, the traditional motifs of the *nasīb*. Hoariness, *al-mashīb*, is one of the themes of the strophe frequently combined with the *nasīb* (see, text III, 17–21), and *intiqāl jiwār* recalls the theme of *firāq*, the beloved's departure from the campsite. Line 13 contrasts with the *nasīb* in the manner of the antistrophe: the lover, blinded by passion, is replaced by *al-labīb*, the man of understanding. The traditional break of communication in the *nasīb* (3), and the corresponding success of evil (4), are overcome in the understanding of the man of reason. He is aware of the approach of death, the final separation, and takes heed of the warning.

This emendation of the ills of the *nasīb* – blind passion and isolated suffering – in the antistrophe does not, as in the panegyric, lead to a reaffirmation of life. Reason, on the contrary, perceives death as the true cause of the suffering of love. In the eye of reason, *intiqāl jiwār* ('the change of neighbourhood') is not a personal experience affecting only the lover's self, but the common fate of man which is observed continuously and gives rise to rational thought. The fruit of speculation is expressed in the next line which evokes the memory of the beloved:

14.   *mā abʾasa l-ḥayawāna laysa li-nābitin*
            asafun bi-mā yabdū mina l-nuwwārī
    How wretched are animal creatures; no plant
    feels grief at the sight of white blossoms.

The white-skinned beauty of Nawār and her companions (*bīḍ*, 2), and the poet's white hair (*mashīb*, 13), are joined in the image of the white flowers (*nuwwār* – note the alliteration to *Nawār*). All are manifestations of beauty and signs of death. In the sorrowful realization of mortality brought about by hoariness lies, however, the release from the enslavement of passion and the beginning of the ascetic's detachment.

The development reaches its term with line 15 which wonders at man's annihilation. The imagery still recalls the *nasīb*, evoking the deserted dwellings with their connotations of departure, emptiness, and memory. The intense grief of the *nasīb*, however, is tempered by the insight of reason: the trauma of loss and sorrow is perceived to be the common lot of man.

In section C, the awareness of death gained from the experience of love and old age is proclaimed openly. The intimate tone and the relatively simple, unadorned language of the tristich are followed abruptly by the portentous gravity of lines 16/17. Next, humanity as a whole is seen at the mercy of time, and finally, in couplet C3, Time and Fate are fully visualized in their cruelty and power. A notable contrast links the victims of Fate in the couplet: *khalīl* literally means 'friend', but the word may also refer to Abraham who is called *khalīl Allāh*, 'God's friend', in the Qurʾān (4/124). Abū l-Mighwār (lit. 'father of the fighting man or raider') was the cognomen of the pre-Islamic warlord, Mālik b. Nuwayra. Thus friend and fighting man, prophet and pagan, are all equally struck down.

The prevailing mood in the final section is one of sardonic detachment, characteristic of many poems of the *Luzūmiyyāt*. Lines 22 and 23 have a ring of satire, and line 26 brings the poem to a close with condensed power. It recapitulates the general conclusion on the mortality of man with a single statement which embodies the final message. Here the grief of love and death is overcome, the detachment from the 'world of becoming and decay' complete.

Summary

The three stages of argument, along which the three final sections of the poem progress, can be summarized as *presentation* (of an aspect of life – B1, C1, D1), *contemplation* (of the changeability and transience of the forms of life – B2, C2, D2) and *conclusion* (on the universal mortality of being – B3, C3, D3). The diminishing length of the concluding sections from the four lines of A3 to three, two, and one line, conveys the increasing certainty and absoluteness of the conclusion; the mood develops from one of sympathetic sorrow to tragic certainty and, finally, to terseness and detachment.

A return to the structure of the *nasīb* shows that its three subsections follow the same pattern of development. The 'visual' imagery of the first couplet has been discussed: it *presents* (ʿaraḍa) the damsels as a source of suffering and threat. The second couplet is reflective: it *contemplates* the hidden suffering of the poet. There is a significant grammatical link between this couplet and its counterpart in section B (i.e. couplet B2). Both contain verbs in the first and second person singular referring to the poet; *lā tashkuwanna* ('do not complain', 11) resumes *al-wujdu minka* ('your passion', 4), *ālaytu* ('I swear', 12) resumes *uwārī* ('my ardour', 3). The poet's suffering abates as he *contemplates* the forms of life in their change.

As to the quatrain of the *nasīb*, it anticipates the conclusions on mortality by a portrayal of the metaphorical death brought about by unhappy love. It is kindled by the damsels whose qualities mirror the traditional attributes of *al-dunyā* in the *zuhdiyya* canon. Like *al-dunyā*, they are deceitful and predatory, and hide suffering and death behind a mask of passing beauty. They are not merely representatives of 'womankind', but symbolize the nature of existence in this world.

As a result, this *qaṣīda* can be interpreted as tracing the gradual emancipation of the individual from the deceptive sorrows of life. It pictures the rise of the ascetic, *zāhid*, whose insight engenders detachment from the world. The *nasīb* represents the elementary stage: man is blindly involved with the deceptive temptations of the world. The folly of passion makes him a helpless prey at the hand of *al-dunyā*. Section B is the first stage of detachment. Through the scrutiny of reason, man is freed from his enslavement by the physical forms; he understands the suffering of love as induced by the existence of death. Section C proclaims the certainty of transience on a universal scale with newly found vigour and heightened detachment: the shapes of mankind, *ashbāḥ nās* (18) are a distant mêlée. In section D, detachment reaches its final stage. Freed even from the suffering of death, the individual ironically contemplates the triviality of being. He perceives that even reason weighs no more than passion in the face of Time. The conclusion is powerful and self-assured; it lacks all self-pity.

Structural counterpoint

A note on morphology

The intricacy of the poem's structure, suggested by the stringency of the style, appears fully when the incidences of morphological parallelism are observed. Unlike Abū l-'Atāhiya's *zuhdiyya* analysed above, morphological and semantic structure do not completely coincide, but differ in such a way as to suggest an alternative arrangement of lines which gives a no less coherent picture of the poetic development.

The complexity of the work precludes here a comprehensive analysis of its morphological features. For the sake of clarity, I will single out only the most important aspects by following up the occurrence of two verb forms: the third person feminine singular of the perfect (*fa'alat*), and the third person feminine plural of the perfect and imperfect (*fa'alna, yaf'alna*), with its corresponding pronoun *hunna*. They are morphological markers and appear several times. Both are introduced in the *nasīb*, which agrees with frequent observation that the initial section contains the major formal elements of a *qaṣīda* (see p. 4).

Third person feminine plural: It first appears in line 1 of the poem in reference to the maidens (*'araḍna*). The quatrain of the *nasīb* repeats it four times in the

same context. The next occurrence of the form in line 10 shows how couplet B1 is skilfully constructed out of the grammatical elements of the preceding quatrain:

9. *fa-j'al siwāray ghādatin wa-burāhumā*
     li-burā ghawādin fī l-rikābi sawārī
10. *yurqilna fī khalaqi l-shiwāri wa-fawqahā*
     akhlāqu insin lil-qabīḥi shawārī

So let a maiden's twin bracelets and anklets be
like nose-rings of camels journeying in caravan through morning and through night.
They hasten with saddle utensils tattered and upon them
are men disposed to evil trades.

Fa-j'al resumes the imperative of line 5, *yurqilna* reflects, in form and metrical position, *yar'amna* and *yal'abna*. *Wa-fawqahā* echoes *wa-innamā* (6); the complementary parallelism *ghawādin/sawārī* recalls that in lines 2 and 6. Finally, the syntax of 10b is analogous to 8b (plural noun plus *iḍāfa*, preposition *li* plus noun and *fawā'il* form).

Couplets C1 and C2 (16/17 and 18/19) are distinguished from the immediately preceding and following subsections (B3 and C3) by the fact that all principal subjects are plural nouns (*nusūr, maqādir, 'awāriyy, jusūm, ashbāḥ*, as opposed to *labīb, ḥayawān, man* in B3, and *sawār, khalīl, qadar* in C3). With the plural nouns goes the reappearance of the third person feminine plural. It establishes a link to lines 5–10: *fawqihinna* (16) echoes *yurqilna ... wa-fawqahā* (10), underlining the semantic relationship between couplets B1 and C1 (see above, pp. 137f). Line 19 resumes the grammatical form for the last time: *yukhliṭna* occupies the same metrical position at the beginning of the line as the morphological markers in lines 6, 7, and 10.

Third person feminine singular perfect: This form is also introduced in the *nasīb*: see *darat* and *ṣādafat* in lines 3 and 4. It is not repeated, however, till the end of the work where it occurs six times: *ba'udat* (21), *zajarat* (22), *fakkarat* and *qa'adat* (23), *jarat* and *umḍiyat* (26).

The ingenious coherence of the poem becomes apparent when the position of the couplets or lines singled out by the morphological markers is compared to the semantic subdivision. While the feminine plural rules the middle portion of the poem, the feminine singular, introduced at the beginning, dominates the end.

Morphological and semantic subdivision correspond in the *nasīb*. In the remaining sections, the interplay between them serves to facilitate the thematic transition. Couplet B1 is dominated by the marker of the preceding quatrain but introduces a new section in the poem's development. Similarly, couplet C3 concludes the third section while *ba'udat* anticipates the form of *zajarat* at the beginning of the fourth. The morphological markers thus serve as links between sections A and B (*yaf'alna*) and C and D (*fa'alat*).

Three key couplets

Three couplets – A1, B2, and C3 – provide a notable counterpoint to the structure that has emerged so far:

A1 {
  1. *a-Nawāru tuḥsabu min sanā l-anwārī*
        wa-mina l-bawāri mahan ʿaraḍna bawārī
  2. *bīḍun dawārin lil-qulūbi kaʾannahā*
        ʿīnun bi-dawwārin wa-ʿayni Duwārī

Can Nawār be considered part of the brightness of lights
when gazelles whose sight emaciates [you] are part of death?
They are white and prey on hearts as though they were
wide-eyed ones on curving sands and Duwār's holy site.

B2 {
 11. *lā tashkuwanna fa-fī l-shikāyati dhullatun*
        wa-la-tuʿraḍanna l-khaylu bil-mishwārī
 12. *ālaytu mā manaʿa l-khuwāru awābidan*
        fī haḍbi Shābata wal-naqā l-khawwārī

Do not lament, for lamentation is but lowliness!
Truly, the steeds shall show their worth on the showground.
I swear, their lowing shall not protect the wild herds
at Shāba's stony mount and the soft sands.

C3 {
 20. *aʿyā sawāru l-dahri kulla musāwirin*
        wa-ramā l-khalīla bi-ashumi l-uswārī
 21. *fa-ḥdhar wa-in baʿudat ghazātuka fī l-ʿidā*
        qadaran aghāra ʿalā Abī l-Mighwārī

Fate's assault lames all attackers
it struck down Abraham with marksman's arrows;
So beware – even as you foray far against the enemy –
of a destiny that pillaged Abū l-Mighwār.

The couplets are the only ones to contain proper names: Nawār and Duwār in A1, Shāba in B2, al-Khalīl (most likely referring to Abraham), and Abū l-Mighwār ('the great raider') in C3. The imagery also shares certain features evoking hunting and war scenes: *dawārin li* ('lying in wait for'), [34] *manʿa* ('to protect'), *aʿyā* ('to ward off'), *ramā* ('to shoot'), and *aghāra ʿalā* ('to invade, attack'). Like the names, the images suggest a pre-Islamic context. Those in lines 2 and 12 are reminiscent of the hunting scenes in the ancient *qaṣīdas* while line 21 suggests a Bedouin raid.

    These features are examples of the archaic flavour of the poem as a whole, but they are also signs of a special link between the three couplets. A1, B2, and C3 punctuate decisive stages in the poem's development. In B2, the threat represented by the 'gazelles' in A1 is countered by the realization that they themselves will be the victims of a stronger foe. This is suggested by the parallelism between 2b and 12b:

  2.   . . . on curving sands and Duwār's holy site.
 12.   . . . at Shāba's stony mount and the soft sands.

The gazelles (*mahan*) in A1 and the wild herds (*awābid*) in B2 appear in similar settings except that the former are ready for attack (*dawārin li*), while the others are defenceless victims (*mā mana'a*). That the meaning of *awābid* may include an allusion to *mahan* is also suggested by the repetition of *araḍa* in lines 1 and 11. The 'gazelles' appear ('*araḍna*) as a deadly threat while the 'horses' will be made to appear (*la-tu'raḍanna*) on the showground to be selected by death. Consistent with this interpretation is the contextual antithesis between *mahan* ('gazelles') and *khayl* ('horses'); the former, usually the victim, appear as the hunter, while the latter, usually associated with war and victory, are exposed to death. Both inversions are also found in other poems. So couplets A1 and B2 are linked: the poet consoles himself with the thought that his tormentors will, like all other forms of life, one day themselves be made to suffer.

What B2 expresses only in the negative (*mā mana'a*) is asserted positively in couplet C3. The two lines spell out what has remained suggestion and allusion up to that point: the victory of death. Couplets A1 and B2 portray an impending hostile encounter from two contrasting angles, focusing once on the attacker (*dawārin li*), and once on the victim (*mā mana'a*). The two aspects are combined in couplet C3: *mana'a* ('to protect') is resumed in *a'yā* ('to repel'), *dawārin* ('lying in wait') in *ramā* ('to strike'), thus marking the release and consummation of the destruction that remains potential in the images above. The death of Abū l-Mighwār mirrors and outstrips the threat of death represented by Nawār: Fate (*al-qadar*), is seen in command.

The positions of the three key couplets A1, B2 and C3 in the development of the poem as a whole give another picture of the intricate coherence of the work. Their positions align themselves with the semantic subsections: one forms the beginning, the other the middle, and the third the end of a movement.

The morphological features discussed, as well as the semantic sequence represented by the key-couplets, suggest, furthermore, an alternative sectional arrangement which is as symmetrical as the semantic subsections discussed above. For lines 5–15 and 16–26 mirror one another in their development:

	Sections	Number of lines			
lines 1–4 (4 lines)	A1	2			
	A2	2			
lines 5–15 (11 lines)	A3	4	C1 C2	4	lines 16–26 (11 lines)
	B1	2	C3	2	
	B2	2	D1	2	
	B3	3	D2 D3	3	

A3 and C1–C2 are linked by the morphological marker, third person feminine plural. B1 and C3 are linked by paronomasia based on the *qāfiya* with the letter *sīn* (*siwāray, sawārī*, 9; *sawār, musāwir* and *uswār*, 20). The same sound formation concludes the poem (*aswār*, 26).

The four couplets B1, B2, C3, and D1, also relate crosswise. The transformation in D1 of themes and images of B1 has been discussed above (see p. 136); C3 and B2 are linked by their function as key couplets. C3, the third key couplet, is thus of particular importance, concluding two semantic developments, as well as resuming morphological and phonological features and thereby introducing the finale.

B3 and the triad D2–D3 are linked, phonologically, by the absence of paronomasia and, semantically, by their conclusions on mortality, presenting the theme from the angle of the personal and specific in one case (B3), and from the angle of the impersonal and general in the other (D2–D3). Couplets A1 and A2 in their parallelism and contrast can be seen to anticipate the links between the two longer parts.

Altogether, the possibility of two alternative subdivisions bears witness to the multiple relations between the individual couplets. For most of the subsections are semantically and syntactically independent units which do not relate by sharing one specific subject or by tracing a development in time. Instead, their interrelations are based on echoes and anticipations of images and linguistic features. This enables each subsection to be simultaneously beginning, climax, and conclusion of a certain development. The resulting impression on the listener is one of a number of powerful individual statements fused together by a multidimensional pattern which can only be sensed but not followed in detail because of its complexity.

Phonological features

I have left discussion of phonological interplay, the most conspicuous aspect of the poem, last, in order to show that the work's coherence does not suffer from linguistic embellishment. Yet the meaning of the work is inseparable from its sound structure:

1. *a-Nawāru tuḥsabu min sanā l-anwārī*
        wa-mina l-bawāri mahan ʿaraḍna bawārī
2. *bīḍun dawārin lil-qulūbi kaʾannahā*
        ʿīnun bi-dawwārin wa-ʿayni Duwārī

Two types of sound relationships govern these lines. One depends on the *qāfiya*, and I will call it 'external assonance'. The other establishes a sound pattern *within* the line which contrasts and complements the external assonance. To this I will refer as 'internal assonance'.

External assonance is achieved by the series of *jinās*, from *Nawāru* and *bawārī* to *Duwārī*. The sound echoes between *ʿaraḍna, bīḍun, ʿīnun,* and *ʿayni*,

are the most important internal assonance. The sound pattern of the couplet can be described as a subtle exchange between the two types of assonance. The link between them is the letter which precedes the *qāfiya wārī*, henceforth called 'key letter'. It changes twice, from *nūn (anwārī)* to *bā' (bawārī)*, and from *bā'* to *dāl (Duwārī)*.

From nūn *to* bā'

The progressive sound metamorphosis which produces the rhyme word *bawārī* appears when juxtaposing the members of the fourfold *jinās* in line 1. *A-Nawāru* and *anwārī* share *hamza* and *nūn* but differ in case ending. The change from *ḍamma* to *kasra* introduces the *qāfiya. (Sanā l-) anwārī* and *(mina l-) bawāri* share article and case ending, but *bā'* replaces *hamza* and *nūn*. This marks a second step towards the emergence of the final rhyme word. *(Mina l-) bawāri* and *('araḍna) bawārī* are identical except for article and length of final *kasra*. Thus the rhyme word *bawārī* develops in successive stages out of its three predecessors in alliteration.

Internal assonance is the substratum of this process. The letter *bā'*, taken up by the final rhyme word, is first introduced by the sound complex, *tuḥsabu min sanā*, in line 1a. The *nūn*, replaced by *bā'* in the sequence of *jinās*, last appears in *'araḍna*. Thus the letter *bā'* moves from internal to external assonance *(tuḥsabu–al-bawāri–bawārī)*, while the letter *nūn* is subject to the opposite process: it changes from external to internal assonance *(a-Nawāru–sana l-anwārī–min al-bawārī–'araḍna bawārī)*.

From bā' *to* dāl

The emergence of Duwār as rhyme word of line 2 is brought about by the same process. Again internal assonance introduces the new key letter *dāl* *('araḍna–bīḍun–dawārin)* and echoes the old *(bawārī–bīḍun–bi-dawwārin)*. The background to this exchange is the sequence of internal assonance from *'araḍna* to *bīḍun, 'īnun bi* and *'ayni*. It is the counterpoint to the external assonance between *dawārin, dawwārin*, and *Duwārī.*

Other subtler echoes and touches of alliteration complete the web of sound which links the two lines. There is the *mīm/nūn* interplay in line 1 (*min . . . min . . . mahan*); there is the resumption in line 2 of *nūn, hā'*, and *alif* in *annahā*; there is the alliteration based on *sīn/fatḥa* in line 1a *(tuḥsabu/sanā)*, which balances that between *kāf* and *qāf* in line 2a.

The second couplet of the *nasīb* is linked to the first by the continuation of the interplay between internal and external assonance: the key letter of line 3, *hamza*, is anticipated in couplet A1 by *a, anwār*, and *annahā*, and resumed in line 4 by *ammā. Fā'*, on the other hand, key letter of line 4, is anticipated by *fī* in line 3 and echoed by *fabtakir* in line 5.

In this way the sound structure continues. Its pattern is so tightly woven, its flow so carefully balanced, that the impression is one of highest formal control.

Alliteration appears to be no embellishment at all, but rather the expression of a stylistic economy which refrains from widening the sound palette beyond the absolute minimum:

16.   *tilka l-nusūru mina l-wukūri ṭawā'irun*
            wa-maqādirun min fawqihinna ṭawārī
Those eagles fly up from their nests
while fates swoop down upon them suddenly.

In this line a maximum of meaning is forged out of a minimum variety of sound. Alliteration and paronomasia make the words define one another with the greatest concreteness.

A line by Abū Tammām quoted above (see p. 66) describes a similar picture:

wa-qad ẓullilat 'iqbānu a'lāmihī ḍuhan
     bi-'iqbāni ṭayrin fī l-dimā'i nawāhilī
The eagles on his flags were overshadowed in the forenoon
by flying eagles feeding on blood.

The rhetorical impact of the line resides in the sensational nature of the image. The circumstantial details, 'being overshadowed in the forenoon' and 'feeding on blood', give meaning and power to *'iqbān*.

Ma'arrī's line (16) does not produce a spectacular context to define *nusūr*. Its expressive power resides exclusively in the tension created by the juxtaposition of words of similar sound and different meaning. With the morphological and phonological resumption of *nusūr* in *wukūr*, *ṭawā'ir* in *maqādir*, a pattern is created which one expects to continue with a third similarly related pair. Instead, the pattern is broken by the rhyme word: *fawqihinna* and *ṭawārī* do not relate like the two previous pairs, and *ṭawārī* in irregular sequence echoes *ṭawā'ir*, without resuming the morphological congruence. The semantic impact of the line resides precisely in the same feature: the outstripping of *ṭawā'ir* by *ṭawārī*. The sound pattern thus ties the words together and heightens their meaning so that the barren image acquires gigantic power through formal constraint.

Atomistic alliteration

The last three lines are relatively devoid of *jinās* and there is no *jinās tāmm* except for line 26. Nevertheless, the sound structure of the lines is no less involved than that of the *nasīb*, but it aims at the opposite effect. At the beginning, the high degree of paronomasia makes numerous words sound alike so that their individuality of meaning is stressed by contrast with their homonymity of sound. In the final lines, however, the phonological patterning is restricted to an interplay of vowels, letters, and rhythm, designed to emphasize the meaning of a word by stressing its individuality of sound. This

technique which I hope to explain in the following pages I call 'atomistic alliteration'.

The phonological leitmotif of lines 21–6 is the interplay between *kāf* and *qāf*. The combination occurs frequently in the course of the poem (see 2a, 10, 11 and 16) but it is nowhere more prominent than at the end. Introduced by *ghazātuka* and *qadaran* in line 21, the letters are part of the two *jinās tāmm* in the following couplet. External assonance is dominated by *qāf* in line 22 (*qawārī*); line 23 resumes *kāf* (*fakkarat, akwār*) with *qāf* as a counterpart in *qa'adat. Kāf* is resumed in line 24 (*ḥukm, ka*) and both are combined again in line 25 (*yuqālu, aqāma, ka*).

Line 24 is thus incorporated into the dominant sound development by repetition of the letter *kāf*. As a unit, the line exhibits a meticulous sound balance which typifies the technique of atomistic alliteration. It is characterized by the fact that the various phonological features of a word – vowels, consonants, and rhythm – do not relate to *one* other word as is the case with normal *jinās*. Instead, each phonological element links up with a different word in the line so that the resulting sound structure is both varied and balanced. To a certain extent, this technique applies to most poetry but, in this work, it appears to be used in deliberate contrast to *jinās* proper.

The words in line 24 can be divided into groups according to their rhythmical and/or morphological pattern:

(i) There are three nouns that follow the patterns *fiʿl, faʿl,* and *fuʿl*:

<div align="center">

nadb   *ḥukm*   *dhimr*

</div>

(ii) There are three nouns with a weak third radical:

<div align="center">

nuhā   *akhī*   *ṣibā*

</div>

(iii) There are two nouns with an *alif* between second and third radical:

<div align="center">

hidān   *'uwwār*

</div>

(iv) There are two words consisting only of consonant and long vowel:

<div align="center">

fī   *dhū*

</div>

With the exception of *alif* and *alif maqsūra*, the nouns in these groups hardly share a consonant or vowel. Each of the nouns in groups (i) and (ii) start with a different vowel, and the only consonant repeated within a group is *mīm* (i).

The relations based on consonants and vowels align the words in different ways altogether. It is interesting to note that with the exception of *fā'*, the consonants that are not repeated are all gutturals: *ḥā', ṣād, khā',* and *'ayn*. All others occur at least twice. The following sequence is arranged according to the order of appearance of the consonants (*wāw* excepted):

nūn:	*nadb*	*hidān*	*nuhā*
dāl:	*nadb*	*hidān*	

bā':	nadb	ṣibā	
kāf:	ḥukm	ka	ka
mīm:	ḥukm	dhimr	
hā':	hidān	nuhā	
dhāl:	dhū	dhimr	
rā':	dhimr	'uwwār	

With the exception of *ḥukm* and *dhimr*, this alignment does not coincide with the one above, nor are the words related by their vowel structure. On the contrary: all words that share a consonant start with a different vowel. The alignment, however, does create a pattern within the line. The alliterations based on *nūn*, *hā'* and *dāl*, and *dhāl* and *rā'* link the two hemistichs crosswise:
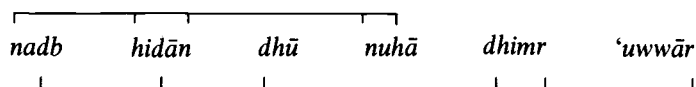
The vowel harmony of the line appears designed to create the utmost variety. I will only point to the threefold interchange between *kasra* and *ḍamma* which structures the vowel pattern of the line. In the first hemistich, the long *kasra* of *fī* anticipates the short *kasra* of *hidān*. The short *ḍamma* of *ḥukm*, on the other hand, anticipates the long *ḍamma* of *dhū*. Thus long and short, *kasra* and *ḍamma* are symmetrically combined:

fī ḥukmi l-hidāni wa-dhū

A variation of the same process links the two hemistichs. The long *ḍamma* of *dhū* anticipates the short *damma* of *nuhā*, while the long *kasra* of *akhī* echoes the short *kasra* of *ṣibā*. The *alif maqsūra* links *nuhā* and *ṣibā*:

wa-dhū l-ṣibā ka-akhī l-nuhā

The two final words of the second hemistich are linked by a similar vocalic inversion:

wal-dhimru kal-'uwwārī

The sound of each individual word in line 24 is thus thrown into relief because each phonological level establishes a sound pattern of its own and no one sound relationship dominates another. The fact that the guttural consonants are not repeated stresses the individual sound quality of the words, while the sheer juxtaposition of nouns in three nominal sentences creates a feeling of conciseness and control.

Alternation between paronomasia and atomistic alliteration

It is clear upon first reading that the phonological structure of the poem is not uniform. The *nasīb* and the first two couplets of section B all exhibit *jinās*. So

do couplets C1, C3, D1, and the final line. The central tristich, B3, however, and couplets C2 and D2, are constructed on the basis of atomistic alliteration, so the sound structure becomes more varied towards the end because of the alternation between the two types of phonological texture. Furthermore, in the second half of the poem, even couplets dominated by *jinās* do not share the homogeneity of sound of the first ten lines. The transition from *tā'* to *'ayn* in couplet C1, for instance, is not developed with the same subtlety by internal assonance as the transitions from *nūn* to *bā'*, *alif,* and *fā'* in the first four lines of the *nasīb*. Couplet C3 does not contain a *jinās tāmm*. The transition from *qāf* to *kāf,* in the rhyme of couplet D1, recalls the transition from *ṣād to sīn* and *shīn* in lines 8–10, but the two elements of *jinās tāmm* in line 23 are both in the same hemistich which does not occur anywhere in the first half of the poem. The same also applies to the last line. Atomistic alliteration, on the other hand, becomes more prominent towards the end. In the *nasīb*, it functions purely as internal assonance subservient to the interplay of *jinās tāmm*. With the end of section B it becomes an independent principle of construction which brings the poem to its climax in the concluding lines.

This suggests something about the relationship between sound structure and semantic structure. I have described the poem as tracing the gradual emancipation of the ascetic through a deepening vision of the insignificance of the world. The *nasīb*, which describes man enslaved by *al-dunyā*, is the section most dominated by external assonance. The constant recurrence of the patterns *awā* and *awārī* creates a sombre rhythm which drowns the individual word as it struggles to assert its meaning in the face of an all-pervasive monotony. Tension is created between heterogeneity of meaning and homogeneity of sound. The *nasīb* is the passage in which the sensuous diversity of the world is experienced most intensely. At the end of the poem, however, the variety and multitude of *al-dunyā* is perceived to be meaningless. The sound structure of the lines which develop this vision (13–15, 18–19, 24–5) is the one least dominated by *jinās*. So the words' individual sound character is most pronounced in lines which describe all individual phenomena as equally insignificant. This evidently applies to line 24 in particular. There is, thus, a contrasting relationship between sound and meaning in the poem: the experience of multiformity is made to sound monotonous, the vision of monotony described with multiformity of sound.

Metrical features

The poem is composed in the catalectic trimeter *kāmil*. In the following metrical chart, the letters 'a' and 'b' stand for the accepted variants of the metre:

a   ⌣ ⌣ — ⌣ —   ⌣ ⌣ — —

b   — — ⌣ —   — — —

A hemistich may consist of eight possible combinations of 'a' and /or 'b'. These can be designated with the capital letters A to H:

b b a	A	a a b	E
b a a	B	a b b	F
a b a	C	b a b	G
a a a	D	b b b	H

All these variants are found in poems of this metre, even though some, like A and B, appear to be more frequent than others.[35] Text VI exhibits seven of these variants (A–G) which are distributed as follows:

Section A	1	a a b	a a a	E D
	2	b b a	b b a	A A
	3	b b a	b b a	A A
	4	b b a	b b a	A A
	5	a b a	b b a	C A
	6	b b a	b a a	A B
	7	b b a	a a a	A D
	8	b a a	a a a	B D
Section B	9	b b a	a b a	A C
	10	b a a	b b a	B A
	11	b a a	a b b	B F
	12	b a a	b a b	B G
	13	b a a	b a a	B B
	14	b a a	a b b	B F
	15	a a a	b b a	D A
Section C	16	b a a	a b a	B C
	17	b b a	b b a	A A
	18	b b a	b a a	A B
	19	b a a	b b a	B A
	20	b b a	a a b	A E
	21	b a a	a a b	B E
Section D	22	a a a	b a a	D B
	23	b a b	b a b	G G
	24	b b a	a b b	A F
	25	a a b	a a b	E E
	26	a b a	a b b	C F

The frequency distribution of the hemistich patterns in the four sections is illustrated in diagram 2. The diagram and metrical chart together illustrate the structural function of the seven hemistich variants. Patterns A and B alternate in their frequency in the first three sections; the first and third are dominated by A, the second by B. Initially the most frequent patterns, they are the most infrequent in the final section where neither occurs more than once. Patterns, C, D, and E function as sectional markers. Pattern C is found in the first line of sections B and C; it also introduces the quatrain (5) and concludes the poem. Pattern D is found in line 1 as well as in the conclusions of sections A and B and the first line of section D. Its counterpart is pattern E: together with D, it is introduced in the first line of the poem and concludes the two sections of the second half. (Observe the regularity in the pattern sequence of lines 7–8 and 20–1.) Patterns F and G are only found in the second and the final sections. Together with E they end on foot b. Patterns of this type are much less frequent throughout the poem than those ending on a (twelve as opposed to forty), a fact which gives them special importance. It comes as no surprise to find that line 11, the first in the poem to end on foot b, is also the first to be marked by the absence of *jinās tāmm*, and the first to introduce the abstract realization of the fact of mortality:

11.   *lā tashkuwanna fa-fī l-shikāyati dhullatun*
            wa-la-tuʿraḍanna l-khaylu bil-mishwārī
Do not lament, for lamentation is but lowliness!
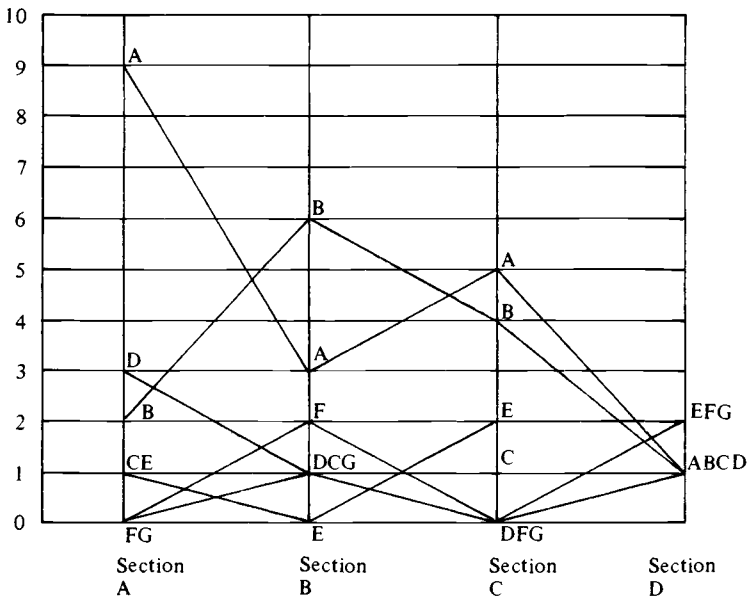Truly, the steeds shall show their worth on the showground.

Diagram 2

The prominence in the final section of hemistich patterns ending on b (six out of ten) is of great significance for the metrical development. As is evident from the diagram, patterns most frequent at the beginning are most infrequent at the end and *vice versa*. Variety is also drastically increased: section A with eight lines contains five hemistich variants, as opposed to seven in the five lines of section D. Furthermore, the only hemistich patterns repeated within a line in the first three sections are the most common: A (2–4, 17) and B (13); in the last section, two of the least frequent patterns are repeated: G (23) and E (25). As a result, the metrical structure of the poem coincides with the phonological development: the metre, repetitive at the beginning, becomes increasingly varied towards the end, so that the last lines combine sets of the rarest metrical variants. This points towards a cumulative rhetorical effect which should be powerfully manifest in recitation. The contrast between semantic and phonological levels is stressed by the metrical structure: the vision of the equalization of opposites with which the poem concludes is voiced with the greatest variety of sound and metre.

Mannerism

'Die Sprache als Sprache zur Sprache bringen'
(Heidegger, 1959, p. 94)

Two mimetic processes

Most recent discussions of mannerism in literature have drawn attention to the prominent role played by techniques and conventions of literary language in mannerist style. This feature has repeatedly provided the reason for its condemnation. In his discussion of Italian baroque lyric, H. Friedrich remarks that 'the aims of expression and representation of artistic language recede in the face of a dictatorship of linguistic artifice' (1964, p. 564); he notices a 'shift of emphasis from colloquy of objects to soliloquy of words' (*ibid.*, p. 563), and concludes that 'language and content, nay, language and world, no longer converge but diverge' (*ibid.*, p. 558).

H. Friedrich's theories inspired J. C. Bürgel (1965, pp. 235ff) and W. Heinrichs (1974) in their search for a meaningful application of the term mannerism to Arabic literature. Heinrichs resumes Friedrich's observation of a dichotomy between signifier and signified; he abandons, however, the latter's negative bias and tentatively describes mannerism as 'a possible and legitimate "Grundform" of poetic expression'. The core of his definition is as follows: 'The correlate of mannerist poetry is not reality but literature, i.e. language formed and formalized. The resulting effect is, so to say, one of language at play, or, as Friedrich says, an "ignition of language from within". Parallel to this, the representational character of language becomes increasingly insignificant' (*ibid.*, p. 128).

Heinrich's definition posits two contrasting mimetic processes – presumably the same intended by Friedrich's distinction between 'colloquy of objects' and 'soliloquy of words'. Reality as correlate of poetry, or 'colloquy of objects', suggests a form of mimesis intent primarily on the fashioning of reality as dictated by, and in accordance with, poetic convention. The dictate of convention pertains to the segment of reality conventionally treated (*Wirklichkeitsweite*) henceforth called 'spectrum'; the accord sought is that between the value–hierarchy of convention and the objects described, henceforth called 'focus'. As an example, one might revert to Buḥturī's ship description. There it was said that the poet's imagery endows the ship with the meaning of its

155

function, 'making this meaning an innate quality with *a priori* existence' (see above, p. 67). The ship is thus portrayed as necessarily victorious, which corresponds to the focus of the mode since in *madīḥ*, the *mamdūḥ*'s enterprises are to be represented as ideal manifestations of good fortune and success. In this interpretation of mimesis, the Aristotelian categories of the necessary and the probable are applicable to Arabic poetry. The requirement of the necessary refers to the demand that the focus of the mode be given full expression – that it be as sharp as possible: the *mamdūḥ* must appear *necessarily* victorious; correspondingly, his battleship is *necessarily* invincible.

If this aim is to be achieved, the poet has to remain within the bounds of the probable or, rather, to concentrate on making the improbable *appear* probable. In *madīḥ*, this means persuasively converting defeat into victory, failure into success, mediocrity into excellence, excellence into sublimity. Excessive use of *ornatus* or 'fantastic' imagery, however, may threaten to deflect attention from this purpose by becoming a feature of interest in itself, thus precluding empathy with what is portrayed. Accordingly, the rhetorical devices in Buḥturī's ship description are subservient to his aim of expressing the martial posture of ship and crew.

Literature as correlate of poetry, or 'soliloquy of words' on the other hand, suggests mimesis not of the object but of the semiological system with which it is described; of language, and principally the language of literature. Mihyār's ship description provides an example. The object of description functions as catalyst of an intricate play of metaphorical antitheses derived from conventional imagery, or, as Friedrich might have put it: it sets in motion the 'automatism of antitheses'. The reaction of the reader is not empathy with form and function of the ship, but *marvel* at linguistic ingenuity.[1]

Clearly in this kind of style, the categories of the 'necessary' and the 'probable' are of secondary importance. What is made to appear necessary above is taken for granted here: spectrum and focus, imposed by poetic convention, function as matters of course. Thus in Mihyār's description, the mere mention of the ship in connection with the *mamdūḥ* is sufficient to make it worthy of poetry: the excellence of its function, the meaning of this association, need not be proved. Correspondingly, the requirement of probability is of little consequence in this form of mimesis: poetry does not expend its force in making the improbable appear probable (i.e. in accordance with the moral focus of convention), but rather the reverse: the quest for the 'marvellous' results in a style in which the probable is made improbable, the familiar enigmatic, the ordinary miraculous. Thus Mihyār's riverboat is transformed by metaphor into a fabulous beast.

If necessity and probability thus recede as dimensions of content, two other categories assume prominence as regulators of form: 'constraint' and 'possibility'. 'Constraint' refers to the formal and thematic limitations imposed by literary language and literary tradition: the rules of morphology, syntax and

lexicon as well as rhyme, metre and the canon of motifs. 'Possibility' denotes the possibilities of their combination which mannerist style explores to the limits of the permissible in its mimesis of the semiological system. In this context, the prominence of techniques and conventions of literary language, characteristic of mannerist style, can be seen to be but aspects of an (ideally comprehensive) semiological mimesis. To what extent interplay between constraint and possibility can provide the substance of a literary work has been shown in the case of the *Luzūmiyyāt*.

The stylistic triangle

The hypothesis posited above can be illustrated by means of a triangle (see diagram 3) with the corners P, R, and C. P represents the individual poem, R and C its two correlates 'reality' and 'convention' ('convention' denotes the combination of the semiological systems of literary language and literary tradition). The triangle makes clear the interdependence of the three elements: whether the correlate of P is R or C, neither relationship can manifest itself without the presence of the opposing pole. The same also appears when considering the three relationships PR, PC, and RC, in the light of the terms introduced above.

RC: The relation is characterized by 'spectrum' and 'focus': C admits only certain segments of the totality of experience and assigns them a position in a hierarchy of values. 'Spectrum' and 'focus' in the relation RC are manifest in the individual poem, P.

PR: The relation is characterized by 'necessity' and 'probability'. P fashions R so as to reveal it in manifestations of ideal values which *necessarily* determine its form and function (e.g. the virtues of the *mamdūḥ*). P's presentation of R must, however, be made to appear within the scope of the *probable* if it is to convey persuasion. Whether this vision corresponds to an
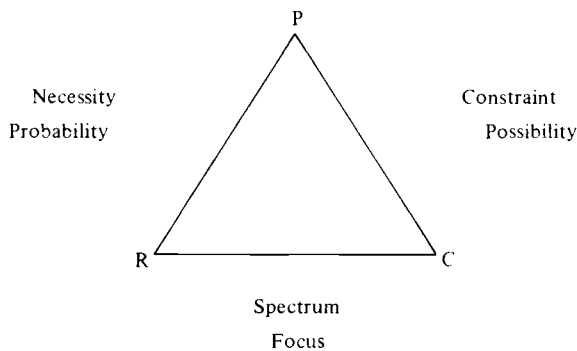

Diagram 3

objective truth is of no relevance in this context.[2] The substance of 'necessity' and 'probability' in the relation PR is a function of C: the latter determines the type of fashioning of R in P (e.g., the types of virtue of the *mamdūḥ* which are laid down by C).

PC: The relation is subject to 'constraint' and 'possibility'; 'constraint' denotes the limitations and rules of the semiological system, 'possibility' denotes the combinatory scope within these limitations (see p. 156). The function of R in the relation PC is more problematic than that of P in RC or C in PR. Yet it seems fair to suggest that PC is also inconceivable without R, since one of the functions of C – 'spectrum' and 'focus' – is only meaningful in relation to R. Even if, as will be seen below, this function is abolished or infringed upon, R does not cease to be relevant in the relation between P and C.

Thus the triangle PRC represents a system of which none of the three elements is conceivable without the other two. However, their relative prominence and function can vary greatly. The scope of this variation is circumscribed by the two mimetic processes discussed above. In the terms of the triangle these can be conceived of as preponderance of the relation PR ('reality the correlate of poetry') as opposed to preponderance of PC ('language the correlate of poetry').

Mannerist mimesis (1)

The preponderance of PC corresponds to mimesis of the semiological system in which R functions as catalyst. This has been illustrated in Mihyār's ship description. An excellent hunting ground for other examples of a similar nature is the 'ecphrastic epigrams': short, often riddle-like portrayals of disparate objects (e.g. animals, dishes of food, objects of daily use, etc.). Generally, the object described is transformed into a miraculous entity by metaphors which derive from the traditional canon. Abū Ṭālib al-Ma'mūnī begins such a descriptive epigram on a pair of scissors with the following lines (see Bürgel, 1965, p. 256; Heinrichs, 1971, p. 175):

wa-ṣāhibayni ttafaqā
    'alā l-hawā wa-'tanqā
wa-aqsamā bil-wuddi wal-
    ikhlāṣi allā ftaraqā
Two friends I remember who agree upon love, and embrace
And swear by love and fidelity that they shall never part.

Evidently the friends are the two blades which constitute the pair of scissors. The metaphor – like the other motifs of the poem – goes back to the canon of love poetry: the promise never to part calls to mind the theme of *firāq*, the separation which afflicts lover and beloved in the *nasīb*. Thus the beginning of the epigram establishes a contrast to the conventional opening: in the fortitude of the 'pair' resides a challenge to the elements of love's tragedy evoked in the metaphor.

The epigram ends with a striking inversion. In their very union and harmony, the 'pair' inflict separation on others:[3]

yufarriqāni bayna kulli mā 'alayhi ttafaqā
fa-ayyu shay'in lāqiyāhu alqiyāhu firaqā
They separate all they agree upon.
Whatever they meet is cast down in shreds.

Whether the poem is a literary joke, whether it conceals a tragic message or represents an ingenious development of the theme of love and war could be discussed at length. The other motifs would have to be considered: the erotic connotations of the 'star' (i.e. nail), which holds the two elements together and is thus instrumental in preventing *firāq* (3–4), as well as the surrealist anatomy of the object as a whole, a distorted echo of the beloved's beauty, also not devoid of sexual innuendos (5–6). The contrast of contexts in the two occurrences of *ittafaqā 'alā* would have to be weighed in some detail: the pair 'agree upon' love, and yet 'separate all they agree, or coincide, upon'.

Whatever the outcome of such a voyage of discovery, the answer lies in the connotations of motifs, and mapping these leads into the world of literature rather than that of 'real experience'. The erotic suggestiveness of the poem (not uncharacteristic of Ma'mūnī's epigrams, see Bürgel, 1965, poems nos. 16, 35), in no way diminishes its primary appeal in the enigmatic play of words. Here Friedrich's sober judgement applies to Ma'mūnī: 'most erotic indulgences of the baroque poets are, in the light of scrutiny, linguistic' (Friedrich, 1964, p. 572).

If one wished to represent the relationship between PR and C in this epigram by means of the stylistic triangle, the latter would have to be conceived as rather flat (see below, p. 162, diagram 4). The correlation PC is dominant and by 'metaphorical inversion' R is wellnigh absorbed into it. The work's artistic impact springs from the ingenuity in the transformation of object into image, a function of the interplay between constraint (in the choice of motifs) and possibility (of their combination). In this transformation, the conventional relationship RC is altered to the point of abolition: spectrum and focus have lost their meaning. The *waṣf* does not make the object representative in a system of moral values (unlike the ship's martial status in Buḥturī's description), but assigns it the extraordinariness uniformly shared by everything in the metaphorical register. Whether ship or scissors, all is equally wondrous.

The disappearance of moral focus is mirrored in the emancipation of the *waṣf* as an independent strand of poetry (see Bürgel, 1965, pp. 225ff). In the classical and archaic *qaṣīda*, description is subordinate to a universal hierarchy of values: whether camel, pasturing ground, or royal palace, their description is of immediate relevance to the moral message conveyed by the poem. Not so in mannerist mimesis: the moral significance of the objective world is irrelevant. In seeking mimesis of the semiological system, any object may serve as catalyst, may be transformed into metaphor to spread the wings of linguistic ingenuity.

This leads to the question of spectrum. Since al-Ma'mūnī's metaphors are derived from the traditional canon, metaphorical reality remains within its scope. But this is merely the result of adherence to the constraint of convention on the level of choice of motifs; it is countered by a deliberately unconventional move on another level, the very one affected by the 'spectrum' of 'convention': the choice of object. A pair of scissors as object of description is in no way warranted by the canon of tradition, as is abundantly clear if it is compared with such poetry-laden items as sword, bridle, or arrow. The clash between motifs imposed and object chosen, between the conventions of the *qaṣīda* and a pair of scissors, creates a deliberate effect of comic disharmony. The lack of proportion between end and means both removes the object from its ordinary context and detaches the motifs from their real correlates.

In this tension between word and object, metaphor and reality, resides the dichotomy noticed by Friedrich in baroque style: language and object, language and world, no longer converge but diverge. In this divergence, language maintains the upper hand. I have called the object of description a catalyst which sets in motion the play of words and images. Since in the course of this, the object is itself abstracted from its context and transformed into an extraordinary entity, a different and perhaps profounder view of the relationship between reality and convention in mannerist style is possible: absorption into the literary cosmos may be seen as an act of magic which reveals the mysterious multivalence of reality. As such, the fantastic conglomerates of metaphor are not mere illusion but capture the very ambiguity of the world of appearances.

The process of abstraction and transformation in mannerist mimesis is wellnigh identical with what W. Worringer saw as the aim of abstraction in art: 'das einzelne Objekt der Aussenwelt ... aus seiner Verbindung und Abhängigkeit von den anderen Dingen zu erlösen, es dem Lauf des Geschehens zu entreissen, es absolut zu machen' (1919, p. 27). This process of isolation is the work of metaphor. Closely related is the 'static nature of description' observed in Mihyār's ship description, a feature also of ecphrastic epigrams: the object is not presented in specific dynamic interaction but description focuses on its unchanging formal properties.

Here the investigation of mannerist mimesis reaches a decisive point. Whether reality provides the catalyst of abstraction or whether in abstraction metaphor constitutes 'das Ding an sich', language in mannerist style represents the sole abode of meaning. It, and not reality, is perceived to be the seminal core of all order so that artistic search for sense and coherence turns towards language itself rather than towards its referent, to the signifier rather than the signified. Therein lies the meaning of literature's being the correlate of poetry in mannerist mimesis as maintained by Friedrich and Heinrichs. Thus Heidegger's formula for the discovery of the 'path towards language' (1959, p. 94) is also the formula of mannerist style: 'die Sprache als Sprache zur Sprache bringen.'

Classical mimesis (1)

The preponderance of the relation PR in the stylistic triangle ('reality the correlate of poetry') corresponds to the mimetic process described above as 'intent on the fashioning of reality'. I will call it classical mimesis. Dichotomy between signifier and signified has emerged as a distinctive feature of mannerist mimesis; its classical counterpart is marked by the *absence* of such a dichotomy. In its fashioning of reality, classical mimesis aims at a concord between 'language and world', between reality as idealized by convention and its restructuring in the given poem. As a result, it shuns excess or incongruity which threatens the harmony it creates between means of expression and meaning. Described in positive terms the style exhibits, in the words of Friedrich, 'appropriateness and meaningfulness of the figures of speech' (1964, p. 553).

A major point implicit in the discussions so far must now be clearly stated: namely, that classical mimesis is by no means identical with imitation or reproduction of reality. Its distinctive feature resides in a certain use of language which is no less dependent on literary convention than the language of mannerist mimesis. Indeed, the distinction between poets primarily inspired by nature, and poets primarily inspired by art, which Hauser and Heinrichs see underlying classical and mannerist styles, is virtually impossible to substantiate (Heinrichs, 1974, p. 127). It would seem that artists of all descriptions learn their craft by mastering a tradition, rather than by inspiration from nature. On the other hand, it is hard to prove that some such inspiration is *not* at the root of many a *mannerist* work. That convention is, however, central to classical mimesis, cannot be doubted. In the concord between signifier and signified, the fashioning of reality as determined by spectrum and focus is made to appear necessary and probable. There is no fissure, no dubiety, no threatening tension in the classical edifice. Indeed, convention is most naturally itself in classical mimesis.

It follows that the latter's illustration in the stylistic model does not correspond to a simple inversion of the triangle describing the relation between PR and C in the (undoubtedly mannerist) poem by Ma'mūnī (diagram 4). In diagram 5, the triangle PRC[1] denotes a near abolition of the role of convention decidedly uncharacteristic of classical art. The concord classical mimesis maintains between reality and convention suggests, transposed into the terms of the triangle, a figure in which neither R nor C transgress the centre M (diagram 6). For near absorption of R or C in the opposing lines PC or PR (compare the two inner triangles in diagram 5) corresponds to a distortion in the relation between signifier and signified characteristic of mannerist rather than classical mimesis.

So far, only one form of distortion has been discussed – that illustrated by diagram 4. The inversion of this triangle in diagram 5 represents a different dimension of mannerism which is no less important. For in their combination,
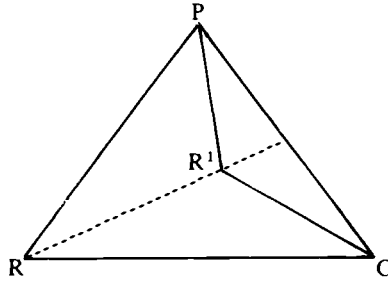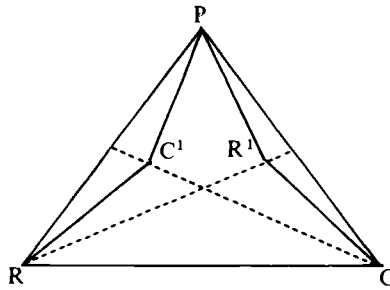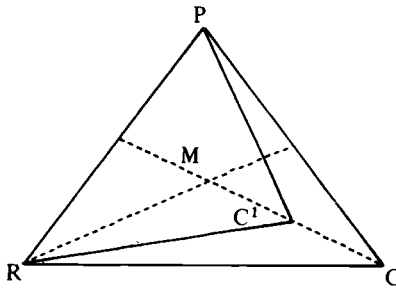
Diagram 4

Diagram 5

Diagram 6

the two liminal triangles PRC^1 and PCR^1 reflect a feature at the core of the style: it is the mannerist *pose*. What is intended is best illustrated by return to a text. The reader will recall the opening couplet of Mihyār's panegyric addressed to Abū 'l-Qāsim (text III):

1. *hal 'inda 'aynayka 'alā Ghurrabī*
       gharāmatun bil-'āriḍi l-khullabī
2. *na'am dumū'un yaktasī turbuhū*
       minhā qamīṣa l-baladi l-mu'shibī

Do your eyes take upon themselves at Ghurrab
to discharge a debt owed by the rainless cloud?
Yes! Tears through which its soil now dons
the garment of the grassy land.

Mannerist pose is crystallized in the word *na'am*, in the emphatic response to a fictitious question. It is as though the question was contrived for the sake of the reply, while by sheer emphasis the reply attempts to prove the spontaneity of the question, thereby revealing only the artificiality of both.

Thus mannerism not only abstracts the motifs from their correlates, but does so by pretending to *affirm* their signifying the very correlate from which they are abstracted. Here lies the source of a tension between emphasis and affectation, a tension as essential to certain forms of mannerist mimesis as the interplay between constraint and possibility. It is illustrated in the contrasting relationship between the two liminal triangles in diagram 5. For the triangle PRC^1 reflects the urgency of feigned realism, the simulated spontaneity in the emphatic tone – an urgency for the sake of which the style pretends to sacrifice the semantic harmony of convention by resorting – as if under compulsion – to *ornatus*, hyperbole, and conceit. Thus Mihyār's poem begins with lines in which antithetical dexterity poses as the only adequate expression to his grief. The result, however, is not portrayal of grief, but linguistic epideixis for which emphasis, through its increased demand on linguistic resources, is but the means. So reality, rather than seeing its objective qualities proffered with urgency as the style pretends, finds itself cocooned within a linguistic web which displays *itself* rather than its signified. This is the 'absorption into the literary cosmos' described above and illustrated in the second liminal triangle PCR^1.

It is crucial to see clearly the contrasting interdependence of emphasis, affectation, and semiological mimesis. Extreme emphasis draws the semiological system to the limits of constraint and possibility and thus brings about the linguistic display of mannerist mimesis. Conversely, the more comprehensive and ingenious the linguistic display, the more extreme and affected the emphasis it imposes, and the more uniform the extraordinariness of all it describes.

Thus mannerist style aims not as much at a dichotomy, but at actual discord between signifier and signified. The resulting tension between language as abstracted system and as reflection of reality, between means of expression and meaning – in short, the mannerist pose – is the style's archetypal paradox. Antithetical exploits and paradoxical constructs which it passionately displays on all levels, are but manifestations of the one archetype. This recalls Friedrich's remark on the combination of erotic indulgence and linguistic exercise in the baroque poets. It marks the same contrast: emphasis, in sacrificing the spectrum of convention for the sake of explicit sensualism, again provides the means of semiological mimesis: here it is *epideixis* of erotic language.

At this point it is clear that the initial distinction made between classical and mannerist mimesis is insufficient. 'Reality the correlate of poetry' is not all there is to classical mimesis. The affirmation of the necessary and the probable is much rather a function of the concord it creates and maintains between reality and convention. The style therefore presupposes an attitude to language as much as to reality: namely, that the latter is not only within the grasp of language, but shines most truly when embedded in it securely and unambiguously, and a vision of order emerges without undue strain; simplicity and measure then prevail.

Similarly, 'language the correlate of poetry' describes only the consequence of a more fundamental feature of mannerist style: the discord it creates between language and world, which is the root of semiological mimesis. So the style presupposes an attitude to reality as much as to language: an awareness of incongruity between them, an awareness of the inadequacy of language coupled with the despairing perception that it is the seminal core of all order.

It follows that the essential distinction between the two styles does not reside in preponderance of reality or language as correlates of poetry. These are merely reflections of a more fundamental axis: that between language and its referent, a relation re-created and affirmed in classical style and disjoined in mannerism.

Mannerism in Arabic literature

The contrasting features subsumed under classicism and mannerism have, in one form or another, been the object of critical discussion every since antiquity. However, this particular pair of terms features in literary studies of comparatively recent origin. It dates back to the famous work of E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and Latin Middle Ages* (1953). Several discussions of mannerism in literature have been undertaken since,[4] and few of them fail to refer to the following passage in which Curtius proposed his definition of terms:

We may borrow it [the term Mannerism from art history] because it is well-adapted to fill a gap in the terminology of literary science. For that purpose, to be sure, we must free the word from all art-historical connotations and broaden its meaning until it represents simply the common denominator for all literary tendencies which are opposed to Classicism whether they be pre-classical, post-classical or contemporary with any Classicism. Understood in this sense, Mannerism is a constant in European Literature.[5]

The full meaning of this passage is not clear without a reference to what Curtius means by classical. The word is given three meanings:
(a) Classical as 'canonical'. The classical writers in this sense are always the ancients. They represent the literary models from which the moderns derive by continuity and opposition. However, canonical classicism is not necessarily opposed to mannerism since the mannerists themselves may, in turn, become

ancients and provide the norm for a group of moderns. The mannerist writers of the Latin Silver Age were canonized as classics in the tractates of Tesauro and Gracian.

(b) Classical as 'correct, clear and in accordance with the rules'. Curtius calls this style Standard Classicism and gives as examples Xenophon, Quintilian, Boileau, Pope, and Wieland. It is characterized by a 'diction naturally suited to its subject', and a moderate use of rhetorical devices. This form of classicism is intended by the concept of classical mimesis: accordance with the rules and appropriateness of diction are manifestations of concord between signifier and signified.

(c) Classical as 'sublime'. Curtius calls this form Ideal Classicism but does not define it more closely because any attempt 'to circumscribe the essence of great art is a makeshift'. He says no more than that the classicism of Raphael and Phidias, and, by extension, of Sophocles, Virgil, Racine, and Goethe may be felt as 'Nature raised to the Ideal'.

It follows that only in the second sense does classical denote a style to which mannerism could be said to be in opposition. Whether Ideal Classicism has a mannerist counterpart need not be discussed in this context.

Curtius's hypotheses provide the basis for W. Heinrichs's investigation of the applicability of the term 'mannerism' to Arabic literature. The problem is not so much whether something akin to mannerism in European literature exists in Arabic – the parallels are too numerous to deny – but whether there is a classical style to which it could be said to be opposed in the terms set out by Curtius. For, as Heinrichs says, 'if one term of the opposition falls away, the system collapses' (1974, p. 119).

In the search for a classicism in Arabic, Heinrichs (*ibid.*, p. 120) turns to pre-Islamic poetry. With respect to early Abbasid literature, it is certainly classical in the sense of canonical, but this aspect is, of course, immaterial to the discussion. Heinrichs also finds little evidence of Standard Classicism in pre-Islamic verse, since 'clarity, appropriateness of diction and proportion' do not contribute much to its description. Ideal Classicism, too, is ruled out by 'the poetry's realist and molecularist tendency' (*ibid.*).

As to the Arabic works akin to mannerism (e.g. the rhetorical diction and illusionist imagery of the later Abbasid poets), Heinrichs considers them not sufficiently different from the canonical classicism of pre-Islamic poetry for there to be evidence of a 'literary tendency opposed to a classicism'. Arabic mannerism is much rather the result of the absence of incisive changes in the tradition so that progressive (and ultimately mannerist) elaboration is the 'natural, wellnigh inevitable consequence' of the persistent canonicity of pre-Islamic poetry. Thus, instead of anything approaching the classical/mannerist dualism of European literature, Heinrichs perceives in the development of Arabic literature a 'monism' (*ibid.*, p. 121).

The stylistic analyses in the first five chapters of this book suggest a line of inquiry different from that proposed by Heinrichs. The comparison between

the ship descriptions of Buḥturī and Mihyār revealed stylistic differences sufficiently sharp to speak of opposing literary tendencies. In the following, I hope to substantiate this stylistic contrast by reference to some of the texts analysed. I wish to show that the stylistic difference between the earlier and the later texts is not one of degree only – in *ornatus* for instance – but one so essential and of such nature as to warrant the terms classical and mannerist.

From this hypothesis two immediate consequences arise. The stylistic differences which have emerged in the analyses are, I believe, in themselves sufficient evidence to cast doubt over Heinrichs's notion of a 'monism' in the development of Arabic literature. The argument he cites in support – that Arabic mannerism is the result of the continuity of the literary tradition and not in opposition to any part of it – is unconvincing since mannerism always appears to grow out of an abundant literary tradition, which it seeks to explore and encompass rather than abrogate. Heinrichs himself has given expression to this when regarding literature rather than reality as the correlate of mannerist poetry.

The second consequence concerns the question of classicism in Arabic. For it appears that by contrast with later works, at least some of the poetry of the early ninth century represents a form of Standard Classicism. This differs from the view of Heinrichs and Schoeler who see in the techniques of *badī*, as developed by the early Abbasid poets, the onset of mannerism in Arabic.[6] However, the existence of rhetorical diction does not in itself make a text mannerist. Furthermore, certain stylistic devices and illusionist (*takhyīlī*, see Jurjānī, 1954, p. 253) images which, in a European context, may seem mannerist, need not be so in an Arabic one. That is why, rather than focus only on single lines and extracts, I have taken whole poems into account and tried to identify their place in the literary tradition. For, in the last resort, it is only with respect to works as units and their interaction with other works that mannerism and classicism can be discussed.

Panegyric poetry

The hierarchy of being

When approaching Buḥturī's panegyric on Mutawakkil (text II) with the formula of classical mimesis 'reality the correlate of poetry', the first question must concern the nature of this reality. The poem's conventional opening alone indicates that its correlate is not the sensible reality of everyday experience. It pertains to something more real than the mere 'world of appearances': this is the ideal order of society and nature, the salutary hierarchy of being. All the structural properties of the poem go to express and underline this essential vision. This is evident, for instance, in the treatment of the spatial dimension. The horizontal dimension structures the image of man's

suffering in the amoral realm: proximity or distance makes no difference to the lover's pain. Horizontal and vertical dimensions come together in the portrayal of the expansion of life in the moral realm. In the conclusion, the vertical dimension alone remains to illustrate figuratively the ascendancy of spiritual virtue and religious truth. Thus the spatial notions provide an axis for the central stages of the poem's development: from nature untamed and adverse, to nature transfigured and restrained by spirit, to spirit divinely blessed and supreme.

Jam‘ and *tafrīq* ('unity' and 'division'), the conceptual themes in Buḥturī's poem on Yūsuf al-Thaghrī (text I), provide a similar juncture for all essential polarities and interactions: Fate and the dispersed tribe, Fate and the Prince, the Prince and his tribe, the Prince and his enemies. In the ship description (see above, p. 63) this structural role is also performed by the spatial axis. It stratifies the elements of description so that they appear in perfect readiness for action. Their order is the realization of an ideal hierarchy: setting out in defence of the Faith, admiral, captain, crew, and ship form a perfect unity, rightly balanced and inclined so that even wind and sea become part of their union. In each of these examples, the structural axes inform the development with subtle consistency, making it fashion reality according to an ideal vision. This conforms to the definition of classical mimesis given in the context of the stylistic triangle: 'P fashions R so as to reveal in it manifestations of ideal values which necessarily determine its form and function' (see above, p. 157).

It follows that Buḥturī's panegyrics face the reader less with a 'colloquy of objects' than with a colloquy of that which they are made signs of: the hierarchy of being. Conversely, the correlate of this poetry is not reality so much as that which reality stands for: ideality. This differs from the aesthetic aim of description in pre-Islamic poetry which culminates in what K. Abu Deeb has termed the 'creation of fixities' – the apotheosis of an object of reality as such so that its every quality is made timeless and static in perfection (1976, pp. 33f). Unlike the pre-Islamic tendency to enumerate the individual qualities of an object described, Buḥturī, throughout the poem, focuses on relationships *between* objects, while the transformation of imagery makes evident the meaning of these relationships. This meaning reflects less on the object of description than on the actual correlate of the poetry: the hierarchy of being.

Intertextuality

The role of convention is no less important to classical than it is to mannerist mimesis. Literary allusions, re-expositions of motifs, etc., contribute to the artistic effect of both. The difference resides in the nature of the effect.

For classical mimesis, the role of such intertextual references can be illustrated in the relationship between Buḥturī's panegyric on Mutawakkil and two other panegyric poems which share the same rhyme and metre: one is by Muslim b. al-Walīd, henceforth called model A (1958, p. 216, 40 lines), the

other by Buḥturī himself, henceforth called model B (1963, p. 2409, 25 lines). The mutual dependence of the three poems is evident in the number of rhyme words they share. Those of model A have fifteen roots in common with the rhyme words of text II (lines 1, 3, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19, 21, 22, 28, 31, 32); those of model B have ten (lines 2, 3, 7, 11, 12, 15, 16, 19, 23, 25). Of the roots that provide rhymes in both model poems, only one is not also taken up in text II (*wly*: A 40 and B 10, B 20). On the other hand, twenty-one of the rhyme words in the latter share the same root with rhymes in the model poems.[7]

The correspondences between individual lines are so numerous that only an extended study would do them justice.[8] The examples I have selected seem to me to be sufficient, however, to capture the nature of the interrelation between the poems. The first example concerns only model B and text II. The Caliph's magic-sway over the gazelles in his palace park is described as follows (model B):

20.   *in sirta sārat wa-in waqqaftahā waqafat*
         ṣūrun ilayka bi-alḥāẓin tuwālīhā
They move when you move, and when you stop them they stop,
turning towards you with incessant glances.

The image calls to mind one of the most outstanding lines in text II – the fish mirrored in the picture of the dolphin:

25.   *ṣūrun ilā ṣūrati l-dulfīni yu'nisuhā*
         minhu nziwā'un bi-'aynayhi yuwāzihā
They turn towards the dolphin's statue cheered
by the wrinkle they meet in its eyes.

The interdependence is evident: the phrase *ṣūr ilā*, the exchange of glances, and the hint of mystery in the relationship between the protagonists, are common to both lines. However, the image in question occupies only a hemistich in the first example while in the second, the idea is extended and elaborated with much subtlety. The editors of the *Dīwān* assign both poems to the same year; the relationship between these two lines suggests that model B was composed first.

Other arguments could be adduced to the same end. We have seen that line 25 of text II contains one of the structural leitmotifs: the theme of reciprocity (see above, p. 46). A glance at model B reveals that it contains elements of the same nature, in addition to the image in the line quoted above. The compound *ubdīhā/ukhfīhā* ('which I reveal'/'which I hide') in line 1, for instance, is countered by *yakhfā/yabdū* ('which is hidden'/'revealed') in line 18: one concerns the relationship between poet and lady, the other that between gazelles and sovereign. In accordance with the antithetical pattern of the panegyric the separation of poet and beloved is transcended in the numinous bond between Caliph and gazelles.[9]

It stands to reason that Buḥturī, not long after the completion of model B, returned to the same rhyme and metre to exploit further the potential of some of the themes and structural features of the earlier work. That this second attempt also took account of Muslim b. al-Walīd's composition in the same 'key' can be seen in the next two examples. The last line of Muslim's panegyric (model A) is as follows:

40. *mā ḍayyaʿa llāhu qawman sirta tamlikuhum*
       wa-lā aḍāʿa bilādan anta wālīhā
May God never strike a people you have come to rule
nor ruin a land whose leader you are.

Line 11 of model B:

11. *fa-lā faḍīlata illā anta lābisuhā*
       wa-lā raʿiyyata illā anta rāʿīhā

There is no virtue not possessed by you,
no flock not shepherded by you.

Finally, line 36 of text II:

36. *mā ḍayyaʿa llāhu fī badwin wa-lā ḥadarin*
       raʿiyyatan anta bil-iḥsāni rāʿīhā
May God never strike in desert or sown
a flock whose shepherd by beneficence you are.

A glance at the three lines shows that the third combines elements of the second and first and moulds them into a new whole. *Mā ḍayyaʿa llāhu* ('may God never strike) has been adduced from the first hemistich of A 40, *raʿiyyatan anta rāʿīhā* ('a flock whose shepherd you are'), stems from the second hemistich of B 11. The two have been forged together into a line, which, instead of two parallel statements, contains only one. Seen in the context of the poem, one notices that the recasting is not arbitrary: the new element in the second hemistich, *bil-iḥsān* ('by beneficence'), does carry the greatest weight since, as has been shown, the root *ḥsn* is one of the poem's lexical leitmotifs (see above, pp. 41f).

The intertextual relations that concern only model A and text II are the most significant. Muslim b. al-Walīd's panegyric has the same number of lines as its later counterpart. They are divided as follows:

 4   *nasīb*
10   *khamriyya*
18   *madīḥ*: general praise
 8   *madīḥ*: martial conclusion

The antistrophe is nearly double the length of the strophe, and the relations between the two parts of each display a symmetry of their own. The *nasīb* is, with four lines, half as long as the martial conclusion. The thematic opposition

between them is as expected: the desolate campsite, from which the poet turns away, is countered by the afflicted parts of the empire to which the sovereign turns, defeating the enemy and rewarding the righteous. Virtue counters the destructive workings of time.[10]

The relationship between the two central parts, the second nearly double the first in length, also follows an established pattern: physical attraction and sensuality in the *khamriyya* are sublimated by moral virtue and spirituality in the *madīḥ*; the one breeds frustration of the individual's desire, the other fulfilment of society's hope.

The conception of Buḥturī's poem contains elements of that of Muslim: *nasīb*, *aṭlāl*, and *khamriyya* are maintained (though inverted in length), so is *madīḥ*. But in between, Buḥturī inserts a new element: the lake and garden description. Thus the conventional antithesis does not proceed in two steps, as in Muslim's poem (from physicality to spirituality), but in three: in the garden and lake, sensual beauty and spiritual virtue are combined.

Once the dependence of text II on the mode of Muslim is accepted, the diametrical opposition between the two beginnings cannot go unnoticed:

1. *shughlī ʿani l-dāri abkīhā wa-arthīhā*
       idhā khalat min ḥabībin lī maghānīhā
I am distracted from the abode and cannot weep over it nor bemoan it when its habitations are empty of my beloved.

1. *mīlū ilā l-dāri min Laylā nuḥayyīhā*
       naʿam wa-nas'aluhā ʿan baʿḍi ahlīhā
Turn to Layla's abode and salute it;
yes, and question it on some of its people.

Distraction from the abode (*shughlī ʿani l-dāri*) is described in one case, turning towards the abode (*mīlū ilā l-dāri*) in the other: two opposing movements and moods. The funereal timbre of *arthīhā* (from *rathā*, lit. 'to mourn') contrasts with the notion of revival in *nuḥayyīhā* (from *ḥayya*, lit. 'to revive'), the emphasis on emptiness in Muslim's second hemistich contrasts with the mention of people and the incitement to communicate in the line of Buḥturī.

This hidden counterpoint in the first line of text II provides reason to oppose Āmidī's criticism of it. He considers the line a failure because of the word *naʿam* ('yes') for which he sees no implicit need in the context; he believes Buḥturī resorted to it as a *ḥashw*, a metrical fill-up (Āmidī, 1961, vol. I, p. 418). In view of the contrast between the two openings and, indeed, the compositional contrast between the poems, the emphasis added by *naʿam* becomes meaningful, however, as it stresses the movement *towards* the encampment in opposition to Muslim's turning away from it. The relationships between the lines suggest, furthermore, that they may contain a metaphorical statement about poetry itself: *dār* could refer to the *maʿnā*, the poetic motif, as much as to the object. Buḥturī's turning towards the *aṭlāl* is then equivalent to saying that the convention still harbours meaning (in the symbolical terms described above)

and need not, in the vein of Abū Nuwās, or with the impatience of Muslim, be discarded. Thus he inverts the length of *aṭlāl-nasīb* and *khamriyya* (from 7/10 to 7/3 lines), allowing the ancient conventions more space. Nevertheless, he succeeds in outstripping his predecessor in the latter's own domain: the Bacchanal. The three-line *khamriyya* in Buḥturī's poem is of such exquisite balance that it surpasses the ten lines of Muslim. In support of this, numerous comparative observations could be made with respect to the lexicon. One would, in the end, find it hard not to perceive a *double entendre* in Buḥturī's line on the architectural genius of Solomon's demons:

15.   *ka'anna jinna Sulaymāna lladhīna walaw*
           ibdā'ahā fa-adaqqū fī ma'ānīhā
It is as though the *jinn* of Solomon had commanded
its marvellous creation and refined its themes.

The line may refer to Mutawakkil's lake as much as to the poem itself. Buḥturī intimates that he has surpassed his predecessors (Muslim in particular) by refining the components of poetry (i.e. the motifs: *ma'ānī*), and succeeded in creating a marvel in novelty (*ibdā'*: cf. *badī'*!).

Classical mimesis (2)

The intertextual associations in Buḥturī's panegyric on Mutawakkil are so prominent that they appear to contradict what has been said about its classical nature. The relationships point in the direction of 'literature the correlate of poetry' – especially examples like the line above and the initial line which seem to conceal, behind their more evident meaning, statements on the poet's creative endeavour. However, the correlate of this poetry has been defined as the hierarchy of being, and the intertextual associations do not compel one to change this verdict. Quite the reverse. The symbolic dimension of the poetic motifs is given added power by evoking the echo of tradition and outstripping its memory. The monarch's political and spiritual superiority is mirrored in the literary superiority of the poem, and submission to the one is a function of admiration for the other. Intertextuality on this level reflects the ritualistic nature of the link between panegyric poet and sovereign, not the mannerist discord between language and referent.

This can be illustrated by a return to the stylistic triangle. Like the model of mannerist mimesis (diagram 5) that of classical mimesis consists of two internal triangles, but instead of being liminal, they overlap (see diagram 7). PCR^1 reflects the dimension of intertextuality. C (the model poems) are the dominant point of reference ('literature the correlate of poetry'), and R is fashioned as a function of the relation PC, the re-casting with greater brilliance of the models of convention. PRC^1 reflects the opposite process. In the re-casting of the model poems, convention (C^1) is fashioned to provide an emphatic and appropriate depiction of R: C^1 is subordinate to the axis PR.
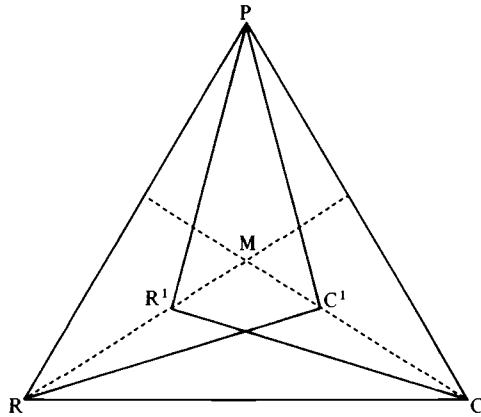
Diagram 7

This subtle tension between the status of the poem with respect to its own tradition and its status with respect to the reality it claims to reflect, runs throughout the work. However, as illustrated by the *overlapping* triangles, this tension does not create a dichotomy or a discord between language and its signified. The poem's literary nature and its extra-literary message complement one another in harmony.

Mannerist mimesis (2)

Buḥturī's panegyric on Mutawakkil (text II) and Mihyār's panegyric on Abū 'l-Qāsim al-Maghribī (text III) both contain a passage on the link between sovereign and office (32f, 104ff). The framework of the metaphor is the same: sovereign and office relate like bride and groom. However, the treatment of the theme differs. Not only does it occupy six lines in the work of Mihyār and only two in that of Buḥturī, but, in its difference, the imagery corresponds to the stylistic distinction between the poets and, by extension, between classical and mannerist mimesis.

33. *abdā l-tawāḍuʿa lammā nālahā riʿatan*
        minhu wa-nālathu wa-khtālat bihī tīhā
When he won her he displayed humility in modest restraint,
whereas she won him and strutted about in pride.

105. *jāʾatka lam tūsiʿ lahā murghiban*
        waliyyahā l-mahra wa-lam takhṭubī
She became yours without your raising the dowry
to please her guardian, or asking for her hand.

Buḥturī's line, in construction, balance, and meaning, embodies the subject matter of the poem. Two elements are prominent: the virtues of the sovereign

(*tawāḍuʿ, riʿa*), and the rejoicing of his office. The Caliphate signifies both the pinnacle of the hierarchy upon which the sovereign stands, and the realm as a whole. Its proud rejoicing denotes the new vigour and fertility the realm receives through being ruled by one who, in turn, bows down to the Most High. The structure of the line, the thematic 'reciprocity' (see above, pp. 46f) and parallelism, convey the proportion and balance inherent in the sound order and generated in the world when it becomes reality. Cosmic and linguistic harmony are entwined: the ultimate aim of classical mimesis.

Mihyār's line, too, makes a statement about the hierarchy of being: the *Wazir*ate submits to the *Wazīr*'s proud independence, knowing she has found her master. However, the image aims not at portrayal and embodiment of the resulting harmony. Instead, it embodies the mannerist interplay of emphasis and affectation: being over-explicit, the metaphor attracts attention to its constituents rather than its referent. The *mechanics* of interchange – dowry, guardian, marriage proposal – generate an unreal configuration of little relevance to the *meaning* of that interchange which is so supremely conveyed in Buhturī's line. While Mihyār thus attempts to heighten the effect of extraordinariness, the cosmic portent is much reduced. The metaphor is altogether too explicit to capture the supreme harmony of an ideal order. What the line lacks in outward magnificence, it gains, however, in inward display: syntax and imagery are aligned in intricate motion, and *here* lies the aesthetic aim. It is language at play, semiological mimesis.

One can now see how the technical features of the metaphorical register – *extension* of metaphors, *dislocation* of motifs, *hyperbolic tone* (see above, pp. 59ff) – are functions of the mannerist pose. It is emphasis that creates metaphorical extension and hyperbole, so that the motifs are dislocated from their referents and abstracted into configurations which aim not at reflecting reality (as they pretend to do), but at displaying the wondrous alignment of their elements.

Constraint and possibility, regulators of form in mannerist mimesis, have an equally important part to play in Mihyār's metaphorical register. Constraint is evident in the choice of motifs. Mihyār not only restricts his imagery to standard motifs, but in many ways adheres to the archaic contexts of ruralism and bedouinity. This restriction is countered by the exploitation of combinatory possibility on the metaphorical level. As has been pointed out, the image of rider and mount is remoulded in multifarious ways to express contexts of very different nature. The interaction of constraint and possibility is thus the origin of the third feature seen as characteristic of the metaphorical register: *variation* (see above, pp. 61ff).

That this technique holds true not only for the transformation of individual motifs but for the combination, on structural axes, of *different* motifs, can be shown by a return to Mihyār's *rahīl*. The phenomenon itself is not new: it was found in the conceptual themes in text I, in the theme of reciprocity, and in the use of the spatial dimension in text II, etc. The difference is that Mihyār faces

the reader with a catalogue of images revolving around the same core – the piercing, penetrative, phallic – in which the predominant effect is again one of cumulative wonder, not descriptive balance. The theme structures the imagery of the whole passage but is particularly evident in the following nouns:

a   *khishāshāt/*'wooden stick in camel's nose' (54)
b   *sawṭ/*'whip' (55)
c   *shawl/*'tail', 'sting' (56)
d   *shawk al-qanā/*'points of spears' (57)
e   *mansim dām/*'bleeding hoof' (58)
f   *masnūn al-qarā/*'pointed back' (59)
g   *bunayyātuhā/*'little daughters of quiver', i.e. 'arrows' (62)
h   *khudūsh/*'scratch marks' (64)
i   *shabā mikhlab/*'sting of claw' (65)

The list shows the variety of motifs strung together by the theme. The interrelation is no less complex and varied: (a) and (e) are part of opposing images denoting *obedience*: the camel responds gently to the wooden *stick* that has pierced her nose; her *toe* writes the dictate of the night journey in blood. The sexual connotations are underlined by the two images which denote *defiance:* (c) and (d). The camel wards off the advances of the stallion to whom other she-camels submit, raising their *tails (shawl)*[11] – similarly the *points* of the *spears (shawk)* cannot harm her (observe the sexual undertone of *waṭi'at*).[12] *Masnūn al-qarā* (f) is next in the series of protruding or piercing objects: this one not causing pain (as in a, b, c) but caused by pain – namely hunger and exertion. Throughout, the emphasis has remained on sterility. This is effectively countered by the next transformation of the theme (g): 'the little daughters' of the quiver (womb) – namely the *arrows* – which pierce their victim (*takhallalna*). Thus the only offspring to have been given birth (after a long pregnancy: *'āmayni*, 'two years') in the midst of this phallic excitation is the agent of death! Line 63 continues the theme of sterility, and the picture series of piercing objects is concluded with the vision of the *claw* (i) and, figuratively, no doubt, with the piercing sensation of terror engendered by the vision.

The structure of the imagery in the passage does exhibit the mannerist characteristics outlined: constraint is evident in the adherence to a structural axis, and counterbalanced by the exploration of multiple and astonishing combinatory possibilities – of which I have mentioned only the most obvious. This enumerative style is reminiscent of the archaic style of description – as is indeed the whole section – yet the result is not creation of a 'fixity', but an abstract interplay of forms in countermotion.

The same technique is at work in all other cumulative effects – whether they concern imagery (e.g. the banquet scene, 72f), lexicon (e.g. the name sequences, 47–52, 113–15), morphology (e.g. the *lam yaf'al* refrain), or syntax. One factor, form or notion, is adhered to with emphatic perseverence and, in return,

occasions an ingenious display of elements shaped and combined in conformity with it. The structural axes do not, as in Buḥturī's poems, provide the outlines of the *necessary*, the hierarchy of being, but act as formal *constraints* for the exploration of the *possible*.

In this mimetic process, the literary work does not attempt to establish harmony between itself and a vision of extra-literary reality. The literary universe is transformed into a detached sphere, an anti-world, and every effort is made to remove it as far as possible from the real. The ordinary is made miraculous, the probable improbable and, by metaphor, all ordinary polarities are inverted. The archaic vein of pastoralism is the crowning point: neither descriptive nor symbolic, it provides the artificial background for motifs in rhythmic and ornamental interaction.

Ascetic poetry

Some aspects of the opposition between panegyric and ascetic poetry have been discussed in chapter four. The contrast, as illustrated by Abū l-'Atāhiya's *zuhdiyyāt*, centres on the celebration of a (divinely sanctioned) worldly hierarchy in *madīḥ*, and the unmasking of all matters and concerns of this world in *tazhīd*. One defines the individual's position with respect to society, the other tends towards dissociation from it and defines man only in relation to God. One portrays him as powerful and active in the face of adversity, ideally able to vanquish Fate, the other sees him as the passive, helpless, and blinded victim of his destiny. The difference is reflected in the style and composition of the two types of poetry. The simple diction of the *zuhdiyyāt* not only bears witness to pious restraint, but also strikes a deliberate contrast to the more adorned and archaic language of the panegyric. This applies also to Abū Tammām, whose verses on *zuhd* exhibit, despite certain characteristic metaphors, less complexity of diction and lexicon than his *madīḥ*.

In the *zuhdiyyāt* of Abū l-'Atāhiya, the difference is supplemented by a contrasting imitation of the composition and development of the panegyric: this world and the hereafter relate like amoral and moral realms (text IV), the ruins of the campsite symbolize the fate of human existence as a whole (text V). The simple diction of the *zuhdiyya* conforms to the simplicity of its message. The complex polarities of the panegyric are reduced to a single axis: that between this world and the hereafter. Fate, ruler and beloved, contrasting principles in the panegyric, are all equated as elements of the earthly existence which is but *ghurūr* ('deceit' and 'illusion'). With the reduction in complexity of diction and thematic structure goes the simplification of the ethos: instead of the many heroic virtues upheld in the panegyric, the *zuhdiyya* bases man's moral existence upon only one: *tuqā* ('piety').

If the stylistic difference between *zuhdiyya* and *madīḥ* is one of reduction, that between *zuhdiyyāt* and *Luzūmiyyāt* is one of drastic augmentation. This is evident in the central ethos where *tuqā* is replaced with the many-faceted

doctrine of asceticism. It bears a contrasting similarity to the panegyric: the sovereign wields power over life and death, the ascetic renounces both. The latter's solitary rebellion is akin to the former's confronting of Fate – but with opposite orientation.

The interaction of thematic elements in the *Luzūmiyyāt* is infinitely more complex than in the work of Abū l-ʿAtāhiya and again more similar to the panegyric. There are contrasting polarities: God and world, the beloved and death, the ascetic and death. However, while the panegyric, in its movement from hardship to deliverance brings about a resolution of the conflicts between the principal themes, this is not so in the *Luzūmiyyāt*: in the last analysis, the tensions are left unresolved.

As to diction, it has been shown that the *Luzūmiyyāt* are a summary of the poetic tradition in form and content. Thus, while the *zuhdiyya* contrasts with the panegyric by reduction and simplicity, Maʿarrī's work encompasses and surpasses the panegyric tradition in richness and complexity. It follows that the contrast between *zuhdiyyāt* and *Luzūmiyyāt* as forms of ascetic poetry could not be more extreme. This alone is sufficient to dispel the notion of a stylistic monism in Arabic literature. However, elucidation is needed to show that the differences sketched above reflect the dichotomy of classicism and mannerism.

Repetition and variation

Repetition is characteristic of Abū l-ʿAtāhiya's style. In text IV (the Paradigm), it is a major element of cohesion. The symmetry of the poem's structure is marked by repetitions of words and roots:

> the root *zyn* links the two central lines (*tazayyana*, 'to be adorned', *zayn*, 'beauty'); the repetition of *dār* ('abode') in line 6 mirrors the repetition of *yad al-dunyā* ('hand of the world') in line 3; the preposition *bayn* ('between') is repeated before the rhyme word in lines 2 and 7; the repetition of *hayn* ('death') links the two outer lines.

There is also a tendency to enumerate or juxtapose words belonging to a 'set':[13] *manāya*, *bayn* and *hayn* (1) are closely related in meaning; so are *dāʾiman* and *ʾabadan* (4a). This manner of collocation is characteristic of the poem as a whole. Abū l-ʿAtāhiya does not juxtapose the startling and unfamiliar, but exploits restricted lexical 'sets' to create mellifluence and ease. Repetition is but an extension of this form of collocation. The simplicity of the *zuhdiyyāt* partly arises from this technique.

In Maʿarrī's style, repetition of words in individual poems is rare. When it occurs, it does not bring about flowing continuity, but rather a phonological or semantic counterpoint. The repetition of the root *bwh*, in the first line of the poem cited on page 97, is a function of the terse command in the first hemistich and an expression of condensation for the sake of which musical

appeal is sacrificed. The sound sequence *ḥahu-ḥa-ḥū* lacks the melodious fluency of Abū l-'Atāhiya's verse. If, furthermore, *mubīḥ* has more than one meaning, this puts the repetition into a special category: variation.

The difference between repetition and variation resides in the fact that the former creates harmonious agreement (of sound and meaning) between the contexts of the repetitions, while the latter aims at altering a given context to create a new entity which will contrast with its prototype (and sometimes modify it beyond recognition, see Schoenberg, 1975, pp. 102ff). *Abāḥahu/mubī ḥu* is an example. The same applies to all the instances of *radd al-'ajz 'alā l-ṣadr* in text VI: it is a matter of contrast and counterpoint, not transparency and harmony.

That a style based on repetition must differ fundamentally from one based on variation stands to reason. The difference can be illustrated with respect to Ma'arri and Abū l-'Atāhiya by turning to two passages of texts V and VI. Section B of text VI is singled out from the remainder of the poem by the frequency of the phoneme L. Its frequency is 4.2 as opposed to 2.3, 2.8 and 3.7 in A, C, and D.[14] Related is the frequency of the preposition *li* ('for'), five of the eight occurrences of which are in section B. Other particles (*bi, mā, min, and fī*) also appear in clusters in section B. Altogether, one can count nineteen occurrences as opposed to ten, ten, and seven, in A, C, and D (see chart, p. 178). These particles provide the formal substance of variation. Mostly they occupy different metrical positions, occur in different and contrasting contexts, and their order of appearance changes throughout. Their repetition does not create rhythmic uniformity but ceaseless contrast. The process is manifest on several levels, phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic:

(a) Phonologically, the passage is marked by a drastic change from a highly ornate sound structure to subtle internal assonance and atomistic alliteration (see above, pp. 148ff); as well as an equally drastic development from accumulations of the letters *khā'* and *qāf* to the nimble sequence of line 15. The phonological theme L remains similarly frequent throughout.

(b) Syntactic and morphological variations are largely determined by the particles. One important effect is the great irregularity of the verbal sequence: positive and negative alternate throughout both in formation (*lā-mā-mā zāla-laysa-lam*) and succession. Morphological difference and congruence both have an equally contrasting effect.

(c) The semantic level is characterized by the juxtaposition of images derived from entirely different spheres. They are connected by abstract and logical factors. Thus the final image of the deserted square (*ṭawār*, 15) is substantially on the same level as the showground (11) and the hills of Shāba (12), despite the absence of *any* collocational link. The lowing of the animals (12), and hoariness (13), equally unconnected, are nevertheless linked by inversion: one tries to keep death at bay, the other augurs it. The same applies to all variations on the

Distribution of particles *min, bi, li, mā* and *fī* in text VI

	min	bi	li	mā	fī	
1	**					
2		*	*			
3				*	*	
4	*					
5						
6					*	
7		*				
8			*			A:10
9			*		*	
10			*		*	
11		*			*	
12				*	*	
13	*	*	*	*		
14	*	*	*	**		
15		*	**			B:19
16	**					
17	*					
18			*		*	
19		*		*	*	
20		*				
21					*	C:10
22	*	*				
23				*	*	
24					*	
25						
26		*			*	D:7

concepts of movement and stillness. Thus each line moulds the formal and conceptual substance of the passage to create a distinct pattern broken by the subsequent line, where the same ingredients are combined to a different end.

The conceptual substance of variation is an aspect of the logical continuity within the section which has been described as presentation, contemplation and conclusion. In section B the three stages are aligned by the contrast of movement and stillness:

B1 shows camels (and humans) in *movement* through life (*ghawādin – sawārin – yurqilna*, 9–10)

B2 shows horses and wild animals exposed and defenceless in *stillness* (*bil-mishwāri – fī haḍbi Shābata*, 11–12)

B3 resumes the notions and combines them with the theme of death: *bi-ntiqāli jiwāri*, (13), 'change of neighbourhood' alludes to the *removal* to the tomb, whereas *bi-mā yabdū mina l-nuwwāri* (14) evokes the contrary movement: the appearance of life (flowers)
In the concluding line (15) *stillness* (*sakana*) and *movement* (*ghadā*) are combined, together with appearance (*yanzil*) and disappearance (*ka'anna ... lam yanzil*)

The only root repeated in the section is *ghdw*. It opens and seals the development: at the beginning, the caravan of life is seen travelling: *ghawādin;* the end reveals the destination: to the tomb: *ghadā lil-qabr*.

The unity of section B is thus determined by highly abstract factors: the frequency of a phoneme, the repetition of particles, and the concepts of movement and stillness in the gradual unravelling, through logical stages, of the theme of mortality. The abstract nature of these factors of cohesion allows for variations of such contrast that they create arhythmic jolts in the constant shift of patterns.

Classical and mannerist mimesis (3)

Section B of Abū l-'Atāhiya's *zuhdiyya* counters the uniformity of section D by variety (see above pp. 88ff). Yet variety and variation are not the same. The unity of the passage does not reside in underlying abstract notions which are varied throughout or in an implicit logical development, but in a single concrete and transparent theme: the death of the King. Variety of diction is merely illustrative amplification and, as such, but an aspect of repetition in Abū l-'Atāhiya's style: it acts to make a basic idea easily graspable and give it plasticity and rhetorical impact. In his poem, variation only governs the interrelation between sections, and there, too, does not create disjunctive contrast, but a rhythmic and consistent development of the basic theme aided by the transitional function of the key couplets.

Transparency and ease in this poem and denseness and intricacy in Ma'arrī's work are evident in their contrasting structures. In one case all the linguistic levels go to establish a symmetrical harmony of parts, while in the other, a maze of contrasting patterns creates multiple subdivisions in which single lines relate like the entire sections of the earlier poem. Structural homogeneity in Abū l-'Atāhiya's poem creates the classical harmony between signifier and signified – the principle expressed as 'appropriateness of diction'. There is no duality between the abstract and the concrete, between language as a system and language as a reflection of reality.

Conclusion

Applying the notions of classicism and mannerism as guiding principles in a study of the Arabic literary tradition provokes a hypothesis as to their significance. Rather than seeing the terms differentiated by types of rhetorical devices, as suggested by Curtius, mannerism and classicism are here defined as attitudes to language. The difference between them resides in the creation of concord or discord between signifier and signified. It is most manifest with respect to three aspects of language: mimetic adequacy, epistemological function, and structural limits. Concord between signifier and signified reflects faith in the mimetic adequacy of language. The mannerist discord, on the other hand, expresses despair over its inadequacy as much as delight in its potential as a creator of meanings and patterns; both are rooted in the perception that, in the words of Heidegger, 'die Sprache spricht, nicht der Mensch' (1957, p. 161). Consequently, the epistemological function of language is oriented in opposing directions in mannerism and classicism. The latter, in maintaining concord between signifier and signified, fashions the picture of a sensible and coherent extralinguistic reality. Discord between signifier and signified, achieved by acting out the formal properties of the signifier in emphatic but simulated service of the signified, expresses search for and exploration of a purely intralinguistic reality. This I have called semiological mimesis.

The differing role of the structural limits of language in classicism and mannerism is the consequence. In the classical style, the establishment and exploration of structural limits are subordinate to necessity and probability as functions of concord between signifier and signified. In the mannerist style, structural limits are the very instruments of semiological mimesis, providing the constraints which delimit the possible within the combinatory scope of language. These constraints act like prisms, revealing in language a self-contained and boundless world of patterns in relation. Two types of pattern mark the extremities of the spectrum: the morphological and phonological potential of the 'system' of language and the metaphorical potential of the 'system' of literature. Ma'arrī's *rā'iyya* (text VI) exhibits the former, while the latter is explored in the panegyric of Mihyār (text III).

Arabic text

I

قال البحتري يمدح [أبا سعيد] محمد بن يوسف الثغري . قال أبو الغوث : أخبرني أبي أنه قالها في
ليلة ، وأنشدها أبا تمام ، فقال له ؛ أحسبك تدري ما يخرج من رأسك ! متعجباً منه أن يقول أن مثلها :

١ أَبـكَـيْـتُ إِلَّا دِمْـنَـةً ورُبـُوعَـا فِـيـمَ ٱبْـتِـدارُكُـمُ ٱلـمَـلَامَ وُلُوعَـا

٢ وَدَعَـوْا فـا وَجَـدُوا الشَّجِـيَّ سَـمِيعَا عَـذَلُـوا فـا عَدَلُـوا بِـقَـلْبـي عَـنْ هَـوًى

٣ عنْـهَا ٱلْحَوَادِثُ شَمْلَـها ٱلمَجْمُـوعَا يـا دَارُ غَـيَّـرهـا الـزَّمَـانُ ، وفَـرَّقَـتْ

٤ لَـتَـرَكْتُـهُ في عَرَصَتَيْكِ خَـلِيعَـا لَـوكانَ لي دَمْـعٌ يُحَـسِّـنُ لَـوْعَـتِـي

٥ في مُـقْـلَـتـيَّ جَـوَى ٱلـفِـرَاقِ دُمُـوعَـا لا تَـخْـطِـبـي دَمْـعِي إِلَـي فَـلَـمْ يَدَعْ

٦ ذِكْـرُ ٱلـمَـطَـامِـع عِـفَّـةٌ وقُـنـوعَـا وَمَـرِيضَـةِ ٱلـلَّـحَـظاتِ يُـمْـرِضُ قَلْبَـها

٧ عَـمْـدًا وتَـنْـزِكُ ٱلـجَـلِـيـدَ جَـزُوعَـا تَـبْـدُو فَـيُـبْـدِي ذُو الصَّـبَـابةِ سِـرَّهُ

٨ لَـمَّـا رأتْ هَـوْلَ ٱلـفِـرَاقِ فِـظِيعَـا كـادَتْ تُـنَـهْـنِـهُ عَـبْـرَتِـي عَزَمَـاتُهـا

٩ تُـبْـدِي لهـا نُـوَبُ الـزَّمَـانِ خُـضُـوعَـا لِأبِـي سَـعِيـدِ الصَّـامِـتِـيِّ عَزَائِمُ

١٠ جُـمِعَـتْ أَدَاةُ ٱلـمَجْـدِ فيهِ جَمِيعَـا مَـلِكٌ لِـمَـا مَـلَـكَـتْ يَـدَاهُ مُـفَـرِّقٌ

١١ وأَحَـانَ مِـنْ نَـجْـمِ السَّـمَـاحِ طُلُـوعَـا بَـذَّ ٱلـمُـلُـوكَ تَـكَـرُّمـاً وتَـفَـضُّـلاً

١٢ حَـتْـفـا يُـبِـيـدُ ، وللعُـفَـاةِ رَبِيعَـا مُـتَـيَـقِّـظُ الأَحْـشـاءِ أَصْبَـحَ للعِـدَى

١٣ في ٱلـمَـكْرُمَاتِ ، وللسَّـمَـاحِ مُطِيعَـا سَـمْـحَ ٱلخَـلائِـقِ. للعَوَاذِلِ عاصِياً

١٤ بِـنَـدَى بِـدَيْـهِ ، وللـنِّـلاَدِ مُـضِيعَـا ضَـخْـمَ الـدَّسَـائِـع . للـمَـكَارِم حافِظًا

١٥ يُـخْـلَـقْ هَـيُـوبًـا للخُطُـوبِ هَـلُـوعَـا مُـتَـتَـابِـعَ السَّـرَّاءِ والضَّـرَّاءِ ، لَـمْ

١٦ وَبَـنَـانُ رَاحَـتِـهِ نَـدًى ونَجِيعَـا تَـلْـقَـاهُ يَـقْـطُـرُ سَـيْـفُـهُ وسِنَانُهُ

١٧ لِـيُـجِيبَ صَوْتَ الصَّارِخِ ٱلـمَـسْمُـوعَا مُـتَـنَـصِّـتًا لِـصَدَى الصَّريخِ إلى ٱلوَغَى

٣	لا زِلتِ في حُلَلٍ لِلغَيْثِ ضافِيَةٍ	يُنِيرُها اَلْبَرْقُ أَحْياناً ويُسْدِيها
٤	تَرُوحُ بِالْوَابِلِ الدَّانِي رَوائِحُها	عَلى رُبُوعِكَ، أَوْ تَغدُو غَوَادِيها
٥	إِنَّ اَلْبَخِيلَةَ لم تُنعِمْ لِسَائِلِها	يَوْمَ اَلْكَثِيبِ، ولم تَسمَعْ لِدَاعِيها
٦	مَرَّتْ تَأَوُّدُ في قُرْبٍ وفي بُعْدٍ	فالْهَجرُ يُبعِدُها والدَّارُ تُدنِيها
٧	لَوْلا سَوادُ عِذَارٍ لَيْسَ يُسلِمُنِي	إِلى النُّهىٰ لَعَدَتْ نَفْسِي عَوَادِيها
٨	قَدْ أَطْرُقُ اَلْغَادَةَ اَلْحَسْنَاءَ مُقْتَدِرًا	عَلى الشَّبابِ فَتُنصِبِينِي وأُصْبِيها
٩	في لَيْلَةٍ لا يَنالُ الصُّبْحُ آخِرَها	عَلِفْتُ بِالرَّاحِ أُسقاها وأُسْقِيها
١٠	عاطَيْتُها غَضَّةَ الأَطْرافِ مُرْهَفَةً	شَرِبْتُ مِن يَدِها خَمْرًا ومِن فِيها
١١	يامَنْ رأى البِرْكَةَ اَلْحَسْنَاء رُؤْيَتَها	واآلِسَاتِ إِذا لاحَتْ مَغانِيهَا
١٢	بِحَسْبِها أَنَّها مِن فَضْلِ رُتْبَتِها	تُعَدُّ واحِدَةً، واَلْبَحْرُ ثانِيهَا
١٣	ما بالُ دِجْلَةَ كاَلْغَيْرَىٰ تُنافِسُها	في اَلْحُسْنِ طَوْراً، وأَطْوارًا تُباهِيهَا
١٤	أَمَّا رَأَتْ كاَلِئَ اَلإِسْلاَمِ يَكلَأُهَا	مِنْ أَنْ تُعَابَ، وبانِي اَلمَجدِ يَبْنِيهَا
١٥	كَأَنَّ جِنَّ «سُلَيْمانَ» اَلَّذِين وَلَوا	إِبداعَها فَأَدَقُّوا في مَعانِيهَا
١٦	فَلَوْ تَمُرُّ بِها «بِلْقِيسُ» عَنْ عُرُضٍ	قالَتْ هِيَ الصَّرْحُ تَمْثِيلاً وتَشْبِيهَا
١٧	تَنْحَطُّ فِيها وُفُودُ اَلْمَاءِ مُعجَلَةً	كاَلْخَيْلِ خارِجَةً مِن حَبْلِ مُجرِيهَا
١٨	كأَنَّمَا الفِضَّةُ اَلْبَيْضَاءُ سائِلَةً	مِنَ السَّبائِكِ تَجرِي في مَجارِيهَا
١٩	إِذا عَلَتْها الصَّبَا أَبْدَتْ لَها حُبُكاً	مِثلَ اَلْجَوَاشِنِ مَصْقُولاً حَواشِيهَا
٢٠	فَرَوْنَقُ الشَّمْسِ أَحْياناً يُضَاحِكُها	ورَيِّقُ اَلْغَيْثِ أَحْياناً يُبَاكِيها
٢١	إِذا النُّجُومُ تَراءَتْ في جَوانِبِها	لَيْلاً حَسِبْتَ سَماءَ رُكِّبَتْ فِيهَا
٢٢	لا يَبْلُغُ السَّمَكُ اَلْمَحْصُورُ غايَتَها	لِبُعْدِ ما بين قاصِيهَا ودَانِيهَا
٢٣	يَعُمْنَ فِيها بِأَوْسَاطٍ مُجَنَّحَةٍ	كالطَّيْرِ تَنْفُضُ في جَوٍّ خَوَافِيهَا
٢٤	لَهُنَّ صَخْنٌ رَحِيبٌ في أَسافِلِها	إِذا اَنْحَطَطنَ، وبَهْوٌ في أَعالِيهَا
٢٥	صُورٌ إِلىٰ صُورةِ الدُّلْفِينِ يُوتِسُها	مِنهُ آنِزَواءٌ بِعَيْنَيْهِ يُوَازِيها
٢٦	تَغْنَى بَسَاتِينُها القُصْوَى بِرُؤْيَتِها	عَنِ السَّحَائِبِ مُنْحَلاً عَزَالِيها
٢٧	كَأَنَّها حِينَ لَجَّتْ في تَدَفُّقِها	يَدُ اَلْخَلِيفةِ لَمَّا سالَ وَادِيهَا
٢٨	وزادَها زِينَةً مِن بَعْدِ زِينَتِها	أَنَّ اسْمَهُ حِينَ يُدْعَى مِن أَسَامِيهَا
٢٩	مَخْفُوفَةٌ بِرِياضٍ لا تَزَالُ تَرَى	رِيشَ الطَّوَاوِيسِ تَحْكِيهِ ويَحْكِيهَا
٣٠	وَدَكَّتَيْنِ كَمِثْلِ الشِّعْرَيَيْنِ غَدَتْ	إِحْداهُمَا بِإِزَاءِ الأُخْرَى تُسَامِيهَا

٣

١٨	وَلَقَدْ يَبِيتُ ٱللَّيلَ مَا يَلْفَى لهُ	إِلَّا ٱلْحُسَامَ ٱلْمَشْرِفِيَّ ضَجِيعَا
١٩	مُتَيَقِّظًا كَٱلْأُفْعُوانِ نَفَى ٱلكَرَى	عن نَاظِرَيْهِ فَمَا يَذُوقُ هُجُوعَا
٢٠	لِلَّهِ دَرُّكَ يَابْنَ يُوسُفَ مِنْ فَتًى	أَعْطَى ٱلْمَكَارِمَ حَقَّها ٱلْمَمْنُوعَا!
٢١	نَبَّهْتَ من «نَبْهَانَ» مَجْدًا لم يَزَلْ	قِدْمًا لِمَحْمُودِ ٱلْفَعَالِ رَفِيعَا
٢٢	وَلَئِنْ بَنَيْتَ ذُرَى ٱلْعُلَا لَهُمُ لَمَا آنْ	فَكُّوا أُصُولًا لِلعُلَا وفُرُوعَا
٢٣	قَوْمٌ إذا لَبِسُوا ٱلدُّرُوعَ لِمَوْقِفٍ	لَبِسَتْهُمُ ٱلأَعْراضُ فيهِ دُرُوعَا
٢٤	لا يُطْمِعُونَ خُيُولَهُمْ في جَوْلَةٍ	إنْ نِيلَ كَبْشُهُمُ فَخَرَّ صَرِيعَا
٢٥	لِلَّهِ دَرُّكَ يَوْمَ «بَابَكَ» فَارِسًا	بَطَلًا لأَبْوَابِ ٱلْحُتُوفِ قَرُوعَا!
٢٦	لَمَّا أَتَاكَ يَقُودُ جَيْشًا أَرْعَنًا	يُمْنَى عَلَيْهِ كَثَافَةً وَجُمُوعَا
٢٧	وَزَّعْتَهُمْ بَيْنَ ٱلأَسِنَّةِ والظُّبَا	حتى أَبَدَّتْ جُمُوعَهُمْ تَوْزِيعَا
٢٨	في مَعْرَكٍ ضَنْكٍ تَخَالُ بِهِ ٱلقَنَا	بَيْنَ ٱلضُّلُوعِ إذا ٱنْحَنَيْنَ ضُلُوعَا
٢٩	ما إِنْ تَنِي فيهِ ٱلأَسِنَّةُ والظُّبَا	لِطُلَى ٱلفَوَارِسِ سُجَّدًا ورُكُوعَا
٣٠	حَلَّيْتَهُ بِشُعَاعِ رَأْسٍ رَدَّهُ	لُبْسُ ٱلنَّرَائِكِ للهِجَابِ صَلِيعَا
٣١	لَمَّا رَأَوْكَ تَبَدَّدَتْ آرَاؤُهُمْ	وَغَدا مُصَارِعُ حَدِّهِمْ مَصْرُوعَا
٣٢	فَدَعَوْتَهُمْ بِظُبَا الصَّفِيحِ إلى الرَّدَى	فَأَتَوْكَ طُرًّا مُهْطِعِينَ خُشُوعَا
٣٣	حتى ظَفِرْتَ بِبَذِّهِمْ فَتَرَكْتَهُ	لِلذُّلِّ جَانِبُهُ وكانَ مَنِيعَا
٣٤	وَبِذِى ٱلْكُلَاعِ قَدَحْت من زَنْدِ ٱلْقَنَا	حَرْبًا بِإِتْلَافِ ٱلكُمَاةِ وَلُوعَا
٣٥	لَمَّا رَمَيْتَ الرُّومَ فيه بِضُمَّرٍ	تُغْطِي ٱلفَوَارِسَ جَرْيَها ٱلْمَرْفُوعَا
٣٦	كُنْتَ السَّبِيلَ إلىْ الرَّدَى إذ كُنْتَ في	قَبْضِ النُّفُوسِ إلىْ ٱلحِمَامِ شَفِيعَا
٣٧	في وَقْعَةٍ أَبْقَى عَلَيْهِمْ غِبُّها	رَخَمَ ٱلقَبَافِي والنُّسُورَ وُقُوعَا
٣٨	هذا، وأَيُّ مُعَانِدٍ نَاهَضْتَهُ	لَمْ تُجْرِ من أَوْدَاجِهِ يَنْبُوعَا!؟

II

وقال البحتري يمدح المتوكل الخليفة :

١	مِيلُوا إلىْ الدَّارِ مِنْ لَيْلَىٰ نُحَيِّيْهَا	نَعَمْ، ونَسْأَلُها عن بَعْضِ أهلِيها!
٢	يا دِمْنَةً جاذَبَتْهَا الرِّيحُ بَهْجَةً	تَبِيتُ تَنْشُرُهَا طَوْرًا وتَطْوِيهَا

٢

١٢	وحاجـة لـولا بُقَيّـاتُـها	في النـفـس لم أطـرَبْ ولم أرغَبِ
١٣	يا ماطلي بالـدَّيـن ما ساءني	إليـك تـرديـدُ المـواعيـدِ بي
١٤	إن كنتَ تقضِي ثـمّ لا نلتقِي	فـدُم على المطـلِ وعِد وأكـذِبِ
١٥	سـال دمـي يـوَم الحَمـى مـن يـدٍ	لـولا دم العـشّـاقِ لم تُخضَبِ
١٦	نـبـلُ رمـاةِ الحيّ مَطـرورةً	أرفَـقُ بي مـن أعيـنِ الربـربِ
١٧	يـاعـاذلي قـد جـاءك الجـزمُ بي	أقـادُ فـاركَبـنيَ أو فـاجنُـبِ
١٨	قـد سـدَ شَيـبي ثُغَـري في الهوى	فكيف قَـصّـي أثَـرَ المَـهرَبِ
١٩	أفـلـحَ إلا قـانـصٌ غـادةً	مـدّ بحبـل الشـعَـر الأشيَـبِ
٢٠	مـا لبنـاتِ العَـشْـرِ والعَشْـرِ في	جِدّ بني الخمسين من مَلعـبِ
٢١	شِـيَـاتُ أفـراسِ الهوى كـلُّـها	تُحمَـدُ فيهـنّ سـوى الأشهـبِ
٢٢	أنـا تَـرَيـني ضـاويًـا عـاريـاً	مـن وَرَقِ المِلتحِـفِ المُخصِبِ؟
٢٣	مُحتجِـزا أنـدبُ مِن أمسـىَ الـ	ماضي أخًـا مـاتَ ولم يُعـقِـبِ
٢٤	فـلم يُنَـلِّـمْ ظُـبَـنَـي عـاملي	مـا حَطَـمَ السـاحِبُ من أكعبي
٢٥	يـوعـدُني الـدهـرُ بغَـدارتِـه	قعقِـعْ لغير الليـثِ أو هَبهِـبِ
٢٦	قـد غَـمـزت كـفُّـك في مَـروني	فتحتَ أيَّ الغَمـزِ لم أصلُـبِ
٢٧	أمُـفـزِعي أنـتَ بـفَـوتِ الغِنـى؟	تـلـك يـدُ الطـالي على الأجرَبِ
٢٨	دع مـاء وجهـي مـالئـاً حوضَـه	وكُـلّ سمينـا نَـشِي وأشـرَبِ
٢٩	إن أغـلَـبِ الحـظَّ فلي عَـزفـةٌ	بالـنفس لم تُـقمَـزْ ولم تُـغلَـبِ
٣٠	ذمَّ الأحـاظِـي طـالبٌ لم يَـجِـدْ	فكيـف وجـداني ولم أطلُـبِ؟
٣١	آوِ على المـالِ ومـا يُـجتَـنَـى	مـنـهُ لـو أنَّ المـالَ لم يُـوهَبِ
٣٢	راخٍ على الـدنـيـا إذا عـاسرَتْ	وإن أتَـتْ مُسمِـحةً فاجـذِبِ
٣٣	ولا تَـعَـسَّـفْ كَـدَّ أخلافِـهـا	فـرُبّـما درَّت ولم تُـعصَـبِ
٣٤	هـذا أوانُ أستـقـبلَـتْ رشـدَها	بـوقفـةِ المعـتذِرِ المعـتِـبِ
٣٥	وآرجَـعَـتْ مـا ضلَّ مـن حِلمِهـا	مـن بـين سَـرْح الـذائـدِ المعـزِّبِ
٣٦	وربَّـما طـالَـعَ وجـهُ المنَـى	مـن شـرف البـأس ولم يُـحسَـبِ
٣٧	قـل لـذوي الحـاجـاتِ مَطرودةً	وآبـنِ السبيل الضيِّـقِ المَذهَبِ :
٣٨	وقـاعـد يـأكـلُ مِـن لحمِـه	تنزُّهُا عـن خَـبَثِ المَكسَبِ :

٥

٣١ إِذَا مَسَاعِيَ أَميرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بَدَتْ   لِلْوَاصِفِينَ فَلَا وَصْفٌ يُدَانِيهَا

٣٢ إِنَّ الْخِلَافَةَ لَمَّا اهْتَزَّ مِنْبَرُهَا   بِجَعْفَرٍ أُعْطِيَتْ أَقْصَى أَمَانِيهَا

٣٣ أَبْدَى التَّوَاضُعَ لَمَّا نَالَهَا رِعَةً   مِنْهُ، ونَالَتْهُ فَاخْتَالَتْ بِهِ تِيهَا

٣٤ إِذَا تَجَلَّتْ لَهُ الدُّنْيَا بِحِلْيَتِهَا   رَأَتْ مَحَاسِنَهَا الدُّنْيَا مَسَاوِيهَا

٣٥ يَابْنَ الْأَبَاطِحِ مِنْ أَرْضٍ أَبَاطِحُهَا   في ذُرْوَةِ الْمَجْدِ أَعْلَىٰ مِنْ رَوَابِيهَا

٣٦ مَا ضَبَّعَ اللَّهُ في بَدْوٍ ولا حَضَرٍ   رَعِيَّةً أَنْتَ بِالْإِحْسَانِ رَاعِيهَا

٣٧ وَأُمَّةً كَانَ قُبْحُ الجَوْرِ يُسْخِطُهَا   دَهْرًا، فَأَصْبَحَ حُسْنُ الْعَدْلِ يُرْضِيهَا

٣٨ بَثَثْتَ فيها عَطَاءً زَادَ في عَدَدٍ الَّ   عَلْيَا، ونَوَّهْتَ بِاسْمِ الْجُودِ تُنوِيهَا

٣٩ مَا زِلْتَ بَحْرًا لِعَافِينَا، فَكَيْفَ وَقَدْ   قَابَلْتَنَا ولَكَ الدُّنْيَا بِما فِيهَا

٤٠ أَعْطَاكَهَا اللَّهُ عَنْ حَقٍّ رَآكَ لَهُ   أَهْلًا، وأَنْتَ بِحَقِّ اللَّهِ تُعْطِيهَا

III

وقال مهيار الديلمي يمدح الوزير أبا القاسم الحسين بن عليّ المغربيّ رحمه الله عند تقلّده الوزارة ، ويهنّئه بالنيروز، وأنشدها في داره بباب الشعير في سنة أربع عشرة وأربعمائة :

١ هَلْ عِنْدَ عَيْنَيْكَ على «غُرّبٍ»   غَرامَةٌ بِالْعارِضِ الْخُلَّبِ؟

٢ نَعَمْ! دموعٌ يكتسِي تُرْبَهُ   منها قميصَ البلدِ الْمُعْشِبِ

٣ سارِبَةٌ، تَرْكَبُ أَرْدافَها   مُعَلَّقاتٌ بَعْدُ لم تَسْرُبِ

٤ تَرْضَى بِهِنَّ الدارَ سُقْياً وإن   قال لها نَوْءُ السِّماكِ : أَغْضِبِي

٥ عَلامَةً آتَنْسَى مَرائرَ العَهدِ لم أَنتَكِثْ   ولم اقْضِبِ

٦ يا سائقَ الأظعانِ لا صاغِرا   عُجْ عَوجَةً ثمّ اسْتَقِمْ وأَذْهَبِ

٧ دعِ المَطايا تلتفِتْ، إنها   تَلوبُ مِنْ جفني على مشربِ

٨ لا والذي إن شاء لم أَعتَذِرْ   في حبّهِ مِنْ حيثُ لم أُذنِبِ

٩ مَا حَدَّرتْ ريحُ الصَّبا بعدَهُ   لِثامَها عن نَفَسٍ طيّبِ

١٠ ولا حَلا البَذلُ ولا المنعُ لي   مَذهُوَ لم يَرضَ ولم يَغضَبِ

١١ كم لي على «البيضاءِ» مِنْ دعوةٍ   لولا اصطخابُ الحَلْيِ لم تُحجَبِ

٤

٦٦	بَذرعُ أدراجَ الـفـيـافـي بـها	كـلُّ غـريـبِ الهـمِّ والمـطـلـبِ
٦٧	يـرمـي بـها لـيـلُ جُـمـادَى إلى	يـوم مـن الجـوزاءِ مـعـصـوصـبِ
٦٨	في عَـرضِ غـبـراءَ رِبـاجـيّـةٍ	عـجـمـاءَ لم تُـسـمَـر ولم تُـنـسَـبِ
٦٩	يُـشـكـلُ مـشـهـورُ الـركـايـا بـها	على مصـانيف الـقَـطـا الـلُّـغّـبِ
٧٠	حـتى أُنـبـخـتْ وصـدوعُ الـسُّـرَى	بـالـنـوم في الأجـفـانِ لم تُـشـعَـبِ
٧١	وشَـمـلَـةُ الـظـلـمـاءِ مـكـفـورةٌ	تحـت رداءِ الـقَـمَـرِ الـمُـذْهَـبِ
٧٢	إلى ظـلـيـلِ الـبـيـتِ رَطِـبِ الـثَّرى	عـالي الأثـافي حـافـلِ المِـخْـلـبِ
٧٣	مخـنضِب الجَفـنة ضخم القِـرى	إذا يـدُ الجـازِرِ لم تُـخْـضَـبِ
٧٤	تُـرفَـع بـالـمـنـدَلِ نـيـرانُـهُ	إذا إمـاءُ الحَـيِّ لم تـحـطِـبِ
٧٥	لـه مجـاوبـفٌ عـمـاقٌ إذا	مـا الـقـدرُ لم تُـوسـع ولم تُـرحَـب
٧٦	كـلَّ رَبـوضٍ عُـنـقُـهـا بـارزٌ	مـثـلَ سَـنـام الجَـمـلِ الأنـصَـبِ
٧٧	تـعجـلـها زحـمـةُ ضِـيـفـانِـه	أن تـنـتَّـى حطـبَ الـمُـلـهِـب
٧٨	أبـلـج في كـلِّ دُجـىَ شُـبـهـةٍ	لـو سـار فـيـها النجـمُ لم تُـثـقَـب
٧٩	مُـوَقَّـرُ الـنـادي ضـحـوك النـدَى	بـلـقـاك بـالـمُـرغِـب والـمُـرهِـبِ
٨٠	تَـلـحـظُـه الأبـصـارُ شَـزرا وإن	أُكـثَـر مـن أهـلٍ ومـن مَـرحَـبِ
٨١	مُـرَّ، وإن أجْـدَنَـكَ أخـلاقُـهُ	ثمـائـلَ الـصـهـبـاءِ لم تَـقـطِـبِ
٨٢	ينحـطُّ عنه النـاسُ من فضلهم	مـنـحـدَرَ الـرُّدفِ عـن المنـكِـبِ
٨٣	أتـعَـبَ تـغـلـيـسُـه في الـعـلا،	مَـن طَـلَـب الـراحـةَ فـلـيـتـعَـب
٨٤	مـن مـعـشـرٍ لم يُـهـتَـبَـل عـزُّهـم	بـغـلَـطِ الحـظِّ ولم يُـجـلَـبِ
٨٥	ولا عـلا أبـنٌّ مـنـهُـم طـالـعـا	مـــــن شَـــرَفٍ إلا وراءَ الأبِ
٨٦	تـسـلَّـقـوا المجـدَ وداسـوا الـعـلا	وطُـرقُـهـا بهـمـاءُ لم تُـلـحَـبِ
٨٧	ووافـقـوا الأيّـام فـاسـتـنـزَلـوا	أبـطالَـها في مِـقـنَـبٍ مِـقـنَـبِ
٨٨	قـوم إذا أخـلـف عـام الحِـيـا	لم تخـتـزلهم حيـرة المسـغـبِ
٨٩	أو بَـسـطَ الـلَّـهُ ربـيـعـا لهم	لم يَـبـطروا في سَـعـةِ المَـخْـصَـبِ
٩٠	سَـمَـوْا وأصـبـحَـتْ سمـاءً لهم	بـطـلـعُ مـنـها شَـرَف المَـنـصَـبِ
٩١	زدتَ ومـا انحـطُّـوا ولـكـنَّـها	إضـاءَةُ الـبـدرِ على الـكـوكـبِ
٩٢	خُـلِـقـتَ في الـدنـيـا بـلا مُـشـبِـهٍ	أغـربَ مـن عـنـقـائـها الـمُـغْـرِبِ

للمجدِ مـن يَلـقَ بـها يَغـلِبِ	٣٩	قـد رُفِعـت في «بـابـل» رايـةٌ
ياخيلَ مُحيي الحَسناتِ آرِكَي	٤٠	يَصيحُ داعي النصرِ مِنْ تحتِها:
بـآيـةٍ مـن يَـرَهـا يـعْـجَـبِ	٤١	جـاء بهـا اللـهُ عـلى فَتـرةٍ
بـواسـعِ الـظَّـنِ ولم تُـرقَـب	٤٢	هاجمةِ الإقبالِ لم تُنْتَظَر
أن تطلُعَ الشمسُ من المَغربِ	٤٣	لم تأْلَـفِ الأبـصارُ مـن قبلِها
يُـخَـض لـه الهـولُ ولم يُـركَـب	٤٤	ردوا فـقـد زارَكـم الـبـحـرُ لم
ثمـين صافٍ مائـه الأعـذبِ	٤٥	يـشِـفُّ للأعـين عـن دُرِّه الـ
وروّضوا بـعدَ الثَّرى المُجدبِ	٤٦	فارتبعوا بـعدَ مِطالِ الحَيا
وقـام «كَعْبٌ» سيّد الأكْعُبِ	٤٧	قـد عـادَ في «طَيْ» نـدَى «حاتم»
يَـهـشِـمُ في عامِهم المُلزِبِ	٤٨	وعـاش في «غـالـبَ» عَـمرُو العُلا
من ذي الكُلاعِ الدهرُ أو حَوشبِ	٤٩	وأرْتَجعـتْ «قَحطانُ» ما بَـزّها
«زُرارةٌ» مـن حـولِـه مُـحـتـبـي	٥٠	ورَدَّ بـيــتٌ في بـنـي «دارِمٍ»
وفـاعـلٍ أو قـائـلٍ مُـعـرِبِ	٥١	كـلُّ كـريـمٍ أو فـتـى كـامـلٍ
أخباره بـالـمَـنـظَـرِ الأقـربِ	٥٢	فـاليومَ شَكُّ السـمعِ قـد زال في
كـلُّ أمـونٍ وعَـرةِ المجَـذبِ	٥٣	إلى الـوزيـرِ اعـتَـرقَـتْ نـيَّـهـا
أنفٍ لها غضبانَ مستصعَب	٥٤	تُعطِي الخَشاشاتِ لَبانا على
بالسَّوط، خَرقاء ولم تَجنَب	٥٥	مجنونةَ الحِلم وما سُفِّهت
لعِزّةِ الـنـفـسِ ولم تُـكـتَـب	٥٦	يـيأَسُ فحلُ الشَّول من ضربِها
في طُرق العليـاءِ لم تُنقِب	٥٧	لو وَطِئتْ شَوكَ القنا نابتًا
دام متى يُـمـلِ السُّرى يَكنُب	٥٨	يَـخـطُّ في الأرض لها مَـنـسِـمٌ
أحمـش مسـنونِ القَرَا احقب	٥٩	كـأنَّ حـاذَيْـهـا عـلى قـارِدٍ
أعجفُ لم يُحمِض ولم يُرطِب	٦٠	طـامَـنَ في الرمـلِ لـه قـانـصٌ
بـأنـها عـامـينِ لم تُـنكَـب	٦١	ذو وَفـضةٍ يَـشـهدُ إخلاقُـها
مِـن ودِج أو ورِكٍ يُـعـطَـب	٦٢	مـهـما تَـخَـلَّـلْـهُ بُـنـيَّـاتُـها
ذُعـرًا ولم يَـرأَم على تَـوْلَـب	٦٣	فـرَّ لم يَـعـطِـف على عـانةٍ
قـدائـمٌ مـن لاحـقِ الأكـلـبِ	٦٤	بـه خُـدوشٌ يـتـعـجَّـلـنـه
رئـةُ قـوسٍ أو شبا مِخلـبِ	٦٥	بـأيِّ حِـسٍّ ريـعَ خِـبلـت لـه

٦

١٢١   بــات مــن الإحـسـان في داركـم   — وهــو غريـبٌ — غيَر مـستغـرَب
١٢٢   لـو شــاء مـن يـنـسـب لم يَـعِـزُّهُ   لـغيركـم عيـدا ولم يـنـسِـب
١٢٣   وأسمـع لـمغـلـوب عـلى حـظِّـه   لـو أنـكَ النـاصـرُ لم يُـغـلَـب
١٢٤   مـوَحَّـدٍ لم يـشـكُ مـن دهـره   وأهـلِـه إلا إلى مُـذنِـب
١٢٥   أقصـاه عـنـد النـاس إدلاؤه   مـن فضـله بالنسب الأقرب
١٢٦   لـو قيـض إنصافُـك قِـدمـاً لـه   عَـزَّ فلم يُـقصَ ولم يُـقصَـب
١٢٧   عـنـدك مـن بـرقـيَ لـمّـاعـةٌ   سابـقـةٌ تَـشـهـدُ لـلغُـيَّـب
١٢٨   منـثـورُها ذاكَ؛ ومـنظـومُـها   هـذا، كـلا الـدَّربِـن لم يُـثـقَـب
١٢٩   مــا زلـتُ أرجـوك ومِـن آيـتـي   أنَّ رجـائـي فـيـك لم يَـكـذِب
١٣٠   لم يبـقَ لي بـعـدَك عنـبٌ عـلى   حـظٍّ ولا فـقـرُ إلى مَـطـلـب
١٣١   فاغـرسْ ونوِّه منـعـا وأصـطـنـع   تُـرضِ مضاءَ الصارم المُـقضِب
١٣٢   وغِـر عـلى رقـىَ مـن خامـل   لـمِلكِ مِـثلي غير مـستوجـب
١٣٣   كم أحمـدت قَـبـلَـك عُـنِّي يـدٌ   لكـنـهـا سامـت ولم تَـضـرِب
١٣٤   ولدنة الأعطاف لم تُـعـتَـسَـف   بالـكـلم المـرّ ولم تـتعـب
١٣٥   مـن الحلالِ العـفوِ لم تُـستَـلَـب   بـغـارةِ الـشـعـر ولم تُـنهَـب
١٣٦   دمُ الـكـرى المـهـراقِ فيهـا عـلى   سامـعـها إن هـو لم يـطـرب
١٣٧   جـاءك مـعـنـاها وألفـاظـها   في الحسن بلأسهل والأصعب
١٣٨   أفصـح مـا قيـلَ ولكـنّـها   فصاحـةٌ تُـهـدَى إلى «يَـعـرُب»

IV

وقال أبو العتاهية

١   يَـا لِلمَـنَـايَـا وَيَـا لِلبَـيْنِ وَالحَـيْنِ   كُـلُّ اجْـتِمَـاعٍ مِـنَ الدُّنيَـا إلَى بَيْنِ
٢   يُبْـلِي الـزَّمَـانُ حَـدِيثـاً بَـعْـدَ بَـهجَـتِهِ   وَالدَّهـرُ يَـقْـطَـعُ مَـا بَيـنَ القَـرِيـبَينِ
٣   لَـقَـدْ رَأيْـتَ يَـدَ الدُّنيَـا مُـفَـرِّقَـةً   لا تَـأمَـنَنَّ يَـدَ الدُّنيَـا عَلَى اثْنَيْنِ
٤   الحَمْـدُ لِلّـهِ حَـمْـدًا دَائِـمًـا أَبَـدًا   لَـقَـدْ تَـزَيَّـنَ أَهْـلُ الحِـرصِ بالشَّـيْنِ
٥   لا زَيْـنَ إلاّ لِـراضٍ عَـن تَـقَـلُّـبِـهِ   إنَّ القُـنُـوعَ لَـثَـوبُ العِـزِّ والزَّيْنِ
٦   الـدَّارُ لَـوْكُـنْتَ تَـدْرِي يَـا أَخَـا مَـرَحٍ   دَارُ أَمَـامَـكَ فِيهـا قُـرَّةُ العَـينْنِ

٩

٩٣	لا يَجلِسُ الحِلمُ. ولا يركَبُ الـ	خوفٌ ولم تجلِس ولم تَركَب
٩٤	إن جَنَحَ الأعداء للسَّلمِ أو	تلاوذوا منك إلى مَهرَب
٩٥	كتبتَ لو قِلتَ، فقال العِدا:	أعزلُ لم يَطعَنْ ولم يضرب
٩٦	أو ركبوا البغيَ إلى غارةٍ	طعنتَ، حتى قيل: لم يَكتُب
٩٧	فأنت ملءُ العين والقلب ما	تشاءُ في الدَّستِ وفي الموكبِ
٩٨	وربَّ طاوٍ غُلّةً بائتٍ	من جانب الشرّ على مَرقَبِ
٩٩	ينظرُ من أيّامه دولةً	بقلم الأقدارِ لم تُكتَب
١٠٠	راعته من كيدك تحت الدجى	دبّابةٌ أدهى من العقربِ
١٠١	فقام عنها باذلاً بُسلَةَ الـ	رأقي ولم يُرقَ ولم يُـنسَبِ
١٠٢	بك أثنى الفضلُ وأبناؤه	بعد عُموم السَّقَمِ المُنصِبِ
١٠٣	والتقم الملكُ هُدَى نهجِهِ	وكان يمشي مِشية الأنكب
١٠٤	وزارةٌ قلَّبَها شوقُها	منك إلى حُوِّلها القُلَّب
١٠٥	جاءتك لم تُوسع لها مُرغبا	ولِيَّها المَهرَ ولم تَخطُب
١٠٦	كم أجهضت قبلَك من عَدَهم	لها شهورَ الحامل المُقرِب
١٠٧	وولدت وهي كأنْ تلِد	أمٌّ إذا ما هي لم تُـنجِبِ
١٠٨	قُمتَ بمعناها وكم جالسٍ	تكفيه منها سِمةُ المَنصِب
١٠٩	وهي التي إن لم يُـقَدْ رأسُها	بمُخصَداتِ الصبر لم تُصحَب
١١٠	مَزلَقةٌ، راكبُ سِيسائها	راكبُ ظهرِ الأسَدِ الأغلب
١١١	راحتْ على عِطفِك أثوابُها	طاهرةَ المَرفَع والمسحَب
١١٢	فتحتَ في مُبهمِ تدبيرها	تنفُّسَ البُلجةِ في الغيب
١١٣	وأرتجعتْ منك رجالاتها	كلّ مطيلٍ في النَّدى مُرغب
١١٤	رُدّ بنو «يحيى» و«سهل» لها	«والطاهريّون» بنو «مُصعب»
١١٥	فأضرب عليها بيتَ ثاوٍ بها	قبلك لم يُعمَدْ ولم يُطنَب
١١٦	واستخدم الأقدارَ في ضبطها	واستثِر الإقبالَ واستصحِب
١١٧	وأمدُدْ على الدنيا وجَهلاتِها	ظِلالَ حلمٍ لك لم يَعزُب
١١٨	وأطلُع على النَّيروز ثمساً إذا	ساق الغروبُ الشمسَ لم تغرُب
١١٩	تفضُلُ ماكرَّ سِنيي عُمرِهِ	بملء كفِّ الحاسب المطنِب
١٢٠	يومٌ من الفُرسِ أنى وافِدا	فقالت العُربُ له : قرِّب

٨

٢٢ لِمَنْزِلِ وَحْدَةٍ بَيْنَ الْمَقَابِرِ أَنْتَ نَازِلُهُ

٢٣ قَصِيرِ السَّمْكِ قَدْ رُصَّتْ عَلَيْكَ بِسُوءٍ جَنَادِلُهُ

٢٤ بَعِيدٍ تَزَاوُرُ الْجِيرَانِ ضَيِّقَةٍ مَدَاخِلُهُ

٢٥ اَاَيَّتُهَا الْمَقَابِرُ فِيكِ مَنْ كُنَّا نُنَازِلُهُ

٢٦ وَمَنْ كُنَّا نُتَاجِرُهُ وَمَنْ كُنَّا نُعَامِلُهُ

٢٧ وَمَنْ كُنَّا نُعَاشِرُهُ وَمَنْ كُنَّا نُطَاوِلُهُ

٢٨ وَمَنْ كُنَّا نُشَارِبُهُ وَمَنْ كُنَّا نُوَاكِلُهُ

٢٩ وَمَنْ كُنَّا نُرَافِقُهُ وَمَنْ كُنَّا نُنَاوِلُهُ

٣٠ وَمَنْ كُنَّا نُكَارِمُهُ وَمَنْ كُنَّا نُجَامِلُهُ

٣١ وَمَنْ كُنَّا لَهُ الْفَا قَلِيلاً مَا نُزَايِلُهُ

٣٢ وَمَنْ كُنَّا لَهُ بِالْأَمْسِ أَحْيَانًا نُوَاصِلُهُ

٣٣ فَحَلَّ مَحَلَّةً مَنْ حَلَّهَا صُرِمَتْ حَبَائِلُهُ

٣٤ اَلَا إِنَّ الْمَنِيَّةَ مَنْهَلٌ وَالْخَلْقُ نَاهِلُهُ

٣٥ أَوَاخِرُ مَنْ تَرَى تَفْنَى كَمَا فَنِيَتْ أَوَائِلُهُ

٣٦ لَعَمْرُكَ مَا اسْتَوَى فِي الْأَمْرِ عَالِمُهُ وَجَاهِلُهُ

٣٧ لِيَعْلَمْ كُلُّ ذِي عِلْمٍ بِأَنَّ اللهَ سَائِلُهُ

٣٨ فَأَسْرِعْ فَائِزًا بِالْخَيْرِ قَائِلُهُ وَفَاعِلُهُ

VI

وقال أبو العلاء المَعرّي :

١ أَنْوَارُ تُحْسَبُ مِنْ سَنَا الأَنْوارِ وَمِنَ البَوارِ مَها عَرَضْنَ بَوارِ

٢ بِيضٌ دَوارٍ لِلقُلُوبِ كَأَنَّها عِينٌ بِدَوّارٍ وعِينِ دوارِ

٣ هَـذِي أُوارِيُّ المَنازِل مَا دَرَتْ أَنِّي أُوارِي فِي حَشَايَ أُوارِي

٤ أَمّا فَوارِي المَيْنِ عنكَ فَصادَفَتْ سَمعًا وَامّا الوَجدُ مِنكَ فوارِي

٥ وإذا الحَوارِيّاتُ صِدْنَكَ فابتَكِر مِثلَ الحُوارِيّاتِ إِثرَ حُوارِ

٦ يَرأمْنَ سَقْبًا في الرَّواحِ وإنّما تَبني على حَوَرٍ وحُسنِ حِوارِ

٧ حَتَّى مَتَى نَحْنُ فِي الْأَيَّامِ نَحْسُبُهَا   وَإِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِيهَا بَيْنَ يَوْمَيْنِ

٨ يَوْمٌ تَوَلَّى وَيَوْمٌ نَحْنُ نَأْمُلُهُ   لَعَلَّهُ أَجْلَبُ الْأَيَّامِ لِلْحَيْنِ

V

وقال أبو العتاهية :

١ لِمَنْ طَلَلٌ أُسَائِلُهُ   مُعَطَّلَةً مَنَازِلُهُ

٢ غَدَاةَ رَأَيْتُهُ تَنْعَى   أَعَالِيَهُ أَسَافِلُهُ

٣ وَكُنْتُ أَرَاهُ مَأْهُولاً   وَلٰكِنْ بَادَ آهِلُهُ

٤ وَكُلٌّ لِاغْتِسَافِ الدَّهْرِ   مُعْرَضَةٌ مَقَاتِلُهُ

٥ وَمَا مِنْ مَسْلَكٍ إِلَّا   وَرَيْبُ الدَّهْرِ شَامِلُهُ

٦ فَيَضْرَعُ مَنْ يُصَارِعُهُ   وَيَنْضُلُ مَنْ يُنَاضِلُهُ

٧ يُنَازِلُ مَنْ يَهُمُّ بِهِ   وَأَحْيَانًا يُخَاتِلُهُ

٨ وَأَحْيَانًا يُؤَخِّرُهُ   وَتَارَاتٍ يُعَاجِلُهُ

٩ كَفَاكَ بِهِ إِذَا نَزَلَتْ   عَلَى قَوْمٍ كَلَاكِلُهُ

١٠ وَكَمْ قَدْ عَزَّ مِنْ مَلِكٍ   يَحُفُّ بِهِ قَنَابِلُهُ

١١ يَخَافُ النَّاسُ صَوْلَتَهُ   وَيُرْجَى مِنْهُ نَائِلُهُ

١٢ وَيَثْنِي عِطْفَهُ مَرَحًا   وَيُعْجِبُهُ شَمَائِلُهُ

١٣ فَلَمَّا أَنْ أَتَاهُ الْحَقْ   م وَلَّى عَنْهُ بَاطِلُهُ

١٤ فَغَمَّضَ عَيْنَهُ لِلْمَوْ   تِ وَاسْتَرْخَتْ مَفَاصِلُهُ

١٥ فَمَا لَبِثَ السِّيَاقُ بِهِ   إِلَى أَنْ جَاءَ غَاسِلُهُ

١٦ فَجُهِّزَ إِلَى جَدَثٍ   سَيَكْثُرُ فِيهِ خَاذِلُهُ

١٧ وَيُصْبِحُ شَاحِطَ الْمَوْتَى   مُفَجَّعَةً نَوَاكِلُهُ

١٨ مُخَمَّشَةً نَوَادِبُهُ   مُسَلَّبَةً غَلَائِلُهُ

١٩ وَكَمْ قَدْ طَالَ مِنْ أَمَلٍ   فَلَمْ يُدْرِكْهُ آمِلُهُ

٢٠ رَأَيْتُ الْحَقَّ لَا يَخْفَى   وَلَا تَخْفَى شَوَاكِلُهُ

٢١ أَلَا فَانْظُرْ لِنَفْسِكَ أَيُّ   م زَادٍ أَنْتَ حَامِلُهُ

١٠

٣	يا أوسُ هيهات كم قابلت هاجرةً	أذكتْ عليك وقودَ الحرِّ فاحتدمَا
٤	وكم طرقتَ عتودًا بينَ أعنزةٍ	يومًا ففرَّيت من أحشائه الأَدَمَا
٥	مطرَّدًا بتَّ لم تبنِ الخيامَ ضُحًا	ولا تُراعُ إذا ما بيتُك انهدمَا
٦	وما كسوتَ إذا قرُّ أنى جسَدًا	ولا حذوتَ حذارًا للوجى قدمَا
٧	جمعتَ في كلِّ ريٍّ سلَّةً وردَى	نفسٍ فهلَّا سرقتَ القُرصَ والحدمَا
٨	قد يقصرُ النفسَ إعظامًا لبارئهِ	على القفارِ منيبٌ طالما ائتدمَا
٩	ولا تصومُ لوجهِ اللّٰهِ مُحتسبًا	أم غير صَومِك أمسَى الهمَّ والسَدَمَا
١٠	أتَضمِرُ التوبَ من ضأنٍ تروِّعُها	أتَضمِرُ التوبَ من ضأنٍ تروِّعُها
١١	ولو ظفرتَ على حالٍ بحاليةٍ	جزَّأتَها ونبذتَ السُّورَ والخَدَمَا
١٢	وهل نَدِمتَ على طِفلٍ فجعتَ بهِ	أمَّا ومِثلُك لا يَستشعِر النندَمَا
١٣	ولا يُوارَى إذا حلَّتْ منيتُـهُ	ولا إذا ماتَ في غارٍ لـهُ رُدِمَا
١٤	وكم تَوَى لك جَدٌّ ما درَى فَطِنٌ	منكُمْ على أيَّ أمرٍ إذ مَضَى قِدمَا

٧	وإذا بـلـغـنَ رضـاً فـهـنَّ ذواري	يَـلـعَـبـنَ بـالـزوّار لـعـبَ قـوامِـرِ
٨	فشجونُ قلبكَ للهُـمـوم صَـوارُهـا	مـثـلَ الـصِـوار إذا شـمـمـتَ صُـوارَهـا
٩	لـبُـرى غـوادٍ في الـركـاب سـواري	فـاجـعـلْ سِـوارَيْ غـادَةٍ وبُـراهُـا
١٠	أخـلاقُ إنسٍ لـلـقـبـيـح شَـواري	يُـرقِـلـنَ في خَـلـقِ الـشَّـوار وفـوقَـهـا
١١	ولَـتُـعـرضَـنَّ الـخـيـلُ بـالـمِـشـوارِ	لا تَـشـكُـوَنَّ في الـشـكـايـة ذُلّـة
١٢	في هَـضبٍ شـابَـةَ والـنـقـا الـخَـوّارِ	آلـيـتُ مـا مـنـعَ الـخُـوارُ أو ابـدا
١٣	مـا زال يـؤذِن بـانـتـقـالِ جـوارِ	ريـعَ الـلـبـيـبُ من الـمـشـيـبِ لإنـهُ
١٤	أسَـفٌ بمـا يـبـدو من الـنُّـوّارِ	مـا أبـأسُ الحـيـوانَ لـيـس لـنـابـتٍ
١٥	لـلـقـبـرِ لم يـنـزلْ لـهُ بـطَـوارِ	وكـأنَّ من سكَـن الـفـنـاء مـتى غـدا
١٦	ومـقـادرٌ من فـوقـهـنَّ طَـوارِي	تـلـك الـنـسـورُ من الـوكـور طـوائـرُ
١٧	فـالـراحُ مـنـهـا والـجـسـومُ عَـواري	إن الـعَـواريَّ اسـتُـردُّ جـمـيـعُـهـا
١٨	مـثـلَ الحـبـاب تـظـاهـرٌ وتـواري	اشـبـاحُ نـاسٍ في الـزمـان يُـرى لها
١٩	غـيـرُ الـذي يـأتي وهـنَّ جَـواري	يُـخـلـطـنَ فـيـهِ بـغـيـرهـنَّ فـا مـضى
٢٠	ورمَـى الـخـلـيـلَ بـأسـهـم الأسـوارِ	أعـيـى سَـوارُ الـدهـرِ كـلَّ مُـسـاورٍ
٢١	قَـدَرًا أغـار عـلـى أبي الـمِـغـوارِ	فـاحـذرْ وإن بـعُـدَت غـزاتُـك في الـعِـدا
٢٢	والحـادثـاتُ مـن الـجِـمـام قَـوارِي	زجـرَت قـوارهـا الـزواجـر بـالـضحـى
٢٣	كـوار مـا قـعـدَت عـلـى الأكـوارِ	لو فكَّـرَت طُـلـبُ الغـنى في ذاهـبٍ الأم
٢٤	كـأخـي الـنُّـهـى والـذَّمـرُ كـالـعُـوّارِ	والـنَدبُ في حكم الهِـدان وذو الصِبا
٢٥	جـبـلاً أقـامَ كـزاخـرٍ مـوَّارِ	ويُـقـال إن مـدى الـلـيـالـي جـاعـلٌ
٢٦	صُـدُقـاً بـأسـوارٍ ولا أسـوارِ	جرتِ الـقـضـايـا في الأنـام وأمـضيَـتْ

VII

وقال أبو العلاء المعرّي :

١	لاخـتـار دونَ مُـغـار الـثـلّـةِ الـعـدَمـا	لو كـانَ يـدري أُويـسٌ ما جـنَتْ يَـدُهُ
٢	شـاكـي المجـاعـةِ يـومـاً أن يُـريـقَ دمـا	فـإنَّ مِـن أقـبـح الأشـيـاء يـفـعـلُـهُ

Translations and commentaries of texts

I

Buḥturī in praise of Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Thaghrī

1. Why do you hasten to blame [an] ardent love?
   Did I bemoan anything other than campsite remnants and spring abodes?
2. They reproved but did not restrain my heart from love;
   they called but found no listener in the afflicted one.
3. O abode which Time has altered and whose gathered
   folk the Fates have separated from it,
4. Had I but tears still to adorn the agony of my love
   I should leave them outcast in your twin courtyards;
5. Do not ask for my tears to be betrothed to you
   for the pain of parting has left none in my eyes.
6. I remember a lady of languid glances whose heart
   the mention of love's desires offends for she is modest and chaste.
7. At her sight the lover wilfully reveals his secret
   and the steadfast one is left confounded;
8. Her resolute strength when she saw the dread
   of parting to be gruesome, nearly restrained my tears.
9. To the firm resolves of Abū Saʿīd al-Ṣāmitī
   the vicissitudes of Time offer surrender;
10. A King who divides what his hands possess
    while in him all implements of glory are united;
11. He outstrips Kings in nobility and grace
    and for the star of munificence sets the time of rise.
12. Alert in his innermost being, he is to the enemies
    a death that annihilates and a season of spring to the supplicants;
13. Generous of character, he defies the reprovers
    through his noble deeds, but to munificence offers obedience;
14. Magnanimous of nature, he preserves noble acts
    through the dew of his hands, but the long-possessed wealth
       he squanders;

15. As good and bad days succeed, he was not
    born timid or anxious in the face of misfortune.
16. You meet him with his sword and lance
    and the fingers of his palm, dripping dew and blood.
17. He hearkens to the echo of the cry to battle
    to answer the crier's well-heard voice.
18. Often he passes the night with none other
    than the Mashrafī sword his only mate;
19. Alert like the snake he banished sleep
    from his eyes and so does not taste slumber.
20. How excellent you are, Ibn Yūsuf, a hero
    who gives noble actions their unattainable due!
21. You have reawakened in Nabhān a lofty glory
    forever reserved for those whose deeds earn praise;
22. Yet if you built the peaks of eminence for them,
    they do not cease to be the roots and branches of [that] eminence;
23. A people such that if they wear armour for a purpose
    the honour [at stake] wears them as an armour;
24. They don't drive their horses to flight
    if their leader is seized and falls down as a victim.
25. How excellent you were on the day of Bābak, a knight
    and hero knocking at the gates of death!
26. When he came to you leading a teeming host
    so densely gathered one could walk upon it
27. You divided them between the points [of lances] and the
        cutting edges [of swords]
    until you annihilated their gathering through division;
28. In a tight battle where one thought the lances,
    when they inclined between the ribs, were ribs,
29. And the tips and blades never tired
    prostrating and bowing to [reap] the riders' necks.
30. You adorned it with the radiance of a head
    rendered bald by wearing battlehelmets.
31. When they beheld you their minds were scattered
    and the defender of their valour was cast aground,
32. So you called them to death with the cutting edges of the blade
    and they all came hurriedly and humble,
33. Until you captured al-Badhdh and left it
    downcast while its boundary had been well fortified.
34. And in Dhū l-Kulāʿ you kindled with the firesticks of lances
    a war ardently desirous for the destruction of valorous men;
35. When you attacked the Byzantines in it with lean [racehorses]
    that give the battling knights their swiftest pace
36. You were the road to death, nay when the souls
    were entrapped you were their intercessor with death,

37. In a combat the end of which brought upon them
    the descent of desert vultures and eagles.
38. So there – what enemy do you defy
    without causing a spring to gush from his jugular vein?

Commentary

The poem, dated 229 AH/845 AD, is addressed to Abū Saʿīd Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, an Arab of the tribe of Ṭayyiʾ who served as army commander under the Caliph al-Muʿtaṣim (d. 227 AH/842 AD). The frequency of his military expeditions earned him the eponym, al-Thaghrī ('the one who resides on the boundaries'). Several panegyrics in his honour were composed by Abū Tammām and Buḥturī. The present poem celebrates the general's campaigns against the Bābak insurrection in Azerbaidjan (see article, 'Bābak', in EC II) and the Byzantines in Asia Minor.

9. Al-Ṣāmitī refers to one of the grandfathers of the praised general (see Buḥturī, 1963, p. 15, no. 16).
21. Nabhān is the ancestor of the Banū Saʿd b. Nabhān, one of the subsections of the tribe of Ṭayyiʾ.
33. The city of al-Badhdh, located in Azerbaidjan, was the centre of Bābak's insurrection. It was captured by the troops of the Caliph al-Muʿtaṣim in 222 AH/837 AD (see Buḥturī, 1963, p. 9 and article, 'Bābak', in EC II).
34. Dhū l-Kulāʿ has been equated with the Byzantine city of Sideropolis in Asia Minor (see Buḥturī, 1963, p. 1256).

II

Buḥturī in praise of the Caliph Mutawakkil

1. Turn to Laylā's abode and salute it;
   yes, and question it on some of its folk!
2. O campsite remnants whose beauty the wind vies to tear away,
   spending the nights between concealing them and laying them bare.
3. You do not cease to be clad in ample garments [of vegetation]
       brought by rain,
   of which lightning weaves the weft at times and at times
       sets the warp.
4. The evening clouds pass over your spring abodes
   bringing abundant showers, or the morning clouds move by.
5. The ungenerous one did not respond graciously to her questioner
   on the day of the sand-dune, nor did she listen to her caller.
6. She remains distressing in distance and proximity;
   separation removes her and the abode brings her close.

7. Were it not for my black sideboards which betoken lack of
      [hoary] wisdom
   my soul would have been crushed by Time's vicissitudes.
8. Commanding youth, at nightfall I may visit
   a comely maiden I delight in and who delights in me;
9. In a night beyond dawn's reach
   I grasp the wine I'm offered and offer in turn;
10. Pouring it out for a maiden lightsome and tender-limbed
    and drinking liquor from her hand and lips.
11. O, whosoever sees the Lake of beauteous sight
    and the comely maidens as their dwellings shine!
12. Suffice it to say that due to its excellent rank
    it is counted first and the river second.
13. How dare Tigris like a jealous rival vie with it
    in beauty at times and at others compete with it in glory?
14. Does it not know the protector of Islam shields it
    from blame and the builder of glory built it?
15. It is as though the *jinn* of Solomon had commanded
    its marvellous creation and refined its themes.
16. If Bilqīs were to pass by its side she would say
    'It is the glass palace in image and in simile!'
17. The hosts of water plunge into it in haste
    like horses leaving the starting line of the racetrack.
18. It is as though shining silver liquified
    from ingots were flowing in its courses.
19. When the East wind stirs it up it displays ripples
    like coats of mail with finely polished fringes.
20. The sun's glamour vies with it in laughter at times;
    at others the drizzling rain vies with it in tears.
21. When the stars gaze at themselves in its sides at night
    you would think a firmament had been built into it.
22. The fish it contains cannot reach its limits
    because of the distance between its nearest and its furthest point.
23. They swim therein with wings on their sides
    like birds whose feathers [lit. coverts] flutter in the air,
24. Having a wide basin in its lower regions
    when they descend and ample space in its upper reaches.
25. They turn towards the dolphin's statue cheered
    by the wrinkle they meet in its eyes.
26. By the irrigation [the lake] provides, the widespread gardens around it
    can dispense with clouds that open their spouts [to bring rain].
27. As it persists in its abundant flow, it is as if it were
    the Caliph's hand when its river bed is flooded high.
28. Its beauty is further embellished by his name
    which ranks among its names when it is called.

29. It is surrounded by gardens you forever see
    peacock feathers reflect and reflected in,
30. And two esplanades vying in height as they face
    each other like [the stars] Sirius and Procyon.
31. When the endeavours of the Prince of the Faithful appear
    to those who describe them, no description can do them justice.
32. The Caliphate as her rostrum trembles [under his weight]
    has in Ja'far been granted her highest hopes.
33. When he won her, he displayed humility in modest restraint
    whereas she won him and strutted about in pride.
34. When the world reveals herself to him in her finery
    she sees her beauty-spots reduced to blemishes.
35. O son of the valley dwellers in a land the broad valleys of which
    mark the pinnacle of glory, far higher than its hills!
36. May God never strike, in desert or sown
    a flock whose shepherd by beneficence you are,
37. Nor a community which the vileness of iniquity enraged
    for a time and the beauty of justice now renders gratified.
38. You have scattered gifts over it which increase the noble
        exploits in number
    and you have greatly exalted the name of generosity.
39. You are forever a sea of sustenance to the needy among us!
    How can this be, since you face us owning the world and all
        it holds?
40. God granted it to you by a right of which he saw you worthy
    and you by the right of God grant it to us.

Commentary

The poem is addressed to the Caliph Mutawakkil (d. 247 AH/861 AD). It celebrates the artificial lake and gardens built by Mutawakkil as part of his ambitious and wide-ranging plans for the extension of Sāmarrā, then capital of the Abbasid empire. H. Viollet concludes his article on 'Sāmarrā in EC I as follows:

Centre d'attractions pour les nombreux artisans venus de touts les parties du globe attirés par la richesse de la Cour des califes abbasides at la protection de ceux-ci, Sāmarrā s'est trouvé être le creuset dans lequel est venu se fondre l'art hellène, l'art syro-copte, l'art indo-persan et d'où est sorti un art nouveau, l'art musulman.

It is against this background of decisive artistic achievement that the prodigious literary activity at the court of the Abbasid Caliphs, and Mutawakkil in particular, must be seen. For a summary view of poets at the court of Mutawakkil see Bencheikh, 1977.

15 Qur'ān 27/17 describes Solomon as lord over men and *jinn*. On Solomonic legends in the Islamic Middle Ages, see Bargebuhr, 1968, pp. 135f, 225, no. 108.

16. This refers to the meeting of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (Bilqīs) as described in Qur'ān 27/22–44. Solomon built a palace of glass which Bilqīs thought was made of water. This passage explains the comparison with the lake of Mutawakkil: it *is* the luminous expanse of water which Bilqīs believed to see in Solomon's palace.

25. The statue of a dolphin appears to have been placed by the side of the lake. For *inziwā'* see Lane, 1863, *inzawā mā bayna 'aynayhi* ('the part between his eyes became contracted, drawn together'). The line suggests that the features of the statue are so faithful to nature that the fish are drawn to it without fear and recognize themselves in it.

26. I have opted for the alternative reading *bi-rayyatihā* instead of *bi-ru'yatihā* (see Buḥturī, 1963, p. 2420, no. 26). The gardens (*basātīn*) were surrounded by a wall 30 km. in length and encompassed a vast area of fertile land (see Buḥturī, 1963, p. 2414). Clouds discharging copious rain are often described as 'loosing their spouts' (*'azāli*) like 'a waterskin' (*qirba, mazāda*) (see Lane, 1863, pp. 2936f)..

30. The *dakkatāni* appear to have been two elevated structures providing a view of the gardens (see Buḥturī, 1963, p. 2420).

35. This refers to Mutawakkil's descent from the tribe of Quraysh and the glory of Mekka. The Quraysh al-Abāṭiḥ are those members of the tribe who settled in the *abāṭiḥ* ('valleys') where Mekka is located.

III

Mihyār al-Daylamī in praise of Abū l-Qāsim al-Maghribī

1. Do your eyes take upon themselves at Ghurrab
   to discharge a debt owed by the rainless cloud?

2. Yes! Tears through which its soil now dons
   the garment of the grassy land,

3. Flowing [tears], on the croups of which others mount
   which are suspended [from the eye] and have yet to flow.

4. Through them the abode is pleased with its watering
   even though Spica Virginis tells it to be angered.

5. [My tears are] a token that I have not undone
   the strands of the promise [to my beloved] nor severed [them].

6. O driver of the [women's] litters, no offence!
   Stop over for a while, then rise up and go;

7. Let the mounts turn hither as they wish
   to drink from the well of my eyelid.

  8. Nay, by the one to whom, if he permits,
      I shall not apologize for love since [in loving him] I did not sin,
  9. Since [meeting] him, the east wind has not lowered
      its veil to grant me a fragrant breath,
 10. Nor can I find solace in abandonment or restraint
      since he was neither pleased nor angered [and stayed indifferent
          to my love].
 11. How many were my curses upon the white [maiden]!
      But for the din of [her] jewels they would not have been
          hidden.
 12. How many were my needs – without their persistence
      in my soul I would have no joy and no longing.
 13. O you who defer your debt to me;
      your false promises do not make me despair in you;
 14. If you appoint a time and then fail me,
      well then continue deferring, promising and lying!
 15. On the day of the enclosure my blood flowed due to a hand
      which would not have been stained were it not for the
          blood of lovers.
 16. The tribal hunters' arrows in their sharpness
      are gentler on me than the eyes of a flock of deer.
 17. O you who reproach me; forbearance brought me to you;
      I am led along [like a steed], so mount on me or leave me.
 18. My hoariness has closed the breach of love [and obstructed
      my access to it];
      how can I now track down its refuge?
 19. Success fails a flourishing maiden's hunter
      who hopes to trap her with a rope of white hair.
 20. Girls in their teens and twenties find no playground
      in the seriousness of men of fifty;
 21. All colour marks of the steeds of love
      meet their praise save the white one.
 22. Don't you see me emaciated and denuded
      of the foliage which envelops those who prosper?
 23. Wearing only a loincloth, I bemoan in my bygone yesterday
      a brother who died without offspring.
 24. Yet the twin edges of my spearhead are not blunted
      by the destruction the sword's wielder wrought upon the
          knots of my spearshaft.
 25. Fate threatens me with its treachery [but I say]:
      rattle or bark at one who is not a lion [like me]!
 26. Your hand has tested [the toughness of] my flint;
      is there a touch to which I am not firm?

27. Do you wish to scare me with loss of wealth?
    That would be daubing tar on a mangy [camel]!
28. Leave the basin of my honour full
    and eat and drink the fat of all I own!
29. Should I by chance suffer defeat, there is a detachment
    in my spirit which cannot be dazzled or vanquished.
30. The seeker who finds nothing blames [his] fate;
    how should I have found [wealth] since I don't seek?
31. Woe unto wealth and what could be reaped of it
    were wealth not subject to donation!
32. Let go the tether of this world when she is refractory –
    when she submits to you then pull!
33. Don't randomly strain her teats [by trying to milk her by force];
    sometimes she does yield milk without having to be tied;
34. At such time she accepts to act with righteousness,
    in apologetic posture and desirous to make amends,
35. Retrieving her forbearance which had strayed
    into a flock whose protector was pushed far aside.
36. And sometimes hope's countenance will unexpectedly shine
    [like a star] from the very peak of despair.
37. Tell the poor in their outcast state
    and the traveller [wandering] on a narrow path
38. And the abstainer who feeds off his flesh
    so as to shun wicked gains:
39. 'A banner of glory has been hoisted in Babylon;
    whoever clings to it will triumph.'
40. Underneath it, the summoner of victory cries
    'Horsemen of the reviver of noble deeds, mount!'
41. By it God has closed a period [of no guidance]
    through a miracle which amazes whoever sees it.
42. It came forward as a sudden surprise and had not been
    expected or awaited [even] by the [most] far-reaching
    thought.
43. The eyes had not been accustomed before
    to see the sun rise in the west!
44. Come and drink, for the sea [of munificence] has visited you;
    no fear has been made to enter into it or ride on it;
45. The clarity of its sweet water discloses
    the precious pearls inside it to the eyes.
46. So alight on the pasture ground after the delay of the spring rains
    and enter the garden after the barren land.
47. The dew [generosity] of Ḥātim has returned to Ṭayyi',
    and Ka'b, illustrious lord, is born again,

48. And ʿAmr al-ʿUlā lives [once more] among the Ghālib,
    crumbling [bread to prepare food for them] in years of drought,
49. And Qaḥṭān retrieved what Time
    seized from Dhū l-Kulāʿ or Ḥawshab,
50. And an abode has been returned to Bānū Dārim
    by which Zurāra sits again draped in his garment;
51. Every generous one, every accomplished hero
    and man of deed or eloquent word [is here restored],
52. And today, all doubt of reports heard about him
    is dispelled by [the proof of] closest sight.
53. To [reach] the *Wazir* every sturdy she-camel
    who is tough to restrain consumes the fat [of her hump];
54. She responds with softness to the wooden nose sticks [by which
        she is guided]
    while her nose is tough and considered refractory.
55. Her patience is mad, yet she is not rendered jumpy by the whip;
    her hind feet do not retread the steps of her forefeet, and yet
        she does not limp.
56. The camel stallion belonging to the herd of pregnant
        she-camels despairs ever to leap her
    because of her proud nature, yet she has not been prevented
    from conception.
57. Were she to tread on the points of the spears which grow
    on the paths of high endeavour she would stay unharmed.
58. Her bleeding hoof draws lines upon the ground,
    writing what the night journey dictates.
59. It is as though the rear of her thigh [against which the tail
        falls] belonged to a wild ass of clotted fell
    with slender shanks, pointed back and white lines on his
        flanks.
60. A hunter lies in wait for him in the sand,
    lean, not fed on dates nor [even] bitter shrubs.
61. His quiver in its time-worn state betrays
    that it has not been emptied [of its arrows] for two years;
62. Whatever jugular vein or hip its little daughters [the arrows]
    penetrate is made to perish.
63. So he [the wild ass] moves on in fear, without seeking the company
    of a herd of fellow asses or fondling a wild ass foal.
64. There are scratch marks on him and the frontrunners
    of [a pack of] hunters' dogs hurry him along in close pursuit;
65. Any sound that scares him he imagines to be
    the twang of a bow or the sting of a claw.
66. He swiftly measures the paths of an open waterless desert
    which harbours all kinds of strange cares and desires;

67. The [ice-cold] nights of [the winter month of] Jumādā
    cast it towards a day of blistering [summer] heat under the
        sign of Gemini,
68. In the expanse of a dusty, windswept sand-desert
    bare of fodder, never pastured on, nor even roamed in.
69. The watering points known to be in it are tough to locate
    [even] for the swarms of exhausted sand grouse.
70. Until [the camel] was made to kneel down – while sleep
    had not sealed the night traveller's eyelids
71. And the cloak of darkness was hidden
    beneath the gilded garment of the moon –
72. At the place of one whose abode is shady, whose earth is
        moist and green
    who has high stones to place his cooking pots and whose milk
        vessel is full to the brim.
73. His largest bowl is red coloured [with meat] and his
        hospitality is boundless,
    when the slaughterer's hand is not dyed red [with blood].
74. His camp fires are built up with precious sandalwood
    when the tribe's servant girls cannot find [ordinary] firewood.
75. He has deeply hollowed [cauldrons ready for use] when
    the cooking pot lacks space and width [to feed to needy],
76. All great and heavy with necks sticking out
    like humps of tall camels.
77. The throng of his [eager] guests does not allow them
    to wait patiently for the firewood of the fire attendant.
78. He shines brightly in every obscure darkness
    which would not be penetrated even by a star.
79. His gatherings are earnest but his bounty is all smiles,
    so he meets you inciting desire and fear.
80. The eyes glance at him sideways [out of awe]
    despite his kind and generous welcome.
81. His manner is dry and yet when his nature grants you
    the like of choicest wine, its sweetness is left uncut.
82. People place themselves below him out of respect,
    just as the back is placed below the shoulder.
83. Travelling at dawn on the heights [of glory] has wearied him;
    whoever seeks repose, let him toil.
84. His is a kinsfolk with glory not earned
    or reaped through strokes of luck,
85. Nor did a son of theirs ever rise to fame, ascending starlike
    from ancestral honour, without succeeding a father [of similar rank].
86. They rose to glory and stepped upon [the course of] eminence,
    though its paths had been a wilderness trackless and unexplored.

87. They matched up to the days [of battle] and threw down
    the heroes [from their steeds] troop after troop.
88. A people whom, when the rainy season betrays its promise,
    the bewilderment of famine does not scatter,
89. Nor, when God spreads spring herbage for them in abundance,
    do they show boastful pride in the width of their fertile realm.
90. They rose and you became their heaven,
    from which the honour of their lineage shines forth.
91. You increased [in light] and they did not diminish,
    but it was the brightness of the full moon outshining the stars.
92. You were created in this world without equal,
    stranger than the mysterious 'Anqā' bird:
93. For sagacity does not sit [idly], nor does fear ride [into battle],
    yet you neither sit nor ride.
94. When the enemies tend towards peace
    or escape from you to a hide-out,
95. You write even when resting [so that] they say,
    'He is weaponless, he cannot stab or strike';
96. But when they embark upon evil and attack,
    you stab [them], till it is said, 'He cannot write';
97. Thus you fill the eye with admiration and the heart [with love]
    as you please, in the counselling chamber or the cavalcade.
98. Many's the conspiring villain who spends the night
    on an outlook with evil intent,
99. Hoping for a change of fortune
    one not decreed by the pen of Fate.
100. Frightened in the darkness through your cunning
    by a [mere] fly, more crafty than the scorpion,
101. He runs away from it to pay the magician's fee
    though neither charmed nor stung.
102. Bounty and his children have recovered through you
    from the affliction of a wearying disease,
103. And sovereignty has accepted the right direction of its path
    when before, it walked [in circles] like a camel injured on the shoulder.
104. In longing for you the *Wazir*ate turned
    to one befitting her in ingenuity and skill;
105. She became yours without your raising the dowry
    to please her guardian, or asking for her hand.
106. How often before you did she miscarry
    because of their thinking that she had gone her time.
107. Now she has given birth and, if this is not a noble birth
    then no woman has ever produced child.
108. You have taken charge of her essence; how many idlers
    were content with the trappings of her rank?

109. Unless her head is guided with firmly twisted
     reins of endurance she's not the one to submit;
110. She's treacherous; who rides her
     rides the back of the broad-necked lion;
111. Her garments are draped over your side at nightfall
     pure in their upper part and their hem.
112. You opened her obscure designs
     to the like of dawn's brightness in the gloom of night;
113. So she retrieved her greatest men in you,
     all those of ample dew, who rouse [our] hopes:
114. Banū Yaḥyā and Sahl were returned to her,
     and the Ṭāhirids, sons of Muṣ'ab.
115. So pitch on her your predecessors' tent,
     one without ropes or poles [for it is made of glory],
116. And reduce Fate to servitude by curbing her
     and consult with good fortune and make it your consort.
117. And cast over the world and its ignorant folly
     the shade of your ever-present forbearance,
118. And rise upon Nayrūz like the sun! When
     'setting' propels the sun it shall not set,
119. And remain to exceed its life's recurring years
     by the measure of a well-filled hand's boastful count.
120. It's a Persian feast which arrived as a newcomer
     and the Arabs said to it 'Draw close';
121. Due to your kindness it stayed in your mansion
     and, despite being a stranger, was not seen as foreign.
122. If the composer of verse so wished, he would not attribute or
     ascribe this festival's origin to anyone but you [i.e. the
     Arabs].
123. Lend your ear to one stripped of his luck by force;
     had you been [his] helper, he would not have succumbed.
124. One who is solitary and has none
     but evil-doers to complain to of his time or kin.
125. It rendered him outcast in the eyes of [his] people
     that he counted his closest kinship [to them] as one of his merits.
126. Had he long ago received your equity in exchange [for their injustice]
     he would have been powerful and would not have suffered severance
          and removal.
127. Yours is a [poem] brightly shining, made of my lightning,
     outstripping [all others], bearing witness to things unknown;
128. It's made of pearls scattered here, neatly strung there,
     but neither of them pierced before.
129. You've always been my hope and I have proof
     that my hope in you does not deceive me:

130. After you, I have no misfortune to blame,
     no [unfulfilled] wish to desire.
131. So be generous, exalt [the name of virtue] in your bounty and exceed
          the limits of munificence,
     so that you may delight [us] with the keenness of a cutting blade,
132. And jealously guard my parchment from lowly [people]
     not deserving to own a work by one such as me;
133. Before you, many a hand has praised my work,
     but it would offer a bid without striking the deal.
134. A pliant one, it is not brought to heel
     by harsh words nor wearied [by excessive travelling],
135. Made of what is lawful and licit, not seized by force
     through raiding poetry nor taken as booty [through plagiarism];
136. May the blood of the sleep sacrificed for it be upon
     the listener's head if he is not stirred to delight!
137. Its meaning and words brought you
     beauty of easiest and most complex [form].
138. The most eloquent ever pronounced it is; and yet
     but an eloquence offered to Ya'rub.

Commentary

The poem is composed in praise of Abū l-Qāsim al-Maghribī (d. 1027) who
was appointed *Wazir* in 1023 by the Buwayhid ruler, Musharrif al-Dawla. As
Abu l-Qāsim did not retain his office for more than one year, the poem must
have been composed in 1023/1024. The *Wazir* was also himself a poet and
writer of some renown and the panegyric makes reference to his literary
faculties (see lines 92–7, also the last line). On Abū l-Qāsim al-Maghribī see
EC I article, 'al-Maghribī'.

1. Tears replace the rain which the clouds did not bring.
4. Among the ancient Arabs, certain weather conditions such as rain,
   wind, heat or cold were attributed to the rising or setting of stars called
   naw' (pl. *anwā'*). According to Lane, 1863, p. 1430, *al-simāk* must refer to
   the star, Spica Virginis, which is one of the *anwā'* and rises aurorally in
   October.
7. The camels are attracted by the poet's copious tears.
8. In lines 8ff, the beloved, even though feminine, is referred to in the
   masculine gender; this is a common poetic convention (see Beeston,
   1977, p. 9).
11. The 'din of her jewels' is a sign of the beloved's wealth and high
    standing, and, thereby, her unattainability for the poet.
14. As long as the beloved continues her promises, the poet may continue to
    hope.
15. The henna ornaments on the beloved's hand are marks left by the blood

of her lovers who suffer and bleed in the agony of love. *Al-ḥimā* refers to the enclosure of the beloved's tribe.

17. Due to his forbearance, the poet remains unmoved by the reproacher's criticism (on the reproachers, see p. 25). 'Mount on me or leave me': accept me the way I am or leave me.

24. *ak'ub* is the plural of *ka'b*, which can have two possible meanings in this context: 'anklebone' or 'knot of the reedlance' (see *WKAS*, vol. I, p. 228). I opt for the latter because of the antithesis established between spearhead (*'āmil*) and spearshaft. I derive the meaning of *al-sāḥib* from the expression *saḥaba l-sayfa*, 'he drew the sword'. The line expresses that age and misfortune have not weakened the poet's spirit.

27. Tar was considered a cure for mangy camels. Loss of material wealth will not harm the poet: on the contrary, it will make his moral qualities, his honour and resolve, shine more brightly (see next line).

28. *Mā' al-wajh*, the 'water of the face' is a synonym for personal honour. The line means, 'leave my honour unstained and take away all I possess', for only honour counts, not wealth. *Samīn* may also refer to *dahr*, i.e. 'fatten yourself by eating and drinking all I own'.

35. This is a pastoral image: *sarḥ* is a grazing herd, *a'zaba* may mean to drive camels to a distant pasturage 'not to return in the evening' (Lane, 1863, p. 2033).

41. The line has religious overtones: *fatra* may be an interval of time between two of God's apostles, 'during which there is a cessation of the apostolic function' (Lane, 1863, p. 2331); *āya*, wonder, also refers to the verses of the Qur'ān. The *Wazir* thus also revives and strengthens the guidance of religion.

43. This is a pun upon the name of the *Wazir* who is called al- Maghribī, i.e. the Western one.

44/5. Water in all its forms (dew, rivers, seas, etc.) is a symbol of generosity.

47. Ḥātim and Ka'b are legendary ancestors of the Arab tribes of Ṭayyi' and Bānū Ka'b. Ḥātim al-Ṭā'ī in particular was famous for his generosity.

48. 'Amr al-'Ulā was the first to prepare *tharīd*, an ancient Arab dish made of crumbled bread and broth (see note of the edition).

49. Qaḥṭān is a South Arabian tribe, Dhū l-Kulā' is one of the rulers of Yemen and Ḥawshab a Yemeni district (see note of the edition).

50. Zurāra is another ancestral figure of pre-Islamic Arabia (see Bevan, 1905, vol. I, p. 182). *Iḥtabā* literally means 'he drew his legs against his belly with a garment confining them therewith, together with his back, and binding it, or making it tight, upon them, so as to prevent him falling (when he sat), like a wall' (Lane, 1863, p. 507).

54. 'Her patience is mad', i.e. she is impatient and jumpy, but because of her bursting energy, not because she is scared by the whip. Similarly, her peculiar gait is the result of vivaciousness not of weakness.

56.   *Shawl* is pl. of *shā'il*, a 'she-camel raising her tail, having conceived' (Lane, 1863, p. 1623). *Tuʿṣab* literally means having her genitals conjoined by a ring of iron (and thus being prevented from conception). My translation of *faḥl al-shawl* follows Nöldeke, 1864, p. 120.

61.   Cf. *nakaba kinānatahu*, 'he inverted his quiver to pour out the arrows contained in it' (Lane, 1863, p. 2845).

62.   I take *bunayyāt*, lit. 'little daughters', to mean the arrows of the quiver in analogy to the expression *bint al-kanā'in* 'daughter of the quivers', i.e. arrow (Kazimirsky, 1846, vol. I, p. 169).

69.   Even the sand grouse (*qaṭā*), experienced desert dwellers, find difficulty in locating the watering points in this wilderness.

70.   Literally, 'the cleavage of the night journey in the eyelids (of the travellers) was not sealed by sleep', i.e. they did not close their eyes to sleep as they travelled without interruption.

72.   The images in this and the following lines all convey the generosity of the *Wazir*.

73.   The *Wazir* feeds the needy when there is a lack of meat. A *jafna* is a 'very large bowl satisfying the hunger of ten men or more'.

92.   The *'Anqā'* is a legendary bird 'not seen save once in ages' (Lane, 1863, p. 2177). The uniqueness of the *Wazir* is explained in the following lines which contrast the *Wazir*'s excellence as a man of letters with his equally outstanding fighting skills. Allusion is made to the traditional contrast between pen and sword both of which the *Wazir* wields equally well.

114.   As in lines 47–51 the poet celebrates the rebirth of ancestral glory in the ascendance of Abū l-Qāsim al-Maghribī. Banū Yaḥyā refers to the Barmakids, a family of famous *Wazirs* of the early Abbasid Caliphs. Sahl is Sahl b. Hārūn, a well-known man of letters who occupied a high position in the Abbasid chancellery during the same period. The mention of Sahl and the Barmakids evokes the memory of a 'golden age'. The Ṭāhirids were a dynasty of semi-autonomous Governors of Khurasān province from 810–65 AD who were celebrated for their literary activity and learning.

118.   The line resumes in more explicit terms the pun on the *Wazir*'s name al-Maghribī (lit. the Western one) in line 43. *Ghurūb*, derived from the same root, normally denotes the setting of the sun but here refers to the Moroccan, or Western origin of the *Wazir*. Nayrūz is the Persian new year's festival, an important occasion at the Buwayhid court. Lines 119–21 praise the fact that the Arabs, in particular the *Wazir* himself who is of Arab descent, adopted Nayrūz as a feast despite its Persian origin.

122.   I take *man yansibu* to mean 'the one who composes amatory verse' (*nasīb*), i.e. the poet.

125. The line appears to play upon Mihyār's Persian descent and Abū l-Qāsim's Arab origin. Mihyār as a Persian is rejected by his people despite his closest kinship to them; he must turn to the *Wazir*, an Arab, to obtain recognition and reward (see following line).

127. Lines 127–38 praise the poem itself and incite the sovereign to provide a generous reward for the poet.

133. 'It would offer a bid without striking the deal', i.e. the poet was offered a reward by previous patrons but did not in fact obtain it.

138. Ya'rub, grandson of the prophet Hūd and one of the legendary Kings of Yemen, was said to have been the first person to speak the Arabic language. In comparing Abū l-Qāsim al-Maghribī to Ya'rub, Mihyar awards him the distinction of literary excellence.

IV

Abū l-'Atāhiya

1. Alas for the fates, for separation and the destiny of death! All togetherness in this world must end with separation!

2. Time wears out all that is new when its beauty goes, and severs the link between two relations.

3. I have seen the hand of the world cause division; never trust the hand of the world where two are joined.

4. Praise be to God forever and always! Nay, the greedy are draped in shame.

5. No beauty save for those content with little! Restraint is honour and beauty's rightful garb.

6. The [true] abode – if only you knew, brother of folly – is an abode before you, where the eye is refreshed.

7. How much longer will we continue to count our days when [in fact] we only stand between two:

8. A day that has passed and one that we hope for; the latter may, faster than others, hasten our death.

V

Abū l-'Atāhiya

1. Whose is the ruined encampment I question, its dwellings long abandoned,

2. That morning when I beheld its ground below announce the death of those above?

3.   I had once seen it inhabited
     but its people have perished.
4.   All is exposed to deadly blows
     through the random force of Time.
5.   Indeed, there is no path
     Time's accidents do not enclose.
6.   It throws down those who wrestle with it
     and defeats those who try to match it in shooting;
7.   It comes down to fight whoever intends to oppose it;
     at times it beguiles him,
8.   At times it delays [his demise],
     at other times it will speed [it] up.
9.   It suffices for you [in misery],
     when its chest descends upon a people.
10. Many a glorious King there was,
     whom his horsemen surrounded,
11. Whose onslaught people feared
     and whose gifts they desired:
12. He swaggered his hips in exultation
     and took delight in his own person:
13. But when Truth came upon him,
     his vanity deserted him,
14. He closed his eyes in death
     and his joints slackened.
15. Hardly had his agony set in
     when the washer of the dead arrived,
16. And prepared his corpse for a grave
     where many will forsake him,
17. Where he will be among the distant dead,
     while his kin suffer bereavement,
18. His wailing women tear their faces
     and black garments are worn for his mourning.
19. How many a wish was nurtured for long
     but never attained by the wishful.
20. I have seen that Truth is not hidden,
     nor are its ways concealed.
21. Look at yourself – what
     provisions do you carry with you
22. For the lonely abode between
     graves where you will dismount,
23. With a low roof
     and rocks piled above you,
24. [Too] remote for neighbourly visits
     and with narrow points of entry?

25. O graves! Inside you
    are those we used to frequent,
26. With whom we used to trade,
    with whom we used to work.
27. With whom we used to consort,
    with whom we used to contend.
28. With whom we shared our food,
    with whom we shared our drink.
29. With whom we were acquainted,
    with whom we exchanged gifts.
30. With whom we once were generous,
    with whom we were polite.
31. With whom out of friendship
    we rarely used to part.
32. With whom but yesterday
    sometimes we joined up closely;
33. They have settled at a place whose settler
    has all ties cut off for ever.
34. Behold, death is a fount
    from which all creation drinks;
35. The last you see will vanish
    like the first have vanished.
36. By your life! Not equal in this matter
    are the knowing and the ignorant!
37. Let it be known by all who know
    that God will ask them [for a reckoning].
38. So hasten to reap victory
    through goodness in word and deed!

VI

Abū L-'Alā al-Ma'arrī

1. Can Nawār be considered part of the brightness of lights
   when gazelles whose sight emaciates [you] are part of
   death?
2. They are white and prey on hearts as though they were
   wide-eyed ones on curving sands and Duwār's holy site.
3. The dwelling's pegs and ropes do not sense
   that in my entrails I conceal my ardent love.
4. Those who forge lies about you found a hearing
   while your passion flares within you [unrequited].

5.   Rise early if the white-skinned maidens chase you;
     like she-camels trailing their new-born calf,

6.   They give the young male camel tender care at nightfall,
     yet all you gain is dazzling eyes and talk of niceties.

7.   They dally with their visitors like gamblers at play;
     and once they find their pleasure they are gone

8.   Like flocks of deer when you detect their musky scent.
     Your heart's desires thus collect but lasting pain.

9.   So let a maiden's twin bracelets and anklets be
     like nose-rings of camels journeying in caravan through morning and
          through night.

10. They hasten with saddle utensils tattered and upon them
     are men disposed to evil trades.

11. Do not lament, for lamentation, is but lowliness!
     Truly, the steeds shall show their worth on the showground.

12. I swear, their lowing shall not protect the wild herds
     at Shāba's stony mount and the soft sands.

13. White hair alarms the man of understanding since
     it will forever herald change of neighbourhood.

14. How wretched are animal creatures; no plant
     feels grief at the sight of white blossoms.

15. It is as though the dweller of the yard had never
     stepped on its ground when he goes to the grave.

16. Those eagles fly up from their nests
     while fates swoop down upon them suddenly.

17. Borrowed items must all be returned;
     hand and body shall be naked of them.

18. Men's phantom shapes in Time are seen
     appearing and vanishing like bubbles;

19. They mix together in [the surge of Time] so that what goes
     is unlike that which comes [down] as they flow.

20. Fate's assault lames all attackers;
     it struck down Abraham with marksman's arrows;

21. So beware – even as you foray far against the enemy –
     of a destiny that pillaged Abū l-Mighwār.

22. Diviners rouse green birds for early augury,
     while Fate's vicissitudes play host to death.

23. If those who crave for wealth but thought of passing eons
     they would not remain seated on their saddles.

24. For the genius is no better than the fool, the youthful lover
     is like the man of wisdom, and the courageous [hero] like the coward.

25. It is said that length of Time can turn
     a sturdy mountain into surging and tumultuous [seas].

26. [Death]-sentences are passed upon mankind and executed justly, with or without defence.

Commentary

1. The rhyme word *bawārī* derives from *barā, yabrī* ('to emaciate'). It here refers to the traditional emaciation of the unhappy lover.

2. Duwār is said to be the name of a heathen shrine which was circumambulated by worshippers (see Lane, 1863, p. 931).

3. According to the notes of the edition, *uwārī* in line 3a is the plural of *awriya*, 'a wooden peg' or 'piece of string' used to attach riding animals.

5. *Ḥawāriyyāt* in line 5a means 'white or fair women' and may also signify 'women of the cities so called by the Arabs of the desert because of their whiteness' (Lane, 1863, p. 666). *Ḥuwāriyyāt* in 5b is derived from *ḥuwār* ('newly born camel') and denotes she-camels having just given birth. For the possible double meaning of lines 5–6, see above, pp. 133f

6. *Ḥawar* literally means 'intense whiteness of the eye and intense blackness of the black thereof' (Lane, 1863, p. 666).

15. Lane defines *ṭawāru dārin* as 'the part of the *finā*' (or 'exterior court or yard') of a house that is co-extensive with the house' (1863, p. 1890).

20. *Khalīl* literally means 'friend', but may also refer to Abraham who is called *al-Khalīl* (see especially Qur'ān 4/124). This meaning may well be intended, especially when seen in conjunction with Abū l-Mighwār in the following line.

21. Abū l-Mighwār (lit. 'father of the fighting man or raider') was the *kunya* of Mālik b. Nuwayra. His memory is celebrated in a number of famous elegies by his brother Mutammim (see Nöldeke, 1864, pp. 87).

22. According to Lane (1863, p. 1210), *zajara al-ṭayra* means 'he threw a pebble at the birds and cried out; and if, in flying they turned their right sides towards him, he augured well from them; but if their left sides, evil'. *Qawāri* (22a) is plural of *qāriya*, synonym of *khuḍāriyy*, a certain greenish bird said to be of evil omen (*ibid.*, p. 755).

26. *Sūr, aswār* denotes a (defensive) wall. According to the notes of the edition, *sūr* may also be a technical term qualifying logical propositions (*qaḍāya*). This reading would suggest that *ṣudafan* in the Cairo text may be a misprint; the manuscripts consulted and the Beirut edition read *suduqan*. The line would then read 'logical propositions circulate among mankind and are [all] ratified as true, with or without *sūr*' [i.e. qualification], signifying that truth and falsehood are of no consequence in the face of death, just as the genius is not better equipped to resist it than the fool (25).

VII

Abū l-ʿAlā al-Maʿarrī

1. Had the wolf-cub understood the crime he committed,
    before attacking a flock of sheep he would have chosen to die,
2. For among the vilest deeds hunger's victim
    can ever perform some day is bloodshed.
3. O wolf, how wrong you are! How often have you met with a midday heat
    which set alight upon you the fuel of its furnace till it burned fiercely?
4. How often have you surprised a young goat in midst
    [of a herd] of she-goats and torn the skin from its bowels?
5. Outcast into distant places, you spend your night without tents built
        [for shelter]
    in the forenoon, nor do you fear your dwelling's collapse;
6. Nor do you clothe your body when the cold comes,
    nor do you wear shoes to protect your feet from soreness.
7. Each time you feed you combine theft and murder;
    why don't you [for once] steal the bread and the heat [of the oven]?
8. In glorification of his Creator, a penitent long used to eat his loaf
        well-seasoned,
    may restrict himself to unseasoned bread,
9. But you do not fast to seek a reward from God; or do you do something
    instead of fasting [to express your] anxiety and repentance?
10. Do you conceal in your heart any penitence for the sheep
    which you frighten, or is this an inveterate disease among your kind?
11. If by chance you seized a bejewelled lady
    you would dismember her and cast aside her bangles and anklets.
12. Have you any regrets for the child whose mother you have bereaved?
    But one like you does not make repentance his banner,
13. Nor is he buried when his fateful hour has come,
    and when he dies in a lair of his, its entrance is not sealed.
14. How many ancestors of yours have perished! Not even the smartest
    among you know what matter they came to after they left.

Glossary of Arabic Technical Terms

Several definitions derive, with slight modifications, from Monroe's glossary in his *Student Anthology of Hispano–Arabic Poetry*, 1974, pp. 391–3

aghrāḍ See *gharaḍ*.

aṭlāl Section of the *qaṣīda* bemoaning the remains of the encampment where the poet once met his beloved.

badī' Art of rhetorical ornamentation based on word play and alliterative sound effects which became increasingly common in medieval Arabic poetry and prose from the early ninth century AD.

dīwān Collected works of a poet, usually arranged according to the alphabetical sequence of the rhyme letter.

al-dunyā This world as opposed to the Hereafter (*al-ākhira*); the term evokes the disappointments of earthly existence and man's exposure to the vicissitudes of Fate.

fakhr The section of the *qaṣīda* devoted to boasting and self-magnification.

gharaḍ (pl. *aghrāḍ*) Often translated as 'genre', the term denotes the traditional thematic units of poetry (e.g. *nasīb, raḥīl, rithā', madīḥ,* q.v.) which in their varied combination make up the polythematic ode (*qaṣīda*).

ḥadīth Record of actions or sayings of the Prophet Muḥammad and his companions.

ḥikma Lit. 'wisdom', here used in reference to wisdom poetry or the wisdom section of the *qaṣīda*.

ḥilm Forbearance, staidness, clemency, 'the management of one's soul and temper on the occasion of excitement and anger' (Lane, 1863, p. 632). *Ḥilm* is one of the virtues of *muruwwa* (q.v.).

jinās Paronomasia; several types are distinguished including *jinās al-tarkīb* and *jinās mulaffaq* (panoromasia in which one or both elements consist of compounds of words) and *jinās tāmm* ('perfect paronomasia', juxtaposition of two homophonous words of different meaning, e.g. *bawāri* and *bawārī* in line 1 of text VI).

khamriyya (pl. *khamriyyāt*) A wine song or a section of a *qaṣīda* devoted to the bacchic theme.

khuṭba Religious sermon, in particular the Friday sermon. The *khuṭba*, centring principally on the theme of admonishment (*wa'ẓ,* q.v.) became a popular literary form in early Arabic prose.

lāmiyya Poem with L as rhyming consonant.

luzūm mā lā yalzam Rhetorical term referring to the observance of additional formal constraints, in particular the use of monorhymes with two or three rhyme letters

215

instead of one as is customary. The term provides the name of Ma'arrī's *Luzūmiyyāt*, a collection of poems exclusively composed in this manner.

madīḥ The panegyrical section of a *qaṣīda*.

mamdūḥ The addressee of the panegyric.

ma'nā (pl. *ma'ānī*) Term used here to refer to individual poetic motifs such as those collected in the *ma'ānī* books (e.g. Ibn Quṭayba, 1949; 'Askarī, 1933).

Mu'allaqa (pl. *Mu'allaqāt*) Term applied to any one of seven (or according to some, ten) pre-Islamic *qaṣīdas* considered to be the greatest masterpieces of early Arabic poetry.

Mujamhara (pl. *Mujamharāt*) The term goes back to the tenth century AD anthology, *Jamharat Ash'ār al-'Arab*, by Abū Zayd al-Qurashī which presents a selection of forty-nine *qaṣīdas* divided into seven groups of seven poems. The first are the *Mu'allaqāt*, the second the *Mujamharāt*.

muruwwa The moral ideal of the ancient Arab tribal ethos comprising cardinal virtues such as bravery, equanimity and generosity.

muṭābaqa Rhetorical term for antithesis, the juxtaposition in one line of two contrary notions.

nasīb Opening section of the *qaṣīda* which evokes the painful memory of a past love.

qāfiya (pl. *qawāfī*) Term denoting the monorhyme of the Arabic poem. A *qāfiya* is made up of a rhyming consonant (*rawiyy*) with or without vowel and stays unchanged throughout the poem.

qaṣīda Polythematic, monorhymed ode, the most characteristic poetic form in Arabic. It may contain a combination of different thematic units (e.g. text II, which comprises *nasīb*, *khamriyya*, *waṣf* and *madīḥ*, q.v.).

rabī'iyya (pl. *rabī'iyyāt*) Poem describing the renewal of nature in spring.

radd al-'ajz 'alā l-ṣadr Rhetorical term denoting the anticipation of the rhyme word in a line. The rhyme word may be anticipated by the prior repetition of the same word, by the occurrence of a word of similar sound and different meaning (e.g. *bawāri* and *bawārī* in line 1 of text VI) or by the occurrence of a derivative of the same root (e.g. *dam'ī* and *dumū'* in line 5 of text I).

raḥīl The journey theme in the *qaṣīda*.

rawiyy Rhyme letter of the monorhyme (see also *qāfiya*).

ridf Long vowel preceding the rhyme letter (*rawiyy*, q.v.).

riḥla The journey which is the subject of the *raḥīl* (q.v.).

rithā' Elegy or elegiac section of a *qaṣīda*.

ṣabr Patience or equanimity, one of the cardinal virtues which make up *muruwwa* (q.v.).

shayb Lit. 'hoariness', term used in reference to the section on old age in the *qaṣīda*.

ṣu'lūk (pl. *ṣa'ālīk*) Indomitable bedouin raider admired for his courage but disowned by his kinsmen on account of his acts of indiscriminate theft and robbery. Some *ṣa'ālīk* became famous pre-Islamic poets, e.g. Shanfarā and Ta'abbaṭa Sharran.

tazhīd Incitement to lead a life of renunciation and piety.

tuqā God-fearing piety, the prime virtue extolled in the *zuhdiyyāt* (q.v.).

'Udhrī A style of love poetry attributed to early Islamic poets such as Jamīl and Urwa ibn Ḥizām but much cultivated in ninth-century Baghdad. It expresses a pure love characterized by sexual denial which could lead to the death of the lover.

waṣf Descriptive poetry or descriptive section of a *qaṣīda* (e.g. the description of the Caliph Mutawakkil's lake in text II).

waṣiyya (pl. *waṣāyā*) Term used in reference to poems designed to impart wisdom and teachings on the ethic precepts of virtuous life; they are usually addressed to a specific person.

waʿẓ Admonishment to mankind to be mindful of death and observe a life of piety and restraint, this being the central theme of early religious sermons (*khuṭba*, q.v.) and ascetic poetry (*zuhdiyyāt*, q.v.).

zuhd Asceticism, leading a life of piety and restraint.

zuhdiyya (pl. *zuhdiyyāt*) Poem extolling the precepts of asceticism.

Notes

Introduction

1　See Badawi, 1978, p. 43 and Heinrichs, 1973, p. 48, as discussed on page 2f.
2　Heinrichs, 1973, p. 26. 'Phantastic' refers to 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī's term *takhyīlī*.
3　Kowalski's theory has been summarized by Heinrichs, 1969, pp. 30–1.
4　For an overview, see Scheindlin, 1974, pp. 1ff, and Gelder, 1982, pp. 14ff. See also Ullmann, 1981, pp. 136f.
5　See Jakobson's structuralist analyses of poems in his *Questions de poétique*, 1973. Jakobson's method has also been used by Jacobi for her analysis of a poem by Ibn al-Mu'tazz (1975).
6　In this context see also the works of Müller, 1981, Monroe, 1974, 1976, and Ullmann, 1981, p. 137.

1　The Islamic panegyric

1　References to translations and discussions of this passage are found in Gelder, 1982, p. 43, n. 141, and Scheindlin, 1974, p. 3, n. 8.
2　Translated by Nicholson, as cited in Arberry, 1965, p. 5.
3　See Abu Deeb, 1975, pp. 179ff.
4　For a discussion of such views, see Scheindlin, 1974, p. 3.
5　*Kitāb al-Tāj fī Akhlāq al-Mulūk*, attributed to Jāḥiẓ, 1970, p. 11. See also Lambton, 1974, pp. 409ff.
6　For a discussion of these, see Wolff-Windegg, 1958.
7　On the controversy between Ḥajjāj and Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik, see Wellhausen, 1902, pp. 160ff.
8　See Bustānī, 1962, vol. II, p. 114.
9　See Appendix, text II, lines 39–40.
10　Abū Tammām, 1951, vol. I, p. 59, as translated by Arberry, 1965, p. 56. See also Badawi, 1978, p. 54.
11　Buḥturī, 1963, p. 1630. For an ancient Egyptian example, see Erman, 1966, p. 289.
12　See Dumézil, 1948.
13　Buḥturī, 1963, p. 151, as translated by Gelder, 1982, p. 131.
14　For a study of the fusion of Islamic concepts and Arab tribal heritage in some poems of Abū Tammām, see Stetkevych, 1979.
15　See de Rougement, 1971.
16　It is, therefore, not surprising perhaps that *'Udhrī* poetry has been seen as an expression of protest against the socio-economic order of the reigning Umayyads (see Djedidi, 1975).
17　Often called *dahr, zamān, layālī, ḥawādith al-dahr, nawā'ib al-dahr*, etc. On the concept of Fate in pre-Islamic poetry, see Caskel, 1926, pp. 42ff.
18　See Abū Tammām's line cited on p. 16. The Caliph's deeds outlast the beauty of the gardens which will be forgotten.
19　See Appendix, text II, line 14.
20　See Badawi, 1980, p. 14.

218

21 See Introduction, p. 4.
22 This pair of terms has been discussed more extensively in my article, 'Islamic Kingship and Arabic panegyric poetry in the early 9th century' (Sperl, 1977); see also Gelder, 1982, p. 205.
23 See Buḥturī, 1963, p. 2209.
24 *Ibid.*, pp. 740ff.
25 Badawi (1980, pp. 7–8) presents a different view: while the Primary *qaṣīda* was a ritual and the ancient poet had 'a functional role in society', the Secondary *qaṣīda* was 'predominantly a literary work' with the modern poet performing 'a purely secondary role, an aesthetic role', limited to providing the ancient forms with 'decoration and embellishment'. Badawi sees the root of the difference in the fact that the ancient poet was the creator of a poetic form which sprang from the 'primary experience' of his immediate environment, whereas the modern poet 'had to work within the framework of the old *qaṣīda*' and wrote products of 'literary experience'. However, the forms and themes of a literary tradition may retain a profound ritualistic significance which can, by far, outlast the particular social or historical circumstances of their origin. Their age and immutability, their very removal from everyday experience may, in fact, render their hieratic quality more powerful. Similarly, the evocative power and ritualist function of the Secondary *qaṣīda*, the Islamic panegyric, reside precisely in its traditionalistic character. I would, therefore, agree with Kudelin, who sees the persistence of Arabic literary convention in the classical age, not as a result of artificiality or insincerity, but as the expression of a mode of existence strictly regulated by certain norms and values. As Bürgel states in his review: 'Der Kanon der Konvention ist ... nicht Zeichen literarischer Dekadenz und geistiger Erstarrung, sondern verkörpert in Gegenteil das überwirkliche, "raum und zeitlose" Ideal, das – im Leben wie in der Kunst – nie erreicht, aber immer aufs neue angestrebt wird' (1978, p. 438).
26 This point has also been stressed by Kudelin, as stated in Bürgel's review of his book on classical Spanish–Arabic poetry (Bürgel, 1978, p. 438).
27 Lévi-Strauss, as cited by Abu Deeb, 1975, p. 181.
28 The creative skill with which classical Arabic poets have unceasingly remoulded the elements of a seemingly narrow, literary convention has often been remarked upon. Monroe, for example, concludes his discussion on a poem by Ibn 'Ammār as follows: 'By creating these startling relationships, he [Ibn 'Ammār] gives a freshness to reality, and is able to do so within the conservatism of the old tradition, without searching for new metaphors, but simply by rearranging the old ones into new patterns' (1974, p. 24). Similarly, Kudelin says about the Arab *waṣf*: 'In ungewöhnlichen Verbindungen, neuartig und bedeutsam aufeinander bezogen, füllen sich die traditionellen Inhalte' (quoted by Bürgel, 1978, p. 440).

2 Buḥturī

1 See Buḥturī, 1963, p. 1253.
2 See Mehren, 1853, p. 161.
3 This also applies if the reading of manuscript (b) is accepted (see Buḥturī, 1963, p. 1254, n. 8): *kādat tunahnihu 'azmatī 'abarātihā* ('my resolve almost restrained her tears').
4 See Lane, 1863, article on *darr*.
5 The alternative reading of line 8 (see above, n. 3) does not alter the essential antithesis: the ruler's *'azm* is more powerful than that of either poet or beloved.
6 The relation between the two lines draws attention to a phonological leitmotif of the poem. It is constituted by the phonemes B and D as evident in the roots *bdw, byd, bdd.* and *bdhdh* (see lines 7, 9, 11, 12, 27, 31, 33).
7 The echo of the theme of the reprovers in lines 13 and 17 leads to the fourth instance of sectional parallelism in the poem. The lines are the second of the two, four-line sections, E and F, which are also linked by the repetition of *mutayaqqiẓ* (12, 19) and resumptions of imagery like those of *ḥatf* and *rabī'* in *najī'* and *nadan* (12, 16).
8 See Buḥturī, 1963, p. 2414.
9 On Solomonic legends in the Islamic Middle Ages, see Bargebuhr, 1968, pp. 137f, 225, n. 208.
10 See Qur'ān 27/44, also Bargebuhr, 1968, p. 139.

3 Mihyār al-Daylamī

1 For the figure of Zurāra and the literary allusion in this line, see Bevan, 1905, vol. I, p. 182, lines 3.

2   Ascent and elevation represent the new *Wazir*'s exaltedness and the fame of his tribe in some other images: see the start of the *madīḥ* ('a banner of glory was hoisted in Babylon', 39). The *Wazir*'s generosity is depicted in such terms: his *athāfī* (stones for the placement of cooking pots) are high (72), sandalwood makes his camp-fire flare high (74). His virtuous course is likened to a tiresome journey in high lands (83), and his tribe ascends the mountain of glory to follow the untrodden path of high endeavour (86).

3   Other similar thematic developments suggest themselves in the various usages of *jalasa*, *qaʻada*, *qāma*, and *rakiba*, as well as *ṭalaba, gharaba, qaruba*. See also the theme of darkness and light (71, 78, 112) or the motif of the 'bloodstained hand' (15, 73, also 27).

4   'Abīd b. Al-Abraṣ as translated by Lyall, 1913, p. 9.

5   On Sām and Ḥām as images of colour, see Abū Tammām, 1951, vol. III, p. 156, line 34.

6   *Ibid.*, p. 82. See also text I, line 37, as well as Ibn Qutayba, 1949, p. 283.

7   See Labīd, *Muʻallaqa*, line 67, in Bustānī, 1966, p. 110. For another comparison of a ship to ostriches, see 'Askari, 1933, vol. II, p. 138.

8   In the *madīḥ* of Mutawakkil (see text II), Buḥturī explores this universe in its entirety: ultimately the natural world is made subservient to the Caliph and God.

9   On *ishtiyām* and *nūtī*, see Fränkel, 1886, pp. 221f; also Buḥturī, 1963, p. 983, n. 23.

10   For another example of the same use in Mihyār's *Dīwān*, see Mihyār al-Daylamī, 1925, vol. I, p. 74.

4   Abū l-'Atāhiya

1   See text II, line 2. For another occurrence of *bahja* in such a context, see Ḍayf, 1969, p. 401, line 17.

2   See Abū l-'Atāhiya, 1969 (the pagination follows Cheikho's edition, Beirut, 1887), p. 207, line 10.

3   Becker, 1924–32, vol. I, pp. 501ff. For examples in the *zuhdiyyāt*, see Abū l-'Atāhiya, 1969, p. 8, lines 8f, p. 76, lines 2f, p. 220, lines 7f.

4   Translated by Ali, n.d., p. 1096.

5   For similar examples, see Abū l-'Atāhiya, 1969, p. 156, line 5, p. 197, lines 7f.

6   Translated by Lyall, 1913, p. 18.

7   See Ṭarafa's *Muʻallaqa*, in Bustānī, 1966, p. 64.

8   On the reproachers, see p. 25.

9   For similar examples, see Labīd in Bustānī, 1966, p. 120, especially lines 4 and 6; also al-Ṭāʼī, *ibid.*, p. 301, especially lines 7f.

10   On the contrast between the reproacher (*'ādhila*) of the beginning, and the mourning women (*nawā'iḥ*) at the end, cf. lines 4 and 41: attack for insufficiency turns into mourning for lost perfection. See also the use of *mutaraddid* in lines 5 and 40 which links beginning and end lexically and semantically.

11   On the symbolism of the horse in the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda*, see Stetkevych, 1983, p. 104.

12   See Labīd's *Muʻallaqa*, lines 75f, in Bustānī, 1966, pp. 111f.

13   *muʻtabiran bi-man maḍā mina l-qurūni l-khāliya*, see Abū l-'Atāhiya, 1887, p. 307.

14   On the 'draught of death' see Caskel, 1926, p. 25. See also 'Antara in Bustānī, 1966, p. 164, line 1.

15   The only *zād* appropriate to the grave being, of course, *tuqā*, 'piety' (see p. 81).

16   See Labīd, *Muʻallaqa*, line 10, in Bustānī, 1966, p. 104. Translation by A. F. L. Beeston (unpublished). See also the famous beginning of the *Muʻallaqa* by al-Aʻshā (Qurashī, 1963, p. 119).

5   Maʻarrī

1   Cf. text V, line 38.

2   Maʻarrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 218, line 2. Both *aʻwar* and *aʻraj* are used as epithets of ravens and crows (see Lane, 1863, p. 1997; Fischer, 1965, p. 134).

3   See Maʻarrī, 1892, vol. II, p. 289, lines 3ff.

4   See Rāzī, 1973, pp. 20f, 26f.

5   See Wensinck, 1932, ch. 12.

6   Cf. the notion of reason in poetry as discussed by Jurjānī, 1954, ch. 16.

7   Maʻarrī's notion of *ṣidq* ('truth') and *kadhib* ('falsehood') in poetry is reflected in Jurjānī's

discussion of this topic (Jurjānī, 1954, pp. 249ff). According to the latter, *ṣidq* may denote 'items of wisdom, compatible with reason' (p. 250, lines 4–6), a definition which clearly points to Wisdom poetry, and agrees with the avowed practice of the *Luzūmiyyāt*.

8 However, Ma'arrī's attempt seems to have been anticipated to a degree in *rajaz* poetry. Ullmann mentions an *urjūza mukhammasa* the rhymes of which run through the whole alphabet (1966, p. 52). Similar comprehensiveness is found in the *Muqṣūra* of Ibn Durayd, the rhyme words of which are said to include most words ending on *alif maqṣūra* (Ibn Durayd, 1961, p. k).

9 Explained by Bīrūnī, 1934: *sinūna ma'lūmatu l-'adadi ya'ūdu fīhā amrun mā ilā ḥālihi bi-'aynihi.*

10 See Bustānī, 1966, p. 36. Translation in Arberry, 1957, p. 65.

11 Ullmann, 1981; for the wolf description attributed to Buḥturī see Buḥturī, 1963, pp. 740ff.

12 Notice the word play: *qurṣ* and *ḥadam* can mean 'sundisc' and 'heat', as well as 'bread' and 'oven'.

13 See Shanfarā, *Lāmiyya*, line 26 (Bustānī, 1966, p. 7). On the companionship between man of *muruwwa* and wolf, see also the wolf section in the *Mu'allaqa* of Imru' al-Qays as well as Farazdaq's nightly encounter with a wolf (Bustānī, 1962, vol. II, p. 129).

14 *Najs* in the edition may be a misprint. The British Library manuscripts BR Or. 3160 and 5319, as well as the 1886 Bombay edition agree on *nahs*. Furthermore, *nahs* and *sa'd* are frequently contrasted (see Ma'arrī, 1892, p. 268, line 10).

15 Labīd, *Mu'allaqa*, line 27, in Bustānī, 1966, p. 106. Translation by Beeston (unpublished).

16 For another example of the same theme see Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 367, line 3.

17 None more so than the Najdī princess evoked by the name Da'd, whose beauty is celebrated in the *qaṣīda yatīma* (see Bustānī, 1969, vol. III, pp. 331ff).

18 See also the preceding poem in the corpus, Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 259, line 8.

19 For similar examples with respect to light imagery, see p. 115.

20 Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. II, p. 282, lines 1–2. *Iyām* and *Yām* are the names of two tribes (*ibid.*, 2).

21 As Wensinck has shown, the image of the 'dark ocean' is one of the archetypes of Semitic literature, symbolizing primeval chaos or death (see Wensinck, 1918, pp. 1–5, 40–56).

22 On Uways al-Qaranī, see Hussaini, 1967, pp. 103–13.

23 Al-Hujwīrī relates that Uways will intercede for 'a multitude of my people as many as the sheep of Rabī'a and Muḍar' (*ibid.*, p. 109). With its reference to the 'unsuspecting flock' (*thulla fī ghafla*), Ma'arrī's line appears like a comment on this tradition.

24 Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. II, p. 169, line 11. The line illustrates a statement on the uncreatedness of the world (*ibid.*, line 10).

25 For an alternative reading, see the analysis of the *nasīb*, pp. 133.

26 Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 9, lines 8f. Jarwal is al-Ḥuṭay'a al-'Absī. For the poem from which the line is drawn, see Ḥuṭay'a, 1958, p. 278. See also Hāwī, 1970, p. 31.

27 For other, related examples, see the *Mu'allaqa* of Zuhayr or the poems of Ḥātim al-Ṭā'ī (Bustānī, 1962, vol. I, pp. 299ff).

28 Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 43, For another significant example of the topos, see Mutanabbī, 1956, vol. I, p. 324, line 36.

29 See the final couplet of the *Lāmiyya* (Bustānī, 1962, vol. I, p. 12).

30 Mufaḍḍal, 1963, poem 50, line 9. Shāba and Iram are mountains.

31 Observe the contrasting allusion to Imru' al-Qays's *Mu'allaqa*, line 62 in Bustānī, 1962, p. 36. There, the virgins of Duwār are an image of the hunter's prey; here they are *dawārin lil-qulūbi*, 'lying in wait for the hearts'.

32 See Lane 1863, p. 1685: *'ṣarā l-mā'a fī ẓahrihi zamānan*, he retained the *mā'* (i.e. sperma) in his back for a long time by abstaining from sexual intercourse'!

33 On this use of *mishwār*, see also poem RI, line 13 (Ma'arrī, 1892, vol. I, p. 336).

34 See also *bīḍ* in line 2 which in other contexts denotes the (white) swords (cf. Badawi, 1978, p. 48).

35 The frequency of the eight hemistich patterns in text I is as follows: A/10; B/26; C/12; D/9; E/3; F/3; G/10; H/3.

6 Mannerism

1 See Friedrich's comments on a sonnet by G. Preti: '... was wahrgenommen werden will ist das varierende Spiel der Antithesen', 1964, p. 552.

2 See the remarks on the sincerity of the panegyric poet on page 27.

3   The dual in the couplet can also refer to *nābān* in line 6. But such a reading would not affect the overall meaning.

4   For a survey of these, see Murillo, 1972, pp. 7–24.

5   For this and the following, see Curtius, 1953, pp. 273f.

6   See Heinrichs, 1974, p. 122 and Schoeler, 1974, ch. 3.

7   That this overlap is not due to lack of choice is evident in the *Luzūmiyyāt* where Ma'arrī derives twenty-six rhyme words from the *qāfiya fīha* alone (1892. vol. II, pp. 412f, metre *basīṭ*).

8   Compare model A, line 28 with text II, line 30; model A, iine 9 with text II, line 18; model B, lines 15, 16 with text II, lines 26, 27, etc.

9   In the concluding lines of Shanfarā's ode, separation (dissociation from society) is transcended in a similar image (see Bustānī, 1966, vol. I, p. 12, lines 4f).

10   Cf. beginning and end (lines 1 and 40).

11   *Shawl* is pl. of *shā'il*, 'a she-camel raising her tail', having conceived. The structural axis of the imagery as well as the alliteration between *shawl* and *shawk* bring to the fore another well-attested meaning of the word: 'scorpion's tail' or 'sting' (see Lane, 1863, p. 1622).

12   *waṭi'a*, 'to tread', may also mean 'to have sexual intercourse'.

13   On 'collocation' and 'set' as categories of lexis, see D. C. Freeman, ed., 1970, pp. 73ff.

14   These sums are obtained by dividing the number of phonemes by the number of lines.

Bibliography

Abbreviations

EC I   *The Encyclopedia of Islam.* Leiden 1913–36
EC II   *The Encyclopedia of Islam.* New Edition, Leiden 1954–
JAL   *Journal of Arabic Literature.*
WKAS   *Wörterbuch der klassischen arabischen Sprache.* Wiesbaden 1970–
ZDMG   *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.*

Abū l-'Atāhiya 1887. *Dīwān*, Cheikho (ed.), Beirut.
    1969. *Dīwān.* Beirut.
Abū Deeb, K. 1975. 'Towards a structural analysis of pre-Islamic poetry', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 6.
    1976. 'Towards a structural analysis of pre-Islamic poetry (II), the Eros vision', *Edebiyāt*, 1, no. 1.
    1977. 'Studies in Arabic literary criticism: the concept of organic unity', *Edebiyāt*, 2, 57–89.
Abū Tammām 1951– *Dīwān Abī Tammām bi-Sharḥ al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī.* 4 vols., Cairo.
    1967. *Dīwān al-Ḥamāsa* with commentary by Marzūqī. 4 vols., Cairo. n.d. *Dīwān al-Ḥamāsa* with commentary by Tabrīzī. Damascus.
Adūnīs 1971. *Muqaddima lil-Shi'r al-'Arabī.* Beirut.
Ali, A. Y. n.d. *The Glorious Kur'an.* Translation and Commentary, Beirut.
Āmidī, al- 1961. *al-Muwāzana bayna Shi'r Abī Tammām wal-Buḥturī.* 2 vols., Cairo.
'Anbārī, al-, Abū Bakr 1980. *Sharḥ al-Qaṣā'id al-Sab' al-Ṭiwāl.* Cairo.
Arberry, A. J. 1957. *The Seven Odes.* London.
    1965. *Arabic Poetry – a Primer for Students.* Cambridge.
Aristotle 1973. *The Poetics.* Cambridge, Massachusetts.
'Askarī, al- 1933. *Dīwān al-Ma'ānī.* Cairo.
Aṣma'ī, Abū Sa'īd 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Qurayb, al-1967. *al-Aṣma'iyyāt.* Cairo.
Audebert, C. 1975, 1977. 'Reflexions sur la composition des poèmes d'Umar Ibn Abī Rabī'a', *Cahiers de linguistique, d'orientalisme et de slavistique*, nos. 5–6, 17–29; nos. 9, 5–18.
Bachmann, P. 1975. 'Some considerations on the concept of time in al-Mutanabbī's poems', *Proceedings of the VIth congress of Arabic and Islamic studies*, Visby/Stockholm, 13–19 August 1972, 113–128 (Leiden).
Badawi, M. M. 1978. 'The function of rhetoric in medieval Arabic poetry', *JAL*, 9, 43–56.

1980. 'From primary to secondary *qaṣīdas*: thoughts on the development of classical Arabic poetry', *JAL*, 11, 1–31.

Bargebuhr, F. P. 1968. *The Alhambra*. Berlin.

Becker, C. H. 1924–32. *Islamstudien*. 2 vols., Leipzig.

Beeston, A. F. L. 1977. *Selections from the Poetry of Baššār*. Cambridge.

Bencheikh, J. E. 1977. 'Le Cénacle poétique du calife al-Mutawakkil', *Bulletin des études orientales*, Paris, 29, 33–52.

Bevan, A. A. 1905. *The Naqā'id of Jarīr and Farazdaq*. 3 vols., Leiden.

Bīrūnī, al- 1934. *The Book of Instruction in the Elements of the Art of Astrology*. London.

Buḥturī, al- 1963–78. *Dīwān*. 5 vols., Cairo.

Bürgel, J. C. 1965. *Die ekphrastischen Epigramme des Abū Ṭālib al-Ma'mūnī*, Literaturkundliche Studie über einen arabischen Conceptisten (Nachr. Ak. Wiss. Phil.-hist. Kl. Jg., 1965, nr. 14), Göttingen.

1974. 'Die beste Dichtung ist die lügenreichste': Wesen und Bedeutung eines literarischen Streites des arabischen Mittelalters im Lichte komparatistischer Betrachtung, *Oriens*, 23–4, 7–102.

1978. Review article on A. B. Kudelin, *Klacciceskaja arabo-ispanskaja poesija konec X-seredina XII v.*, Moscow, 1973, *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung*, 437–42.

Bustānī, F. 1962. *al-Majānī al-Ḥadītha*. Beirut, vol. II.

1966. *al-Majānī al-Ḥadītha*. Beirut, vol. I.

1969. *al-Majānī al-Ḥadītha*. Beirut, vol. III.

Canard, M. 1976. Review article on A. B. Kudelin, *Klacciceskaja arabo-ispanskaja poesija konec X-seredina XII v.*, Moscow, 1973, *Arabica*, 23, 315–30.

Caskel, W. 1926. *Das Schicksal in der altarabischen Poesie*. Leipzig.

Cowell, D. 1974 'Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi and his *ghazal* verse', *JAL*, 5, 72–82.

1975. 'Poetic structure in Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi', *Actes XXIXe Congrès international des orientalistes (Paris 1974). Etud. arabes et islamiques, II, Langue et littérature*, 2, 46–51.

Culler, J. 1975. *Structuralist Poetics*. London.

Curtius, E. R. 1953. *European Literature and Latin Middle Ages*. Translation W. R. Trask, London.

Ḍayf, S. 1969. *al-Fann wa-Madhāhibuhu fī al-Shi'r al-'Arabī*. Cairo.

1972. *al-'Aṣr al-'Abbāsī al-Awwal*. Cairo.

Djedidi, T. L. 1975. 'Interpretation sociologique de la "stratégie sexuelle" des poètes "Udhrites"', *Actes XXIXe Congrès international des orientalistes (Paris, 1974) Etud. arabes et islamiques, II, Langue et littérature*, 2, 52–9.

Dumézil, G. 1948. *Mitra-Varuna, Essai sur deux representations indo-européennes de la souveraineté*. Paris.

Eliade, M. 1975. *Rites and Symbols of Initiation*. New York, Harper Colophon.

Erman, A. 1966. *The Ancient Egyptians – a Source Book of their Writings*. Harper Torchbooks.

Fallāl, A. A. al- 1947. *Mihyār al-Daylamī wa-Shi'ruhu*. Cairo.

Fayrūzabādī 1952. *Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ*. Cairo.

Fischer, W. 1965. *Farb- und Formbezeichnungen in der Sprache der altarabischen Dichtung*. Wiesbaden.

Fränkel, S. 1886. *Die aramäischen Fremdwörter im Arabischen*. Leiden.

Frankfort, H. 1948. *Kingship and the Gods*. Chicago.

Freeman, D. C., ed. 1970. *Style in Language*. London.

Friedrich, H. 1964. *Epochen der italienischen Lyrik*. Frankfurt.

Gelder, G. J. H. van 1982. *Beyond the Line. Classical Arabic Literary Critics on the Coherence and Unity of the Poem*. Leiden.

Hamori, A. 1974. *The Art of Medieval Arabic Literature*. Princeton.

Ḥāwī, I. 1970. *al-Ḥuṭay'a*. Beirut.

Heidegger, M. 1957. *Der Satz vom Grund*. Pfullingen.

    1959. 'Der Weg zur Sprache', *Die Sprache*, Darmstadt, 93–114.

Heinrichs, W. 1969. *Arabische Dichtung und Griechische Poetik*. Beirut.

    1971. Review of Bürgel, 'Die ekphrastischen Epigramme des Abū Ṭālib al-Ma'mūnī', *ZDMG*, 121, 166–90.

    1973. 'Literary theory, – the problem of its efficiency' in *Arabic Poetry: Theory and Development*, G. E. von Grünebaum (ed.), Wiesbaden, pp. 19–69.

    1974. '"Manierismus" in der arabischen Literatur' in *Islamwissenschaftliche Abhandlungen* (Fritz Meier Festschrift), R. Gramlich (ed.), Wiesbaden, pp. 118–27.

Hopkins, G. M. 1918. *Poems*. London.

Hussaini, A. S. 1967. ''Uways al-Qaranī and the Uwaysī sufis', *The Muslim World*, 103–13.

Ḥuṭay'a, al- 1958. *Dīwān*. Cairo.

Ibn Durayd 1961. *Sharḥ Maqṣūrat Ibn Durayd*. Cairo.

Ibn Qutayba 1949. *Kitāb al-Ma'ānī al-Kabīr fī Abyāt al-Ma'ānī*. Hyderabad.

Jacobi, R. 1971. *Studien zur Poetik der altarabischen Qaṣīde*. Wiesbaden.

    1975. 'Ibn al-Mu'tazz: Dair 'Abdūn: a structural analysis', *JAL*, 6, 35–56.

Jāḥiẓ, al- 1948–50. *al-Bayān wal-Tabyīn*. 4 vols., Cairo.

    1970. *Kitāb al-Tāj fī Akhlāq al-Mulūk*. Beirut.

Jakobson, R. 1973. *Questions de poétique*. Paris.

Jurjānī, 'Abd al-Qāhir, al- 1954. *Asrār al-Balāgha*, H. Ritter (ed.), Istanbul.

Kafrāwī, M. A. 1951. 'A critical study of the poetry of Isma'īl b. al-Qāsim known as Abū l-'Atāhiya', Ph.D. thesis, SOAS, London.

Kazimirsky, A. de Biberstein 1846. *Dictionnaire Arabe-Français*. Paris, vol. I-II.

Kremer, F. von 1888. *Über die philosophischen Gedichte des Abū l-'Alā' al-Ma'arrī*. Wien.

Lambton, A. K. S. 1974. 'Islamic political thought' in J. Schacht and C. E. Bosworth, *The Legacy of Islam*. Oxford, pp. 404–24.

Lane, E. W. 1863. *Arabic-English Lexicon*. London.

Latham, J. D. 1979. 'Towards a better understanding of al-Mutanabbī's poem on the battle of al-Ḥadath', *JAL*, 10, 1–22.

Lyall, C. 1913. *The Diwans of 'Abīd Ibn al-Abraṣ and 'Āmir Ibn aṭ-Ṭufail*. Leiden and London.

Ma'arrī, al- 1862. *al-Luzūmiyyāt*. 2 vols., Cairo.

    1938. *Kitāb al-Fuṣūl wal-Ghāyāt*. Cairo.

    1945. *Shurūḥ Siqt al-Zand*. Cairo.

    1950. *Risālat al-Ghufrān*, Bint al-Shāti' (ed.), Cairo.

    1952. *Luzūm mā lā Yalzam*. Beirut.

    1970. *Sharḥ al-Mukhtār min Luzūmiyyāt Abī l-'Alā' li-Abī Muḥammad al-Baṭalyūsī*, Cairo.

    Luzūm mā lā Yalzam, British Library manuscripts BR Or. 3160, 5319.

Malti-Douglas, F. 1976. 'Ibn Zaydūn: towards a thematic analysis', *Arabica*, 23, 63–76.

Mehren, A. F. M. 1853. *Die Rhetorik der Araber*. Kopenhagen, Wien.

Mihyār al-Daylamī 1925. *Dīwān Mihyār al-Daylamī*. 4 vols., Cairo.

Monroe, J. T. 1974. *Hispano–Arabic Poetry: a Student Anthology*. Berkeley, California.
1976. 'The structure of an Arabic *muwashshaḥ* with a bilingual *kharja*', *Edebiyat*, 1, 113–23.

Mufaḍḍal al-Ḍabbī, al- 1963. *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*. Cairo.

Müller, G. 1981. *Ich bin Labīd und das ist mein Ziel. Zum Problem der Selbstbehauptung in der altarabischen Qaṣīde*. Wiesbaden.

Murillo, J. 1972. 'The Mannered and the Mannerist' in *The Meaning of Mannerism*, F. W. Robinson and S. G. Nichols (eds.), Hanover, New Hamshire.

Muslim b. al-Walīd, 1958. *Sharḥ Dīwān Ṣarīʿ al-Ghawānī*. Cairo.

Mutanabbī, al- 1956. *Dīwān Abī Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbī bi-Sharḥ Abī l-Baqāʾ al-ʿUkbarī*. 4 vols., Cairo.

Nicholson, R. A. 1921. *Studies in Islamic Poetry*. Cambridge.

Nöldeke, T. 1864. *Beiträge zu Kenntnis der Poesie der alten Araber*. Hanover.
1961. *Delectus Veterum Carminum Arabicorum*. Wiesbaden.

Qurashī, al- 1963. *Jamharat Ashʿār al-ʿArab*. Beirut.

Rāzī, Abū Bakr al- 1973. *al-Ṭibb al-Nafsānī*. Beirut.

de Rougemont, D. 1971. *L'Amour et l'Occident*. Paris.

de Saussure, F. 1986. *Cours de linguistique générale*. Paris.

Scheindlin, R. P. 1974. *Form and Structure in the Poetry of Muʿtamid Ibn'Abbād* Leiden.

Schoeler, G. 1973. 'Die Einteilung der Dichtung bei den Arabern', *ZDMG*, 123, 9–55.
1974, *Arabische Naturdichtung, Zahriyyāt, Rawḍiyyāt und Rabīʿiyyāt von ihren Anfängen bis aṣ-Ṣanawbarī*, Beirut.

Schoenberg, A. 1975. *Style and Idea* (Collected Writings). London.

Seidenstricker, T. 1983. *Die Gedichte des Šamardal Ibn Šarīk*. Wiesbaden.

Sophocles, 1974. *The Theban Plays*. London, Penguin Classics.

Sperl, S. 1977. 'Islamic Kingship and Arabic panegyric poetry in the early 9th century', *JAL*, 8, 20–35.

Stetkevych, S. P. 1979. 'The ʿAbbāsid poet interprets history: three *qaṣīdas* by Abū Tammām', *JAL*, 10, 49–64.
1983. 'Structuralist analyses of pre-Islamic poetry: critique and new directions', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 43, 85–107.
1984. 'The Ṣuʿlūq and his poem: a paradigm of passage *manqué*', *Journal of American Oriental Society*, 104, no. 4, 661–78.

Ṭayyib, al- A. 1950. 'Abū l-ʿAlāʾ al-Marʿarrī as a poet: an aesthetic appreciation', SOAS, Ph.D. thesis, London.
1970. *al-Murshid ilā Fahm Ashʿār al-ʿArab wa-Sināʿatihā*. Beirut.

Turner, V. W. 1974. *The Ritual Process*. London.

Ullmann, M. 1966. *Untersuchungen zur Rajazpoesie*. Wiesbaden.
1981. 'Das Gespräch mit dem Wolf', Beiträge zur Lexikographie des klassischen Arabischen Nr. 2 (Sitzungsber. Bayer. Ak. Wiss. Phil. -hist. Kl. Jg., 1981, Heft 2), München.

Wansbrough, J. 1977. *Quranic Studies*. Oxford.

Wellhausen, J. 1902. *Das arabische Reich und sein Sturz*. Berlin.

Wensinck, A. J. 1918. *The Ocean in the Literature of the Western Semites*. Amsterdam.
1932. *The Muslim Creed*. Cambridge.

Wolff-Windegg, P. 1958. *Die Gekrönten – Sinn und Sinnbilder des Königtums.* Stuttgart.
Worringer, W. 1919. *Abstraktion und Einfühlung.* München.
Zuckerkandl, V. 1958. 'Mimesis', *Merkur*, 12, 225–40.

Index