Structure and Meaning in Medieval Arabic and Persian Poetry

Orient pearls

Julie Scott Meisami

STRUCTURE AND MEANING IN MEDIEVAL ARABIC AND PERSIAN POETRY

This is the first comprehensive and comparative study of compositional and stylistic techniques in medieval Arabic and Persian lyric poetry. Ranging over some seven centuries, it deals with works by over thirty poets in the Islamic world from Spain to present-day Afghanistan, and examines how this rich poetic tradition exhibits both continuity and development in the use of a wide range of compositional strategies.

Julie Scott Meisami discusses a wide range of key topics including the use of rhetorical figures, metaphors and images, and the principles of structural organization within lyric poetry. She provides detailed analyses of a large number of poetic texts, to reveal how structural and semantic features interact to bring meaning to the individual poem.

The book also examines works by the indigenous critics of poetry in both Arabic and Persian, and demonstrates the critics' awareness of, and interest in, the techniques which poets employed to construct these eloquent poems.

The book will be of interest to students and scholars of pre-modern poetry and poetics, and Middle Eastern literature.

Julie Scott Meisami, until recently Lecturer in Persian at the Oriental Institute, Oxford University, has published extensively on Arabic and Persian poetry and is the editor of *Edebiyat: The Journal for Middle Eastern Literatures*.

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STRUCTURE AND MEANING IN MEDIEVAL ARABIC AND PERSIAN POETRY

ORIENT PEARLS

Julie Scott Meisami

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This book is dedicated to the memories of two great teachers and dear friends – Elroy J. (Roy) Bundy and Tawfiq Sayigh – who taught me poetry, and who never grudged either their time or their talk

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PREFACE

This book has been a long time in the making. It was begun many years ago, in the context of a discourse about Arabic and Persian poetry which has since moved on to ask other questions, and to question the original questions. Having been begun as research into problems of poetic structure, it has – in the course of major upheavals, a transatlantic move, and various other pressing projects – often been relegated to the back burner, where it finally reached a point when simple rewarming would not do. Consider this, then, a rehashing; some new ingredients have been added (notably the chapters on rhetorical figures, metaphor and imagery), but many of the old ones have been retained, because I remain convinced that there is still much worth saying about them.

For there is still considerable resistance to the notion that Arabic and Persian poems are not merely "coherent" in a general sense, but carefully structured. Has enough work been published to provide evidence of the principles of structural organization? Many more studies exist now than when I first began the research that would ultimately lead to this book; but they are still sparse. But surely (runs another argument) there are more interesting things we could be doing, more important questions we could be asking? Indeed there are; but until we have more than a handful of critical studies of individual poets, or of individual poems, we will not have a critical mass to work with. This is why this particular study is intended to be a broad one; but although it may not provide every detail about every poet, or every poem considered (as well as about many other poets and poems that have not been discussed here), it should furnish starting points for further investigation – investigation which would both apply and test the conclusions arrived at here. No single person can read every single poem by every single poet in both Arabic and Persian – not only what is available in print, but what remains in manuscript, the study of which would require several collective lifetimes; but someone might, on reading this book, find a particular poet interesting, and go on from there. I hope so.

But why study structure at all? Can't we just assume that poems are structured, and get on with it? There are two answers to this. One, is that not everyone, even now, assumes that this is the case; the extant studies, in general, seem to waffle, assuming that there is this kind of poem, or that kind of poem,

but no general principles are involved of which poets, critics and audiences are (in varying degrees) aware. The other is perhaps less self-evident (though it should be): structure does not just keep the poem from falling apart, or the audience from losing track; it is, rather, a means by which the poet conveys meaning. Debates over the relative merits of wording (*lafẓ*) and "meaning" (*maʿnā*) ought not to confuse us; they are means to the same end. The river is never the same river, and the poem is never the same poem: every change in wording, order, structure, changes the meaning, and that meaning is unparaphrasable, unreduceable to "content", "idea", "message". The medium – the words used, their arrangement, rhetorical embellishment – is the message.

One way to study structure is through the close analysis of texts. The study of medieval Arabic and Persian poetry has been complicated by the fact that, traditionally, this close analysis has largely been in the hands of philologists, and to a lesser extent of historians, who have viewed the poetic tradition as a collection of autonomous texts to be mined primarily for philological and/or historical, rather than literary, data, and as located within a generalized "world-view" (or expressive of a specific "mentality") which accounts for the peculiarities (or shortcomings) perceived in the texts themselves. Those who have begun with the views of medieval critics of poetry, and have extrapolated these onto poetic practice, have often taken the critics' statements at face value, or have argued that they failed to see what was happening in the poems. Composing poetry and criticizing it (as many of the medieval critics have remarked) are quite different activities, with quite different goals.

Others, in reaction to the philologists (but, in some senses, their heirs), have focussed on texts from a synchronic standpoint, divorcing poetry from its historical and literary contexts in order to determine, "objectively", how poems are formed – as if poems were formed in a vacuum. But poems are formed to convey meaning; and without attempting to grasp that meaning, not only in terms of text *qua* text, but also in terms of context, we cannot appreciate the function of formal features in conveying that meaning. Formal features are, in many ways, markers: they alert the audience (and we must remember that poetry was, in the first instance, heard rather than read) to what is going on, to where the poem is (or might be) going, to those bits to which they should pay attention. Poems exist in a historical context; but this means that they should not be studied merely to provide us with data about events or persons, but to show us responses to those events and those persons.

What were medieval Arabic and Persian poets doing? They were certainly not composing documents to be of use to an unimaginable posterity; they were embedded in particular times and places, and composed their poems for those times and places. Conversely, they were not mere propagandists or dilettantes, nor were the poems they composed simply contingent; they produced works of great aesthetic value and poetic sophistication. We need therefore to consider attitudes towards poetry, poetic production and reception, and techniques of composition, starting within the tradition itself – within the criticism written by

grammarians, rhetoricians, exegetes, philosophers and others, and the comments of anthologists, biographers, historians and, not least, the poets themselves. No systematic study of the conditions of poetic production and reception, of the effect on poetry of the demands of patronage and of audience expectations, yet exists for either Arabic or Persian poetry (although important steps have been taken in this direction); and this does not purport to be such a study, although I hope to provide some pointers for further research. We need to remember, however, that poetry served many purposes; it might function as propaganda, as lyrics for songs, in sermons, as exemplary or illustrative material in historical and other works, and all these varied uses affected poetic style.

No particular type of discourse in which poetry is discussed should be considered more privileged than any other. "Critics" do not take precedence over philosophers – they simply approach things from a different angle – and all types of discourse contribute to a broader picture of medieval views on poetry and poetic composition. This picture is not, as has often been assumed, either monolithic or hopelessly confused; on the contrary, the variety of views expressed reveals the existence of a dynamic, often heated, debate, in which many points may be reiterated for polemical purposes, while others, because they are largely taken for granted, remain virtually unstated.

There is also much to be gained by comparing the Arabo-Persian tradition to other pre-modern literatures which share the quality of "alterity", of strangeness, of remoteness from our own modern cultural and literary preoccupations – a remoteness which is not merely geographical, nor yet culture-specific, but one of time and, above all, of basic assumptions about poetry. This study is not, and could never aspire to be, fully comparative in this sense; but I hope that it will caution us to be wary of such modern (or pre-post-modern, if one can use such an expression) assumptions that the poetry in question is, on the one hand, "realistic", mimetic, based on "experience" rather than on language, or, on the other, that it is concerned only with language as such, rather than with language as the mirror, or analogue, of reality.

I have, in general, attempted to approach Arabo-Persian poetry against the background of pre-modern European rhetoric, but have not embarked on a comparison of poems, for the simple reason that this already elephantine project would have become even more inflated. But because it is often argued that poets in the relevant traditions had no notion of composition, I feel that there are some important points to be addressed here: what did critics actually talk about, and is this at odds with poetic practice? Moreover, the comparative approach provided what seemed at the time of this book's inception a neat analytical division, which I still feel is a useful one – namely, the division of the discussion according to the classical rhetorical categories of invention, disposition, and ornamentation. Here, again, the goal is to provide starting-points for further investigation, and perhaps, to some extent, to familiarize, for readers on both sides, the unfamiliar.

A final note on my use of the term "Arabo-Persian tradition". While this tradition is by no means a wholly unified one – indeed, its two branches exhibit

a number of important differences, some of which at least I hope to point out – it does have many common features. Much Persian poetry draws upon Arabic; Persian rhetorical manuals are heavily dependent upon Arabic ones. The tradition as a whole shares many fundamental attitudes and assumptions (to say nothing of divisions and points of dispute); it is, therefore, meaningful to speak of these two closely related and interdependent traditions as constituting one larger system, within which both Ottoman and Urdu poetry ought also to be included. These are, however, beyond the scope of this study.

There is much in this book that is old-fashioned: pure, plodding lit. crit. My initial assumption has been that writing a poem is an intentional act, and that a poem is put together in a certain way both because the poet means it to be that way, and because he has a wealth of resources upon which to draw – specifically, other poems, both earlier and contemporary. I still cling to the old-fashioned belief that it is the poet who composes the poem, that poetry is not some sort of "automatic writing" that needs no author. Thus part of my project here must be to relate the poem to the poet, and to the circumstances under which the poem was composed; and I should perhaps apologize for injecting a historical element, which might seem out of place, into what is primarily a literary study. Put it down, first, to a conviction that we cannot construct nice, tightly sealed and mutually exclusive categories of what is literary, historical, and so forth; and second, that I am, like the elephant's child, "'satiably curious", and hope to remain so.

The germ of this project dates from 1982, when I received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to study poetic structure in Arabic and Persian; I am deeply grateful for this initial assistance. To detail the project's various stages would be tedious; and to acknowledge all the people who helped me along the way would perhaps be impossible. I am greatly indebted to the early encouragement of Earl Miner, at Princeton, and James Monroe, at the University of California, Berkeley, who were unflagging in their support; and, more recently, that of Stefan Sperl, of SOAS, and of James Montgomery, the editor of this series, who believed in the book and offered to publish it. Last, but not least, very special thanks must go to Dr. Nadia Jamil, my former research student and sometime research assistant, who read the entire manuscript in draft, performed the dismal task of checking references, copy-edited with an eagle eye, and, most importantly, provided invaluable assistance with the translations from Arabic. (All translations, unless otherwise indicated, are my own, as are any errors.) Finally I must express my gratitude for the enduring patience and support, over the years, of my daughters, Mona and Ayda, who must often have thought their mother was mad, but who nevertheless encouraged her in this seemingly never-ending enterprise.

During the final stages of completion of this study a number of books appeared which I have been unable properly to utilize; these include (the list is not exhaustive) Margaret Larkin's *The Theology of Meaning: 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī's Theory of Poetic Discourse* (1995), Philip Kennedy's *The Wine Song in*

Classical Arabic Poetry (1997), Wen-Chin Ouyang's *Literary Criticism in Medieval Arabic-Islamic Culture* (1997), James Montgomery's *The Vagaries of the Qaṣīda: The Tradition and Practice of Early Arabic Poetry* (1997), Fatemeh Keshavarz's *Reading Mystical Lyric: The Case of Jalal al-Din Rumi* (1998), Thomas Bauer's *Liebe und Liebesdichtung in der arabischen Welt* (1998), Paul Losensky's *Welcoming Fighānī* (1998), and M.C. Lyons's *Identification and Identity in Classical Arabic Poetry* (1999). A final technical note: transcription of Arabic and Persian follows the system of the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (slightly modified); dates are given according to both the Hijri and the Common Era calendars.

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1

INTRODUCTION

Go boldly forth, my simple lay,
Whose accents flow with artless ease,
Like orient pearls at random strung:
Thy notes are sweet, the damsels say;
But O! far sweeter, if they please
The nymphs for whom these notes are sung.
<p style="text-align:right">Sir William Jones, "Persian Song"</p>

Brief encounters

Sir William Jones's rendering of the final line of a *ghazal* by the eighth/
fourteenth-century Persian poet Ḥāfiẓ stands Janus-like at the gateway of the
modern West's encounter with Arabic and Persian poetry. Jones' own encounter
with that poetry was that of an enthusiast: he found in it a potential source for
the revitalization of European poetry, which he felt to be encumbered with
tired, stale imagery and in need of something new, fresh, and vital. "A Persian
Song", his poetic treatment of Ḥāfiẓ's *ghazal* first published in his *Persian
Grammar* (1771), was less a translation than a poetic homage to the qualities he
found in the Persian poet, the "wildness and sweetness" of whose poem so
pleased him that he felt obliged to attempt an English version in verse, which
might recapture its music as well as its content and imagery (1771: 137–40).
The "Persian Song" had a marked impact upon Jones's contemporaries, and on
the English Romantic movement in general (see de Sola Pinto 1946), not least
because it embodied his conviction that lyric might be raised from its status as a
minor genre to become the highest expression of the poet's art.

Jones's own literal translation of Ḥāfiẓ's line shows a somewhat different
understanding of it, closer perhaps to the original:

> O Hafiz! when thou composest verses, thou seemest to make a string of
> pearls: come, sing them sweetly; for heaven seems to have shed on thy
> poetry the sweetness and beauty of the Pleiads. (1771: 136)

Sweetness, beauty, sublimity, intrinsic worth: these are the qualities with which
Ḥāfiẓ's poem is, for Jones, endowed. And when Jones turned Ḥāfiẓ's string of
pearls into "orient pearls at random strung", he meant no literary judgement;
rather, he sought an image which would convey those qualities of freshness and
brilliance. But his search for a fresh and striking image resulted in a statement

<p style="text-align:center">1</p>

no less than prophetic for the subsequent course of Western encounters with the Arabic (or Persian, or Ottoman) poem – encounters in which the poem itself became lost, as the romance with the Orient gave way to the philological method on the one hand, and to Western cultural narcissism, to the conviction that the progressive West had nothing to learn from the backward East which it was increasingly in the process of subjugating both politically and culturally, on the other.

Jones's image resurfaces, in many transformations, as the unspoken background to Orientalist assumptions of the "molecular" or "atomistic" nature of the Arabic or Persian poem, now described not only as a random stringing of "orient pearls", but as a "piece of filigree work" (Rypka 1968a: 102), a "mosaic of sounds and symbols" (Arberry 1964: 350), an Oriental carpet. It is not my intent to retrace the history, or to dwell on the excesses, of this particular (and still widely upheld) theory, though I shall return shortly to consider the shaky foundations of the analogies used to support it.[1] What should be noted, however, is that both such flights of fancy and more sober assertions of formal incoherence as a real rule of composition have often been supported by contrasting the incoherence of Arabo-Persian poetry with "our conception" (i.e., "our" superior knowledge) of what true poetry is. The molecular theory is less an aesthetic than a value judgement behind which lies the assumption of the innate superiority of Western culture and literature, defined through a process of selecting certain features as primary or fundamental, hence normative, and applying these as criteria for all literature. The result is the creation of two mutually opposed literary entities, one "Western", one "Oriental", an opposition which constitutes an important part of the paradigm of cultural identity produced by Orientalist scholarship.[2]

This supposed opposition is expressed in terms of irreconcilable polarities geared to demonstrating the superiority of Western literature. For example: where Western poetry is spontaneous, Oriental (Arabic, Persian, Ottoman) is constrained by strict formal rules. Where Western poetry is infused with emotion, Oriental subordinates emotion to intellect, to compliance with prescribed conventions and approved patterns, and to that hyperactive imagination which characterizes the Oriental mind. Where "the occidental poet is able to transport his reader by a simple metaphor or a single simile," the Oriental poet has recourse to rhetorical embellishment. Where the Western poem stands in a direct relation to experience, to Reality, the "reality" of the Oriental poem is a construct of the imagination, a fantasy in which experience yields to artisanship, or is "disguised in allegory or metaphor." Where the imagery of Western poetry is dynamic and immediate, that of Oriental poetry is static, visual, and decorative. Where the Western poem is an "organic" whole governed by "a strictly logical sequence of verses," in the Oriental poem "each verse is in itself a completely worked out and independent miniature," and its overall structure is governed "more by the imagination than by logic." Finally, whereas Western poetry reflects the progressive nature of Western society,

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Oriental poetry reflects "the general medieval view of the world and its material elements as something immutable, static," and the "feudal basis [of society] with its accompanying conservatism which affects literary themes almost to the point of petrifaction" with respect to both selection of subjects and their treatment. One is tempted to conclude (as one scholar did) "that this poetry is unaware of the correct relationship between the poetical ego and the world, mankind and itself, which is what constitutes the true character of great poetry."[3]

The internal illogicality of such statements (how can "emotion" be subordinated at one and the same time to intellect and to the "hyperactive imagination of the Oriental mind"?) is self-evident; their purpose is not aesthetic but polemic. Oriental literature, refracted through a distorting lens, becomes the mirror image of "our" literature, of "true" literature. But the image of Western literature itself is as notable for what it omits as for what it includes: Greek and Hellenistic literature on the one hand, and the Renaissance and its heirs on the other, frame an enormous gap, an abyss constituted by the European Middle Ages, of which nearly nothing is said, although it is precisely the literature of this period with which that of the Islamic Middle Ages may most profitably be compared. Thus not only is a Western model established as normative for all "true" literature, but that "norm" is itself both limited and anachronistic, taking as fundamental such forms as the drama, and such modes as mimesis, the absence of which defines those other literatures (or literatures of the Other) as non-progressive or non-humanistic.[4]

That the medieval portion of the Western tradition has been ignored or discarded as a critical referent when discussing Arabo-Persian literature may well be because it contrasts with the self-view of Orientalist scholarship as emanating from a progressive culture in terms of which "medieval" is the equivalent of backward and benighted.[5] Moreover, to admit the existence of obvious resemblances between medieval Islamic and Western literatures would be to open up questions of contacts and affinities between two cultures viewed as ineradicably opposed and in incessant conflict, and would set at nought the enormous investment – academic, political, personal – which resides in the paradigm of cultural opposition (see Menocal 1987, 1994).

The banishing of medieval European literature from comparative studies of Arabo-Persian poetry on the one hand, and the absence of that poetry from academic curricula (in medieval studies, for example, or comparative literature) on the other, combined with the paucity of reliable and readable translations – the three phenomena are closely related – causes that poetry to cease to exist in a practical sense, as we are denied real access to it (see Menocal 1987: 12, 151). But there is another, more important reason why it ceases to exist as poetry: because it fails to conform to what we in the West know (or believe) that true poetry is. True poetry describes reality, to which it relates in a direct way (in other words, it is mimetic); it expresses the poet's personal experience. We know that poetry is mimetic because Aristotle tells us so, and of course we read that ancient writer correctly – unlike the Arabs and the Persians, whose readings, or

misreadings, of the *Poetics* demonstrate their imperfect understanding not only of Greek but of the true nature of poetry (see e.g. Hardison 1970). We know that poetry is personal because the Romantics told us so, even though later poets sometimes disagreed with them. We also know, however, that as Goethe said – and it is far truer now than in his time – we live in an age of prose, an age in which poetry is no longer central, but peripheral, and often trivial.

Pre-modern poetry (and that includes European poetry, arguably up to the beginnings of the Romantic revolution, in which Jones played a major part, perhaps ironically, by invoking the emotional intensity of Arabic and Persian poetry as opposed to the fusty coldness of neo-Classicism) rests on other assumptions about the relationship between poet and world. Arabic and Persian literature share with the literatures of medieval Europe that "alterity", that otherness, which arises from their remoteness in time (see Jauss 1977a, 1979), but which is also part of our shared past; hence they are not Other in an Orientalist-colonialist sense.

There is another difficulty in our encounter with Arabo-Persian literature; for not only is it pre-modern, positively medieval, but it stands on the other side of the mimetic divide which separates the literatures of the Western tradition (and only parts of that tradition at that) from those of the rest of the world. For Western literature is an anomaly, a minority of one, in being the only literature whose founding narrative is based on mimetic assumptions because Aristotle based his discussion of poetry upon the drama, the most prestigious poetic genre of his day. "No account of the nature of literature," Earl Miner warns, "can be anything other than parochial if it fails to observe that mimesis is one of the least frequent systematic ideas about literature" (1979: 349). All other known literary systems – including the Arabo-Persian – are founded upon lyric.

But surely (one might ask) we have gone beyond the mimetic assumption, in our post-modernist age? Have we? Miner identifies the "telltale signs" that indicate, despite denials, that many critics' views are still "shaped by mimetic assumptions".

> On hearing "representation," "fiction," "origin" or "originality," "literari-ness," "unity," "plot," or "character," one knows the talk is mimetic.... Someone might object that these ... are simply terms everybody uses. Nothing could be more Eurocentric. Those are precisely terms that everybody does not use, but only users whose assumptions continue to be mimetic. (1990: 26–7)[6]

Eurocentric as they are, however, these are indeed terms that "everybody uses"; but perhaps they can be used in fresh ways, divorced from their underlying mimetic assumptions, when we talk about the unity of Arabic and Persian poems and of what those poems are meant to "represent". Many scholars object categorically to the use of Western critical categories or terminology (including, for example, "medieval") in discussing the literature of another culture (see e.g. Rehder 1974; see also Meisami 1985b; Meisami 1983: 98–9; compare Minnis

1984: 3–8; Allen and Moritz 1981, especially Chapter 1; Steadman 1974: 147–8). To criticize the lack of scholarly rigour in applying Western terms to Islamic literatures is one thing; to consider them totally invalid is like throwing the baby out with the bathwater – particularly if one of the goals of comparative studies is to test and modify our own methods. While many scholars dream of objective, "culture-free" methodologies which can be applied to any and all literatures regardless of the cultural circumstances under which they were produced, and while many are aware of the unwisdom of applying anachronistic criteria to medieval poetry, there is another issue which they fail to take into account: that we must, somehow, talk about the poetry we study in a language which can be understood by others, while at the same time we may perhaps alter or reject aspects of that language as it is customarily employed, to arrive at a more broadly-based poetics of literature.

Grounds for comparison

In *Comparative Poetics* Earl Miner ponders the question of why comparative literature lacks "an eastern and a southern hemisphere" (1990: 20). The answer, he suggests, lies in the discipline's "canons of comparability", "the assurance of sufficient resemblance between or among the things compared." Because of this, comparisons tend to be intra-cultural rather than inter-cultural. We compare, for example, novelists in the Western tradition – English with German, German with French, European with North or Latin American – and base our notions of narrativity, of fictionality, on such comparisons. We compare dramatists – say, Italian with Spanish with French with English – and derive our notions of the tragic, or the comic, or of mixed genres from such comparisons (generally with reference to Aristotle along the way). We compare, say, Homer and Virgil and Milton, Ariosto and Spenser, and talk about the various types of epic. Less often (and with grave consequences for the study of non-Western literatures) do we compare lyric poets; but here we come up against the question of prestige (and I have, of course, put the novel first, on a descending scale which ends with lyric, to suggest where current preoccupations lie). And when we do venture into non-Western literatures, we have, of course, all the norms and values derived from these inter-cultural comparisons at our beck and call, ready to "apply" to them. Small wonder that they prove unobliging, unwilling to fit our moulds, unliterary.

But once we have understood that what sets Arabo-Persian poetry apart from modern critical conceptions is not its "Oriental" character, but its remoteness in time (its medievalness) and its lyric nature, we may be better equipped to undertake its study in a more meaningful comparative context, without basing our study on assumptions that point it in the wrong direction, so to speak. Indeed, there have long been calls for comparative studies of Middle Eastern literatures, or which take those literatures into account; but these have been somewhat limited in their approach. In 1966, for example, Alessandro Bausani

called for a comparative history of Islamic literatures (1966: 145; see also Pagliaro and Bausani 1960: 509) on the basis that "Islamic literature, from its origins up to its most violent contact with European culture . . . is in reality one great literature subdivided into various literary dialects and into many literary types" (1966: 145, 147). He envisaged a history divided according to broad "literary [i.e. poetic] types" – *qaṣīda*, *ghazal* and *naẓm* (narrative verse) – integrated into a historical framework which would take into account both their antecedents and their further development (see 1966: 151–3, 156). But note: the unified nature of "Islamic" literature sets it apart from European, which it comes to resemble only after that "violent contact", and only then becomes "comparable" with it. (Moreover, "Islamic" literature is not as "unified" as Bausani's scheme suggests.)

Charles Pellat made a case for the comparative study of medieval Arabic and European literature, first because of its influences on "our own literature," the details of which "are still far from being known," and second because "it has received . . . foreign contributions which, worthy of study in themselves, arouse an interest of a more elevated and general order when one inquires about their reception by their beneficiaries" (1967: 3). Nothing could better reflect the Eurocentric position: Arabic literature is worth studying, less for what it contributed to ours, than for what Arab "beneficiaries" may have received from the West. And the focus on "influence studies" – a mode of inquiry becoming increasingly discredited, and typically limited to documentable textual contacts (revealing the inbuilt biases of a modern print culture) – reduces the phenomenon of what is shared to a question of what has been "received" or "borrowed" (see Menocal 1987: 71–90; Menocal 1994, especially 76–7, 154–7).

Other scholars have suggested studies of "affinities" – defined as "resemblances in style, structure, mood or idea between works which have no other connection" (Aldridge 1969: 3) – between Eastern and Western literatures, or of "analogies", based either on the principle that similar cultural conditions produce similar literary phenomena (e.g. Manzalaoui 1986), or on the view that such phenomena reflect the presence of common (textual) sources (e.g. von Grunebaum 1952b).[7] While such approaches may provide much that is of interest and value, they ultimately privilege European literature in one way or another. They point, as I have said, in the wrong direction.

If comparative literature is to be more than a mere adjunct to European literary studies, if it is to furnish methodologies not based in any national literature or group of literatures but more generally applicable, it must be able to account for literary phenomena in non-parochial terms. As James Monroe insists, "A theory is valid not because of its place of origin, but because it accounts for observable reality better than do other theories;" his view that "if the discipline of Comparative Literature is to achieve the goal of becoming the 'Poetics' of the twenty-first century, it must assimilate hitherto neglected non-Western traditions into its theoretical constructions, in order to eliminate the bias in favor of Western literature that now dominates it" would strike a

responsive chord in the minds of many comparatists (Monroe 1983: 99, 15; see also Andrews 1992; Menocal 1987: 138–54; Miner 1990).[8]

The field of pre-modern, lyric-based poetics furnishes a useful testing-ground, as it calls into question many assumptions both about the true nature of "literature" and about the "otherness" of non-Western literatures. Such a study would, ideally, deal not only with affinities, analogies, common origins (that is, intellectual history), influence and reception, but pose more general questions about the poetic art itself, questions which are not framed in culture-specific terms.[9] The present study does not attempt to establish a comprehensive poetics of Arabo-Persian lyric (much less a medieval poetics); it does, however, attempt to make a start, by examining one specific aspect of that poetics, that of principles of composition and structure. In this endeavour there seem to be, indeed, grounds for comparison.

One such ground is the assumption that art is, by definition, governed by rules (that the "rules" often exist to be flouted only proves the point), and is, of necessity, coherent: otherwise it would be meaningless (meaningless, that is, in terms of communication, which is arguably still a function of art). All art has formal structures susceptible of identification and analysis (see Arnheim 1974, 1982; Washburn 1983). To discover those structures in medieval Arabic and Persian poetry, and to reveal an awareness of the fundamental principle of structure among poets and critics alike, is one purpose of this study.

Since the medieval literatures of Europe and the Middle East present similar problems in many respects (not least because they are medieval), the study of one may shed light on another, while reference to more familiar traditions may make the "exotic" ones more accessible to those unfamiliar with them. The medieval world was not fragmented by twentieth-century geopolitical or linguistic boundaries; despite differences of language, faith, and culture, it was far more homogeneous than traditional scholarship would have us believe (see for example Hodgson 1974, 1: 22–67; Menocal 1987, especially Chapter 1). Nor did it share our understanding of "literature" as being based on what Judson Allen terms the "distinction between art and experience" (Allen and Moritz 1981: 63).[10] Medieval literature (lyric poetry included) was closely linked with ethics, in that one of its aims (if not its foremost aim) was to edify. This is seen, for example, in the assertion by Averroes (Ibn Rushd; d. 595/ 1198) that the matter of poetry consists of *i'tiqādāt* and *'ādāt*, beliefs and customs (rendered into Latin by Hermann Alemanus as *credulitates* and *consuetudines*; see J. B. Allen 1976: 69–70);[11] but it is an attitude shared by critics, poets, and audiences. The effect of this on poetry is a proliferation of speakers, of voices, that inform the lyric. In the West, the "experience" of the speaker (typically identified with the poet) is considered primary; that this is not obviously so in Arabic or Persian has led to the belief that Islamic literatures place no value on the individual or on individual experience, or that "personal expression" can be found only in certain types of writing, such as mystical poetry.[12]

How then do Arabic and Persian poetry relate to "reality"? The fifth/ eleventh-century Arab critic Ibn Rashīq of Qayrawan stated that the poet (*shāʿir*) is so called because he knows or perceives (*yashʿaru*) what ordinary individuals do not, and expresses this knowledge in his poetry (1972, 1: 116); but what is it that is known? Miner asserts that lyric-based, affective-expressive poetics assumes that "the world affects the poet, who is then led to expression. That expression then affects other people in the world." Such a system thus accounts for "the poet, the reader, the world, and the expression" (1979: 352). Here is what Averroes says:

> The affections established by the rhetorical or poetical statement are fear, anger, compassion, amplification, and the rest of the things enumerated in the Rhetoric. It is clear that just as there are statements here that inevitably give rise to these affections, so too are there attitudes and outward appearances that indicate that the things inevitably giving rise to these affections are present in the speaker and that, insofar as they have already taken place by dint of the things causing them having taken place, the spectator will be affected by them. These manners and attitudes ought to be employed in poetry ... with affective poetic statements for amplification, depreciation, or sorrowful and fearsome things, since these are the things for which the art of eulogy employs affective statements. (1953: 233; translated by Butterworth, Averroes 1986: 114)

The medieval poet does not, so to speak, turn his back on the "real world" and its particularities; but for him, reality does not lie in those particularities. (It is our "reality" that is made up of particularities, organized, if at all, only by the laws of physics, which also determine our mode of perception; it is we who, quite literally, possess an "atomistic world-view".) Particularities – *visibilia* – are signs which point to the realities – *intelligibilia* – behind them; the medieval world was filled with such signs: all created things, including language itself. The sign-system that was creation was paralleled, in poetry, by a system of imagery that revealed, through language and by analogy, the correspondences not only between the earthly and the divine, but between the various systems within the created world itself.[13]

If "reality" ultimately relates to intelligible realities rather than to physical actualities, it follows that that reality is largely constituted by language. That language is the primary focus of lyric, as well as of the criticism which deals with it, is one of the major obstacles to a modern understanding of both. Medieval writers, it is thought, were obsessed with language in a manner which was both pedantic and restrictive of creativity. We tend to downgrade the power of language, the emptiness of mere "rhetoric"; medieval literature is, however, not centred upon "experience", but upon language as a means of both knowing and expressing.

Medieval literary theory

If what is known is not what is immediately grasped by the senses, but what is intellected (what lies beyond sensory perception), how can poetry communicate that knowledge? Not, clearly, through the appeal to mimetic accuracy, but through the communicative powers of language. The stress on language colours both poetic practice and critical discourse in ways which often make that discourse, in particular, inaccessible or incomprehensible to modern scholars. In more ways than one (and this is not, or not primarily, a matter of terminology), medieval critics simply do not speak our language.[14]

The view that medieval Arabic and Persian poetry is fundamentally different from Western is often supported by reference to medieval "literary theory" – and specifically to the absence in that theory of statements reflecting our own concerns in the sort of terms which we expect. This absence has led to the celebrated view of the "inefficiency" of medieval Arabic literary theory, one aspect of which, which has coloured the investigation of both criticism and poetry, is "the failure of the theorists to understand ... complex structures," and the conclusion that "artistic creation and creative evaluation are both directed toward the single line" (Heinrichs 1973: 35).[15] This view finds a parallel (if indeed it does not reflect an influence) in the assumption, with respect to medieval European literature, that neither writers nor critics had any general notion of composition; the absence of theoretical discussions on the subject proved the point. (See e.g. Faral 1924: 59–60; Curtius 1973: 71.)

One may question the validity of reasoning backward from rhetorical *habitus* to poetic practice; this assumes both an identity of goals and a greater influence of rhetoric on poetry than is generally the case, rhetoric often being considerably behind poetic practice in the sophistication of its descriptive methods (cf. Williams 1980: xi; Steadman 1974: xxxii, 61, 237; Hamori 1991: 13–14). It also assumes that medieval critical preoccupations were the same as ours – that they should have said something about poetic structure and that their "failure" to do so reflects a more serious conceptual failure. Judson Allen has suggested that for medieval European writers the principles of coherence and wholeness were so deeply ingrained, so self-evident, as to require no discussion (1982: 141–2); and this seems true of Arabic and Persian writers as well. (In fact, both poets and critics did make statements on this issue, as we shall see, but in terms which are not perhaps what modern readers might expect.)

More problematic is the assumption that medieval writings on poetry – whether Arabic, Persian, or European – constitute "literary theory" in a comprehensive sense, or that they represent a specialized discipline which may be called "literary criticism." In medieval Europe, discussions of poetry were subsumed under the two disciplines of philosophy (where poetry was considered a branch of ethics) and rhetoric; no third, generalized discipline existed to counterbalance these specialized approaches by considering

"literature" (or poetry) as distinct from philosophy or rhetoric. (See Trimpi 1971, especially 3–9, 60–5; Miner 1979: 349–53; Monroe 1983: 93–5; and compare Judson Allen's description of his "becoming a medievalist", 1982: xi.) Much the same situation applies with respect to medieval Arabic and Persian discussions of poetry: they take place in the context of the "foreign" sciences of philosophy and rhetoric (in its status as a branch of logic), or of their analogues in the "Arab" or "Islamic" sciences of exegesis and philology. (See van Gelder 1982a: 1–14; Cantarino 1975; for the place of poetry in classifications of the sciences see Gardet and Anawati 1948: 106–210.) While various writers distinguish poetry from prose (largely within a polemics which sees, for a variety of pseudo-historical reasons, one as superior to the other, or alternatively, both as branches of "eloquent discourse"; see Arazi 1986), and while many were indeed concerned with poetry's aesthetic qualities (which cannot be divorced from its communicative function), few would have described the "nature" of poetry (as opposed to the poetic use of language) in isolation from its larger contexts.[16] None would have spoken of "literature" in our sense of the term: both *adab* (sometimes translated as "literature", but constituted by various prose or prose-plus-poetry genres combining instruction and entertainment), and *shi'r*, poetry, exist as types of knowledge characterized by specific means of expression.[17]

As Miner also points out, a poetics need not be explicit to be understood (1990: 7). We may assume that medieval critics knew things that we do not, and that they had different priorities than ours. It is these different priorities that lead to the assumption of "varying degrees of incongruity between poetry and theory" (Heinrichs 1973: 19), one of the most serious of which, for modern scholars, is the apparent "failure to understand complex structures". G. J. van Gelder, after devoting the bulk of his *Beyond the Line* (1982a) to a detailed exposition of Arabic writings on specific aspects of poetic composition, concludes (despite the abundant evidence to the contrary) that neither poets nor critics conceived of poems as wholes but as agglomerations of discrete parts: "It cannot be denied that Arabic poetry ... is characterized by what has been termed 'molecularity'" (ibid.: 14), even though "the order of the parts is not as arbitrary, nor the connection as loose, as is commonly thought." Thus he exhorts us "to refrain from demanding and finding 'unity' everywhere, and to let the *qaṣīda* disintegrate to some extent" (ibid.: 201; cf. Sperl's comments, 1989: 6–7; cf. also Scheindlin 1974: 1–24; and see further below).

But there is a further problem here. If, as is often maintained, poets themselves were not concerned with "complex structures" (Heinrichs comments that while in Arabic poetry "there are larger superstructures ... capable of conferring unity on a mere assembly of lines, a unity of literary form, that is, not of content," their complexity "would not seem to be very large" [ibid.: 48]), it would seem churlish to berate the critics for their failure to perceive what was not there. The notion that because a critic fails to discuss whole poems he is unaware that poems can be wholes seems in any case a

peculiar one, and to accept it would require branding not only medieval but much modern literary criticism "inefficient": one has only to peruse the writings of that great advocate of organic unity, Coleridge, to see that the practice of citing individual lines is not confined to medieval critics. (Attention to single lines seems, moreover, to be a characteristic of lyric-based poetics; cf. Miner 1979: 352.) On the contrary, the citation of single lines or excerpts suggests rather an awareness of the poem from which they came: if "To be or not to be" can conjure up a notional sense of an entire play, does not *Qifā nabki min dhikri ḥabībin wa-manzilī* ("Stop, let us weep at the memory of a beloved and an encampment;" the opening line of the pre-Islamic poet Imru' al-Qays's *Mu'allaqa*) arouse similar resonances of an entire poem? As Judson Allen comments,

> The most important principle one must see in this habit . . . is that there must have existed, in the medieval awareness of the material of their poetry, a firm conviction that the material involved had a unity, an integrity, an essence, a stability, so strong that analysis by mere division would reveal and not obscure its essence. (1982: 141–2)[18]

To extrapolate from purpose-oriented criticism to poetic practice is to confuse apples with oranges: do we assume (for example) that poets only composed so that their verses – isolated from their larger context – might be utilized as *shawāhid* (evidentiary examples) at some future date?[19]

But (so runs another argument), surely the problem is one of memory: how could critics, or readers, remember the whole of even one lengthy *qaṣīda*, let alone many of them? Van Gelder states, "Even when an entire *qaṣīda* is cited one cannot grasp the whole as one can see a necklace (to use the well-worn metaphor for an Arabic poem) at one glance" (1982a: 199). Why not? Because "memory works differently on different levels," weak "at the levels of phonology or the lexicon, so that figures like paronomasia (*tajnīs*) and antithesis (*ṭibāq*) are effective, to the Arabs, within the confines of one line only. . . . Stronger on the level of motifs, but still much weaker than modern critical practice would like to see;" and because of this, "sustained metaphors or comparisons are relatively rare in Arabic poetry" (ibid.).

> In some ways a *qaṣīda* can be compared to a game of chess: at any stage during the game a player is able to reconstruct the preceding moves. However, as a rule he will not do so, for in the course of the game it is the existing position only that counts; how it was achieved is irrelevant and a reconstruction would only amount to a loss of time. After the game is completed one can enjoy it in several ways: either by replaying it from beginning to end, or by studying one or a series of moves: a 'combination', which may give as much satisfaction as the game as a whole, or even more. Such a combination may indeed be composed for its own sake, as part of an imaginary game, on a particular motif or theme: a 'problem'.

> In the same manner a *qaṣīda* can be enjoyed as a whole: its opening will, as a rule, be compared with other openings; the developments that mark the end of the opening will receive special attention; a happy succession of motifs will be admired[.] Alternatively, only one or a few brilliant motifs will be singled out and the rest is forgotten. (ibid.: 199–200)

The analogy, however, belies the principle: skill in chess depends on the retention in memory not only of past moves in a particular game but of possible moves learned through detailed study. To forget what one has learned would be fatal. Further, the notion of replaying the same game later, whether for enjoyment or instruction, presupposes having retained it in memory; if this is possible after the game is over, why not at all its different stages?[20]

That van Gelder's examples – the claim that such devices as paronomasia and antithesis are effective only on the level of the single line, the infrequency of extended metaphors (and the allied problem of mixed metaphors, so abhorrent to Western taste), and the interpretation of the "well-worn" metaphor of the necklace – are simply incorrect will be seen later in this study. His notion of how memory operates in relation to literature (or, indeed, any other form of knowledge) ignores both the importance of memory in pre-modern (pre-print) cultures and the significant body of research on this topic (see e.g. Yates 1966; Ong 1989: 57–68).[21] In a culture relying heavily on oral transmission memory is crucial; in medieval Islamic society individual memories were prodigious, and often surprised even those who considered memorization a part of the normal course of things.

The historian Miskawayh (d. 421/1030) reports that the Buyid vizier Ibn al-ʿAmīd possessed a prodigious memory and was famed for his extensive knowledge of poetry. When asked how he had accomplished this, the vizier replied:

> You seem to suppose that it costs me trouble to learn a thing like this by heart. Why, it impresses itself on my memory if I casually hear it once. . . . Several times he told me that in his young days he used to bet his comrades and the scholars with whom he associated that he would commit to memory a thousand lines in one day. . . . I asked him how he managed it. He replied: I made it a condition that if I were required to learn by heart a thousand verses of poetry which I had not previously heard in one day, it must then be written out, and I would then commit to memory twenty or thirty lines at a time, which I would repeat and so have done with them. . . . I used to recite them once or twice, and then return the paper, to engage upon another, and so get through the whole on one day. (Miskawayh 1920, 5: 295–6)

Miskawayh's account reflects the complex relationship between orality and the written word which existed in medieval Islamic culture. For although that culture was highly literate, and although many texts were composed in writing

rather than produced orally, their oral performance and transmission were the norm. (See Pedersen 1984: 20–36.) Particularly in poetry, orality, and hence memory, played an important part in composition as well as in performance; and while it has been argued that the oral features of poetry became redundant as poets and audiences became literate, this claim cannot be substantiated. (See S. Stetkevych 1991: 105–6, and the review by Meisami, 1994: 68; compare Bencheikh 1975b: 124, who observes that the poem's formal and thematic conventions aid in its memorization, often at a first hearing.)

We may assume that an Arabic- or Persian-speaking audience was (like any other) expected to remember, during the course of a poem, those elements they had heard up to any given moment (just as the chess player must remember the moves leading up to his present position in order not to be deceived into a false move), even though the poem might be of considerable length. To assume that medieval audiences were either unable or unwilling to perform such an operation is particularly misguided in view of the medieval preoccupation with such matters as number, symmetry, and design, elements which also functioned as mnemonic devices (see especially Peck 1980; Yates 1966). If the rhetoricians chose to ignore such features (perhaps because they were so obvious they did not require discussion), modern scholarship must not, for to do so is to ignore an important aspect of medieval composition. For if an Arabic (or Persian) "poetics", in a theoretical sense, does not exist, a general theory of composition (an unwritten poetics) was shared by both poets and writers on poetry.

The search for unity

Central to both the molecular theory of Arabic and Persian poetry and to the doctrine of critical inefficiency is the notion that the compositional unit of that poetry is the individual verse, or *bayt* (cf. Scheindlin 1974: 10–16; Bencheikh 1975b: 147–63). J. Stetkevych argues with respect to Arabic (but his remarks are also valid for Persian or Ottoman) that the widespread acceptance of this notion was the natural consequence of the continual restatement, on the part of Orientalist philologists in particular, of the "otherness" of that poetry, relegated "to a plane of nonaesthetic, nonexperiential, merely culturally descriptive usefulness." This negative picture relied in turn on an "excessively naive receptivity to whatever Arabic literary theory was then available and accessible," becoming crystallized in the acceptance at face value of the critics' insistence on the syntactic unity of the verse, elevated into a universal principle from which "Orientalist criticism proceeded to derive its cultural-anthropological generalisation of the paratactic, compartmentalized, atomistic nature of Arabic poetry. An encompassing framework of delineation of meaning, or a larger metaphor, was neither visualized nor suspected" (1980: 116–17).

As R. Scheindlin observes, "the idea that [the critics] wished to prohibit all syntactic relationships [between verses] is largely the product of the imagination of some Western scholars" (1974: 92). Yet in their efforts to support (or

occasionally to refute) this notion, scholars have typically presented the relative absence of *enjambement* in Arabic and Persian poetry – which reflects both the syntactic integrity of the verse and the oral nature of poetic declamation (cf. Scheindlin 1974: 15–16; Bencheikh 1975b: 149–52; Arazi 1986: 478), and by no means implies lack of connection between verses – as demonstrating the truth of the molecular theory. (One wonders what they would make of the animadversions of a Boileau against the use of *enjambement* in any but the "less 'noble' genres" [Preminger 1993: 360]).

The verse is, indeed, a basic compositional unit, just as the sentence is a basic unit of prose composition; but it is by no means the sole element with which the poet is concerned, nor is it an end in itself, but rather (to paraphrase Bencheikh) a unit which "inserts itself" into the poem as a whole (Bencheikh 1975b: 151).[22] The verse is not, in other words, the basic conceptual unit of the poem, nor is it conceptually independent of the remainder of the poem. The majority of Arab and Persian critics stress the necessity for connections between the verses, and parts, of a poem.

If the Arabic or Persian poem is not a whole, what (if anything) keeps it from flying apart (or "dissolving", in van Gelder's words); what makes it perceived as a poem (and hence referred to as such)? Conversely, if it is a whole, how is it put together? Many scholars have sought answers to these questions, and have addressed the problem of poetic composition from a variety of approaches, among them thematic, structuralist and, more recently, anthropological;[23] while studies of Arabic poetry are the more numerous, certain shared assumptions make them relevant, *mutatis mutandis*, to Persian (not to mention Ottoman, or Urdu) as well. But there have been few attempts to discover generalized or wide-ranging principles of composition; most studies deal with individual poets and with a restricted corpus (sometimes only a single poem). The unwillingness to extrapolate is perhaps logical; but it is curious that this unwillingness is so often accompanied by a lack of reference to other studies which might provide useful points of comparison.

It is often assumed that poems are composed of discrete units (often termed "blocks" or "atoms") arranged in some sort of sequence; but there is no agreement as to the nature of these units, nor (generally speaking) any suggestions as to what larger principle(s) might determine their selection, organization, or sequential arrangement. As Robert Rehder comments (1974: 64), "As far as the atomism of Islamic poetry is concerned it is important to note that the atom is different for each author;" such fragmentary approaches recall J. Stetkevych's criticism of the tendency of "the philological mentality of the 'perfect text' to search for the nature of something as fragile as the structure of the Arabic poem in its smallest morphological components" (1980: 113). Those who employ a thematic approach assume that a poem is built up through the juxtaposition of "themes" which are essentially unrelated or, at most, linked by a common subject.[24] The structuralists are in many ways the logical heirs to the philologists (cf. Menocal 1987: 3–4); for if the latter believed that a text is

knowable through identification of its lexical components, the structuralists believe that it is knowable through the identification of its linguistic components, with which the semantic element (when discussed at all) is seen as existing in a parallel but essentially independent relationship (cf. Windfuhr 1974a: 331). Structuralist analyses attempt to isolate the basic units or "building blocks" of which a poem is composed, or to identify consistent types of pattern according to which it may be constructed. These basic units or patterns, however, are, like "themes", defined in often radically different ways; each researcher follows his or her own method, usually ignoring those of others; and the application of what may indeed be sound principles of analysis is all too often accomplished in a mechanical and simplistic fashion.[25]

Most of these studies, whether thematic or structural, present certain fundamental biases, in particular the almost predictable recourse, either explicit or implicit, to the molecular theory, and its linkage with a putative "Islamic" (or Arab, or Semitic, or Iranian) mentality. It is the rare investigator who can penetrate the veil of received opinion and discover (to mix a metaphor) that this particular emperor wears no clothes.[26]

This has, however, been done, as scholars such as Andras Hamori, Stefan Sperl and Suzanne Stetkevych (for Arabic), Frank Lewis and Paul Losensky (for Persian), and Walter Andrews (for Ottoman, but with important implications for the others) have challenged such fragmentary approaches and urged us to read these poetries in new and different ways (new and different to us, that is, but perhaps closer to those of medieval poets and critics themselves). They show us that structure and meaning are inextricably, vitally linked – as any good medieval poet, or critic, knew. They also show that all the elements of the poem work together to convey its meaning; and that the poem is, indeed, as the Arabic critic Ibn Ṭabāṭabā (d. 322/934) envisioned the ideal *qaṣīda*: "like a single utterance in respect to the resemblance of its beginning to its conclusion, its closely-knit texture [*nasj*], beauty and eloquence, lucidity of wording, precision of meanings, and correctness of composition" (1956: 126; cf. also Ibn Rashīq, quoted by Hamori 1991: 13).

Poetry as craft

He who strings fancies [*muntaẓim al-khayālāt*] is like he who strings a necklace, and who has at his disposal various types of jewels, separate, in safe places known only to him: whatever stone he wishes, in whatever quantity, he goes to the place where he knows it is, takes it, and strings it. He whose fancies and imaginings are ordered and distinct is the same: he aims, through careful consideration of them, at what he wishes, and does not exceed it. (al-Qarṭājannī 1981: 43)

The notion that Orient pearls are strung at random is put to rest by Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī's (d. 684/1285) comparison of the poet's craft to that of the

jeweller: the orderly craftsman is he who selects his "gems" from where they are properly found and strings them in their appropriate positions, while he whose notions are confused takes inappropriate materials and puts them where he will (ibid.). And for medieval poets, poetry is, indeed, a craft which requires study, skill, and artistry, a craft whose finished product is an artefact of great beauty, quality, and value.[27] While modern critics tend to devalue the notion of "mere" craft, medieval writers had precisely the opposite attitude: for is not the most sublime manifestation of "craft" Creation itself? and is not God the greatest Artisan? (See e.g. Meisami 1987: 303–4 and the references cited; Coulter 1976; Heninger 1974.) Hence the prevalence of metaphors of craft throughout classical and medieval literature: the poet is compared to a painter (Horace's *ut pictura poesis* providing the *locus classicus*, if not the earliest occurrence, in the classical tradition), a jeweller, a weaver, a builder, and so on, and the poem both to the artefacts produced by such craftsmen, and to the human form. All these metaphors derive from a perception of the poem as an ordered entity based upon principles of design.[28]

> If anyone is to lay the foundation of a house, his impetuous hand does not leap into action: the inner design of the heart measures out the work beforehand, the inner man determines the stages ahead of time in a certain order; and the hand of the heart, rather than the bodily hand, forms the whole in advance, so that the work exists as a mental model rather than as a tangible thing. (Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *Poetria nova*, ll. 43–48, quoted by Gallo 1978: 71–2; see also Geoffrey of Vinsauf 1967: 16–17. Kelly [1969: 126–7] notes a number of parallel statements by writers both before and after Geoffrey.)

Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova*, "the most widely used treatise on composition written in the Middle Ages," enjoyed a wide popularity until as late as the eighteenth century (Kelly 1969: 117). Although Geoffrey's statement was predicated for narrative poetry (the most prestigious type of his own time), the attitude that it embodies would have been totally familiar to his Eastern counterparts. ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 471/1078 or after) states that in composing "one must shape the sentence as a whole in one's mind; one should be like a builder who puts something here with his right hand and at the same instant something there with his left" (1946: 73; quoted by van Gelder 1982a: 132).[29] Al-Jurjānī's contemporary, the Persian poet Nāṣir-i Khusraw, expressed the notion poetically, likening his poem to a palace, with well disposed gardens, porticoes and vistas (1993: 303; on this poem see Clinton 1979: 84–8; Meisami 1990c: 458–61, 1993b, 1995a; and see further Chapter 6 below):

> A palace of my poem I'll make, in which
> from its verses I'll form flower beds and verandas.
> One spot I'll raise up like a lofty prospect,
> another make wide and spacious like a courtyard.

16

At its gate, some rarity of metre
I'll set, trusty and wise, to be its gateman.
Mafʿūlu fāʿilātu mafāʿīlu faʿ
I'll make the foundation of this auspicious building.

Nāṣir-i Khusraw compares his poem first to a garden whose fruits and flowers are exalted notions (*maʿānī*) borne by the supporting "trees" of elegant style (*lafẓ*); then to a palace (whose "foundation" is its metre, *muḍāriʿ*); and finally (as we shall see below) to a beautiful human form, its "meaning" a lovely face concealed by the "veil" of expression. Over a century later another Persian poet, Niẓāmī Ganjavī (d. c. 602/1209), in the exordium to his verse romance the *Haft Paykar*, likened his craft to that of a jeweller, compared his poem to a "written temple", and evoked the principle of design which informed its composition:

For when the seven lines converge,
one point at center shall emerge.
The painter, ten designs in hand,
of one main thread yet grasps the end.
If that thread from the line should stray,
the others would be set awry.
Though one trace not this thread aright,
rightness remains, nor quits our sight.
I follow this thread, painter-wise;
on this main thread I've fixed my gaze. (1995, §4: 18–32)[30]

Niẓāmī's assertion that the "rightness" of the underlying design (that is, of the cosmic design laid down by the divine Geometer) endures, even though the individual may fail to read this design correctly recalls his Western precursor Augustine, who "had explained that if a man comprehends number it is not changed; yet if he fails to grasp it, its truth 'does not disappear; rather, it remains true and permanent, while man's failure to grasp it is commensurate with the extent of his error'" (Peck 1980: 17). Increasingly, notions of number and order as the essential elements of all created systems (from the cosmos itself to the word which mirrors it) come to underly metaphors of craft.

If a building (it may be objected) is static, "inorganic" – as is a necklace, or even a painting – the human form is not. Form and matter are intimately related, as Aristotle (and his Arab interpreters) make clear. Qudāma ibn Jaʿfar (d. 337/948?), in a profoundly Aristotelian statement, asserts,

Concepts [*maʿānī*] in poetry take the place of the subject matter, and poetry is like the form, as is the case in every art [*ṣināʿa*] in which there must be matter receiving the influence of forms. As wood for the carpenter and silver for the silversmith, so the poet, when he begins to work with a concept ... must strive to bring the perfection achieved to

the desired degree. (1956: 4; translated by Cantarino 1975: 48, who notes the presence of Aristotelian logic in this "line of reasoning")[31]

Often interpreted as reflecting a "form/content" dichotomy inherent in Arabic literary theory, this passage testifies to a distinction between the materials of a literary discourse (its "subject matter" or "ideas") and the form (or "wording") in which they are expressed, a distinction founded not only on the analogy with other arts and crafts but on the very nature of all created things, and reflecting Aristotelian notions of causality.[32]

The distinction between matter and form colours those "organic" metaphors which compare the literary work to the human body. Al-Ḥātimī (d. 388/998) observed that

> a qaṣīda is created like a human body in the way its parts are conjoined. When one of these is detached from another (part), or differs from it as to the soundness of constitution (or 'composition', tarkīb), this then leaves the body with a defect that impairs its good qualities and effaces its beautiful characteristics. (1979, 1: 215; quoted by van Gelder 1982a: 82)[33]

In another passage from the qaṣīda quoted above, Nāṣir-i Khusraw likens himself to the Universal Intellect which animates the Universal Nature, the "body" of the material world:

> In the body of discourse, like the Intellect itself,
> I'll place beautiful and rare meanings, as the soul.
> If you have not seen discourse in human form,
> I'll make for you, in discourse, the form of a man.
> For him, from pleasing descriptions and pleasant tales,
> I shall form twisting locks and smiling lips.
> His meaning I'll make a lovely face, and then
> within the veil of wording I'll conceal it. (1993: 303–4)

We may recall Plato's statement in the *Phaedrus* that "a literary composition must resemble a living thing" (see Coulter 1976: 95); and it is hardly necessary to restate the widely held belief in man as microcosm (and its corollary, the cosmos as a "great man") which pervaded classical and medieval thought in both East and West. Once again, it is important to recognize that underlying such expressions is not some concept of "organic unity" in the Coleridgean sense, but an analogy: the literary discourse, like the human form, is constructed according to a pattern, and if this design is "misread" (as Niẓāmī, or Augustine, might say) the form of the discourse will be defective. In this analogy wording, or style, the work's formal cause, is likened to the body's external form, "ideas" to the soul which animates it; and while, as in the analogue, they may be divided for purposes of discussion, they are, like body and soul, ultimately inseparable.[34]

The prevalence of metaphors of craft throughout the medieval tradition is thus scarcely surprising, given their philosophical underpinnings in an intellectual tradition shared by both East and West (if, at the time, more firmly established in the East). It is neither evidence of "influence", nor yet mere coincidence, that we find Geoffrey of Vinsauf's close contemporary, Shams-i Qays Rāzī (fl. early seventh/thirteenth century), describing the process of poetic composition in terms comparable to Geoffrey's own.

> When [the poet] begins a poem and starts to versify, let him first bring its prose substance to mind and sketch its themes on the pages of his heart. Then he should arrange words appropriate to them and choose a meter agreeable to that poem and rhymes that are both possible and easy to the mind and write them down on a sheet of paper.... While composing *bait*s let him give no heed to the sequence of the discourse or the arrangement of the themes until he has strung out the whole of the *qaṣīda* in a rough draft, but let him speak and write it as it occurs.... When the *bait*s have become numerous and the themes complete, he should read over the whole repeatedly and with great care, and strive to the utmost to test and trim them, and to sew the *bait*s together, and to put them in their proper place, and to eliminate transposition so that neither will the themes be broken off from each other or the *bait*s appear as strangers to each other. (1909: 417–18; translated by Clinton 1979: 80)[35]

The similarity with Geoffrey's remarks – in particular the implication of a mental archetype in accordance with which the poet constructs his poem – testifies to a common notion of poetic composition; and although Shams-i Qays advises the poet to "give no heed to the sequence of the discourse or the arrangement of the themes until he has strung out the whole of the *qaṣīda* in a rough draft, but let him speak and write it as it occurs," the passage as a whole suggests a conscious attention to an overall pattern governing the final disposition of the poem's elements.

The parallels between medieval European and Arabo-Persian notions of composition are clear. Equally clear is the fact that medieval writers were fully aware not only of the existence of, but of the necessity for formal coherence (see further Minnis 1984: 119–59; and compare Coulter 1976: 72–126). The evident similarities between such concepts, and the manner in which they are expressed, suggest a common background, a shared tradition which dates from classical times;[36] but this common background should not be overstressed, as other factors undoubtedly contributed to these concepts as well, including the more general principle that poems (like other artefacts and like the human form) are wholes.

Theories of composition

How then did medieval critics approach the discussion of poetic composition, if not (or if rarely) through the detailed analysis of whole poems? Let us take a

brief look at those two approximate contemporaries, Geoffrey of Vinsauf and Ḥāzim of Cartagena (d. 684/1285). Geoffrey divides composition into three categories or processes: invention, disposition and ornamentation, categories which have their roots in the Latin rhetorical tradition. Invention involves the choice or "discovery" of the subject matter (*materia*, *matière*) of the poem, the method of presentation (overall form, metre, rhyme, and so on), and the generic definition of the work in hand, determined by the occasion for which it is composed. Disposition involves ordering and giving shape to the various parts of the poem within the overall scheme conceived of at the stage of invention; it includes such features as beginnings and endings, amplification and abbreviation, syntactical arrangement, some rhetorical figures, metre, rhyme, and similar matters – in short, those aspects of composition which involve the ordering of the discourse and the distribution of its various components (Kelly 1969: 130–5; J.B. Allen 1982: 117–78). Ornamentation concerns the embellishment of the discourse with rhetorical devices, figures of speech, imagery, effects of sound and so on, as well as choice of vocabulary, so that the poem will produce the maximum effect. Although there is a logical order to these operations, in that invention must necessarily precede the other two, it is clear that once the work is begun there will be a good deal of overlapping between them.

Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī's *Minhāj al-bulaghāʾ wa-sirāj al-udabāʾ* has received much attention (see especially Heinrichs 1969), and is sometimes said to represent what Arabic poetics might have been but was not.[37] Ḥāzim comes rather late in the development of Arabic poetics; and his attempt to combine Arabic and Greek notions seems less a genuine innovation than an effort to preserve, for all time, universal principles not only of composition but of poetry itself, since (he says) the "recent poets of the East" have been blind "to the true nature of poetry for the last two hundred years," have forsaken the sound practices of their predecessors "in establishing the foundations of (their) discourse, making its disposition firm, and selecting the materials of which it must be formed," and have in consequence "left the path of poetry and entered (that) of mere speech [*takallum*]" (1981: 10; cf. also 26).

Although a large portion of Ḥāzim's treatise is lost, enough remains to demonstrate not only its Aristotelian connections, but its affinity with the notions of composition espoused by Geoffrey. Ḥāzim deals in particular with invention (*maʿānī*) and disposition (discussed under the heading of *mabānī*, the "foundations" of poetry).[38] Although Ḥāzim is usually considered important because of his effort to develop a generalized poetics,[39] it is his choice of categories for discussion which is of interest here.

Ḥāzim opens his discussion of the "foundations" of poetry with advice which would have been readily understood by both Geoffrey of Vinsauf and Shams-i Qays:

> If the poet ... [chooses] the appropriate time, collects his thoughts and
> puts his mind to the occasions for composing the poem, and follows his

thought where it leads him, then it is certain, when he seeks to visualize it, that his goal will appear before his imagination [*khayāl*] and his mind, along with the ideas [*ma'ānī*] which will support him in his purpose [*gharaḍ*] and goal; and he will then imagine them [*yatakhayyaluhā*], subsequent to contemplation, in scattered phrases [on the basis of which he will then select his rhyme and metre].... Then he will divide his ideas and phrases into segments [*fuṣūl*], beginning with those with which it is suitable to begin with respect to his goal, following them with other segments as is appropriate ... segment by segment. Then he will versify those phrases which occurred to him in the form of prose [or: he will order those which occurred to him in scattered form] and make them metrical [*mawzūna*] .... (ibid.: 204)[40]

Here the processes of invention and disposition, though not so named, are clearly outlined; and Ḥāzim is at pains throughout his treatise to instill a correct understanding of these two basic principles of composition, in his effort to restore a proper knowledge of poetry and the poetic process.

The tripartite classification invention–disposition–ornamentation is implicit in Arabic and Persian writings on poetry, although it is never developed systematically as in the West; Ḥāzim's is, indeed, virtually the only work in which such a division seems to be consciously applied.[41] But Ibn Ṭabāṭabā, for example, describes the "tools" of poetry thus: the poet must know, first, the sciences of language and "the transmission of the various types of culture" (*al-riwāya li-funūn al-adab*), history, genealogy, the "methods of the Arabs in the foundation of poetry and deployment of its topics" and those which relate to "descriptions, addresses, accounts and proverbs," and direct and indirect expression (these pertain to invention); amplification, abbreviation, elegant beginnings and endings, and full expression of the topics (disposition); and, finally, "clothing (the poem) in appropriate words, so that it appears in the best style and most brilliant form" (ornament) (1956: 4; compare Shams-i Qays 1909: 416–18).

Though only implicit, the tripartite division provides a useful framework within which to consider poetic composition. Thus it is against the background of the three categories of invention, disposition and ornamentation that I shall present my examination of the relationship of structure and meaning in Arabic and Persian lyrics, beginning with the comments of critics both Eastern and Western, and attempting to relate, insofar as is possible, critical perceptions with poetic practice in the Arabo-Persian tradition. I will conclude this chapter with a reminder drawn from Gernot Windfuhr's review of two relatively early works on the subject of poetic structure.

[Studies of poetic technique] may appear exclusive, eclectic to some, even "dull" or irrelevant, since they investigate ... techniques which were essential for the poets and recognized by their biographers, but the

systematic investigation of which is despised by some moderns as "destructive" in the face of the "indestructable beautiful whole" of the poems. But even the Romantic poets worked hard to develop their skills and so did the ancient Arabic poets. . . . The analysis of these poets' techniques can only contribute to their being more highly esteemed. (1974b: 529–30)

We will, in fact, see many whole poems in the course of this study, as well as bits and pieces of many others, in our effort to discover just what it is that makes Arabic and Persian poems whole.

2

INVENTION

Arms and violent wars, with meter suited to matter,
Arms and violent wars, all in hexameters,
I was preparing to sound, when I heard a snicker from Cupid;
What had the rascal done, but taken one foot away?

<div align="right">Ovid, The Art of Love</div>

If it is to be praise, the love-song always precedes it;
Is every eloquent voicer of poems a distracted lover?

<div align="right">Abū al-Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbī</div>

Concepts of invention

Invention is the art of finding the material appropriate to the work in hand. For the classical orator or writer, this meant the arguments necessary to judicial cases or legislative initiatives and the topics of epideictic compositions; it comprised (according to Aristotle) three branches: proofs, topics, and commonplaces. "Natural" proofs are derived from the facts of the case being argued; "artificial" proofs might be based on character (*ethos*), especially that of the speaker, on the effect produced in the audience (*pathos*), or on logic, including the use of syllogisms, enthymemes, examples, and maxims. Topics (*topoi*) are "ways both of conducting an argument and of analysing a theme or subject prior to discussing it;" commonplaces (*koinai topoi*), originally "those topics of argument . . . common to different subject areas" (for example, "that we cannot judge the merits of an action until we have scrutinized the motives of the agent"), came to include "any observation or truth which is pithily expressed, weighty and serviceable: time flies; death is common to all," as well as "matters of perennial interest which might be proposed as subjects for debate or taken as themes for oratorical or poetic variations: the mutability of things; the contemplative versus the active life" (Dixon 1971: 24–8).[1]

Medieval *artes poeticae* extended invention to encompass the matter of narrative works, including under its rubric historical (or fictional) subject-matter as a class of topics from which arguments, proofs, commonplaces and so on are abstracted (see Kelly 1978b). In the most general terms, invention involves the choice of genre, subject matter, material and topics, and their adaptation to the occasion and to the poet's intent, according to the "mental archetype" he has of his poem (cf. ibid.: 233). Central to this process is the poet's discovery of the meaning inherent in his material – whether that material

<div align="center">23</div>

is "historical", as in narrative poems such as epic and romance, or generic, as in lyric – and of the means of conveying that meaning to his audience. The common factor which links both types of material is their derivation from a received source or sources or from prior treatments by others.

While Arabic and Persian rhetorical manuals lack both explicit discussions of invention and terms which would correspond to the Greek *heuresis* or the Latin *inventio*, there clearly existed both a parallel conception and a parallel discipline: the science of *ma'ānī*, of the "ideas" of poetry (to be distinguished from the *ma'ānī al-naḥw* discussed in later works, especially following al-Sakkākī (d. 626/1229), when *'ilm al-ma'ānī* is placed firmly in the domain of grammar), represented both in rhetorical works and in collections of *ma'ānī* or poetic topics (see Sadan 1991).

The terms *ma'nā* and its plural *ma'ānī* are used by a variety of disciplines and in a variety of senses.[2] Its later restriction, within the science of rhetoric (*'ilm al-balāgha*), to matters of syntax has obscured the existence of a secondary discipline (which, Sadan notes, is peripheral to the system of *balāgha* itself; ibid.: 60–1, 67) concerned with the invention of topics. The widespread practice of translating *ma'nā* as "idea" or "meaning" has further obscured the parallel between *'ilm al-ma'ānī* and invention (cf. ibid.: 62–3).

Collections of *ma'ānī* such as Abū Hilāl al-'Askarī's (d. after 395/1005) *Dīwān al-ma'ānī* functioned in part as sources of invention, providing examples of the expression of a variety of topics (in prose as well as in verse) arranged under generic headings (praise, satire, description and so on) and specific subjects (love, wine). Far from being mere catalogues of tropes (as is sometimes assumed), these collections point to the importance of finding the right expression for conveying meaning, to the necessity of expanding and developing topics rather than merely repeating them. I shall have more to say about what they tell us in this respect below.[3]

The invention of new topics and the expansion of old ones is central to both Arabic and Persian poetry; and the critics are well aware of this. When al-'Askarī cites al-Buḥturī's preference for the poet al-Farazdaq (d. 110/728) over Jarīr (d. 111/729) because the former "uses his judgement to vary certain *ma'ānī* as Jarīr does not, and employs them in his verse in each *qaṣīda* differently than in the next," whereas Jarīr merely repeats the words of others (1986: 24), he signals the importance of expanding the meaning of a topic or an image; when he notes 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Kātib's (d. 132/750) adaptation from Persian of topics related to the secretarial art he commends the invention of new topics for new subject matter (ibid.: 69). In his chapter on *ḥusn al-akhdh* ("excellence in borrowing") he states explicitly that no writers

> can dispense with treating the *ma'ānī* of their precursors and pouring (their discourse) into the moulds of those who came before; but they must, if they borrow them, clothe them in words of their own, present them in forms of their own composition, and introduce them in other than their original garb. . . . Individuals are distinguished from one another

by the words they use, how they put them together, combine them and
order them. (ibid.: 196)

The concept of invention is also seen in discussions of *takhyīl*, which means
both to create and to induce an imaginative (re)presentation (not, it should be
stressed, a representation in a mimetic sense, but a particular form of expression
designed to produce assent).[4] Cantarino defines *takhyīl* as "imaginative
creativity," that is, "the mental process by which the poet can cause his
mimetic representations [*sic*] to be imaginative, effective, and creative" (1975:
80–1); in fact, what characterizes such "representations" – and specifically, those
expressed metaphorically – is their basis in imaginative premises and their
conveyance through eloquent language.[5] The distinction between logical (or
authoritative) discourse, which appeals to the reason, and poetic discourse,
which appeals to the imagination, underlies ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī's (d. 471
or 4/1078 or 81) division of *maʿānī* into *ʿaqliyya* ("intellectual") and *takhyīliyya*
("imaginative") (1954: 241–8); both, however, operate with words, the former
to convince, the latter to create an imaginative impression.[6] The notion of
imagination as one of the essentials of poetry must therefore be seen as relating
to the specific way in which words operate on the mind to convey the "idea",
the *maʿnā*. In this operation, it is not the object represented which is of primary
importance but its significance; the process of *takhyīl* explores, clarifies, and
represents this significance through finding the best means through which to
create an imaginative impression (cf. Cantarino 1975: 78–9).[7]

In this sense *takhyīl* encompasses all the means of poetry: words, images,
figures of speech, rhyme, metre, and, of course, structure. This wider use of
the term characterizes its discussion by Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī, who classifies the
poet's procedure "in considering the imaginative forms [*takhyīlāt*] in which
he wishes to present his praise or blame, and the conceits [*takhayyulāt*] which
he wishes to assist in this presentation" into eight stages, "each of which has a place
in the practice of composition" (1981: 109). First, "he conceives [or invents
(*yatakhayyalu*) the general aims of the genre [*gharaḍ*] which ... he wishes to
present." (Ḥāzim uses *gharaḍ* variously: as "genre", with various subdivisions
[ibid.: 12]; as the "goal" or "motive" which produces a genre [11]; as the "human
motives" which generate *maʿānī* (18). Second, "He conceives for these genres a
mode [*ṭarīqa*] and a style [*uslūb*] or styles, either similar or contrasting, whose
path he follows with his topics [*maʿānī*]." (The *ṭarīqa*, "mode", may be serious,
jidd, or jesting, *hazl* [ibid.: 327]; "style" [*uslūb*] is of three types, defined as
"delicacy, roughness, and an intermediate style" [*riqqa*, *khushūna*, and *wasaṭ*],
which may be used alone or in combination [ibid.: 109].) Third, he determines
the order of the topics presented, in particular noting places for transition
(*takhalluṣ*) and digression (*istiṭrād*; these terms will be discussed in Chapter 3
below). Fourth, "he conceives the material form [*tashakkul*] of these topics and
their accomplishment in the mind in appropriate phrases," selects a suitable
rhyme, and determines the opening line of his poem; "he may also consider the

place of transitions and digressions at this stage." "These are the four stages of general inventions [*al-takhāyīl al-kulliyya*]."

In the fifth stage (the first of "particular inventions", *al-takhāyīl al-juz'iyya*), "the poet begins to conceive his topics [*ma'ānī*], one by one, in accordance with the poem's genre." Sixth, "He conceives what will ornament [each] topic and complete it ... by conceiving matters which relate to that topic with respect to their proper positioning and the correspondences and relationships which exist between the various parts of the topic and with things external to it which are yet connected with it, to aid him in conveying the intended meaning." The seventh stage involves precise metrical considerations based on the effect he wishes to produce in his audience, the eighth the invention of additional topics, if needed, for the purpose of filling metrical gaps or completing the rhyme. "The poem is generated on the basis of this type of progression" (ibid.: 109–11).

Geoffrey of Vinsauf defined invention as comprising the "careful planning [of the work] before taking up the pen to write," the "subordination of subsequent disposition and ornamentation to the plan of the invented materia," and the overall ordering of the work with respect to its beginning, middle, and conclusion (Kelly 1969: 119; see Geoffrey of Vinsauf 1967: 16–18). While Ḥāzim (as befits his Aristotelianism) is more systematic than Geoffrey, their conceptions of how a poem comes into being are essentially the same. The first stages of this creative process are the most crucial: determining the appropriateness of the material to the genre and purpose of the poem. It is to the question of generic invention, and its implications for poetic structure, to which I shall now turn.

Invention, imitation, and genre

Poetic invention is closely linked to the issue of the relation of the poet and his poem to the tradition, to prior treatments of the same material. Discussions of this relationship have often expressed it in terms of "influence", "borrowing", or "copying", or more generally as "imitation", terms used largely in a derogatory sense as implying lack of "originality"; alternatively, stress is placed on the poets' "individual achievement", and their relationship to other poets, and other poems, is not considered a valid tool of interpretation. (See, e.g., Arberry 1964: 352–4, and the criticisms by Rehder, 1974: 59; see also Meisami 1987: 308–9.) But the Arabic or Persian poet was intimately connected with a poetic world created, and ever in the process of creation, by himself and his predecessors, a connection seen in all aspects of composition: invention, disposition, and ornamentation. Other poets, other poems, play a formative role in the choice both of the poem's "mental archetype" and of the materials appropriate to it; on the level of invention, such choices revolve primarily around questions of genre.

Modern criticism has spent a great deal of effort discussing genre, and in attempting to systematize a concept which resists systematization. The classical Western division of poetry into dramatic, epic, and lyric is obviously of no value

for a system which, like the Arabo-Persian, is lyric-based; yet this system most certainly possesses a concept of genre. But that, indeed, is what "genre" is: a concept, a notion in the mind, of classifications, distinctions, decorum, within which the poet works.

Indeed, genre is perhaps the most important of literary concepts, as it provides a framework that the poet may not only write within, but write against. In the pre-modern west genre was precisely such an informative concept, which expressed itself in a variety of ways.[8] That a strong sense of genre is characteristic of pre-modern literatures has been shown for both classical and medieval European literature (cf. Cairns 1972; Colie 1973; Fowler 1982: 31–2; Jauss 1982: 76–109); that this is no less the case for Arabic and Persian is demonstrated by the medieval rhetoricians.

There is no single term in Arabic or Persian which corresponds to "genre". The term most often used is *gharaḍ* (generally in the plural *aghrāḍ*; often translated as "theme"), which refers to the "ends" or "purposes" of poetry; other terms include *anwāʿ*, "kinds", *asālīb* "types", and so on. Scholars often lament such terminological "confusion" (or flexibility), as they do the apparent absence of any consistent system of generic classification (see e.g. Trabulsi 1955: 237–8; van Gelder 1999 now provides a fresh look at questions of genre); but this seeming lack of consistency reflects both a diversity of views and a vigorous and dynamic concept of genre.

In his *Kitāb al-ʿUmda* Ibn Rashīq provides an example of this diversity. "Some scholars," he begins, "have said … that poetry is constructed upon four pillars [*arkān*]: *madḥ*, *hijāʾ*, *nasīb* and *rithāʾ*." This division into panegyric, invective, love elegy and lamentation is the traditional one found – often with some elaboration – in most works on rhetoric and poetics. "Others say that [its] basic principles [*qawāʿid*] … are four: (the provoking of) desire, fear, pleasure, and anger. *Madḥ* and *shukr* [expression of thanks] are associated with desire, *iʿtidhār* [apology] and *istiʿṭāf* [asking for sympathy] with fear, *shawq* [passionate longing] and the delicacy of the *nasīb* with pleasure, and *hijāʾ*, *tawaʿʿud* [threatening] and severe *ʿitāb* [reproach] with anger." This division stresses the expressive-affective aspect, the emotions which generate certain genres and which they, in turn, generate in the audience. Similarly, the poet Arṭāh ibn Suhayya, when asked by the Umayyad caliph ʿAbd Allāh ibn Marwān, "Will you compose poetry today?" replied, "By God, I am neither sad nor angry nor drinking nor desirous of anything, and poetry is composed in one of these (states)."[9]

The exegete ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā al-Rummānī (d. 384/994) identified the five "most frequently used" poetic *aghrāḍ* as *nasīb*, *madḥ*, *hijāʾ*, *fakhr* (boasting), and *waṣf* (description), and included *tashbīh* and *istiʿāra* (comparison and metaphor) under *waṣf*.[10] Ibn Rashīq's teacher ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Ibrāhīm al-Nahshalī provides a more detailed classification.

> The types [*aṣnāf*] of poetry are comprised under four headings: *madīḥ*, *hijāʾ*, *ḥikma* [wisdom] and *lahw* [pleasure]; each type [*ṣinf*] is divided into *funūn*.

Madīḥ includes elegies, boasting and thanks; *hijāʾ* includes blame, reproach, and seeking delay; *ḥikma* includes proverbs, exhorting to asceticism, and admonition; and *lahw* includes love poetry, incitement to pleasure, and descriptions of wine and the drunken.

Finally, others subsume all types of poetry under the bipartite division *madḥ/hijāʾ*.

Madḥ includes elegy, boasting, love-poetry [*tashbīb*], and related laudable descriptions such as that of the long-suffering and of great deeds, beautiful comparisons, and admiration of virtues, such as proverbs, *sententiae*, sermons, renunciation of this world, and contentment. *Hijāʾ* is the opposite; but *ʿitāb* [reproach] occupies a middle ground, having one side towards each, as does *ighrāʾ* [incitement], which is neither praise nor blame. (Ibn Rashīq 1972, 1: 120–3. For further discussions of generic classifications see Heinrichs 1973: 38–43; Trabulsi 1955: 215–47; van Gelder 1999; and compare Shams-i Qays 1909: 421, on the *asālīb* of poetry. See also the entry, "Genre," in Meisami and Starkey 1998 [J.S. Meisami])

Ibn Rashīq records the approaches to genre by critics in varying disciplines and professions: rhetoric, grammar, exegesis, *kalām* (dialectic), and poetry itself. None of these schemes is either systematic or exhaustive, though some attempt to be, and all reflect the attitudes and assumptions of the disciplines to which they are related. Some accept a general division of discourse into praise and blame (*madḥ* and *hijāʾ*) and marshal sub-genres under these headings; others stress the relation of the poem to specific emotions or states (a classification recalling the Aristotelian notion of character, or ethos, as a source of argument). The quadripartite *madḥ* : *hijāʾ* :: *ḥikma* : *lahw* classification and its subdivisions posited by ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Nahshalī is also found in the *Kitāb al-Burhān* of Isḥāq ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Wahb (see Ibn Wahb 1933: 70).[11] Another type of classification is grammatical: "ʿAbd al-Ṣamad ibn al-Muʿadhdhal said, 'All poetry is contained in three words: … When you praise, you say *anta* [you are], when you write invective you say *lasta* [you are not], and when you write elegy you say *kunta* [you were]'" (Ibn Rashīq 1972, 1: 123; attributed to the poet ʿAmr ibn Naṣr al-Qisafī [d. 247/861] in Ibn al-Jarrāḥ's *al-Waraqa* [van Gelder 1982a: 90–1]).

What is notable about these classifications is, first, the absence of formal criteria (cf. van Gelder 1999: 23; classifications by prosodic form, with little or no reference to content, are found in discussions of *ʿarūḍ*, prosody); and second, that whether the emphasis is on the affective (i.e. "praise/blame") or the expressive aspect of poetry, the result is a listing of genres according to content. It is irrelevant to inquire, as does Trabulsi, how many genres "actually existed" in Arabic poetry or to criticize the omission of "important genres such as bacchic and gnomic poetry" from any given list (1955: 215, 219); such lists are, by definition, idealized, partial, and often merely exemplary, rather than attempting to be all-inclusive.[12]

The generic repertoire of Arabo-Persian poetry can ultimately be traced back to the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda*, which employed a variety of genres in combination. The practice of the rhetoricians, and of compilers of *maʿānī* collections, is, indeed, to trace specific generic *topoi* to their pre-Islamic origins. Thus for example Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī introduces the chapter on *madīḥ* in his *Dīwān al-maʿānī* (the first chapter of the book, as *madīḥ* is foremost among the *aghrāḍ*) with a line by the pre-Islamic poet al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī which, he says, has been called "the most encomiastic [*amdaḥ*] line uttered by the Arabs" (i.e., the ancients):

> Do you not see that God has granted you a high station before which every (other) ruler falters?
> For you are a sun, and (other) kings are stars; when you shine forth, not one of their stars can be seen. (1994, 1: 19; Abū Hilāl gives a lengthy explanation of the function of this line in the context of the poem, from which he cites a number of other verses; see ibid.: 19–20)

Abu Hilāl cites earlier poets who preceded al-Nābigha in the use of this topic, and later poets who adapted and developed it, among them Nuṣayb ibn Rabāḥ (d. ca. 108/726) –

> He is the moon, and other men stars around him; do stars resemble the light-giving moon? –

and Abū Tammām (d. ca. 232/845) –

> As if the Banū Nabhān were, on the day of his death, stars in a sky from whose midst the moon had fallen. (ibid.: 20)[13]

But in actual practice the genres, and their related *topoi*, appear even in early poetry not only in the *qaṣīda* but in brief, monothematic poems (*qiṭaʿ*, sing. *qiṭʿa*), and in later periods they undergo extensive development in both contexts.

Genre plays a formative role in composition. A poem's genre is related both to its addressee and to its speaker (e.g., the poet may speak as panegyrist to patron, as lover to beloved, etc.; both speaker and addressee are, moreover, implied by the genre), as well as to its broader audience (the assembled court, members of a drinking party, and so on). Certain types of communication are presupposed by certain genres; and the act of communication itself implies specific speakers and addressees in certain situations.[14] Each content-oriented genre, therefore, implies a specific type of speaker. Moreover, a poem may consist of one genre or of several genres in combination; the distinguishing feature of a genre (as opposed to a topic) is that it can constitute an independent poem.[15] Genres may be combined or included; one genre may become a topic of another, or a topic may be amplified until it takes on the status of a new, independent genre.

Most important in terms of the actual process of composition is the generic repertoire, the topics (*maʿānī*) and other elements which are characteristic of each genre but are not necessarily genre-specific. It is these elements which play the greatest part in the generic manipulation so typical of lyric poetry; and it is for this reason that they figure so prominently in Arabo-Persian rhetoric and criticism and in collections of *maʿānī*. For lyric poetry relies extensively on the manipulation of generic topics; such, indeed, is the point of criticisms of Abū Tammām's line quoted above on the grounds that his use of the "moon/stars" topic implies, not praise, but blame: the Banū Nabhān are so inferior that they only shine because of the death of their superior chieftain (cf. n. 13 below). Generic manipulation is a marked feature of the Arabic poetry of the Abbasid period, to which I will turn next.[16]

Invention and genre in early Abbasid poetry

The poets of the early Abbasid period (late second/eighth-early third/ninth centuries) inherited a poetic tradition that already extended back several centuries. Formally, this tradition was dominated by the (usually polythematic) *qaṣīda*, consisting of several sections, or "movements" (a term J. Montgomery [1986] suggests as preferable): an exordium (*nasīb*), usually amatory or erotic in nature, a "journey" passage (*raḥīl*), followed by sections of boasting (*fakhr*), praise (*madḥ*), or gnomic topics (*ḥikma*).[17] Generically, it possessed a vast range of well-established topics and motifs developed over the centuries and hallowed by repeated use.

The early Abbasid period saw a sudden explosion of hitherto minor genres – in particular those dealing with bacchic, erotic and gnomic topics – employed in independent, generally monothematic poems which provided a counterpart to the more formal *qaṣīda*, now devoted chiefly to panegyric (see Badawi 1980),[18] and perhaps reflecting a desire to elevate such formerly minor genres, formerly inserted into the larger framework of the *qaṣīda*, to independent status (see ibid.: 7–12; Schoeler 1990: 294). Another was undoubtedly the increasingly occasional nature of Abbasid poetry (or rather the increasing diversity of occasions for which poetry was composed) and the multiplication of informal gatherings in which it was performed;[19] a third, related factor was the association of poetry with music, and with singers and musicians (cf. Vadet 1968: 78–101; Bencheikh 1975a: 120).[20] The independent wine poem (*khamriyya*), love poem (*ghazal*), and ascetic poem (*zuhdiyya*) which were developed at this time were later adapted to other uses (e.g., for religious or mystical poetry), and provided models for the various types of the later Persian *ghazal*.

The height of this period of experimentation was during the reigns of Hārūn al-Rashīd (170–93/786–809) and his son and successor al-Amīn (193–8/809–13). Following the civil war between al-Amīn and his half-brother al-Maʾmūn, which ended in the latter's victory and al-Amīn's murder, the atmosphere

changed, becoming less conducive to "light" poetry and favouring the official *qaṣīda* (cf. Bencheikh 1977: 35–8). Nevertheless, the new genres left a marked impact both on later Arabic and on Persian poetry; and they remained popular at the courts of rulers who did not always share caliphal tastes, such as the Hamdanids of Syria, the Fatimids in Cairo, and the Buyid "protectors" of the caliphate.

In developing these independent poetic types poets drew upon both the earlier Arabic poetry and on materials imported from the cultures which had come under Arab hegemony, most notably the Persian. Their chief technique was the adaptation and modification of traditional generic topics for use in these new poetic contexts. The fact that the generic constituents of such poems (generally called *qiṭʿa*, in Persian *muqaṭṭaʿa*, i.e., "fragment") can be traced back to the ancient *qaṣīda* has prompted some scholars to view them as representing "a splitting up of the old *qaṣīda*" (Heinrichs 1973: 25); however, as J. Stetkevych argues (reminding us that al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/868–9) termed the short poem *al-qaṣīda al-qaṣīra*), "The term *qiṭʿa* is etymologically misleading, and … lends itself to being erroneously viewed as part of the standard *qaṣīda* as the latter appears in the definition of Ibn Qutayba," itself a "formal abstraction" rather than a description of actual practice (1967: 2–3).[21] In this view, it is not so much that "parts of the *qaṣīda*" have been split off from it, but that specific *aghrāḍ* which the *qaṣīda* typically employs in combination are isolated and developed into independent poetic types.[22]

The dynamics of Abbasid generic manipulation may be observed in the interplay of the three major types – *khamriyya*, *zuhdiyya*, and *ghazal* – and the manner in which they draw both on the ancient repertoire and on one another (compare Williams 1980: 233 on the exploitation of genre-differentiated views of love). Central to this process is the modification of the persona of the poet/speaker: for if the predominant mode of pre-Islamic and much early Islamic poetry was heroic, Abbasid poetry is often deliberately antiheroic (see Hamori 1974: 3–77). In contrast to the early portrayal of the poet as tribal hero (or, in the case of the Ṣuʿlūk or "brigand" poets, as anti-hero; see e.g. S. P. Stetkevych 1984), the Abbasid poet is more often victim: of love, of fate, or of his own impulses. The central focus of lyric – the intense presence of the speaker, the lyric I – takes on a variety hitherto unknown. This corresponds to what Quintilian terms the invention of *fictiones personarum*: "we create *personae* that are suited to advise, blame, complain, praise, or pity. … For it is certainly true that words cannot be invented without also inventing them for a particular *persona*" (quoted by Williams 1980: 212). The most startling examples of this transformation may be seen in the *khamriyya*, the chief Abbasid exponent of which was Abū Nuwās (d. c. 198/813), with whom the description of wine and its associated topics became a poetic end in itself.[23] In his hands, the *khamriyya* (like, *mutatis mutandis*, the love poem and the *zuhdiyya*) becomes a countergenre which both draws upon and subverts or parodies the heroic mode of pre-Islamic poetry (see *EI*[2], art. "Khamriyya" [J.-E. Bencheikh]; Hamori 1974: 47–50; on

fakhr in pre-Islamic and early Islamic poetry see Blachère 1952, 2: 409–17). The central focus of the *khamriyya* is wine, the object of the poet's devotion and praise; it is described in terms resonant of the old poetry.

Hamori suggests that the topic of wine as both old and virginal, seen in Abū Nuwās's line –

> Does it not cheer you that the earth is in bloom, while the wine is there for the taking, old and virginal? –

originates in descriptions of war, citing this verse by al-Kumayt –

> When, after having seemed a delicate young girl, war shows itself a graying old woman, quarrelsome and shrill. (Hamori 1974: 49; Abū Nuwās 1958, 3: 5)

It occurs as well in this brief poem attributed to Imru' al-Qays:

> War is at first a beautiful maiden who appears with her adornments to every headstrong youth.
> But when she becomes heated and her fires blaze, she turns into an aged crone with no spouse,
> A grey-hair hag with clipped locks, altered in form, loathsome to smell and to kiss. (al-Masʿūdī 1971, §1569, and cf. §1776; Imru' al-Qays 1958: 161)

The movement of the topic from one context (gnomic) to another which is totally different (wine) enables its transformation: the young "daughter of the vine" imprisoned in the vat, at once ancient and virginal wine, becomes an object of desire.

> 2 There is no excuse for your abstention from an ancient one whose father is the night, whose mother the green vine.
> 3 Hasten; for the gardens of Karkh are decked out; no dusty hand of war has usurped them. (Abu Nuwās 1958, 3: 5)

In these lines, the juxtaposition (in reverse order) of *ḥarb* "war" and *shamṭāʾ* "grey-haired" seems to be a deliberate allusion to Imru' al-Qays's poem; this allusivity (a concomitant of the transfer of topics into new contexts) is a prominent feature of Abbasid poetry.[24]

Imru' al-Qays warned that war only appears beautiful to the "headstrong" (*jahūl*), one with the quality of *jahl*, excess. Abū Nuwās's persona of winebibber prides himself on his *jahl*: "Youth was (for me) the steed of rude excess," he states (ibid., 3: 233), echoing al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī's

> ʿĀmir has spoken rudely (*jahlan*): the riding animal of rude ignorance is insult (or: 'youth'). (Quoted by van Gelder 1988: 19)[25]

The Arab critics noted other echoes of pre-Islamic poets, and particularly of Imru' al-Qays, in the *khamriyya*. Ibn Qutayba asserted that the source of Abū Nuwās's

In a party where joy laughs wholeheartedly and where wine is
permitted

was Imru' al-Qays's,

I am now permitted to drink wine, after having been kept from it by an
all-absorbing occupation. (Quoted by Hamori 1974: 48–9; see Abū
Nuwās 1958, 1: 227; Ibn Qutayba 1981: 426)

Ibn Qutayba's explanation (which, along with the provenance of the topic,
Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī, the redactor of Abū Nuwās's *Dīwān*, accepts) – "Abū Nuwās
had sworn not to drink wine until joined with the person he loved in a
gathering; when they came together, (wine) became licit to him" – is expanded
upon by Hamori:

[Imru' al-Qays's] occupation was avenging his father's murder; abstinence
from wine (and from other amenities) was to last until blood had been
shed for blood. Ibn Qutayba picks up the technical aspect of *ḥallat liya
l-khamru* [the fulfillment of the oath]. It must be left undecided whether
he is correct in reporting that Abū Nuwās too had a vow: to touch no drop
of alcohol until he secured a coveted rendezvous. He was no doubt
justified in sensing a conscious echo – or parody – of the heroic in the
khamrīya. (1974: 48–9)

The poem in which Abū Nuwās's line occurs is, we may note briefly, a panegyric to
the governor of Egypt al-Khaṣīb, and concludes the five-line wine-song with which
the poem opens. There follows a ten-line *raḥīl* describing the camel which bears
the poet to his patron; the final five lines comprise the *madīḥ*. Wine-song and
madīḥ, precisely balanced, are thus linked: the implication is that it is al-Khaṣīb's
generosity which has made both gathering and wine available, where they had
been disallowed not by self-abnegating abstinence but by financial hardship.

Abu Nuwās frequently inverts, subverts, or explicitly renounces many of the
conventions of the pre-Islamic *qaṣīda*. Most famous, perhaps, is his rejection of
the *aṭlāl* topic (the lament over the ruined encampment of the departed tribe),
a rejection which should not be taken, as is often done, at face value: it serves to
establish the *khamriyya* as countergenre, and Abū Nuwās could employ the topic
seriously when he wished. In his *khamriyyāt* he sometimes dismisses it outright:

1 Turn aside from the transformed ruins; leave off describing the ancient
   abodes and the sticks of the fire-drill;
2 Forsake the bedouin Arabs; leave them, along with their wretchedness,
   to one who is deprived, who likes hardship and (is) mean and
   niggardly. (1958, 3: 120)

At others he mocks it:

1 Say to the one who weeps over faded traces standing – and what harm
   would it do if he were sitting? –

2 "You describe the spring quarter and those who camped there, like
     Salmā, Lubaynā and Khanas:
3 "Put the spring quarter, and Salmā, aside, and seek a morning cup of
     Karkh wine, bright as a firebrand...." (ibid., 3: 196)

Elsewhere, he modifies it to suit the urban ethos of the *khamriyya*, substituting
for the abandoned camps places in his own home town of Basra, now deserted
by him (see Meisami 1998b: 76–7).

1 The Muṣallā is empty, the sand hills deserted by me, as are Mirbadān
     and Labab,
2 And the Friday mosque which ingathered chivalry and glory is bereft,
     and its courtyards and great halls,
3 Gatherings I frequented in my youth, until grey appeared on my
     cheeks. (ibid., 3: 29–30)

The opening line (*'Afā l-Muṣallā wa-aqwati l-kuthubū*) echoes that of Labīd's
Mu'allaqa:

   *'Afati d-diyāru maḥalluhā fa-muqāmuhā   bi-Minan ta'abbada Ghawluhā
   fa-Rijāmuhā*
   The site of the encampments has been effaced, and the hills of Ghawl
      and Rijām, their [former] resting place, have returned to wilderness.
      (al-Zawzanī 1933: 112)

Similarly, Abū Nuwās's

1 May abundant rain fall on (a place) other than the height and the cliff,
     and other than the ruins of Mayy's abode in the flat wastes

was said by the grammarian al-Mubarrad (as quoted by Ḥamza) to be a response
to the opening line of the *Mu'allaqa* of al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī:

   O abode of Mayya at the heights and the cliff, now forsaken, over
      which long ages have passed.

Ḥamza comments, "al-Nābigha placed the abode on the heights and the cliffs
because it was a higher place for it, more glorious for its people, and safer for
them from the torrents of floods. Then Abū Nuwās came along, ridiculing [or:
finding fault with] al-Nābigha's description, and said [the line]" (Abu Nuwās
1958, 3: 103).

In what does Abū Nuwās's "fault-finding" consist? Some critics take very
seriously Abū Nuwās's outstpoken contempt for the rough, uncultivated
bedouin and his clear preference for a more comfortable lifestyle, seeing in it
political motives associated with the Shu'ūbiyya movement (see the discussion
and references in Arazi 1979). But the *khamriyyāt* are, it seems to me, designed
primarily for the entertainment of others, in urban Basra and, more particularly,
Baghdad, who share the poet's preference – hence the force of Hamori's

designation of the poet as "ritual clown" (see 1974, Chapter 2); and they are not, moreover, lacking in a certain nostalgia for idealized aspects of the Arab past (see further Chapter 3). This is a poetic game, in which the topics and motifs of the Ancients (and not only the Ancients) are wrenched out of context to supply materials for a new type of poetry.

Thus for example Abū Nuwās adapts the *raḥīl* – the poet's description of his journey through the desert, the excellences of his mount and the many hardships he suffers – to depict journeys which begin outside the city walls of Baghdad and whose destination is the tavern, not the beloved, the tribe or, as in panegyric, the patron:

3 How many a group of companions, blameless, generous, free, of great honour, radiant and beautiful,
4 Whose mounts I diverted, weary and weakened – for the winds' ways were closed,
5 And shadows had risen over my sandal-strap, like a feather in the fold of a wing –
6 To wineshops located in trellised vineyards in twisting fields. (1958, 3: 90)

He may also describe his favourite mount:

4 And nights when I depart on a dark chestnut steed, and return at dawn on a golden one,
5 Steeds of wine, not made to sweat or starve for a racing day. (ibid., 3: 165)

But perhaps the most striking of these transfers, or transformations, is that surrounding the poet's object of desire. For the pre-Islamic poet desire for, attainment of, or separation from a woman figured complex relationships with kinsmen or enemies, with the poet's own resources, with life, or Time (*dahr*) itself (see Jamil 1999). For Abū Nuwās, wine is the beloved, the primary object of desire (although other, more physical ones are associated with it – usually boys, over whom wine provides the means for triumph). Wine, however, is the true beloved – always faithful, always dependable (except when unaffordable); and wine is described in terms, and in contexts, reminiscent of both pre-Islamic and early Islamic *ghazal*.

The poem beginning *Daʿ ʿanka lawmī*, introduced by an apostrophe shared by both love and wine poetry (address to a "blamer", *ʿādhil*) followed by the affliction/remedy oxymoron, contains a description of the "beloved" in language typical of *ghazal*:

1 Leave off blaming me, for blame is an enticement, and cure me with she who was the affliction:
2 A blonde [*ṣafrāʾ*] in whose courtyards sorrow does not alight, and who, if struck by a stone, would touch it, dispelling its sadness (1958, 3: 2).[26]

Compare the opening of a *ghazal* by ʿUmar ibn Abī Rabīʿa (d. 93/712 or 103/721):

1 O my two companions, lessen your blame; do a pious deed for a lover whom desire has afflicted with remembrance
2 For one white as the wild cows of the sands, tame, seductive, plump and full-formed as the moon:
3 Tall, living in luxury, plump-jointed like the wild cows who graze amid succulent flowers,
4 Round-legged, fragile of waist, beauteous of neck, breast and hair. (n.d.: 139)

But while ʿUmar continues with a narrative description of an amorous adventure, which includes his companions' advice – "Leave off loving her! . . . Be like one struck down [by drink] who has risen from his stupor" – and concludes with the lady's tearful remark ("I shall not forget . . . her words, as the tears from her eyes coursed down her throat: 'The blood-wit for this heart must be sought from ʿUmar'"), Abū Nuwās, having described the wine, its server, its pouring and mixing, its brilliance, and the group of youths (*fitya*) who enjoy it, returns to the identification of wine as the beloved:

9 It is she for whom I weep, and not for an encampment stopped at by some Hind or Asmāʾ.
10 God forbid that tents be pitched for (the sake of) a pearl, and that camels and cattle walk over it!

The association between the beloved and wine can be traced back to Imruʾ al-Qays, who says of his beloved:

11 She walks (slowly) like one giddy with drink, felled on a sand-hill, breathless and weak:
12 Smooth-skinned, elegant, soft and tender as a fresh bough of the *bān* tree in leaf,
13 Heavy to rise, slow to speak, smiling with bright, cool teeth,
14 As if wine, and the clouds' downpour, the scent of lavender, the wafting sandalwood
15 Watered the coolness of her teeth as the dawn bird trilled. (1958: 110)

Here the lady is suffering from the debilitating effects of wine; in ʿUmar's *Ḥawrāʾa anīsatun muqabbiluhā ʿadhābatun ka-anna madhāqahu khamrū*, "A dark-eyed maid whose mouth is as sweet as if it were the taste of wine" [n.d.: 182]), the association between beloved and wine becomes closer, paving the way for the substitution of one for the other by Abū Nuwās.

This substitution is of course facilitated (if not inspired) by wine's feminine gender, which makes easy the transfer not only of feminine descriptive adjectives – *shamṭāʾ*, "grey-haired", *ṣafrāʾ*, "blonde", *ʿadhrāʾ*, "virgin", and so on – but of the patterns of diction typical of love poetry as a whole – though not without a certain ambiguity, as in the poem by Abū Nuwās which begins

1 *Shajānī wa-ablānī tadhakkuru man ahwā   wa-albasanī thawban mina*
    ḍ-ḍurri mā yublā

1 I am distressed and afflicted by the memory of the one I love; it has
    clothed me in garments of hurt which do not wear out.

2 Signs of what the young man's heart conceals are found in the turning
    of his eyes towards the one he loves.

3 But not every one who loves passionately is sincere. The lover wastes
    away; he neither dies nor lives. (1958, 3: 14; accepting Ghazzālī's
    reading [Abū Nuwās 1982: 118] of *ablānī* in 1 for Wagner's *aḍnānī*
    "has wasted me", which preserves the *tajnīs ablānī/mā yublā*)

Such patterns as *shajānī*, *ablānī* etc., especially in the opening line of a poem,
should create the expectation of *ghazal*;[27] but this expectation is short-lived, as
the poet turns to a narrative of his suit for, and marriage to, one of the
wineseller's "daughters", and thence to praise of her:

6 A nectar whose father is water and whose mother the vine, whose
    nursemaid was the mid-day heat, grown intense....

8 Christian of lineage, dwelling in Muslim towns, Syrian of provenance
    [lit. in the morning], produced in Iraq,

9 A Magian who forsook the people of her faith because of her aversion
    to the fires which they kindle....

Abū Nuwās's praise of his "beloved's" noble ancestry scarcely differs from the use
of the same topic in *ghazal*, as for example by al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf (d. after
193/108?):

14 A maiden of high lineage, noble in both paternal and maternal lines.

15 She gave me to drink of the saliva of her mouth; and how wonderful
    the perfume from that girl's lips! (1986: 85)

Wine possesses all the qualities customarily praised in the beloved – noble
lineage, elevated social status, chastity; brightness of visage, life-giving and
reviving powers, and so on (qualities which, *mutatis mutandis*, also characterize –
in the masculine – the *mamdūḥ* of panegyric). Ibn al-Muʿtazz observed, "As for
the comparison of wine to the brightness of day, we see that the topics presented
in this connection are transferred [*muḥawwala*] from the poetry of the Arabs and
the descriptions of beautiful faces, from which the *muwalladūn* have produced
various attributes for wine" (1925: 37, and see 37–40). Abū Nuwās's
personification of wine as beloved will be discussed further in Chapter 8; let
us merely note, for now, the identification, which draws on the topics of both
ghazal and panegyric (e.g., placing the wine, like the name of the *mamdūḥ*, at
the center of the poem; see further Chapter 6) to establish wine as the ultimate
object of desire and praise. To each poet, then, his own beloved; and to each his
own persona. And if Abū Nuwās adapts both the heroic topics of the pre-
Islamic poets and the love motifs of contemporary *ghazal* to his own purposes, he

is no less sparing with the topics of the *zuhdiyya*, and with religious motifs in general. Hamori comments on the allusion to the topics of "abandonment of the world" and right guidance in the lines,

> Leave the gardens of roses and apples; direct your steps – may you be guided aright [*hudīta*] – towards Dhāt al-Ukayrāḥ!

No doubt, on hearing a line like this, the audience's first reaction was astonishment. "Leave the gardens" misleads you: when taken by itself, it would better suit an ascetic poem. In the next half-line the optative turns the sentence into something of a sermon. Right guidance is a frequent notion in the Koran and in pious exhortations, but the place where the spiritual pilgrim is advised to go happens to be a monastery of Christian monks who sell excellent wine. It is all a bit of a joke, and the invitation is not uncommonly outrageous: people often used to go on outings to such monasteries. The scandal is in the wording rather than in the contents. (1974: 51)

Abū al-ʿAtāhiya (d. 211/826) employs the same motif in more than one *zuhdiyya*, with virtually the same wording; for example,

14   Be just – if you are guided aright [*hudīta*] – if you yourself seek justice;
  do not approve in others what you would not approve for yourself.
  (1886: 293)

Indeed, the frequent similarities of phrasing between the two poets suggest that they were, in fact, parodying each other's poetry (see further below).

Hamori comments extensively on Abū Nuwās's utilization (or parodization) of religious imagery and of topics specific to Islam – the devil as *shaykh*, or religious guide, who instructs in debauchery rather than piety; wine as the *qibla* towards which the winebibber prays (a motif also prevalent in *ghazal*, in which the beloved is the sacred shrine sought by the pilgrim-lover); denial of resurrection and the afterlife; wine as the illuminating light which guides men to its worship; and the motif of divine forgiveness as encompassing the sinner (1974: 50–71). We might add many more examples, such as the famous poem in which the rituals of Islam – prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, *zakāt* – are inverted to become the practices of the winebibber.[28] The impact of such procedures, however, arises not merely from their explicit content – the anti-heroic, anti-religious "message" of the social rebel – but from the manner in which both traditional conventions and contemporary practices are subverted to the ends of the *khamriyya*.

The *khamriyya*'s generic opposite, the *zuhdiyya*, also modifies topics borrowed from other genres to suit its own specific ends. As Abū Nuwās was the foremost practitioner of Abbasid *khamriyya*, so Abū al-ʿAtāhiya may be considered the inventor of the *zuhdiyya*, which, though it has antecedents in earlier poetry, is developed in its canonical Islamic form by that poet (see Sperl 1989: 72–82).

The self-conscious nature of this specialization on the part of both poets is suggested by an anecdote retold by Ibn Manẓūr (d. 711/1311) which purports to record their marking out of specific poetic territories.

> Abū Makhlad al-Ṭāʾī [related]: Abū al-ʿAtāhiya came to me and said, "Abū Nuwās will not go against you; I would like you to ask him to refrain from composing *zuhd*. I relinquish to him *madīḥ*, *hijāʾ*, *khamr*, and that sort of effeminate [*raqīq*] verse that poets write; my passion is for *zuhd*." I sent to Abū Nuwās; he came to me, and we busied ourselves (drinking); but Abū al-ʿAtāhiya would not drink wine with us. I said to Abū Nuwās, "Isḥāq [Abū al-ʿAtāhiya] is one known for his eminence and precedence; he would like you to refrain from composing *zuhd*." Abū Nuwās was taken aback by this, and replied, "Abū Makhlad, you have anticipated what I wished to say to you on this matter; for I had resolved to compose [poetry] about things which any libertine would repent of, and have indeed done so." (Ibn Manẓūr, *Akhbār Abī Nuwās*; quoted by al-Dāsh 1968: 331)

Whether this anecdote is veracious or fictitious matters little; it reflects an awareness on the part of poets and their audiences alike both of deliberate specialization and of a strong competitive element among the poets of the period which forces us to consider the development of independent genres in this period not merely from the point of view of the supposed beliefs or proclivities of the poets, but from the standpoint of literary dynamics.[29]

Not only does the *zuhdiyya*, like the *khamriyya*, manipulate the form of the *qaṣīda* to its own ends (as will be discussed further in Chapter 5), but it too appropriates topics associated with other genres, modifying them to the thematics of the ascetic poem. If Abū Nuwās invokes the *aṭlāl* topos only to reject it –

1 Forget the traces of the abodes and the ruined encampments; forsake the spring quarter, effaced and obliterated.
2 Have you ever seen the abodes return an answer, or respond to one who asks a question? (1958, 3: 257) –

for Abū al-ʿAtāhiya the *aṭlāl* are a sign of mortality and transience:

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? (1886: 227–8; translated by Sperl 1989: 209)

Li-man ṭalalun ("whose is the ruined encampment?") is a formula which introduces many a pre- and early Islamic poem. So, for example, Imruʾ al-Qays:

1 *Li-man ṭalalun dāthirun āyuhu taqādama fī sālifi l-aḥrusī*
   Whose is the ruined encampment, its signs effaced by the advance of many ages of time. (1958: 121)

And Abū Nuwās:

1 *Li-man ṭalalun ʿāriyu l-maḥalli dafīnū   ʿafā ʿahduhu illā khawālidu jūnū*
   Whose is the ruined encampment, its place bare, buried (concealed)
      from view, whose familiar signs have been effaced, save for
      blackened cooking-stones? (1958, 3: 305)

The motif of the ruins not responding is similarly conventional:

1 *Alimmā ʿalā r-rabʿi l-qadīmi bi-ʿAsʿasa   ka'annī unādī aw ukallimu akhrasa*
   Visit (companions twain) the ancient spring quarter at ʿAsʿasa; it is as if
      I addressed or called on a mute (stone). (Imru' al-Qays 1958: 117;
      cf. also Sperl 1989: 220 n. 16)

For Imru' al-Qays, the absence of response is testimony that the tribe has
departed, abandoning the encampment; for Abū Nuwās, it is because mute ruins
are not going to answer anyone, and to address them (let alone describe them)
is pointless; for Abū al-ʿAtāhiya, it is because, though silent, they provide mute
witness of those who have not departed, but will inhabit them till Resurrection,
as the *aṭlāl* are transformed into the graves.

1 What is the matter with the graves, that they do not respond when he
      who sorrows calls out to them? (1886: 25)

Where the *khamriyya* substitutes, for the pre-Islamic tribal and heroic ethos, the
anti-heroism of libertinism, the *zuhdiyya* replaces that ethos with the concept of
man's helplessness: "If the pre-Islamic hero is ... depicted as active in the face of
death, man in the *zuhdiyya* is the passive victim of the forces of destiny" (Sperl
1989: 81). If Abū Nuwās exhorts *Tazawwud min shabābin laysa yabqā*, "Store up
provisions of youth, which does not last" (Hamori 1974: 55), Abū al-ʿAtāhiya
responds, *Laysa zādun siwā t-tuqā*, "There is no sustenance save piety" (Sperl 1989:
81; both verses allude to Koran 2: 197: *Tazawwadū fa-inna khayra z-zādi t-taqwā*,
"Store up provisions; for the best provision is the fear of God" [Hamori 1974: 55]).

Abū al-ʿAtāhiya also employs topics of *ghazal* not to praise a beloved, but to
warn against setting one's heart on that false beloved, this world (*dunyā*, also
conveniently feminine; see further Chapter 8).

1 I have cut the cords of hope in you, and brought down my baggage
      from the back of my mount;
2 And despaired that I might survive to enjoy what I have gained from
      you, O world, or that ought would remain to me.
3 I found the coldness of despair in my breast, and have been freed from
      my bond and my constant journeying. (1886: 194)

The lover renounces this world in despair, seeing through her seductive
appearance as Kumayt and Imru' al-Qays saw through the equally seductive,
equally deceptive face of war. The "abode" (*dār*), too, is feminine, and thus it
too may be equated with an unfaithful beloved:

1 An abode for love of which I suffered, treacherous to her lover:
2 Each is tried and afflicted by what she gives and takes,
3 By her enchantment [*khalb*] and her pride, by her farness and nearness,
4 By her praise and her blame, by her love and her insults.
5 If you do not seek help in contentment, she will be strait for you, despite her expanse.
6 No pleasure will be destined for you save with the fear of her calamity [*khaṭb*].
7 If she approaches in fresh opulence the death-knell cries out beside her. (ibid.: 35–6)

The figure of this world as a treacherous beauty becomes a commonplace of later poetry, as well as of prose homilies and sermons. This world – man's transient abode – is both enchanting and deceitful; he who loves her suffers for nothing, as his reward is death. The parody of the central convention of *ghazal*, the lover's devotion to a cruel beloved, is signalled in the lines above by such words as *khalb*, "enchantment, charm", which also means "talons" and occurs in the metaphor *khalb al-maniyya* "the claws of death", and *khaṭb*, "calamity", associated with *khaṭaba* "to ask in marriage", used ironically by Abū Nuwās in the *khamriyya* as he seeks the daughter of the vine. Abū al-ʿAtāhiya also evokes the cup; but it is a cup to be avoided:

6 I had forgotten, as the cup of death was passing round in the hand of one neither heedless of it nor forgetful,
7 That one day I shall surely drink from the cup of death, and be struck down – just as those who have departed drank of it. (ibid.: 130)

Wine, world, abode, soul (as we shall see in Chapter 7) – all feminine, all treacherous and deceptive. To put one's trust in them, to follow their urgings or succumb to their blandishments, is to make a fatal error.

While the *khamriyya* and *zuhdiyya* depend for their effects on their manipulation of generic conventions and topics derived from earlier poetry, from each other, and from the independent love poem, the *ghazal* itself appears more stable than the other two. This is perhaps in part because it achieved independent status earlier than they, at the hands of Hijazi poets such as ʿUmar ibn Abī Rabīʿa, of ʿUdhrī poets like Jamīl (d. 82/701), and of Umayyad poets in the cities of Kufa and Basra, among them Bashshār ibn Burd (d. c. 167/784). While the *ghazal*s of the poets of these "schools" vary widely in tone, ranging from chaste to licentious,[30] by the time of the form's chief Abbasid exponent, al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf (d. after 193/808?), its dominant mode is already well established as the antithesis of the pre-Islamic heroic mode: "what had been a matter of action was now translated into emotion, and a poetry of passionate but unfulfilled love – passionate inaction – was born" (Hamori 1974: 38, and see 31–47). Its characteristic diction, marked by simplicity and musicality, was equally well established.

As the libertine's devotion to wine and debauchery puts him outside the moral norms of society, so the lover's obsession, similarly incompatible with religion, makes him an outsider; his single-minded pursuit of that obsession makes him at once both victim and hero. Hamori compares Jamīl's line –

> Whether to love her means to be guided aright or to stray [*ghawāya*],
>   I stumbled upon this love without intent–

to a line by the pre-Islamic poet Durayd ibn al-Ṣimma:

> What am I but one of the Ghazīya? If they err, I err [*in ghawat ghawaytu*]; and if they follow right guidance, I do too. (Hamori 1974: 42, 44)

We may recall the motif of "right guidance" (*hudā > hudīta*), used by Abū Nuwās and Abū al-ʿAtāhiya with significantly different meanings in different generic contexts. The equivalent word in Jamīl's line is *rushd* (Durayd's phrase is *in tarshud . . . arshudī*), opposed to *ghawāya/ghawat*, "straying (from the right path), error". (In the *Muʿallaqa* Imruʾ al-Qays's beloved reproaches him: *wa-mā in arā ʿanka l-ghawāyata tanjalī*, "I do not see that error has left you"; 1958: 40.)

Hamori reads both lines as reflecting "assent to a given situation" – in Durayd's case, to joining his tribe in a disastrous battle after they had rejected his pleas for restraint, in Jamīl's to pursuing his love despite similar pleas for restraint by the "blamer" (1974: 44). There is perhaps more involved, however. Durayd's poem – in which the line which precedes that quoted is "When they rejected my counsel I remained one of them, though well aware of their error and knowing that I would be entering upon a misguided course [*wa-innanī ghayru muhtadī*]" – is an elegy for his brother, who was killed in the battle in question; Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī comments, "He agreed with his brother's opinion, even though he saw it was in error, and abandoned his opposition, even though it was right, fearing to lose his love," and praises the line as "the most eloquent in which a man supported his brother" (Durayd 1981: 47 n. 17; al-ʿAskarī 1994, 1: 118–19; translated by Hamori 1991: 15; in Abū Tammām's *Ḥamāsa*, Hamori's source, there is an intervening verse). The motives for "assent" are totally different – solidarity versus individual obsession, *jahl* (and moreover the Islamic overtones of words like *rushd* and *muhtadī* would not have been lost on the audience): Jamīl's statement involves elevating the *ghazal*-poet's persona to heroic (or counter-heroic) status by deliberately choosing error over guidance, much the same as the winebibbing persona of the *khamriyya* is similarly elevated. Abū Nuwās writes (1982: 198):

1 When the "father of war" orders his horsemen to war,
2 And death's banner proceeds openly before the leader,
3 And war grows hot, and burns brightly, kindling flames. . . .
5 We take the bows in our hands; but the bows' arrows are lilies. . . .
7 And our warfare becomes good company, and we ourselves good friends,

8　With youths who consider being slain by pleasure a sacrifice.

If the hedonistic winebibber is slain as a sacrifice to pleasure, the obsessed lover is the sacrificial victim of love – a *topos* recalling the Prophetic saying, "He who loves, and remains chaste, and dies, becomes a martyr," developed both in love poetry (especially that of the ʿUdhrī poets) and in the literature on love and lovers which flourished later in the Abbasid period. (See e.g. Hamori 1974: 39–47; Giffen 1971: 91–115). Yet if Abū Nuwās chooses wine over warfare, and if the *ghazal*-poet chooses to make (or at least to pursue) love, not war, these are active choices, no matter how fatalistically presented (and it is Durayd who, bound to honour bonds of tribe and kinship, has far less real choice). The *ghazal*-poet, like the wine-poet, is thus less passive than Hamori sees him as being: he chooses his fate, his victim's role, as a stance which will bring him, in the end, far greater glory than the heroic one, as his name will join the roll-call of famous lovers.

> Jamīl never loved as I do; know this, verily, and neither did ʿUrwa, love's martyr.
> No, no, nor was al-Muraqqish like me when he loved Asmāʾ until the appointed, fatal end. (al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf 1986: 15)

The love poem presents a closed world dominated by the obsessive persona of the poet-lover, through whose vision all events and persons are filtered. This obsessiveness is reflected by a marked fixity in the *ghazal*'s conventions, a fixity which has implications for its structure as well, as the repetitive nature of its conventions means that the poem can be organized in a manner which suppresses explicit linkages between its parts, since any choice of topics can be deployed which relate to its focus: the depiction of the emotional state of the lover. Thus the *ghazal* often reveals no clear organizing principle beyond a sequence of generically related segments ordered in a manner which appears arbitrary because it requires the audience to supply connections which are left implicit. This type of structure – which may also be associated with the performance context of such poetry[31] – characterizes many of al-ʿAbbās's poems, for example this love-plaint (ibid.: 25).

1　I concealed my passion, and avoided my beloved, keeping secret in my heart a wondrous yearning.
2　My avoidance of her was not from anger, but (because) I feared lest shame fall upon her.
3　I shall guard and conceal her secrets, and keep hidden the pleasure I had from her.
4　How many who stretched out their hands towards union have received not a share!
5　(With) some, I was satisfied with what love I received from them, rightly or wrongly;

6 and some to whom passion called me, and I obeyed the summons, acceding;

7 and some I was fond of in youth – but I grew white-haired before my time!

8 By my life! they lie, who claim that hearts requite each other faithfully;

9 for were that true, as they claim, no lover would ever be cruel to another.

10 How can this be what I desire? – that my beloved sees my virtues as faults?

11 I have seen no one like you in all the worlds – half plump (as a sandhill), half (supple) as a branch.

12 When you trample upon the earth, you make of earth another perfume.

Al-ʿAbbās develops four basic topics of *ghazal* in linear, ABCD sequence. Segment A (1–3) announces the topic of "concealment of love" (*kitmān*) with *katamtu l-hawā*, "I concealed my passion," and amplifies it by stating the cause for concealment (implying a choice between various possibilities) and the determination to pursue this course; the progression of verb tenses (*katamtu . . . sa-arʿā*, "I concealed . . . I shall guard") helps to unify the segment. Segment B (4–7), introduced by the *wāw rubba* construction (*wa-kam bāsiṭīna*, "And how many who stretched out their hands") which is a frequent marker of transition, catalogues the speaker's past experiences in love, presented as typical and functioning to define his present situation by placing it in the context of inequalities in love; it is unified by the anaphoric repetitions or near-repetitions with which each line begins. (The "religion of love" motif is suggested by the use of *labbaytu*, "I responded," a term associated with the pilgrimage, in 6.) Segment C (8–10), introduced by the oath *la-ʿamrī*, "By my life," links the topic of inequality to that of the beloved's cruelty, moving from a generalization on the lack of reciprocity in love to the speaker's own case. In the fourth and last segment, D (11–12), the speaker addresses the lady directly, to praise her; this address is not a necessary outcome of the poem's movement but occupies the final position for much the same reason that encomium constitutes the final portion of the polythematic *qaṣīda*, that is, as the last (hence best) item in a sequence. (See further Chapter 3 below.)

The topics chosen by al-ʿAbbās are used to support the poem's focus not only on a single genre, that of love, but in particular on the persona specific to that genre. This focus on the implied speaker (not to be confused with the narcissistic emphasis of a real speaker on his own person) so characteristic of al-ʿAbbās's poetry is no innovation with him, but is typical of love poetry in general and is seen also in such poets as ʿUmar ibn Abī Rabīʿa or Bashshār ibn Burd, both of whom (in contrast to the ʿUdhrī poets, whose poems, by and large, are brief and occasional) were major contributors to the development of the independent love poem. The loose, linear structure of al-ʿAbbās's poem is also found often in the *zuhdiyya*, which, since its generic content is relatively

fixed and predictable, often operates through the accumulation, in linear sequence, of relevant topics, coming to resemble a sermon in verse. This type of structure is thus characteristic of much Arabic poetry of the period; and we shall discuss further examples later, in Chapter 6.

That a poem may rely on implicit links between generically related topics is an important principle of composition in monothematic poems such as *khamriyya*, *zuhdiyya* and *ghazal*. When the topics are apparently unrelated we are in the presence of another type of generic manipulation which has proven even more problematic for scholars, as it involves different strategies of organization, of generic recognition and of the evocation of the speaker's persona. Such strategies characterize a poetic form which, in its most complex manifestation, lies at the end of our chronological time-scale: the Persian *ghazal*, as practiced by the master of the form, Ḥāfiẓ of Shiraz.

Invention and genre in the Persian *ghazal*

Many centuries lie between the Persian poet Ḥāfiẓ and the Arabic poets of the early Abbasid period, centuries during which many generic and formal developments took place both in Arabic poetry itself and in Persian poetry as it progressed from the tenth century onwards. We will discuss many of these developments in subsequent chapters. What is important to note here, however, is that the generic experimentation which marks Ḥāfiẓ's *ghazal*s assumes an engagement with the entire tradition of Arabic and Persian poetry of the seven centuries and more which precede him – as the *Dīvān's* opening, and programmatic, *ghazal* makes clear (see Chapter 9 below) – and must be seen against the background of that tradition.

The Persian *ghazal* originated as a brief lyric form analogous to the Arabic *qiṭʿa*, and composed for similar occasions. Over the centuries, and particularly from the late eleventh century onwards, it was expanded and modified until it became the most popular poetic form in post-Mongol Persia. (On the various theories surrounding the origins and development of Persian *ghazal* see A. Bausani in *EI*[2], s.v. "Ghazal".) Although the *ghazal* was originally composed to be sung, and long retained its close connection with music, the influence of its performance context on its style has as yet received little examination, and is largely beyond the scope of this study.[32] The *dīvān*s of poets of the fourth/tenth and early fifth/eleventh centuries (the Sāmānid and early Ghaznavid periods) contain relatively few identifiable *ghazal*s – partial exceptions are Rūdakī (d. after 339/950–1), who was an accomplished musician as well as poet, and to a lesser extent Manūchihrī (d. 432/1140–1?) – perhaps because the informal and oral nature of the sung poem (and perhaps also its non-conformity with the *ʿarūḍ*) meant that it would not, or seldom, be recorded in writing or included in a collection of "official" poetry. Nor is it clear how many of the poems classified as *ghazal*s in modern editions are in fact the exordia of panegyric *qaṣīda*s which have not survived in their entirety.

By the end of the fifth/eleventh century and the beginning of the sixth/ twelfth, however, the independent *ghazal* had become a flourishing form and had acquired its normative formal features: the rhymed *maṭlaʿ* and the use of the poet's pen-name (*takhalluṣ*) in the final or penultimate line, said to have been introduced by Sanāʾī (d. 512/1131), who employed this device in many of his *ghazal*s (see Humāʾī, in Mukhtārī 1962: 571; and see further Chapter 3 below), and used by other of his contemporaries as well. Whether this reflects the *ghazal*'s increasing "literarization", its passage from oral song to written poem (as the convention of *taṣrīʿ*, and perhaps also that of the *takhalluṣ* [see Losensky 1998a] suggest), is a matter for speculation; what is in no doubt, however, is that from this time onwards it enjoys both increasing popularity and increasing adaptation to a variety of uses.

The *ghazal* has received more than its share of criticism for its "incoherence", particularly with reference to Ḥāfiẓ. (For overviews see van Gelder 1982a: 14–22, 194–208; Hillmann 1976; Andrews 1973: 97–9, 1992.) Ḥāfiẓ's patron Shāh Shujāʿ (r. 759–86/1357–84) is reported to have critized the poet for his "incongruity", saying: "The *bayt*s ... in your *ghazal*s ... do not happen to be of one kind, instead in each *ghazal* there are three or four *bayt*s about wine and two or three *bayt*s about sufism and one or two *bayt*s about the characteristics of the beloved. The changeableness of each *ghazal* is contrary to the way of the eloquent." To which Ḥāfiẓ is said to have replied that, nonetheless, "the poetry of Ḥāfiẓ has found consummate fame in all regions of the world and the verse of his various rivals has not set foot beyond the gate of Shiraz" (quoted by Rehder 1974: 83 [the source is Khvāndamīr's *Ḥabīb al-siyar*]; see also van Gelder 1982a: 207, and see the discussions by Rehder, Hillmann, and Andrews, cited above.) This perhaps apocryphal anecdote (which may reflect poetic jealousy rather than literary criticism: Shāh Shujāʿ's own verses were of consummate mediocrity), often invoked as evidence for the *ghazal*'s formal incoherence, draws attention to an important point: the proliferation of generic elements within the compass of a brief lyric (with a corresponding proliferation of poetic personae), to an extent where genres become combined, inserted into one another, or even treated allusively.

Generically the *ghazal* is, *par excellence*, a love poem, and many of its topics and motifs derive ultimately from the independent love poems of the Abbasid period as well as from earlier Arabic poetry; but from its inception in the early proto-*ghazal*s of Rūdakī it incorporated bacchic topics, and was later extended to include gnomic, homiletic, and religious (often mystical) themes (see further Meisami 1990d). Its bacchic and erotic diction and imagery were also used for brief panegyrics (see Meisami 1987: 271–85). Ḥāfiẓ was heir to a long tradition of generic manipulation in the Persian *ghazal* which began, roughly speaking, with Sanāʾī (and his contemporaries), whose *ghazal*s include both panegyric and religious-mystical poems as well as more "secular" love poetry. Panegyric *ghazal* is especially associated with the court of the Ghaznavid sultan Bahrāmshāh (r. 515–52/1118–51), where Sanāʾī and Ḥasan-i Ghaznavī (d. 556/1160–1) in

particular cultivated its use, although earlier examples are also found (see de Bruijn 1983: 152; Meisami 1987: 273–9; and see for example Mukhtārī 1962: 221–2).

It is possible that the increasing length and ornateness of the *qaṣīda* led poets to employ the simpler form of the *ghazal* to present praise in informal gatherings such as the banquets and drinking parties which were a prominent feature of court life, a practice for which there are precedents in Abbasid poetry as well; moreover, the convention of homoerotic love characteristic of Persian love poetry (and seen in the *nasīb* of panegyric *qaṣīda*s) lent itself to the depiction of relations between poet and patron in a manner similar to the Augustans' use of homosexual love as a "framework for treating a personal relationship with an *amicus*" (Williams 1980: 214, and see 212–16; cf. also the panegyric *ghazal* by Sanā'ī with the *radīf dūst*, "friend", discussed in Chapter 5 below).

Such brief, lyrical panegyrics employ erotic and bacchic motifs in preference to the panegyric topics of the *qaṣīda* (e.g., emphasis on the ruler's military achievements); the following *ghazal* by Ḥasan-i Ghaznavī (1949: 166), which is virtually indistinguishable from a love poem, provides a typical example.

1 To the beloved I've given heart and life;
   to join with him once more: ah, that were life!
2 I'll patiently endure this; for my hand
   by separation's tyranny is bound.
3 I suffer from his absence pain so sore,
   the lofty Sphere itself could not endure.
4 The separation of two intimate friends:
   how speak of it? for it cannot be known.
5 Rejoice, Ḥasan, as you for his sake grieve;
   he's both the affliction and the remedy.
6 I fear it will not reach Sultan's ear
   that grief for him is sultan o'er my heart:
7 Shāh Bahrāmshāh, son of Mas'ūd, who is
   the very form of sovereignty, image of life.

Although the panegyric context is suggested by such topics as the poet's humble patience (opposed to the tyranny of separation in the elaborate word-play of 2: *pāy dar dāman āram az ān-k/dast dast-i sitam-i hijrān-ast*, literally "I must draw my foot beneath my skirt, for my hand is in the hand of separation's tyranny"), and by the word-play on *sulṭān* in 6, in which *gham-i ū*, "grief for him," is as ambiguous in the Persian as it is in English, the poem's panegyric purpose is not announced until the final line, where the beloved (*ma'shūq*) of the opening becomes identified with the person praised (*mamdūḥ*), who thus becomes the object of both love and praise.

This shift in object, as well as in addressee, is also found in much mystical poetry, in which both become, implicitly, either God, a spiritual master or an

ideal figure (e.g., the Prophet). Mystical poetry adapts the erotic and bacchic motifs of secular poetry in ways which are both thoroughgoing and ambiguous. (This is true in Arabic as well, for example in the mystical poems of Ibn al-ʿArabī or Ibn al-Fāriḍ; see Chapter 8 below.) The topics of praise in these lines by Sanāʾī, for example, might apply equally to the beloved, the prince, or God (1962: 807):

1 O moon-faced beauty, the whole world sings your praise;
   lovers' affairs are undone because they dance to your tune.
2 Wherever there is sweet verse, there are the stories of your love;
   wherever there is elegant prose, there are the books of your
      attraction. . . .
7 Wherever there are seeing eyes, there is the court of your love;
   wherever there is an exalted ear, there is the lover of your song.

This ambiguity extends to physical descriptions as well (ibid.: 820):

1 If your face, O heart-illumer, is not like the moon,
   why are your two black lovelocks two halves of the full moon?
2 Although your moonlike face is a source of light;
   although your black locks are the source of sin,
3 You are the king of idols, and lovers are your army;
   you are the earth's moon, and the heavens your crown.

In due course, at the hands of such later poets as ʿAṭṭār, ʿIrāqī, and Rūmī (as well as in the prose writings of other mystics), the descriptive, erotic and bacchic imagery of the *ghazal* developed into a symbolic vocabulary capable of being read allegorically (and leading to an often mechanical interpretation of many poems, even if their original intent was not mystical, according to this "lexical code"). Thus for example many descriptive topics, which can often be traced back to early Arabic love poetry, lend themselves to a mystical interpretation (although not always without ambiguity). Consider this blazon by the sixth/twelfth-century mystical poet Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār (1960: 173):

1 O you whose locks are snare, your mole the grain:
   may every prey you take be licit to you.
2 The sun continually falls, enmeshed,
   into the ringlets of your night-dark snare.
3 Like the black markings visible upon
   the sun's face, is your own black beauty-spot.
4 The heart's bewitched by your black curling locks;
   the soul is thirsting for your limpid spring.
5 From the world of beauty the midwife of grace
   brought you forth a hundred thousand years ago. . . .

We might read this *ghazal* in the terms discussed by Aḥmad Ghazzālī (d. 520/1126) in his *Savāniḥ*, an early Persian mystical treatise.

... in the world of Imagination, in order to reveal its face, love sometimes may show a concrete sign, while sometimes it may not.

(1) Sometimes the sign is the tress of the beloved, sometimes the cheek, sometimes the mole, sometimes the stature, sometimes the eye, sometimes the eyebrow, sometimes the glance, sometimes the smile, and sometimes the rebuke.

(2) Each of these symbols relates to a locus in the lover from which a specific quest arises. He for whom the sign of love lies in the beloved's eye, his nutriment is supplied by the beloved's sight.... If the sign is the eyebrow, then ... the quest arises from his spirit....

(3) In the same way, each of the other signs ... in the physiognomy of love signifies a spiritual or physical quest or an imperfection or a fault, for love has a different sign on each of the inner screens, and these features are its signs on the screen of Imagination. Therefore, her features indicate the rank of (the lover's) love. (1986: 52–3)

The same sort of transfer applies to bacchic motifs:

If it becomes possible for the lover to take nutriment from the beloved ... that will not happen except in (the mind's) absence from the world of manifestation ... which is similar to a state of intoxication in which the companion is not there, but the nutriment is there....

Love is a kind of intoxication, [for its] perfection ... prevents the lover from seeing and perceiving the beloved in her perfection. This is because love is an intoxication [of] the organ of ... perception, hence it is a prevention to perfect perception.... (ibid.: 64–5, amending Pourjavady's translation)

'Aṭṭār writes (1960: 154):

1 Your nearness makes me drunk; I know nought of my being;
   I'm drunken with love's grief; there's no other drunk like me.
2 Since my liver's blood was spilt in the feast of the wine of love,
   I of the burnt heart have no refreshment but the liver's blood.
3 Those drunk on love's wine have departed into this desert;
   I have remained (behind), and there is no sign of my leaving.

One result of such transformations is that the language of the *ghazal* becomes increasingly polysemous, lending itself to varied, often contradictory readings simultaneously encoded into the poem. (Compare Andrews' discussion of later Ottoman gazel, 1985). This makes it exceedingly dangerous to take the statements of an Aḥmad Ghazzālī, or of the later Maḥmūd Shabistarī (d. 726?/1326?), who wrote a long poem on the symbolic language of the mystics, or of later commentators on Ḥāfiẓ, as descriptive of poetic practice: Ghazzālī employs the poetic vocabulary of love poetry (along with quotations from it) for his own ends; Shabistarī's motives are similar; and the commentators, on the basis of

such cross-fertilization of prose by poetic imagery, developed a hermeneutics of reading, of decoding the poem in a certain predetermined, not to say overdetermined, manner. Even in the case of poets known to have been practising mystics – ʿAṭṭār, ʿIrāqī, Rūmī, each of whom practised his own brand of spiritualism – the language is much more elusive (and allusive), much less cut-and-dried than is suggested by their interpreters. How much more so when we come to a poet like Ḥāfiẓ, whose "mysticism" is largely a stylistic feature of his *ghazals*.[33]

Another result of the extensive tradition of generic transfer is that topics and motifs which in earlier poetry were essentially concrete (though often none the less symbolic) undergo a process of abstraction, of textualization; the world of the poem closes in upon itself, it relates primarily to other texts (cf. Williams 1980: ix for a parallel situation in Augustan poetry). Generic topics become both increasingly allusive and infinitely combinable, so that the very mention of one – for example, the beloved's night-black curls – evokes a host of associations (dark obscuring light; snares for the heart; fetters for madmen; separation and withdrawal of favour, and so on) which, as the products of a long process of development, need not be explicitly stated to be understood. This process, somewhat paradoxically, also makes possible the application of such conceits to specific topical issues, as we shall see. It leads as well to another feature which is particularly marked in Ḥāfiẓ's *ghazal*: the allusive combination not only of related generic topics, but of genres themselves, within the brief lyric. All these features – polysemy, the combination of the abstract with the topical, and the allusive mixture of apparently unrelated genres – are seen in this *ghazal* by Ḥāfiẓ (QG9; see Bausani 1958: 146–9; see also Meisami 1991a: 99–101, 1990d: 137–40).

1 The brilliance of youth's season once more adorns the garden;
  news of the rose arrives to the sweet-songed nightingale.
2 Ṣabā, should you pass by the elegant youths of the meadow,
  pray, carry my regards to cypress, rose and basil.
3 If the wine-selling Magian child displays himself like this,
  I will sweep the wineshop's threshhold with the tips of my eyelashes.
4 O you who draw over the moon a polo-stick of pure amber,
  do not cause me distress, a wanderer, gone astray.
5 I fear that group who laugh at those who drink the dregs
  will, in the end, put their faith in pledge to the tavern.
6 Be the companion of the men of God; for in Noah's ship
  is (one of) earth that gives not a drop for the tempest.
7 Go out of this turning dwelling, and do not ask for bread,
  for that (host with) blacked pot in the end kills its guest.
8 The last resting-place of everyone is a handful of dust;
  say, what need is there then to raise a palace to the skies?
9 O my Moon of Canaan, the throne of Egypt is yours;
  the time has come for you to bid farewell to your prison.

10   Ḥāfiẓ, drink wine, be a libertine, be happy; but
      do not, like others, make the Koran a snare of hypocrisy.

This *ghazal*, whose mixture of topics recalls Shāh Shujāʿ's criticism of Ḥāfiẓ, was used by Bausani to support his notion of the *ghazal*'s "formal incongruity" (1958: 149). It begins (1–2) with a description of spring (*vaṣf-i bahār*), a characteristic opening for love poems, wine poems, and panegyrics, suggesting that any of these genres (*ghazal*, *khamr*, *madḥ*) may become the dominant one. In fact, though all three *aghrāḍ* are combined in this *ghazal*, the generic dominant will turn out to be something quite different. The apostrophe to the Ṣabā (the south wind, conventionally the lovers' messenger) indicates that the speaker is elsewhere than in the garden described; lines 3–4 suggest that he is in the tavern, where the beauty of the "wine-selling Magian child" (a particularly Persian term for the beautiful cup-bearer, the *sāqī*) threatens to rob him of his wits and place him in eternal service to the tavern. All these topics – the handsome young Magian *sāqī*, his irresistible beauty, his cruelty in concealing his bright face beneath his curling black locks – are ultimately traceable to the Arabic *khamriyya* and *ghazal*.

With lines 5–8 the generic tone shifts from that of the wine song, with its vague, hedonistic expression of *carpe diem* as the lover seeks solace in wine, to that of admonition (*mawʿiẓa*) characteristic of the *zuhdiyya*, marked generically by the imperatives in lines 6 and 7 and by the sentential commonplaces of ascetic poems (consort with men of piety; beware this treacherous world; know that all men are mortal) in 6, 7, and 8. While this segment remains linked to the preceding one by the motifs of wine, tavern and *sāqī*, and by the transitional line (5) which contrasts the pious hypocrites with the honest, if reprobate, winebibbers, the voice of the implied speaker is a different, sterner one: the *rind*, or libertine (a conventional persona of wine poetry which has its origins, if not its specifically Persian manifestation, in the Arabic *khamriyya*), has been temporarily transformed into the sage, the preacher of the *zuhdiyya*, who exhorts to sincere piety as opposed to hypocrisy, and warns of worldly transience. But there is a difference: for while Ḥāfiẓ invokes, as Abū al-ʿAtāhiya might have done, the pious example of Noah and the image of the treacherous "abode" of this world (*khāna-yi gardūn*, linked explicitly with Time as represented by the turning sky), he does not – as Abū al-ʿAtāhiya most certainly would have done – condemn outright all those who seek worldly pleasure, but rather a select group: those who veil their material desires beneath the guise of piety. Line 9 returns abruptly to a topic of *ghazal*, the anticipated appearance of the beloved, now given a courtly setting through the allusion to Joseph, who rose to become ruler of Egypt after having been imprisoned (on Ḥāfiẓ's uses of this particular allusion see Meisami 1990a). That this topic must be read, in the context of the preceding segment, as an exemplum of the reward of virtue, rather than simply as an anticipation of the beloved's epiphany, is made clear by the final line, which combines a self-addressed *invitatio* (invitation to drink) with a further admonition against hypocrisy.

That the generic dominant in this poem is neither *ghazal* nor *khamr* but admonition (*maw'iẓa*) is clear from the central position of the admonitory segment and the amount of space devoted to it (over half the *ghazal*, if we include its recapitulation in the *maqta'* and the allusive reference in line 9), and from its connections (through semantic links, shared imagery and selected generic topics) with the other generic components, which perform an accompanying rather than a constitutive function and must thus be read as supporting the argument that contentment with life's simple joys is superior to material aspirations thinly veiled by hypocritical piety. The poem's homiletic character makes irrelevant the glossing of the rose as "the supreme, inaccessible symbol of the divine *istighnā*" (Bausani 1958: 146): while in *ghazal* the rose signifies the beloved, and in panegyric the prince, in homiletic poetry it is an emblem of the transience both of beauty and of power, a sense which illuminates its use in this *ghazal*; a mystical interpretation is gratuitous. The "extraneous" character of the Magian child is explained (were an explanation required) by his appropriateness to wine poetry (the speaker sends his regards to the garden from the tavern, where he is engaged in drinking and *naẓarbāzī*, the contemplation of the beautiful *sāqī*); the child's "ambiguous appearance" is, in fact, highly conventional. The over-interpretation of such figures as the *mughbachcha*, the rose and the nightingale – who in this poem at least is not singing "invitations to partake of the mystic wine" – stems from the view that "tradition" imposes meanings on topics and images that the poet "does not consciously wish" (ibid.: 148); in fact, the poet, having determined those areas of meaning he wishes to elaborate, selects his images and topics accordingly, relying on their conventional associations to lessen the dangers of reductionist readings, and yet manipulating them in such a way as to make his own meaning clear.

A pre-determined mystical reading, by relying more on the application of the "lexical code" than on a close analysis of the text in its specific historical context, misses that important aspect of the *ghazal*'s meaning which the poet has taken care to build into it from the beginning and which is crucial to its interpretation: the courtly one. Williams calls this sort of technique the creation of an "unspoken field": "the ostensible field of the poem" – here, love, and the topics associated with it –

> excites a sense of the unspoken field so that the poem acquires a new dimension that co-exists with the immediately perceptible dimension. Seen from the poet's view-point, it is a technique for transforming subject-matter which, from whatever motive, he is unwilling to treat directly. Secondly, the process is one by which the poet achieves a certain objectivity. He insulates himself from direct involvement in the unspoken field. . . . Thirdly, the proportionality between the two fields always turns out to be more complex than can be described by simply naming or even exhaustively plotting the two fields. . . . In the simplest form, the poet, in

relation to the ostensible field, has a different persona from that which he wears in relation to the unspoken field.... Fourthly, there is always an element in the poem which can be regarded as fulfilling the function of an index of proportionality between the two fields. (1980: 189–90; see also the quotation from Quintilian on what he terms *illusio*, ibid.: 191; and compare Andrews 1985)

As we shall see, the technique is a favourite one with court poets in particular (for obvious reasons). Now let us examine it in this *ghazal* of Ḥāfiẓ.

The garden of the opening lines is a courtly garden, its inhabitants – cypress, rose and basil – emblems of royalty. That the speaker is not present in that garden, to which he asks the lovers' messenger (the Ṣabā) to convey his greetings, and that he is troubled by his beloved's cruelty, suggest that he is out of favour, has lost his place in the courtly garden; the *sāqī*, concealing his bright face under dark curls, emblematizes this withdrawal of favour, and may be seen as an analogue of the prince, who has treated the poet in the same fashion. The homiletic segment, contrasting false piety with honest love and warning that the world is treacherous and that lofty palaces will be of no avail to those whose last resting-place is a handful of dust (topics again recalling the *zuhdiyyāt* of Abū al-ʿAtāhiya), shares with ascetic poems its implicit exhortation to royal justice, but adds a second, analogous contrast between the honest *rind* and the pious hypocrites who criticize him. The allusion to Noah may refer to the poet's protector (see Meisami 1990a: 152, 157 n. 43); while the apostrophe to the "Moon of Canaan", with its allusion to Joseph, also suggests not a mystical but a topical reference (see ibid.: 151–2, 157 n. 47).[34] We should not overlook, however, the links of both allusions to the contexts of wine and love: *kashtī* "ship" is also a type of drinking-vessel (hence the numerous poetic references to "launching the ship" upon the sea or river of wine), Joseph a type of the ideal, irresistibly beautiful beloved (who, moreover, repulsed – for pious motives which have not always gone unquestioned – the love-struck Zulaykhā; cf. Koran, Sūra 12, and see further Ḥāfiẓ's use of this motif in the "Shiraz Turk" *ghazal* discussed in Meisami 1990a: 151 and in Chapter 4 below).

The final line, which reiterates the contrast between the honest *rind* and his hypocritical enemies, recapitulates these links – wine-drinking, and the Koranic "snare", the excuse for hypocrisy. (Ḥāfiẓ's commentator Sūdī glosses: "Ḥāfiẓ, do what you will; but do not make the holy Koran a snare for hypocrisy, because hypocrisy is unbelief [*kufr*]. His purpose was not to incite corruption; rather, he says that every type of impiety in the world is bad, but hypocrisy is worse than any" [1979, 1: 79]).

The *ghazal* as a whole presents itself as advice to the prince; rather than exemplifying the "compositional principle" of incoherence, it is in fact remarkably coherent, first grouping topics related to a particular genre in balanced units, then recapitulating them in an enhanced context. The Arabic or Persian poet who has such techniques of invention and manipulation at his

disposal is free to make the connections between the parts of his poem elliptical, or to omit direct connections altogether, in the knowledge that his audience – by expending that amount of effort all good poets expect, nay, demand, of sophisticated audiences – will recognize at each successive stage where they are in the poem's progress, will relate what they hear at present to what has gone before, and will be aware of the various generic manipulations taking place – and, by so doing, will derive both pleasure and meaningfulness from the poem. He is not, as it were, obliged to "start from scratch", since familiar expressions and markers will put the audience in the picture, will direct them towards what they may expect from the poem (but may not always get). This does not, of course, preclude the existence of other, more complex structural strategies; indeed, most poems employ a variety of generic and organizational techniques to produce their total effect, to convey their total meaning. It is to such means and strategies that I shall turn my attention in the following chapters, beginning with a discussion of techniques of disposition.

3

DISPOSITION:
THE PARTS OF THE POEM

> Begin at the beginning, and go on until you
> come to the end; then stop.
> The King of Hearts (*Alice in Wonderland*)

Concepts of disposition

Disposition involves ordering the poem: the poet, having selected his form, genre(s), theme, topics and so on, organizes his materials in such a manner as to give his poem semantic and structural coherence. The Elizabethan rhetorician Thomas Wilson defined *Dispositio* as an "apt bestowing", "the settling or ordering of things invented for [the orator's] purpose"; "disposition declares 'in what manner every reason [i.e., the matter] shalbe applied for the confirmation of the purpose'" (quoted in Tuve 1972: 389).

Classical and medieval rhetoricians generally treated disposition in connection with the ordering of the larger parts of a discourse (an oration; a narrative poem). In its fullest form a classical oration consisted of an *exordium*, which functioned "to put the hearer into the right frame of mind," and which might contain digressions, anecdotes, jests or other amplificatory material; a *narratio* stating the facts of the case to be argued; a *propositio* identifying the central concern, issue or problem to be presented; a *divisio* (or *partitio*), often combined with the proposition, in which "the speaker shows how he proposes to treat the subject under certain main heads;" the *confirmatio*, or proof, which presents supporting arguments; a *refutatio*, which answers or discredits actual or possible counter-arguments; and the *conclusio* or peroration, which might include "a summing up (*enumeratio*) of the main points," an *amplificatio* (or *indignatio*), "an impressive affirmation or emphatic statement of the speaker's position," and a *commiseratio* (or *conquestio*), "an appeal to the tender feelings of the audience" (Dixon 1971: 28–30). Special attention is given to the exordium, in which the orator appeals to the audience by emotion rather than by argument, establishing where their sympathies should lie; here the strongest points should be placed, "for the opening passage contains the first impression and the introduction of the speech, and this ought to charm and attract the hearer straight away" (Cicero, *De Oratore* II. lxxvii.313–lxxviii.315 [trans. Sutton]; see also *De partitione oratoria* viii.28, and cf. Aristotle, *Rhetoric* III. xiv.1).[1]

Medieval writers expanded these principles to encompass various forms of writing, including poetry. Geoffrey of Vinsauf divided disposition into "the use of natural and artificial order, and ... of amplification and abbreviation,"[2] and distinguished disposition from invention, in which "the poet decides ... what the beginning, middle, and conclusion of his *materia* will be." This done,

> he decides in what order he will present the different parts of the *materia* in the finished poem, that is ... what the final disposition of the poem will be.... Once the poet has decided what ... needs to be stressed or elaborated upon, what needs to be toned down or shortened, he must know in what ways this may be accomplished. The means of amplification and abbreviation are his answer. (Kelly 1969: 130–1)

Rhetoricians also distinguished between the *forma tractandi* (the modes, or *modi agendi*, in which a subject may be treated – "The form or mode of treatment is poetic, fictional, descriptive, digressive, and metaphoric, and with this it defines, divides, proves, refutes, and gives examples," wrote Dante in his letter to Can Grande) – and the *forma tractatus* (the actual arrangement into books, chapters, paragraphs, sections and so on) (J. B. Allen 1982: 72–3; see also Minnis 1984: 118–59). The *modi agendi* have to do "with generic matters – that is, with content and the way words work in relation to their significations – and with the mental postures and procedures of authors and readers (or singers...)" (J. B. Allen 1982: 79) – that is, with matters relating to the process of invention; while the *forma tractatus* has to do with the ways in which the text is ordered. Thus "the medieval theory of modal discourse posits two forms simultaneously, instead of one" (ibid.: 85).

This concept of double form illuminates some of the difficulties experienced by modern readers of Arabic and Persian poems. What, for example, links the apparently disparate formal divisions of the *qaṣīda* – exordium (*nasīb*), encomium (*madīḥ*), boasting (*fakhr*), and the various other generic components it may include – other than a single metre and rhyme scheme and a conventional order of progression? It is, among other things, the modes themselves ("poetic, descriptive, digressive, metaphoric", to borrow Dante's terms), as well as complex relations of semantics, imagery, rhetorical and verbal devices, and the presupposition of a unifying poetic speaker or persona. The audience or readers are invited to attend to these features as they experience the poem; implicit in such an invitation is the essentially rhetorical character of poetry, and the notion that, in following that order, the pattern of thought which informs the poem will be recreated in the audience. This does not mean that the poem is unstructured, or that the poet was not conscious of it as a unified text, but that he ordered his material in a manner appropriate to the decorum of the mental process underlying its creation.

Medieval rhetoric deals with the parts of the poem in the Aristotelian terms of beginning, middle and end, conceived of not with respect to plot, but to the discursive and rhetorical organization of the text (see J. B. Allen 1982: 117–18;

Minnis 1984: 147–9).[3] The first principle of structure is that of division (*divisio*) of the parts of the text on the basis of meaning (*sententia*); the second is that of assimilation (*assimilatio*, or likening; Averroes' *tashbīh*), which defines their relationship to one another. In medieval European practice these terms are applied primarily to narrative; the Arab commentators, however, naturalized Aristotle's categories to their own, lyric-based poetry – as Miner puts it, they "lyricized Aristotle" (1990: 127) – and interpreted them in conformity with the most prestigious form of Arabic poetry, the panegyric *qaṣīda*. Thus Averroes applies the Aristotelian divisions of the "art of eulogy" (i.e. tragedy, interpreted in the Arabic tradition as *madīḥ*) to the *qaṣīda*:

> Three of [its parts] are found in the poems of the Arabs. There is the part that forms the introduction to an oration for them; in it, they mention the [deserted] abodes and the traces [of the beloved] and sing of love. The second part is the eulogy. The third part performs the function of the conclusion to an oration. For them, this part is above all either a plea on behalf of the praised person or an encomium of the poem that has been recited. (1986: 90; 1953: 217)

Averroes is also concerned with the Aristotelian issue of magnitude: a poetic work must be, "in terms of its end, of a certain determinate size which makes it whole and complete. Anything whole and complete has a beginning, a middle, and an end" (J. B. Allen 1982: 122, quoting from Hermann Alemanus' translation of Averroes' *Middle Commentary*; see Averroes 1953: 212, 1986: 80; and compare Avicenna, in Dahiyat 1974: 99). Each of these parts must be "of a moderate size," and "the whole composed of these parts be of determinate size, and not of some indifferent magnitude." A poetic speech is arranged as is a lecture [*in doctrina demonstrativa/fī al-taʿlīm al-burhānī*]; for "if a lecture is too short for its material it is confusing, and if it is too long it is hard to remember and makes the student forget." And if, in poetry, "the song of praise is shorter and more condensed than the material of praise requires, the due praise will not be accomplished, and if it is too prolix the audience will not remember its parts; it could happen that as they hear the last parts, they forget the first ones." Further, whereas "rhetorical speeches used for controversy in conference or argument have no determinate natural length . . . the art of poetry should have a natural end, like the natural sizes of things existing according to nature" (J. B. Allen 1982: 122–3; Averroes 1953: 212–13, 1986: 81–2).

Averroes' comments are strongly reminiscent of those of his predecessor Ibn Qutayba, whose classic definition of the *qaṣīda* will be discussed below. Philosophers and rhetoricians, working within their own disciplines, clearly shared certain assumptions about the nature of the poem, assumptions derived both from their own theoretical preoccupations and from their observation of poetic practice. As Judson Allen pointed out, this definition of arrangement is not specific to narrative (that is, it has nothing to do with plot), but applies to discourse in general (1982: 123–4), and is thus relevant to any type of

composition, as indeed Averroes' remarks make clear. In this definition it is the middle part of the poem which is the most important, beginning and end being what lead up to and conclude it. But, somewhat paradoxically, it is "middles" which receive the least treatment by the rhetoricians.

One arrives at a definition of the parts of a discourse by division, which can itself be subdivided into *dispositio*, the actual ordering of material, *divisio*, dividing the material into parts, and *distinctio*, an array of parts or topics under a single topic (ibid.: 126).[4] "In order, therefore, to understand any given medieval text, it is necessary to know where its divisions come, and what its parts are" (ibid.: 129). The principle underlying the arrangement of parts is comparison or likening, *assimilatio* (*tashbīh*), which means not only the "exploitation of similitudes" (ibid.: 197) but the relationship between what is in the text to what is outside it – of word to world, of textual order to external order. In other words, *assimilatio* subsumes both "that likening which relates a description to the thing described, or more generally language to its referent; and, at the opposite extreme in linguistic space, that likening by which descriptions of particulars are connected to their universal names and significance" (ibid.: 189; cf. Tuve 1972, especially 12–26; Al-Azmeh 1986: 114–20). Relations based on *assimilatio* dictate both poetic language itself (which is, by definition, both imaginative and figurative), and poetic structure, governing both the relationships between the parts of the poem, and the overall relationship of the poem's structure to the "realities" reflected in the text.

Since much medieval European rhetorical theory was derived from Aristotle by way of Averroes (the most recent, and perhaps the most accessible, of a long chain of Arabic commentators on Aristotle), it is scarcely surprising to find parallels with European rhetoric in the writings of these commentators. But even in criticism not directly or obviously influenced by Aristotelian thought, there exists a surprising degree of similarity between Western and Eastern writing on composition, a similarity found also in poetic practice, suggesting that medieval notions of composition were widely shared for reasons other than the influence of theory.

We have already dealt with the argument that philosophers were not interested in poetry; but another important point demands re-emphasis: that writing on rhetoric is a descriptive enterprise which aims at validating norms on the basis of practice, and that rather than looking for evidence that the rhetoricians influenced the poets, we should consider the extent to which poetic practice is reflected in rhetorical writing and to which both criticism and practice demonstrate shared preoccupations and concerns. We have already mentioned discussions in which the "inefficiency" of Arabic criticism is exemplified in part at least by its failure to deal with whole poems, and the resulting inference that neither critics nor, for that matter, poets were interested in, perhaps even aware of, poems as wholes; and we have noted the parallels between this view and traditional assessments of classical and medieval European poetics. Scholars in both fields have argued for a certain amount of

incompleteness in poetic texts;[5] such "incompleteness" is, however, in general only apparent, and arises from a misunderstanding of the habit of analyzing poems by sentential division.

Judson Allen's argument that "the fundamental medieval principle of division . . . is not textual but sentential" (1982: 141) is pertinent here: the parts of the poem are arranged sequentially both by formal divisions (beginning, middle, end) and, within those divisions, by topics, a process reflected in the practice of Arabic and Persian rhetoricians of analyzing single verses or groups of verses on the basis of * maʿānī*. (See further Chapter 4 below.) But sentential division does not preclude the existence of other, more complex structures which enhance the poem's sentential aspect. Moreover, formal structures themselves permit of considerable variety in the disposition of their constituent elements, a fact of which the Arabic and Persian critics were certainly aware, even though they may not have devoted much space to what must have seemed self-evident.

Reviewing van Gelder's *Beyond the Line*, Hamori points to the diversity of the materials the rhetoricians had to work with: not only the canonical *qaṣīda*, but a variety of brief, non-canonical lyric forms which, if not always explicitly discussed, certainly influenced their thinking (1984b: 385). Hamori takes exception to van Gelder's conclusion "that effects not discussed in theory had no place in practice," and to his notion "that to study criticism is to study the poetry itself." "There is no reason," he argues, "why, from poem to poem, the practice of the poets could not have been more varied and more subtle than the prescriptively oriented rhetorical theory," and points to areas, such as the use of rhetorical figures or of rhyme, in which larger configurations operate (ibid.: 386–7). Hamori also refutes the notion that observations made in the context of one discipline (for example, Koranic studies, or logic and philosophy) would have been, so to speak, invisible to rhetoricians, philologists, and other critics (ibid.; see also Hamori 1984a: 39–47, 1991: 13–14).

Hamori's remarks raise several important points. One is the question of whether modern structural analyses of Arabic and Persian poetry read into that poetry things which were not perceived either by the poets themselves or by contemporary audiences. This seems to be van Gelder's position when he notes, "Recent studies in which whole *qaṣīda*s are analysed do in fact often reveal structures that were hitherto unsuspected; revelations that can serve to test methods, support theories, even add to our appreciation of the poems; or, if such an analysis does not serve anything, it may be its own reward as a neat exercise in inventivity and ingeniousness" (1982a: 200). The second point is that we cannot limit our view of what the rhetoricians perceived to their *ipsissima verba*, but must take their observations concerning individual verses or groups of verses to be extendable to larger structures; this applies to the philosophers as well who, far from being uninterested in poetry, were in fact vitally interested in it, and especially in its ethical function, a function served by the proper arrangement of its parts. The third point is that we must derive our notions of "unity" from the

poems themselves, and not from either the critics' uninterpreted statements or from external, Western criteria. As Stefan Sperl observes,

> Poems may be validly and meaningfully divided up according to many different criteria.... 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. (1989: 6–7)

Beginnings

Both classical and medieval rhetoric paid considerable attention to the beginning of a work, and to its importance in establishing the sense of the whole. Arabic rhetoricians were also particularly concerned with beginnings, especially in respect to the *qaṣīda*; but their remarks are also applicable to shorter lyric forms, as will be seen.

The "classic" description of the *qaṣīda* is that of the third/ninth-century critic Ibn Qutayba:

> I have heard men of letters say, that one who intends to compose a *qaṣīda* begins by mentioning abandoned encampments, traces, and vestiges; he weeps, laments, apostrophizes the site, and begs his companion to stop, that he may make this an occasion to speak of those who have departed.... To this he joins the *nasīb*, and complains of the force of his passion, the pain of separation, and the excessiveness of his longing and desire, so as to incline hearts towards him and attract interest, and gain an attentive hearing. For the poetry of love is close to the soul and insinuates itself into the heart.... Once he is assured that he will be heard and heeded, he proceeds to the affirmation of his rights: thus he mounts up, in his poem, and complains of hardships and sleeplessness, night journeys, the midday heat, and the emaciation of his weary camels. When he is sure that he has convinced his addressee of his right to hope for reward and to expect satisfaction, and has established the hardships encountered on his journey, he begins the *madīḥ*, in which he urges him to requite him and incites him to generosity, elevates him above his peers and diminishes their stature (as compared to) his noble station.
>
> The excellent poet is he who follows these paths and observes a just balance between these parts, and does not make any one of them dominate the poem, nor make (one) so long that the listeners become bored, or cut it short while their souls still thirst for more. (1947: 13–14)

Ibn Qutayba's insistence that the *nasīb* must "gain the hearts" of the audience (including both the specific addressee and the more general audience for the poem) indicates that the principle of *captatio benevolentiae* (if not the term) was

widely shared both East and West (cf. Meisami 1987: 51–4 and notes). While actual *qaṣīda*s often depart from this idealized scheme, the functions implicit in that scheme are maintained throughout the various phases of the form's development (cf. ibid.: 50–1; Jacobi 1982; Meisami 1996; and see Chapter 5 below).[6] The principle of striving for an eloquent and attractive opening (and of avoiding displeasing openings) is enunciated throughout the works of the rhetoricians (often in language which does not confine itself merely to the opening line); thus for example al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī (d. 392/1002) states,

> A skillful poet takes pains to make the opening, the transition and after these the end, beautiful; for these are the places that attract the attention of the listeners and should induce them to listen. The early poets did not devote too much attention to this. Al-Buḥturī followed them in this, except for the opening; for there he took care to produce some excellent things. Abū Tammām and al-Mutanabbī, on the other hand, went to great lengths in their concern for the transition. Especially al-Mutanabbī did exceedingly well in this respect. (1966: 48; translated by van Gelder 1982a: 78)

The term *ḥusn al-ibtidāʾ* was used for an excellent opening line, one which would allow the audience both to recognize the poem's prosodic scheme (hence the importance of *taṣrīʿ*, the rhyming of the two halves of the opening hemistich, especially in the lengthy *qaṣīda*) and to anticipate its primary theme; for it is not merely the metrical form of the final foot (*ʿarūḍ, ḍarb*) of each hemistich and the rhyme pattern and letter which are anticipated, but a meaningful word.[7] *Taṣrīʿ* was not universally employed by the Ancients; the preference for its use, and its acquisition of normative status, seem to have developed over time, as does the practice (particularly marked in later Persian poetry) of repeating the rhyme of the initial hemistich later in the poem (see Chapter 7 below). Thus, although Qudāma ibn Jaʿfar held that "the excellent poets, both ancient and modern, followed this procedure and scarcely deviated from it," both Jāhilī and even later poets often omitted it, and many lines praised as beautiful beginnings do not always feature *taṣrīʿ* (1956: 19; on *taṣrīʿ* in pre-Islamic poetry see Bauer 1993: 50–1 and the references cited). As Qudāma also noted, "Sometimes they even rhymed (the hemistichs) of other verses in the *qaṣīda* besides the first; this shows the competence of the poet and the extent of his skill" (ibid.: 23; see also Ibn Rashīq 1972, 1: 174). Qudāma cites Imruʾ al-Qays as an example of a poet who did this frequently (1956: 19–20); he also cites other poets who ignored *taṣrīʿ* in the *maṭlaʿ* but introduced it later in the poem (ibid.: 22–3; cf. Shams-i Qays 1909: 391).[8]

Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī praised these opening lines by the pre-Islamic poet al-Samawʾal which lack *taṣrīʿ*:

> *Idha l-marʾu lam yadnas mina l-luʾmi ʿirḍuhu   fa-kullu ridāʾin yartadīhi jamīlū*

*Wa-in huwa lam yaḥmil ʿalā n-nafsi ḍaymahā   fa-laysa ilā ḥusni th-thanāʾi
   sabīlū*

If a man's honour is not stained by blame, every garment he puts on is
   beautiful;

But if he does not constrain his soul to bear its burden, there is no way
   (for him) to attain good fame. (1986: 433)

It is clearly the sentential quality of this opening which Abū Hilāl appreciated.
Ibn Rashīq noted that the poet may use *taṣrīʿ* "when he moves from one story
[*qiṣṣa*] to another or from the description of one thing to that of another; then
he uses *taṣrīʿ* to indicate that and call attention to it;" he states further that its
use had become so frequent that poets often employ it improperly (*fī ghayr
mawḍiʿ al-taṣrīʿ*), as a sign of skill, often to the point of artificiality (1972, 1:
174). It seems clear that *taṣrīʿ* was sometimes viewed as a mere embellishment;
however, despite van Gelder's caveat to the contrary ("only in a minority of
cases does it have a clear structural significance;" 1982a: 120), repeated *taṣrīʿ*
is often used to mark divisions in the *qaṣīda*, especially in Persian, where it is
termed *tajdīd-i maṭlaʿ*, "renewal of the opening (rhyme)."[9]

   Since the poem's beginning creates a strong initial impression on the
audience, gaining their attention and appreciation and preparing them for what
is to come, poets are warned against inauspicious openings. Ibn Ṭabāṭabā
cautions,

> The poet should avoid in his poetry, and (especially) at the opening of his
> discourse, that from which a bad omen may be drawn, or which might be
> considered rude speech or address, such as weeping, describing the
> desolation of encampments and the scattering of friends, lamenting (lost)
> youth, or reproaching Time, especially in *qaṣīda*s containing praise or
> congratulation; but (such topics) may be employed in elegies and the
> description of calamities. For when the discourse is based on such (topics)
> its hearer will draw a bad omen from it, even though he knows that the
> poet is addressing himself and not the *mamdūḥ*. (1956: 122; cf. van
> Gelder 1982a: 64–5. Al-ʿAskarī attributes the saying to "a secretary";
> 1986: 431)

While this injunction seems in contradiction to the widespread use of such
topics of the *nasīb* as "weeping, describing the desolation of encampments," and
so on (van Gelder 1982a: 65), it clearly relates to questions of decorum (as do
prohibitions against using, "in the *tashbīb*, names which might correspond to
those of the *mamdūḥ*'s womenfolk" [Ibn Ṭabāṭabā 1956: 123], or addressing the
patron familiarly by name rather than by title [Shams-i Qays 1909: 379]).
Moreover, it is not merely "a warning against untoward allusions resulting from
the ambiguity that arises when the poet speaks about or addresses himself,
without making it sufficiently clear that it is not the listener who is meant," still
less a condemnation of "the existence of conflicting moods in the themes of a

poem" (van Gelder 1982a: 65, 64), but reflects the power associated with the poetic word.

Routinely cited in this connection is the opening line of a poem in praise of al-Faḍl ibn Yaḥyā ibn Khālid ibn Barmak by Abū Nuwās,

> in which he offended decorum and diverged from the (proper) way. One of the Barmakids had built a palace on which he had spent great effort, and had moved there; Abū Nuwās ... wrote a *qaṣīda* praising him for it in which he says at the beginning,
>
>> O abode of desolation, humiliation shows clearly upon you, though my love has not betrayed you,
>
> and concluded it, or nearly so, with the line,
>
>> Greetings unto the world, so long as you have not been deprived of the Barmakids, among those who come and go.
>
> The Barmakid took a bad omen from it, and was so distressed that he grew gloomy and fell into a depression; then he said, "You have lamented our own passing, Abū Nuwās." And it was only a short time until [the caliph] al-Rashīd brought about their fall, and the evil omen was proven true. Some say that Abū Nuwās meant to predict calamity for them, because of (ill-will) he harbored against Jaʿfar [ibn Yaḥyā]; but I do not think this is true, since this *qaṣīda* is one of his finest poems, over which I have no doubt he took great pains ... and [this] should not be considered some sort of strategy of his and a veil for his true intent. (Ibn Rashīq 1972, 1: 224; see also Ibn Ṭabāṭabā 1956: 122–3; al-ʿAskarī 1986: 431; Ibn al-Athīr 1959, 3: 100, and another example, 3: 101; Abū Nuwās 1958, 1: 152–7)

Ibn Rashīq's protest is somewhat less than convincing (Abū Nuwās's hostility to the Barmakids, whom he frequently satirized in an outspoken manner, was well known); but whether the unfortunate lines were intended deliberately or no, the anecdote points to the power attributed to such utterances, which raises the necessity to avoid them above the mere requirements of decorum.

Al-Marzūbānī (d. 384/994) relates,

> When [the caliph] al-Muʿtaṣim had completed the building of his palace in the Square [of Baghdad] ... he sat in state therein, and assembled his household and his associates. He commanded that everyone dress in brocades; he had his throne placed in the portico, which was adorned with mosaics, in its upper part the image of a phoenix. He sat upon his throne, which was encrusted with many sorts of gems, upon his head the crown containing the unique pearl. The *īwān* was filled with ebony thrones placed right and left, from the edge of the throne on which al-Muʿtaṣim sat to its doors; whenever someone entered he [al-Muʿtaṣim] would seat

him according to the rank he perceived as his due. No one had seen a finer day than that.

Isḥāq al-Mawṣilī asked permission to recite. It was granted; and he recited a poem the likes of which in beauty no one had ever heard, describing the caliph and the assembly – except that it began with a *nasīb* on the ancient abodes and the remnants of their traces. Its first *bayt* was:

> O abode which calamity has altered and effaced: would that I knew
> what it is that has ruined you!

Al-Muʿtaṣim took this badly; and the assembled court were shocked, especially in view of Isḥāq's "understanding and knowledge and his lengthy service of kings." They rose quickly and departed; al-Muʿtaṣim moved his capital to Samarra, and let the palace fall to ruins (al-Marzubānī 1924: 301–2).

There is obviously more at stake here than a simple breach of decorum.[10] The poetic word has a quasi-magical power (reflected also in the very real damage that could be inflicted by *hijāʾ*, invective; see van Gelder 1988, especially 4–7). How much the magical power of the word was actually believed in in Abbasid and later times is a matter for speculation (see e.g. Bürgel 1988, especially 27–88, who somewhat overstates the case; see also the review by Meisami, 1991c); how much also the possibility of covert motives on the part of the poet (as suggested by Ibn Rashīq's remarks on Abū Nuwās) figures in the prohibition against such openings is also unclear, although the glossing over of such lines as "unintentional" suggests that this was, in fact, a consideration.

Al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965) was criticized for the opening line of a *qaṣīda* praising Kāfūr, the Ikhshīdid regent of Egypt, to whose court he had fled following his break with the Ḥamdānid prince Sayf al-Dawla.

> They censured Abū al-Ṭayyib's utterance to Kāfūr at their first meeting, with which he began, although he was addressing himself and not Kāfūr:

> > It is sufficient affliction that you see death a remedy, and enough for
> > death that it be your hope.

> The fault (here) relates to the civility [due] to kings and the good policy which was required of Abū al-Ṭayyib in this beginning, especially since this type of beginning – I mean the excellent beginning – is one of Abū al-Ṭayyib's finest qualities and one of the noblest effects of his poetry when poetry is mentioned. (Ibn Rashīq 1972, 1: 222)

Such breaches of decorum are not only tactless, but damage the poet's reputation. They are also inappropriate to the purpose of the poem, as is made clear by al-Ḥātimī's comment on the same line:

> You erred ... because you opened his [Kāfūr's] praise with that (sort of) statement) with which one opens elegies. ... It is the poet's way to seek the best opening for his poem, just as he seeks for it the best ending when

his need is achieved, and to make the opening of his discourse the best possible with respect to wording and meaning, and to begin his poem with that which resembles the meaning he intends.

Similarly, al-Ḥātimī criticizes al-Buḥturī's

> Woe to you from a night whose end grows long, and from the speed of Mayy's departure on bridled camels,

saying, "Had al-Buḥturī been writing *hijāʾ* when he uttered [the line] ... he would have excelled; for every type [*ṣinf*] of discourse demands a particular type of beginning and a particular sort of opening which is not suited to another (type)" (1965: 66–7).

Decorum involves not only the occasion, or the genre, of the poem, but the person to whom it is addressed; the poet must "choose for occasions what resembles them, and consider the circumstances of his addressees, pay attention to their desires, and bend himself to their wishes" (Ibn Rashīq 1972, 1: 225; cf. Tuve 1972, 192: decorum encompasses "the person who speaks, to whom he speaks, of whom or what ... to the time, the place, the purpose"). Improprieties and controversions of fact (one does not praise for his horsemanship someone who has never ridden, for his bravery someone who has never seen a battle) are to be avoided, and persons are to be described in terms appropriate to the type they represent: a ruler for his justice, a vizier for his good governance, a secretary for his eloquence, a religious figure for his piety, and so on. Shams-i Qays criticizes a poem by Rāzī Nīsābūrī in praise of a religious figure which opens with a description of wine and an invitation to drink:

> It is not proper that the *nasīb* of a panegyric for one who is called "Lord of the Sharīʿat and Establisher of the Faith" should deal with wine, drunkenness, and the morning cup; and if, in the same way that he praised the music of his feast, and wine, he had detailed his virtues and noble qualities, and described his accomplishments and beneficent deeds, it would have been more appropriate. (1909: 385–6)

He also criticizes a *qaṣīda* which begins with a negative verb; and Kamāl al-Dīn Ismāʿīl's "Have no hope of pleasant life from the turning sphere," which, "even though he is addressing himself, is quite unacceptable.... And since in this poem he is asking for beneficence and sympathy, how can he say [in the second hemistich], 'For in these lands there is no generosity in any man'?" But the effect of such openings can be mitigated by a skillful transition: thus Anvarī, who begins a *qaṣīda* with "Suddenly avarice destroyed the kingdom of generosity," makes amends in the *takhalluṣ* in which "he says, on the tongue of the beloved,

> 'She said angrily: How long will you go on in the manner of the uncultured? stop lamenting generosity in the presence of generosity,'"

which is acceptable "because Anvarī depicted himself as ignorant of the existence of generosity until another speaker made him aware (of it)" (ibid.: 292–4; that this is a favorite tactic of Anvarī's will be seen when we discuss some examples by that poet).

For Shams-i Qays,

> an excellent opening means that the poet makes the *maṭlaʿ* of each poem appropriate to his purpose. He should not begin with unpleasant statements, unless (the poem) is a threnody or an invective.... In [the *nasīb* of] panegyric *qaṣīda*s he should not mention the name of a slave or a woman unless it is clear that there is no connection between that name and the *mamdūḥ*. (ibid.: 378)

The principle that the opening line of a poem should indicate its purpose is often vaguely phrased so that it is not clear whether this refers to the poem's overall theme, its first *gharaḍ*, or its first *maʿnā*; however, most statements suggest that it is the main *gharaḍ* that should be anticipated in the opening line(s). Al-Ḥātimī cites al-Aṣmaʿī's praise of the beginning of a *marthiya* by Aws ibn Ḥajar "because he opened the elegy with an utterance ... whereby he expressed the way he was going in his poem ... thereby making you aware of his intention in the first line" (van Gelder 1982a: 30; see Bonebakker 1975: 76–7); he himself praised Abū Nuwās's line,

> Description of encampments is the eloquence of the slow-witted, so
> make your descriptions of the daughter of the vine,

which explicitly announces the main *gharaḍ* of the poem as *waṣf al-khamr*, as "the finest beginning composed by a poet either ancient or modern" (Bonebakker 1975: 79; cf. Ibn Rashīq 1972, 1: 232).

It can be argued that when a poet began a *qaṣīda* in the traditional manner, with a description of the *aṭlāl* and a lament for lost love, the audience would anticipate that its main *gharaḍ* would be panegyric. This is supported by the deliberate exploitation of such expectations in poems such as Abū Nuwās's *khamriyyāt*, in which the *aṭlāl topos* is explicitly rejected at the outset, or in Abū al-ʿAtāhiya's *zuhdiyyāt*, which go on to modify that *topos* in terms of the ascetic poem. With the introduction of new *aghrāḍ* for the *nasīb*, such as descriptions of gardens in spring and fall, bacchic themes, and sophisticated, urban *ghazal*, new expectations are raised: for example, the description of the garden anticipates that of the prosperous state under the rule of the *mamdūḥ*. (This is especially true of Persian panegyrics; but it is already seen in Abbasid urban poetry of the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries; cf. Sperl 1979, 1989: 13–19.)

In the case of the monothematic panegyric *qaṣīda* (variously termed *mabtūr* or *abtar*, *muqtaḍab*, or *maḥdūd*; see van Gelder 1982a: 115–16; Ibn Rashīq 1972, 1: 231–2; Shams-i Qays 1909: 386), a clear decorum also obtains with respect to opening lines which goes beyond the mere omission of the traditional *nasīb*.

Thus Ibn al-Rashīq praises the openings of Abū Tammām's monothematic *qaṣīda*s, among them that celebrating the caliph al-Muʿtaṣim's conquest of Amorium –

> al-sayfu aṣdaqu anbāʾan mina l-kutubī / fī ḥaddihi l-ḥaddi bayna l-jiddi wal-laʿabī
>
> The sword is truer in tidings than (any) writings: in its edge is the boundary between earnestness and sport (Arberry 1965: 50; for appreciations of this opening see e.g. Ibn al-Athīr 1959, 3: 103) –

a sententious statement which the poem as a whole may be said to illustrate (see further Chapter 9 below); and he takes exception to those who praise al-Buḥturī's opening lines, because these often have no relation to the poems they open (1972, 1: 232–3).

Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī observes that monothematic *qaṣīda*s

> are best begun with the description of a condition that is closely related to the aim (*gharaḍ*) of the discourse, as one opens the praise of someone arriving after a journey with congratulating him on his arrival and considering it a good omen; or as one opens the praise of someone who has triumphed over his enemies with the description of this and a congratulation on it. (1981: 305; van Gelder 1982a: 185)

In fact, Ḥāzim suggests, any poem, whether poly- or monothematic, should begin with a line which will both indicate its *gharaḍ* and arouse a sense of wonder and expectation in the audience. He cites in illustration the opening line of a panegyric *qaṣīda* by al-Mutanabbī –

> Do you see her, because of the abundance of her lovers, thinking that tears come naturally in calamity? (1981: 284) –

in which both semantic and thematic links establish the connection between *nasīb* and *madīḥ*. In short, "the opening (line/s) should be appropriate to the goal of the speaker in all its aspects," including style, diction, and topic (ibid.: 310). This principle applies to the beginnings of segments as well; for it, Ḥāzim coins the term *taswīm* (literally, the white blaze of a horse, that is, a distinguishing mark), "to announce something and give it distinguishing features" (ibid.: 297). He notes further that it was the practice of the *muḥdathūn* to beautify the second line of the *qaṣīda* so that it supports or completes the first; thus for example al-Mutanabbī's second line is

> How should you mourn her who sees every eyelid that sees her, save her own, cut off?

The practice was extended to beautifying the line following the transition (*takhalluṣ*; see below) as well (ibid.: 307–8).

Al-Mutanabbī was regularly praised for his opening lines; the sixth/twelfth-century critic al-Kalāʿī approved him for anticipating the *madīḥ* in his *nasīb*

(1966: 67; see van Gelder 1982a: 148–9), as had Ibn Sinān al-Khafājī (d. 466/ 1074) a century earlier:

> When, however, one begins with *madīḥ* or another theme (*gharaḍ*), it is best when the beginning is an indication of the intended theme. . . . Thus, al-Mutanabbī began the ode in which he praises Sayf al-Dawla and provides an excuse for his defeat at the hands of the Byzantines who killed or captured many of his army, by saying: 'Others, not I, are deceived by most of these people: if they fight they are cowards, if they talk they are brave.' So he began with his (main) theme . . . from the beginning of the poem. (1953: 254; van Gelder 1982a: 129; for other examples see e.g. Ibn al-Athīr 1959, 3: 104–5)

Ḍiyā' al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr (d. 637/1239) considers beginnings "one of the five pillars of eloquence;" the opening of any work should indicate its intended meaning: "if conquest, (it should deal with) conquest, if congratulation, congratulation, if mourning, mourning, and likewise with respect to other topics" (1959, 3: 96). "The beginning of a discourse, whether poetry, sermons, orations, or epistles, should indicate [its] intended meaning;" because the opening part of the discourse is the first to be heard, "when the opening is appropriate to the meaning which follows, the motives for listening to it become greater and the reasons for heeding it are increased" (1956: 187–8). Further,

> The poet, when composing a poem, must consider: if it is pure panegyric and not concerned with a particular event, he has the choice of opening it with *ghazal,* or not doing so but proceeding directly to the *madīḥ.* . . . But if the poem concerns a particular event, such as the conquest of a fortress, the defeat of an army, or the like, he should not begin it with *ghazal;* to do so indicates the weakness of the poet's talent and his inability to achieve his goal, or his ignorance of how to put words in their (proper) places. . . . For *ghazal* is delicacy pure and simple; but the diction in which such (weighty) events are versified consists of serious language and solid speech, which is the opposite of *ghazal.* Further: ears will be waiting to hear what will be said about these events, and for a beginning which plunges directly into mention of them, not a beginning with *ghazal.* For important matters take precedence. (1959, 3: 96–7)

Although this decorum is generally observed in both Arabic and Persian *qaṣīda*s – with some exceptions; al-Mutanabbī, for example, often prefaced victory *qaṣīda*s with a *nasīb* (usually when the "victory" in question was a non-event; see further below) – poetic practice varies. We will consider relationships between *nasīb* and *madīḥ* in Chapter 5, as well as poems without a *nasīb* but with some other type of exordium. Here we will look at some frequently used types of opening, as well as at ways in which a poem's beginning can indicate its meaning.

Sentential or generalizing openings were greatly admired; for not only do such openings announce the poem's theme but posit the exemplary truth of the events or other matters it treats. Such is the case with the opening line of Abū Tammām's *qaṣīda* on the conquest of Amorium quoted above, a line which was widely quoted or emulated. The Persian poet 'Unṣurī (d. after 422–1031) begins a panegyric to Maḥmūd of Ghazna (388–421/998–1030) by expanding on Abū Tammām's opposition between sword and book:

1   Even so do the swords of monarchs leave their effects; even so do great
    men act when action must be taken.
2   Regard the sovereign's sword, don't read the book of the past; for his
    sword is far more truthful than any book.
3   When a man has faith in his own ability, he goes to meet the enemy
    seeking battle;
4   He needs no guide to help him, nor any astrologer; he needs no taker of
    omens, nor any who reports them. (1944: 48)

'Unṣurī proclaims the falsity not only of astrologers' predictions but of the "book of the past" (*nāma-yi guzashta*), that is, history: the deeds of the kings and heroes of the past have been outstripped by those of Maḥmūd. The narrative of Maḥmūd's conquests which follows – like Abū Tammām's narrative of the conquest of Amorium – provides proof of the initial assertion.

The opening line of al-Mutanabbī's *qaṣīda* celebrating the Hamdanid Sayf al-Dawla's (333–56/946–67) victory over the Byzantines at al-Ḥadath in 343/954 –

1   According to the degree of the people of resolve come the resolutions,
    and according to the degree of noble men come the noble actions
    (Arberry 1965: 84) –

similarly states a universal principle which the remainder of the *qaṣīda* will illustrate. On a more personal note, the generalizing opening of a panegyric to Maḥmūd of Ghazna by Farrukhī Sīstānī (d. after 422/1031) –

1   Whatever army is ruled by one like Maḥmūd will have riches on its
    right hand and ease on its left (1932: 56) –

introduces a list of the blessings enjoyed by such a powerful army, under such a mighty ruler, couched in similar general terms. Homiletic and ascetic poets, not surprisingly, often favor sententious openings which announce the universal truths embodied in their poems. Abū al-'Atāhiya begins a *zuhdiyya* thus (1886: 75–6):

1   Death searches through all regions; death obliterates all men.
2   You will surely receive from it the like of that which I see we received
    in respect to Thamūd and to 'Ād.
3   It has destroyed those of Nizār who passed on; it has destroyed those of
    Iyād who departed.

4 Do you recall those of the Banū al-Aṣfar [the Byzantines] who have
   vanished – men of domed tents and mighty tent-poles?

The ensuing catalogue of vanished dynasties and rulers supports the opening
statement that all men, everywhere, are at the mercy of death (or, the fates,
al-manāyā); the pattern is repeated later in the poem to introduce the motif of
separation, the inevitability of parting from those one loves:

12 The (passage of the) nights will soon bring death to you, so be prepared.
13 Have you pretended to forget, or forgotten, death? have you forgotten
    separation from your children? (1886: 75–6)

   The Persian poet Nāṣir-i Khusraw develops a similar motif in the opening of
a lengthy homiletic *qaṣīda* (1993: 50):

1 The eagle of this world is swift-winged, and men are its prey; what
   other business has the eagle of this world but hunting?
2 The base world is not inclined towards us; and why? (Because)
   devouring us is sweet to its eagle.
3 The caravan never ate (of this world) and set out again; for the eagle of
   this world is a highwayman and devourer of caravans.

The opening passage, on the predatory nature of the material world which
devours those who seek to consume it, paves the way for the poet's renunciation
of worldly affairs for spiritual (here, as often, realized in his dedication to praise
of the Fatimid caliph al-Mustanṣir).

   Another type of beginning is for the poet to announce the newness of the
undertaking at hand. Such is the intent behind Abū Nuwās's rejection of
the *aṭlāl topos*: there are newer, and better, subjects for poetry than weeping over
abandoned encampments. Often such openings contrast the history and legends
of the past, now worn out, abrogated, if not indeed false, with the glories of the
present. Farrukhī begins his lengthy *qaṣīda* (discussed in Chapter 6 below)
which celebrates Maḥmūd of Ghazna's campaign against the Indian city of
Somnath and the destruction of its temple thus (1932: 67):

1 The tale of Alexander has become an antiquated legend; bring forth
   new discourse, for the new has a different sweetness.
2 An ancient legend, a history full of lies is worthless; go, do not exert
   yourself in telling lies.
3 The tale of where Alexander went, and what he did, has been heard so
   much that everyone knows it....
5 If you would tell a pleasant and agreeable tale, take up the tale of the
   world-ruler, and do not stray from it....

While this opening also involves a criticism of Firdawsī's (d. ca. 411/1020)
recently completed epic poem the *Shāhnāma* (the "old tale" referred to here, as
in 'Unṣurī's *qaṣīda* quoted from above), which recorded the history and great

deeds of the kings and heroes of pre-Islamic Iran, the emphasis on "newness" implies the exceptional nature both of Maḥmūd's conquests and of the poet's enterprise.

Nāṣir-i Khusraw begins the *qaṣīda* quoted in Chapter 1 along similar lines:

1 Now it is fitting that I change the state of things, and strive to attain that which is best.
2 The world in April becomes fresh and green: through contemplation I'll make my mind like April.
3 In the gardens and hillsides of my books of prose and verse, out of verse and prose I'll make hyacinths and basil.
4 Fruits and flowers will I make from meanings, and out of pleasing words I shall make trees.
5 As the cloud makes the desert's face a garden, I'll make my notebook's face a garden too. (1993: 303)

This newness of intent refers to the poet's special concern, not only in his poetry, but also in his prose works, to propagate the Ismāʿīlī faith and praise its representatives; his poetic purpose is clarified in the body of the poem and summed up in its conclusion. (See further Chapter 6; and see Meisami 1990c: 458–61, 1993c.)

Khāqānī (d. 595/1198–9) devotes an entire *qaṣīda* to the theme of newness, building it into his *radīf* (the word or phrase that, in Persian poetry, follows the rhyme-word proper, often creating a refrain; here, [-ān]-i naw pardākhta "has built/made/etc. something new"), and celebrating both the new palace built by his *mamdūḥ*, the Sharvānshāh Akhsitān ibn Manūchihr, and the newness of his own poetic achievement (1959: 387–8).

1 See: the royally crowned sun has erected a new palace; in swift pursuit of the sphere's ball has traversed a new arena. . . .
8 Make haste to largesse, people, haste; seek the soul's joy from the great; for the chief of the Sharvānshāhs has built a new palace. . . .
10 'Tis fitting that Jalāl al-Dīn, 'tis fitting that the lord of Sharvān, 'tis fitting that his heavenly feast has begun a new cycle of time. . . .
22 The theriac of his justice is, each moment, elixir for a world's life; in praise of him Khāqānī has begun a new *dīvān*.

Ḥāfiẓ too begins a *ghazal* by announcing the "newness" of his project (QG374):

1 Come, let us scatter flowers, and pour wine into the cup;
   rend the roof of the sphere and establish a new design.
2 Should grief muster its army to shed the blood of lovers,
   I and the *sāqī* will attack together and destroy its foundations.

Wine, perfume, music and song are the weapons to be deployed against the "army of grief"; but the beloved is absent, and the poet invokes the Ṣabā: perhaps the breeze will persuade the "king of beauties" (*shāh-i khūbān*) to cast a

glance his way. After exhorting the listener to leave off disputes about reason and piety and seek Paradise in the tavern, the poet concludes by making clear the nature of his "new design":

8   Poetry and sweet song are not practiced in Shiraz;
      come, Ḥāfiẓ, let us place ourselves in another realm.

Many other types of opening might be enumerated here: the use of apostrophe ("Stop, let us weep!"), a question ("Whose are the ruined abodes?"), an imperative ("Leave off blaming me!"), a statement which sets the scene for what follows ("Spring has come;" "Last night I went to the tavern;" "The muezzin has sounded the call to prayer"), a quotation (Ḥāfiẓ's "O *sāqī*, pass the wine around and proffer it" [QG1; see further Chapter 9]), and so on. And there are clearly many ways in which the opening lines of a poem anticipate its larger theme, or call attention to topics of particular importance. In this connection, the *qaṣīda* form presents special opportunities for the intermingling of the topics of the *nasīb* with those of the remainder of the poem, opportunities which include the possibility of subverting the apparent meaning of the poem and inscribing therein a subtext which often conflicts with the poem's ostensible purpose. While *nasīb-madīḥ* relationships will be treated in detail in Chapter 5, it is not inappropriate to consider some examples here, in anticipation of further discussion in this chapter of linkages between the poem's parts.

Elsewhere I have discussed in detail a *qaṣīda* by Bashshār ibn Burd dedicated to ʿUqba ibn Salm, governor of Basra from 147–51/764–8 under the caliph al-Manṣūr (Bashshār 1950, 1: 107–13; see Meisami 1985c); I will mention it only briefly here. In the opening *nasīb* the poet addresses his travelling companions and bids them convey his greetings to his lady, Umm al-ʿAlāʾ, whose eyes "hold both remedy and affliction for a suffering lover; but affliction before remedy" (1–2). Lines 3–8 describe his love for the lady, who at first encouraged him, then rejected him because of a slander against him. He urges his friends not to blame the lady (9), but to convey to her his plea for favour (11b–18), in which he recalls her early promises and the intercession of her confidante in his favour, and repeats the motif of slander (14), to conclude with the confidante's words to the lady:

18   "The noble man's promise is an obligation upon him; fulfill (yours),
        and help him to triumph over his enemies."

The lady's response (19–21), conveyed by the confidante, Sulaymā, is to remind the poet that everything in this world is doomed to perish; resigned to separation (22), he turns abruptly to a brief description of his journey to his patron (23–28), whom he praises in the remainder of the poem (29–54), moving from general topics of praise – Ibn Salm's nobility and generosity – to specific instances of his generosity towards the poet (39–45), and in particular his bestowal on him of a young slave, who subsequently died.

42 He went by on his bier, and I went to ʿUqba complaining, and he said, not in secret,

43 "If you mean a slave, then you have one; for I have a living one like him among my servants."

44 So I asked him to fulfill (his promise) with a haughty (youth) like a lion cub who leaps out at you from within a thicket.[11]

The panegyric concludes (46–54) by passing from more praise of ʿUqba's generosity towards the poet to general praise, taking up once more the motif of slander (47) introduced in the *nasīb*.

Nasīb and *madīḥ* are linked by the analogy between lady and patron, both of whom have power to do good or harm. One would expect the "remedy" for the poet's "affliction" to be, in accordance with the conventional pattern, the patron's generosity, which compensates for the lady's cruelty (see Sperl 1979: 29–30, 1989: 20–2). That the lady rejects the lover's plea suggests that the poet's request of his patron has also been rejected, or at least not yet fulfilled; the use of the masculine gender in the concluding line of the confidante's speech (18) gives the statement the force of a *sententia* affirming the injustice of failing to fulfill a promise. Lady and patron are thus further linked by their lack of generosity, a lack which is presented as a moral lapse. Various structural and semantic strategies provide further links between the two, and between other significant motifs, which will be discussed later (see Chapter 5). The panegyric may thus be seen as voicing not merely praise, but criticism, of the patron for failing to fulfill his promise.

Farrukhī Sīstānī composed a *qaṣīda* of 53 lines in celebration of ʿĪd al-Fiṭr 421/1030, addressed to Amīr Muḥammad, the son and (briefly) successor of Maḥmūd of Ghazna, only days before that prince's deposition in favour of his half-brother Masʿūd (Farrukhī 1932: 106–9). The lengthy *nasīb* begins with the departure of Ramaḍān, personified as an old man, an honored guest who has gone on his way rather than wear out his welcome.

1 Ramaḍān has departed and has undertaken a long journey; happy is he who observes Ramaḍān properly to the end.

2 This month is greatly honoured; but what can I say? Better that one bound to leave should depart and commence his journey.

3 He lightened his burden upon us and, at the proper time, journeyed on and departed, lest it be said, "He lowered his anchor in our midst."

4 Ramaḍān is a wise and clever old man; the deeds of the wise are always proper and fitting.

5 He had heard that they say of guests who tarry long, "He dwelt long with us and continually complained."

6 But why should I make a long story of it? What is it to me? Now I must sing of the one who is arriving.

Line 6 marks the transition to the second segment (7–13), which describes the advent of the feast, a time to celebrate, drink wine and sing the king's praises, and the feast itself, concluding with the poet's self-apostrophe: "Farrukhī, as long as you can drink nothing but this wine" (13b). Reminding himself that he owes all he has to the prince's favour, and that his duty in return is to compose a poem in which are mingled "praise of the king and of the beloved's moonlike face" (18), he concludes:

19   Minstrel, strike up just such a rare love-song [*ghazal*]; or, if you will, listen while I sing a new one.

This love plaint comprises the second part of the *nasīb*, set off from the first by the device of *tajdīd-i maṭlaʿ*, "renewal of the *maṭlaʿ*".

20   Alas for my heart! that silver-limbed beauty has stolen my heart, but I have no news of his.
21   He had a worthy heart, but found another; would that I too could find another heart!
22   Where is the market of the heart-sellers of Khurasan, that I might find a heart like my own?
23   No one in this city has an extra heart; and even if they did, they would not sell their hearts for gold.
24   He who frequents idols loses his heart, like me; such is my state, everyone: beware, beware!
25   How can you ask how can I, without a heart, sing the praises of the just prince in such a state?

The prince is named at the central line:

26   *Mīr Abū Aḥmad ibn-i Maḥmūd ān shīr-i shikār   Mīr Abū Aḥmad ibn-i Maḥmūd ān shīr-i shakar*
     Mīr Abū Aḥmad, son of Maḥmūd, that hunting lion; Mīr Abū Aḥmad, son of Maḥmūd, that sugared milk.

(Prior to this, in the *nasīb*, several "false transitions" at lines 9, 14, and 18 establish expectations of transition denied by Farrukhī's delaying tactics; I shall discuss this strategy in the section on transitions, below.) The principal topics of the *madīḥ* are then announced: Muḥammad's resemblance to his father Maḥmūd; his learning and virtue; his generosity, magnificence, and eloquence.

The choice of topics in both *nasīb* and *madīḥ* reflects the circumstances in which the *qaṣīda* was composed and the poet's own divided loyalties. The *nasīb* introduces topics appropriate to its own generic conventions (especially in the love-plaint, unusual – and therefore conspicuous – in a *qaṣīda* celebrating ʿĪd al-Fiṭr) which it would be improper (to say the least) to express in the *madīḥ*, but which provide an essential background against which the latter must be read: "the language of erotic emotion is used to avoid explicit statement of political belief and feeling" (Williams 1980: 34). Departing Ramaḍān recalls

the pious, recently deceased Maḥmūd; Muḥammad's impending downfall is anticipated in the reference to the "heart-sellers of Khurasan" (the armies of Khurasan had declared for Mas'ūd during Ramaḍān); Farrukhī designates Mas'ūd's Khurasani supporters as "heart-sellers", faithless lovers who sell their loyalty for money. The emphasis on Muḥammad's (physical) resemblance to Maḥmūd cannot but call to mind the far greater resemblance (in character, at least as was widely assumed) of the half-brother who is about to replace him. The comparison of Muḥammad to the moon (rather than to the sun, as is more customary), accompanied by a contrived explanation (38–9), suggests that Muḥammad is second best; while the emphasis in the *nasīb* on the "newness" of the feast suggests his inexperience and a taste for luxury. The contrast between old, pious Ramaḍān and the newly-arrived feast implies a similar one between the bookish, pleasure-loving prince and his dead father.

As these examples show, the beginnings of *qaṣīda*s (and not merely their opening lines) provide a means of establishing the overall theme of the poem in ways which are neither explicit nor direct, but which would have been clearly understood. I shall have more to say about beginnings when discussing larger relationships between the parts of the poem; before that, however, I will turn to another aspect of the poem's structure treated with great interest by the Arabic and Persian critics: that of transitions, and particularly those between the major portions of the panegyric *qaṣīda*, the *nasīb* and *madīḥ*.

Transitions

Classical and medieval European critics seem to have paid less attention to the subject of transitions than did their Arab and Persian counterparts. This may be due to differences in the types of discourse to which their attention was primarily directed: in Classical literature the oration, in medieval European the narrative. By contrast, the dominant type of discourse in the Arabo-Persian tradition was the lyric poem, and especially the polythematic *qaṣīda*, the chief point of reference in discussions of transitions, which testify to an abiding concern for harmony between the *qaṣīda*'s apparently disparate sections.[12]

Van Gelder's discussion of "transition lines" both provides a useful introduction to the topic and raises a number of problems, not least that of the wisdom of conceptually limiting transitions to single lines. Van Gelder's assertion that even skillful transitions between, for example, *nasīb* and *madīḥ* "cannot conceal the disparity between the parts" (1982a: 32) is belied by the critics themselves: Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī, for example, emphasizes that transitions must be subtle and skillfully composed so that such "disparity" (*tabāyun*) may not be apparent (1981: 318–19).

Despite variations in terminology, it is the term *takhalluṣ* which is most widely used for transitions, especially from the *nasīb* to the *madīḥ*.[13] Arabic writers also use the term *khurūj*; in Persian, *takhalluṣ* in the sense of transition from *nasīb* to *madīḥ* in the *qaṣīda* is often translated by the Persian *gurīzgāh*, while

the term *takhalluṣ* is also applied to the final or penultimate *bayt* of the *ghazal* which includes the poet's self-naming.

The earliest statement dealing with transitions between *nasīb* and *madīḥ* appears to be by the philologist Abū 'Ubayda (d. 209/824–5).

> The best transition (*takhalluṣ*) of the Arabs … by which they passed on from weeping on the traces (of the abandoned camp), the description of the camels, the carrying away of the women and the parting from the neighbours, without *daʿ dhā* or *'addi 'ammā tarā* (pass on from what you see…) or *udhkur kadhā* (think of…), within the limits of one line … while the poet does not exceed (these limits) or connect (the transition) with what follows, is the line by Zuhayr: 'The miser is to blame wherever he is (i.e. always). But the generous in all circumstances is Harim.' (Van Gelder 1982a: 33; the source is al-Ḥātimī)

Abū 'Ubayda's statement suggests a preference for a transition which does not exceed a single line, although, as van Gelder points out, the use of *enjambement* (as in "'I travel … //Towards So-and-so …'") seems not to have been condemned (ibid.: 34), and is especially prevalent in the Persian *qaṣīda*. Moreover, the *takhalluṣ* generally contains the name of the *mamdūḥ* (some poems may use only a descriptive epithet, e.g. *fatan*, "youth", or a title: *malik* "king", *vazīr*, etc.). This gives rise to a certain confusion between the terms *takhalluṣ* and *istiṭrād*, frequently translated "digression", but for which van Gelder – on the basis of a statement by Abū Tammām – prefers the term "feint", which describes the strategy much more precisely (ibid.: 34–6; see further below).

Use of the term *takhalluṣ* appears to have been well established from the fourth/tenth century onwards. Among the first to devote a separate chapter to the topic was Ibn Ṭabāṭabā, who began with the "method of the Ancients":

> The early poets had only one method. After describing the desert and how they crossed it on their camels, and relating their sufferings on their journeys, they said: 'We undertook all those hardships in order to reach So-and-so', meaning the person to be praised. … Or one started afresh (*yustaʾnaf al-kalām*) after the conclusion of the *tashbīb*, the description of desert and camels etc., so that, when the panegyric began, it was cut off from the preceding … or one reached the panegyric after complaining about Fate and describing one's afflictions and misfortunes, seeking refuge from them with the person to be praised; or one started to describe the clouds, the sea, the lion, the sun or the moon, and said: 'No broad cloud, no foaming sea, no lion in his lair, nor is the sun or the full moon as generous, or as courageous, as So-and-so', meaning the person to be praised. (van Gelder 1982a: 60–1; Ibn Ṭabāṭabā 1956: 111–13)

As van Gelder observes,

the 'one method' of the Ancients turns out to be of three different types –
and Ibn Ṭabāṭabā is the first to distinguish between them. In the first,
there is a quasi-narrative connection: the poet explains that the difficult
journey leads to the *mamdūḥ*. The second type is based on association: the
mamdūḥ is favourably compared with a natural phenomenon that has been
described in the preceding passage. Both types exploit the contrast
between the two themes: the first type direct and crude, the second less
harsh and more sophisticated. In the third type [mentioned second by Ibn
Ṭabāṭabā, and supported by an example from Zuhayr] no connection is
made. (1982a: 61)[14]

Ibn Ṭabāṭabā also notes that the *muḥdathūn* are considerably more subtle in
their transitions than were earlier poets, and devotes the remainder of the
chapter to examples (1956: 115–19; van Gelder 1982a: 62–7).

Elsewhere Ibn Ṭabāṭabā discusses more generally the need for smooth
transitions between the generic elements of the poem.

> For verse has passages (or periods, *fuṣūl*) like those of epistles. So the poet
> has to make subtle connections between the various subjects (*funūn*) of
> his discourse. Thus he makes a transition (*fa-yatakhallaṣ*) from love poetry
> [*ghazal*] to panegyric, from panegyric to complaint, from complaint to
> request; and from the description of abodes and their remnants to the
> description of the desert and camels [and so on] . . . from self-praise to the
> account of the exploits of one's ancestors, from submission and humility
> to reproach and apology, from rejection and making difficulties to
> compliance and leniency; by the subtlest of transitions and the best of
> representations (*bi-alṭaf takhalluṣ wa-aḥsan ḥikāya*), without any motif
> being broken off from the one preceding it, but connected with it and
> mixed with it. (van Gelder 1982a: 55; Ibn Ṭabāṭabā 1956: 6–7, and see
> also 126, where Ibn Ṭabāṭabā stresses that the *fuṣūl* must not stand
> independently – e.g. like a string of aphorisms or proverbs – but that the
> *qaṣīda* "must be like a single discourse".)

Van Gelder comments that while "almost every pair of themes" is so closely
related that "the poet would not need to contrive an artificial connection,"
there is "one exception".

> Ibn Ṭabāṭabā suggests (by means of a subtle connection!) that the
> transition from love poetry to panegyric is on a par with the other pairs . . .
> [but] this suggestion is belied in [his] treatment of *takhalluṣ*. But the
> passage reveals at least a tendency on the part of Ibn Ṭabāṭabā to
> exaggerate, in his theoretical remarks, the coherence of the *qaṣīda*.
> (1982a: 55–6)

Since Ibn Ṭabāṭabā is talking about the *qaṣīda*, it is likely that what he means by
ghazal is not "love poetry" but, more broadly, the *nasīb*, which can incorporate a

variety of topics; and indeed, it is largely (though not exclusively) *nasīb-madīḥ* transitions he discusses in his chapter on *takhalluṣ*.

In the chapter on *khurūj* in his *al-Muwāzana bayna Abī Tammām wa-al-Buḥturī* al-Āmidī noted that transitions without connection were frequent in the poems of both poets (see van Gelder 1982a: 71–5), an observation due perhaps to his wish to defend al-Buḥturī against criticism for his abrupt transitions. Al-Ḥātimī in his *Ḥilyat al-muḥāḍara* discussed both transitions and "digressions" (which he termed *iltifāt* or *iʿtirāḍ*) in a manner which anticipates the later discussion of Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī (see ibid.: 84–8). Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī adds little to these discussions except in his chapter on *istiṭrād*, defined as when "one starts with a motif (*maʿnā*); then, while in the course of this, one starts with another motif, making the first the occasion for (or 'link with', *sabab*) the second" (ibid.: 94; al-ʿAskarī 1986: 398). Usāma ibn Munqidh noted that transitions which combine (topics from) *tashbīb* and *madīḥ* – a method in which, he says, the *muḥdathūn* excelled – are greatly esteemed (1960: 288).

Ibn Rashīq, who considered elegant transitions "a cause of delight to the *mamdūḥ*" (1972, 1: 217), took exception to such critics as al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī, al-Āmidī and al-Ḥātimī, "for whom", he says, "*khurūj* is more like *istiṭrād*, whereas this is not the case" (ibid., 1: 234). He defined *khurūj* as "when you leave the *nasīb* for the *madīḥ* or something else with an elegant disengagement and then continue in what you have gone into" (ibid.), and *takhalluṣ* as when "the poet makes a transition (*takhallaṣa*) from one motif (*maʿnā*) to another, then goes back to the first, and starts with another, and then turns back to the previous one" (ibid., 1: 237; van Gelder 1982a: 118; van Gelder considers this a "graded transition" which is more like *istiṭrād*, ibid.: 119). Ibn Rashīq states, "Something of this kind may occur when in the middle of the *nasīb* part of the panegyric is inserted, devoted to the person whom the poet intends to honour in his *qaṣīda*; after which he returns to the *nasīb* and only then goes back to the panegyric....This type is called *ilmām*" (1972, 1: 238; van Gelder 1982a: 119).

Ibn al-Athīr distinguished between *takhalluṣ*, the smooth and flowing transition between *maʿānī* so that "the entire discourse is, as it were, poured into one mould," and its opposite, *iqtiḍāb*, when the poet "cuts off" what he is talking about to "start afresh" on a new subject, "be it *madīḥ*, *hijāʾ*, or whatever" (1959, 3: 121). Ibn al-Athīr (d. 637/1239) notes that there are two types of transition: *takhalluṣ* proper, "when the writer chooses a topic and, while he is occupied with it, chooses another, making the first its cause, so that they are connected, without breaking his discourse to take up another," and *iqtiḍāb* ("truncation"), its opposite, "when the poet breaks off the discourse he is engaged in to take up another ... with no connection between the two" (1956: 181). Shams-i Qays states that there is a decorum to be observed in transitions: the poet should not, for example, proceed from *tashbīb* to *madīḥ* in such a way "that he appears to be seeking (the *mamdūḥ*'s) help in gaining what he wishes from the beloved" (1909: 295; the practice is also censured by the Arab critics, though it is often employed in light-hearted poems).

Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī devotes a lengthy chapter to a discussion of the parts (*fuṣūl*) of a poem; and while van Gelder finds it "unfortunate . . . that he did not provide a definition" of this term (1982a: 178), it would appear that for Ḥāzim a *faṣl* is a sentential unit, a unit of meaning. A poem is composed of segments made up of *abyāt* linked by their topical or generic sense: the relation between *fuṣūl* and *abyāt*, and between *abyāt* and the poem, is analogous to that between *ḥurūf* (letters) and words, i.e., the units of which they are made up and which, it is implied, have no meaning independently).[15] Ḥāzim's discussion of segmentation will be dealt with in Chapter 4; what is important here is his insistence that "those segments should come first in the poem which relate to the intended purpose [*gharaḍ*] of the discourse as a whole," and that close topical connections should be observed between segments (1981: 289). While the establishment of proper connections and transitions takes place throughout the poem, and not simply at certain points, Ḥāzim does, however, pay special attention to transitions between *aghrāḍ*, and particularly between *nasīb* and *madīḥ*, in "compound" (polythematic) *qaṣīda*s which may have one or several *aghrāḍ*. In such poems the *madīḥ*

> should begin with an enumeration of the virtues of the *mamdūḥ* followed by that of the occasions where he shows his courage and generosity, and by mention of his exploits against his enemies. When the *mamdūḥ* has (famous) ancestors one does well to couple the mention of his achievements with theirs. One should conclude with foretelling good things for the *mamdūḥ*, with a prayer for his happiness, continual bliss, subduing of the enemy, and the like. (ibid.: 305)

Ḥāzim stresses the importance of the poem's opening lines and of the *takhalluṣ*, which "should be graceful, and the *khurūj* into the panegyric eloquent (*badīʿ*)" (the *muḥdathūn*, he notes, were wont to beautify both the second line of the *qaṣīda* and the line following the *takhalluṣ*), and reiterates the principle that the poem's opening "should be appropriate to the goal of the speaker in all its aspects," that is, with respect to wording, order, topics (*maʿānī*), and style (*uslūb*) (ibid.: 306, 308, 309). He then turns to the possible types of transition.

These are two: intentional (*maqṣūd*) and gradual, or unintentional and abrupt, giving an impression of spontaneity. "Specialists on *badīʿ* call a gradual transition *takhalluṣ*; and when it is neither gradual nor abrupt but effected by means of a sudden turn [*inʿiṭāf ṭāriʾ*] by way of apostrophe [*iltifāt*] (they speak of) *istiṭrād*" (ibid.: 316; van Gelder 1982a: 186).[16] The two types may be combined; citing an example by Muslim ibn al-Walīd, Ḥāzim observes that the *muḥdathūn* are noted for their use of both types, in contrast to the "ancients" who were, in general, more abrupt (1981: 317).[17] "Both types of *khurūj* to the *madīḥ* – whether connected to what precedes or is cut off from it – either contain in the rhyme of the *bayt* the name of the *mamdūḥ* or the *madhmūm* [person blamed], or mention of the father (of one or the other); or this is placed within the *bayt* and it is

rhymed by something else;" naming in the rhyme-word is however preferable (ibid.: 318–19).

> With transition one always follows one of two methods. Either one proceeds gradually to what the transition is meant to lead to.... Or the transition ... takes place by means of a turning [*iltifāt*] of the mind from one domain [*ḥayyiz*] to another, when it perceives one point after another. [And] then, at the last moment, it turns to what the transition is meant to lead to, by means of something contradicting or contrasting, without an introduction that announces it or a link that organizes the two parts, but by abandoning one for the other all at once, in various ways. This is done when one notices that the two contrasting parts have a common attribute that is (at first) not perceived; then the transition from one to the other proceeds by way of a comparison or representation [*muḥākāt*]. Or (it is done) by turning away from one in a (certain) objective [*maqṣad*] and relying on the other in it [viz. the same *maqṣad*]; or by denying one of them what is granted to the other. Methods other than these are [also] possible. (ibid.: 319–20; van Gelder 1982a: 186)

The *takhalluṣ* may occur either in a half-line (*shaṭr*), in a *bayt*, or over two *bayt*s; and the name of the *mutakhallaṣ ilayhi* may be either simple or compound (i.e. a lengthy form of the name, which may be extended to fill the maximum amount of space possible within the line; this is called *iṭṭirād*, as in Durayd ibn al-Ṣimma's *Qatalnā bi-ʿAbdi llāhi khayra lidātihi/Dhuʾāba bni Asmāʾa bni Zaydi bni Qāribī*, "We would have slain the best of ʿAbd Allāh's offspring, Dhuʾāb ibn Asmāʾ ibn Zayd ibn Qārib"). Ḥāzim concludes by presenting a number of examples of "gradual" transitions (*takhalluṣ*, *istiṭrād*) (1981: 320–1).

Van Gelder finds that Ḥāzim adds nothing "radically new or different" to the "traditional" concept of the poem, and attributes this to his inability to achieve "a synthesis of Greek and Arabic theory, or, more precisely, of the method of the Arab philosophers and that of traditional literary criticism."

> It must have struck Ḥāzim that Greek theory ... cannot be applied to Arabic poems in every respect; and this may have inspired him to replace Aristotle's 'integrated unity' by the 'concatenated unity' described in the *Minhāj*. It is possible, too, that Ḥāzim, reflecting upon his own practice as a poet, introduced the concept of the 'passage' as the nearest equivalent that can be considered as a 'whole.' (1982a: 189)

The nature of "passages" (*fuṣūl*) will be discussed in Chapter 4; for the moment, however, it may be useful to test the accuracy of Ḥāzim's discussion of transitions against some examples.

Ḥāzim's discussion is linked to his analysis of the first fifteen lines of a panegyric by al-Mutanabbī addressed to Kāfūr, which begins, "I contend with my yearning regarding to you, and yearning prevails" (1967: 96–103; Arberry's translation; on this discussion, and the poem, see further Meisami 1999). In the

nasīb the poet laments his banishment from the beloved (figuring his estrangement from Sayf al-Dawla), describes the dangers of his journey to Egypt, and praises his mount, concluding with a sentential passage which places the description in its emotional and moral context, and then moving to the *takhalluṣ*.

12 Fine steeds, like true friends, are few, even if to the eye of the inexperienced they are many;

13 if you have seen nothing but the beauty of their markings and limbs, their true beauty is hidden from you.

14 God curse this present world as a place for a rider to halt, for every man of far aspirations is tortured there.

15 Would I knew whether I shall ever compose a poem and not complain in it or reproach,

16 there being with me that, the least part of which fends off verse from me; but my heart, O daughter of the folk, is full of shifts,

17 and the virtues of Kāfūr, whether I desire to praise him or not, dictate to me, and I write.

Ḥāzim notes how the poet "moves from individual to general topics" with the reference to his horse, drawing the general conclusion that fine steeds are as rare as fine men (12). Then he turns to

> blame of this world … and (how) its adversities follow him … mention of separation, remoteness, absence, and the hardships (caused by) enemies, and expresses his pain at what afflicts every person of far aspirations therein. … He has connected his discourse in all this with the finest continuity, and throughout has moved from one thing to another appropriate to it, or its cause, and combined these with his purpose. (1981: 299)

The suggestion that the poet is unwilling to praise Kāfūr (17) links up with the notion that "fine steeds, like true friends, are few" and with the poet's inclination to renounce poetry (15–16). All this was certainly understood by Ḥāzim, whose perception of the nature of the transitions between topics and whose emphasis on maintaining continuity not only between contiguous segments but also among the major topics of the poem reflect a concern with its overall harmony.

This concern is seen in poetic practice. If we look back at Bashshār's *qaṣīda* to ʿUqba ibn Salm, we will recall that the *takhalluṣ* comes at the end of the *raḥīl*, which may be considered as an extension of the *nasīb*, as together both function as exordium.[18] The poet describes his desert journey, on a swift-running camel

28 Whose care is to visit ʿUqba in his domains and drink from his sea in bucketsful.

29 A Mālikī by whose face war is dispelled as is the darkness by the light.

The conceit that it is the camel, rather than the poet, who desires to visit ʿUqba and drink from the sea of his generosity continues the image of the mount as a fast swimmer (*sabūḥ*; 27), as well as introducing the topic of generosity for which ʿUqba will be praised; while the topics of his tribal lineage and his courage in war present him in the framework of those traditional Arab values which will be implicitly questioned later in the poem. Lines 30–31 illustrate the principle that the line(s) following the *takhalluṣ* should also be given attention; the change from statement to apostrophe announces the encomium:

30 O you who ask about resoluteness, bravery, courage, liberality and
    loyalty:
31 All those qualities are found in Ibn Salm, and more of their like, in
    abundance.

Here again there is a juxtaposition of values: bravery and firmness of resolve on the one hand, liberality and, most important (as reflected by its position as rhyme-word), loyalty. This passage concludes with a line which links it to its opening:

38 A magnanimous man with one hand which rains gifts, while the other
    is poison to his enemies.

The traditional coupling of generosity to friends and ruthlessness towards enemies is a standard *topos* of panegyric; but the parallelism between *Mālikiyyun/aryaḥiyyun*, which frame the passage, again suggest the contrast between the old tribal values and the new sense given to the virtues of generosity and loyalty by Islam. Thus not only is the transition to the panegyric accomplished in a way which links the *takhalluṣ* line semantically and formally to what precedes and follows, but within this passage other transitions skillfully take up and reiterate the alternation between praise of ʿUqba's prowess in war and of his magnanimity, paving the way for the specific topic of his personal generosity to the poet and for the story of the slave.

Among Ibn Ṭabāṭabā's examples of excellent transitions are two from *qaṣīda*s of particular interest for their linkage of *nasīb* and *madīḥ*. The first is ʿAlī ibn al-Jahm's (d. 249/863) elegy on the caliph al-Mutawakkil, murdered by his Turkish *ghulām*s in 247/861 (n.d.: 56–4). Ibn Ṭabāṭabā cites five lines from the *nasīb*: 1–2, 9, and 14–15 (1956: 117), and it is clear that his commentary is based on an understanding of both the content and the structure of the whole poem. The *nasīb* consists of an extended metaphor: a raincloud passes over Iraq by night, bringing it fertility, but leaves in its wake the cold winter wind.

1 A night-travelling raincloud, making towards a land to bestow its
   generosity upon it, with which I occupied my sleepless eyes.
2 Brought to us by the east wind, as though it were a young maiden
   pushed along by an old crone.

The passage continues with an amplification of the image of the wind pushing the cloud along gracefully, never wishing to separate from it, like a tender

mother (3–4); mention of the effects of its brilliant lightning and thunder (5–6) leads to a depiction of its dispensation of abundant rain over Iraq (line 9 is the third cited by Ibn Ṭabāṭabā):

7 And when she saw the good, moist earth clinging to what fell from her,
    and the hills asking her for more,
8 And (saw) that the regions of Iraq were in great need of her, she
    remained in Iraq, giving to it generously,
9 Until Baghdad gushed with endlessly rising valley waters.

    This transition, further marked by the repetition of the initial rhyme-word *tajūduhā* (1a) in line 8, ushers in the second stage of the *nasīb*, which tells of the cloud's passage over Iraq and its beneficent effects on the landscape. Lines 14–15 (the fourth and fifth cited by Ibn Ṭabāṭabā) describe the cloud's departure and effect the transition to the *rithāʾ*:

14 And when she had discharged what was due to Iraq and its people,
    there came to her the north wind's messenger,
15 And she passed away in the twinkling of an eye, racing, as though
    ʿUbayd Allāh's numerous troops had fled,
16 And left the Commander of the Faithful struck down, martyred – and
    the best of kings are their martyrs.[19]

The remainder of the *qaṣīda* attacks the treacherous slave troops who murdered the caliph, as well as those who failed to assist or avenge him (chief among them ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Yaḥyā ibn Khāqān), and calls for vengeance on the traitors.

    The *nasīb* employs the conventional analogy between the ruler's life-giving powers and the rain which brings fertility and new life to the parched lands; al-Mutawakkil's prosperous rule is compared to the spring raincloud (whose lightning and thunder suggest his ruthlessness towards his enemies) which passes over Iraq, only to be succeeded by the cold and killing winds of winter, which leave the caliph martyred and his domains in disorder. Much the same analogy is the basis for the *nasīb* of a second *qaṣīda* whose transitional lines (11–12, 22) are cited by Ibn Ṭabāṭabā, a panegyric by Abū Tammām to the caliph al-Muʿtaṣim (218–27/833–42) which begins with a description of spring (1951, 2: 191–7; Ibn Ṭabāṭabā 1956: 118; see also Ashtiany 1993, 1994).[20]

1 Soft and tender now are the borders of Time's garment, fluttering softly,
    as the earth breaks into refracted gems.
2 Summer's vanguard has alighted, worthy of praise, though winter's
    hand, now severed, does not go unthanked.
3 For without that which winter's hand had planted, dry fruitless trees
    were all that summer would find. . . .
8 O spring of ours! in all these nineteen years, indeed, by God, you are
    the most glorious spring!

9 The days would not be reft of all their splendour did gardens and their beauty live forever.

10 Do you not see, when things change they grow ugly; yet earth is lovely when it's tilled for planting.

11 Companions twain, look closely: you will see the earth's face is now beautifully adorned:

12 You'll see a sun-lit day, made whiter still by flowers on the hillsides, fair as moonlight:

13 A world which gives men sustenance: but when spring comes, it then becomes a spectacle.

Lines 11–12 (the first cited by Ibn Ṭabāṭabā) form the transition between the first passage, which concludes with the praise of spring and of the garden's everlasting beauty, and the second, which continues the description of the prosperity brought by spring. The lines apostrophizing the "companions" (modifying the convention in which the poet asks his travelling companions to weep with him over the ruins of the beloved's abode) are linked to what precedes and follows by the emphasis on sight and the repetition of words associated with it: *tarā* (10), *tarayā* (11, 12); *naẓaraykumā* (11), *manẓarū* (13).

The poet amplifies his description of the effects of spring (14–20): it fills valleys and hillsides with bright flowers that gladden the heart, makes the trees green-leaved and fresh as beautiful maidens; the lowlands seem filled with red and yellow banners (an allusion to the standards of Muḍar and Yemen, the northern and southern Arabs), the flowers are like precious pearls or rich, joy-bringing saffron.

21 The work of him without the marvels of whose grace no yellow of ripening grain would follow after green.

22 A temperament showers down from spring like that of the Imām, whose guidance owns great bounty.

23 On earth, from the Imām's justice and largesse, and from the fresh plants, (spring forth) radiant lamps.

24 The gardens will be forgotten; but what his deeds have forged will ever, despite the passage of (many) nights, be remembered.

These lines (Ibn Ṭabāṭabā quotes line 22) form the transition to the *madīḥ*, as the prosperity brought by spring is linked directly to the caliph's virtues and right guidance; again, verbal and semantic links – the yellow flowers like banners, the golden colour of joy-bringing saffron and of the ripening harvest; the *tajnīs* in 24 between the gardens (*riyāḍ*), which will be forgotten by time, and the deeds "forged" (*yurawwiḍu*) by the caliph, which will be remembered forever – connect the passage as a whole with what precedes and follows. (Ibn al-Athīr too singles out 22–24 for special praise, calling them "one of the most elegant and excellent transitions" from description to praise; 1959, 3: 122.) The remainder of the *madīḥ* (25–32) praises the caliph for bringing order to the state,

in language which continues these semantic linkages and stresses the caliph's guiding powers and the prosperity and stability which result from his largesse:

29 He has ordered the lands, and they are now like a precious necklace,
    with justice their central jewel.

The necklace which adorns the caliph's realms recalls the brilliant gems to which the blossoming flowers of line 1 were likened: as spring has put on its ornaments, so has the flourishing state.

    The complex transitions in both these *qaṣīda*s demonstrate that the notion of transition is not restricted to that from *nasīb* to *madīḥ* but extends to those between various stages in the progress of the poem. The manner in which the relevant lines are cited by Ibn Ṭabāṭabā presupposes an awareness of their function within the poems in which they occur and their relationship to those poems in their entirety. These examples further demonstrate the attention paid by both poets and critics to the *nasīb* and to transitional lines as devices which contribute significantly to the overall meaning of the poem.

    Transitions can be manipulated in ways which tend to subvert the poem's surface meaning and suggest other, sometimes conflicting, intentions. Farrukhī's Ramaḍān *qaṣīda* to Amīr Muḥammad (whose opening was discussed in the preceding section) provides an example; in it, delaying of the *takhalluṣ* (or *gurīzgāh*) proper makes possible the construction of the lengthy and complex *nasīb* which establishes the larger context of the poem. The first of these false transitions, which arouse expectations of the panegyric only to disappoint them, comes at line 9:

9 A gathering must be prepared, adorned like the garden of Paradise,
    with a minstrel who knows the praises of the king of kings by heart.

It is followed by a description of the feast and of the beautiful *sāqī* who serves the wine, thus linking the preceding lines (7–8), which announced Ramaḍān's departure and the arrival of ʿĪd al-Fiṭr, with those which follow, and which conclude with the poet's self-apostrophe:

14 I have all this, and more than this, through the glory of a prince who is
    foremost among kings in virtue and excellence.

    This, even more than the preceding, arouses the expectation of transition to the panegyric; but while, like a proper *takhalluṣ*, it marks a break between the preceding segment and what follows, what follows is unexpected: the poet's self-exhortation to compose a panegyric and repay the ruler's favor, and his apology for digressing:

16 I, the beloved, wine, the lute, and the street of song: it is in the street
    of song that my donkey has gone astray.

This is followed by yet another false transition in which the poet appears to sum up what has gone before, but is in reality preparing for the final and most important section of the *nasīb*:

18 Sweet to the ear is poetry which contains praise of the prince with the
       description of a moonlike face.

Since the poet has already described the beauty of the *sāqī*, the "moonlike face"
might well be taken as an allusion backwards; but in fact it is a further delaying
tactic which paves the way for the *ghazal*, set off from the rest of the *nasīb* by the
apostrophe to the *muṭrib* (19) and the *tajdīd-i maṭlaʿ*.

   The *takhalluṣ* proper does not occur until line 25, after the love plaint and
triggered by the turn to a supposed interlocutor:

25 What are you saying (when you ask) how can I, heart-reft, utter the
       praises of the just ruler, in such a state?
26 Mīr Abū Aḥmad, son of Maḥmūd, that hunting lion; Mīr Abū Aḥmad,
       son of Maḥmūd, that sugared milk.

The repetition of the prince's name, with epithets suggesting bravery and virtue,
in some wise appears to compensate for the failure to move to the panegyric
earlier; it also provides a heavy overstatement which adds to the many ironies
already perceivable in the *nasīb*, and which will become even more evident in
the panegyric. The next line recapitulates the motifs of the "false transition" of
line 14 –

27 He who is greater than all kings in learning and refinement; he who is
       greater than all princes in virtue and excellence –

to the point of repeating its rhyme (*ba-faẓl u ba-hunar*), stressing that Amīr
Muḥammad is to be praised for his learning and virtue, not his military prowess
(which was fairly negligible) nor even, to any great extent, that generosity
which was extolled in the *nasīb*. Indeed, the panegyric is as noteworthy for what
it omits as for what it includes, and the topics selected by Farrukhī for emphasis
– Muḥammad's resemblance to his late father, his appearance as he reviews his
court and troops on the day of the feast – contribute further to its ironies. All of
Farrukhī's transitions – both false and real – are entirely proper, well
constructed, providing firm links with what precedes and follows; but they
function not only formally, to facilitate movement from one segment of the
qaṣīda to another, but thematically as well.

   Farrukhī's procedure of anticipating and delaying the transition to the *madīḥ*
falls into the category of *istiṭrād*, specifically of the type which Ibn Rashīq terms
ilmām, which "may occur when in the middle of the *nasīb* part of the panegyric
is inserted, devoted to the person whom the poet intends to honour in his
qaṣīda; after which he returns to the *nasīb* and only then goes back to the
panegyric" (Ibn Rashīq 1972, 1: 238–9; van Gelder 1982a: 119).[21] *Istiṭrād* is
often used to achieve an aim indirectly, as Abū Tammām explained:

   Al-Buḥturī relates that Abū Tammām recited to him a short poem of four
   lines describing a horse and ending as follows:

And if you had seen it (sc. the horse) in its zeal, while the pebbles were
    split between its hoofs, in groups of two and single,
You would feel sure – if it had not been proven already – that its hoof
    consists of rock from Tadmur or of the face of ʿUthmān.

Then Abū Tammām asked: 'What kind of poetry is this?' and al-Buḥturī
continues:

    I said: I do not know. He said: This is *al-mustaṭrad* (or he said:
al-istiṭrād). I said: And what does that mean? He said: It looks as if it wants
to describe the horse, while (in fact) it intends to deride ʿUthmān.
(Quoted by van Gelder 1982a: 35)[22]

The type employed by Farrukhī is also seen in these lines from a *qaṣīda* by
al-Buḥturī (d. 284/897) addressed to Yūsuf ibn Muḥammad al-Thaghrī, quoted
by Ibn Ṭabāṭabā among his examples of "excellent transitions":

3 O, former dwelling of theirs in Dārat Juljul! May rain drench you, with
     showers in the evening and morning!
4 May it come to you resembling Yūsuf ibn Muḥammad – may his (or its,
     sc. the rain's) sweet odour quench you and its (his) downpour be
     generous to you! (van Gelder 1982a: 75; Ibn Ṭabāṭabā 1956: 116)

As van Gelder points out,

These lines, taken by themselves, seem to form a perfectly normal *khurūj*,
as indeed they were to Ibn Ṭabāṭabā, al-Ḥātimī, and al-ʿAskarī. However,
[they] . . . are followed by six more lines of the *aṭlāl* and *nasīb* theme; only
in the eleventh line the poet turns again to the *mamdūḥ* and this time the
madīḥ is sustained. Therefore al-Āmidī's remark: 'this is called *istiṭrād*', is
to the point. (1982a: 75; see al-Āmidī 1961, 1: 502)

Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī describes

another type of *istiṭrād*, [which] is to produce a statement (*kalām*) which
makes one think he is beginning with *zuhd*, whereas he intends something
else, as in the poet's verses . . . .

   'You, who are preoccupied with the remains (of abandoned dwelling-
     places), desist, for the Time is near!
   Connect your evening drink with your morning drink and give up
     these boring descriptions!' (van Gelder 1982a: 95; al-ʿAskarī 1986:
     400)

Van Gelder comments, "This type of *istiṭrād* was ignored by later critics" (ibid.).
But not by later poets: in the *ghazal* whose opening line was quoted above
(QG374) Ḥāfiẓ states,

6 One boasts of reason, while another weaves ascetic words;
    come, let us take these arguments before a judge,

which suggests a shift (as in QG9; see Chapter 2) to homily or admonition, a suggestion encouraged by the beginning of the next line, only to be promptly negated:

7 If Eden's Paradise you seek, come with us to the tavern;
   for one day we will toss you from the foot of the vat into Kawsar's pool.

The shift is not forward, to homily, but backward, to the joyous hedonism of lines 1–4; the "judge" invoked is neither (as might be anticipated) the absent *shāh-i khūbān* (also designated *ʿālī-janāb*, "sublime presence") nor the Judge of the real (or promised) Paradise, to whose wondrous pool of Kawsar (cf. Koran 108) the wine is likened, but the tavern-keeper.

These examples should caution us against attempting to define transitions too narrowly. Again, we can posit a whole range of types: from *nasīb* to *madīḥ* (or *hijāʾ*, *fakhr*, *rithāʾ* etc.); from *maʿnā* to *maʿnā* within a larger segment; and finally, complex strategies of anticipation and delay through the use of *istiṭrād* or *ilmām*. Thus transition in general is not merely a formal device, but conveys meaning through both the linkages it provides between various parts of the poem and the shifts of focus it makes possible. It is worth looking at a final example where the handling of the *takhalluṣ* contributes significantly to the poem's overall meaning.

The Persian poet Manūchihrī (d. 432?/1040–1?) was panegyrist to Maḥmūd of Ghazna's son and eventual successor Masʿūd I. Despite his initial popularity, Masʿūd's mismanagement of affairs of state, his greed, and his promotion of court intrigues caused increasing disorder throughout his domains, culminating in his defeat by the Saljūqs at the battle of Dandānqān in 431/1040. Some months before this battle, Manūchihrī composed a panegyric *qaṣīda* for the festival of Nawrūz (the New Year) 439/1040 (1948: 30–3; see further Meisami 1990b: 39–42). The *qaṣīda* is a rhetorical *tour de force* which commemorates a non-event: Masʿūd's "victory" over the Qarakhānid chief Būritigīn, who in 438/1038 was harrassing his northern territories. In the winter of that year Masʿūd campaigned against Buritigīn, whom he pursued across the Oxus, building a bridge over the river for this purpose; the poem celebrates Būritigīn's "defeat" and the building of the bridge.

The *nasīb*, which occupies half the *qaṣīda*'s 67 lines, depicts through an extended metaphor a battle between winter and spring. Nawrūz, personified as a ruler, has journeyed forth from his kingdom. In his absence Winter invades, and replaces the sovereign's court with his own denizens: flowers, verdure, and nightingales are ousted by bare trees, snowy hillocks, and crows. Nawrūz learns of this situation from the North Wind, his spy, and determines to attack Winter; he sends the feast of Sada before him as his advance guard,[23] and bids him convey his intent to the "King of Kings" (Masʿūd).

27 "This decision to move, this intention I have made, convey with
       respect to the king of kings of all kings.

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28   "From me to the lords of all the East and West bear this message at
        once, O message-bearer.[24]
29   "But beware of saying my words to him, with your own tongue; again
        I say, beware,
30   "For his magnificence is too great for you to speak directly and openly
        to him.
31   "Rather tell my words in secret to a chamberlain, that that
        chamberlain may convey my message to the prince.
32   "Say, 'O chosen king of the seven heavens! great ruler! noble prince!
33   "'Fifty days remain until I [Nawrūz] come like a vassal to your court,
        with many tributes.'"

The *gurīzgāh* (27) is embedded within Nawrūz's speech, itself embedded within
the metaphorical action of the *nasīb* (which, like the *qaṣīda*s of ʿAlī ibn al-Jahm,
Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī discussed above, exploits, albeit ironically, the
analogy between the ruler's life-giving powers and those of spring). This structural
strategy reinforces the emphasis on indirection in 29–31, which recalls Masʿūd's
notorious unwillingness to listen to advice, especially that which he might find
displeasing (in this case, not to conduct the campaign in question, which proved
disastrous). This is followed by the text of Nawrūz's message, in which he describes
the "many tributes" he will bring the ruler, and which dwells in particular on
topics related to the pleasures of the Nawrūz festival and to world rule (32–42).

This list of promises, expressed in the optative, takes the place of the
customary encomium; Masʿūd's actual achievements – his building of the bridge
and his "defeat" of Būritigīn – are not mentioned until line 43, and there is no
clear transition between the voice of Nawrūz and that of the panegyrist. Only at
the end of this lengthy segment, as he refers to "our ruler", does the poet speak
in his own voice:

62   If our ruler did not kill (him, i.e. Būritigīn), that is because no prince
        ever committed such a shameful act as killing a snake.

(Būritigīn was compared to a viper in the preceding verse.) With these Chinese
boxes of indirect discourse enclosed one within another (Nawrūz tells Sada
what to tell the chamberlain to say to the king), all contained within the
extended metaphor of the *nasīb* (the action of which remains unresolved:
Nawrūz has not yet attacked Winter, but only declares his intent to do so), the
poet makes it virtually impossible to say where Nawrūz's message ends and the
madīḥ itself begins, especially since the reference to the bridge-building employs
the same pattern:

51   You crossed the Jayhun; may you cross the Sayhun; you traversed that
        side; may you traverse this side.

The second half of the poem (34–67) resembles an extended *duʿā* in which is
embedded a brief encomium from which the poet effectively distances himself.

Thus the *takhalluṣ*, rather than providing a clear shift of focus, obscures that focus; it embodies the sort of "sliding away ... when reality threatens to get too close" that Gordon Williams notes as "a feature of [the] political poems" of Horace (1980: 27) – as does the delayed *takhalluṣ* in Farrukhī's Ramaḍān *qaṣīda* to Amīr Muḥammad.

Other transitional strategies might be considered here, such as the use of "abrupt" transitions for ironic effect, as in al-Buḥturī's

> 5   Leave off passion, or die of your affliction; for the obsessed lover always
>   dies of his affliction! (1963, 1: 23);

the simple announcement of transition, as in Ibn Yamīn's

> 10   Now that you have given *ghazal* its due, Ibn-i Yamīn, by describing the
>   mole, the paint, and the curling locks of sweethearts,
> 11   Gird your pen for service and let loose its tongue, after your *ghazal*, in
>   singing the ruler's praise (1966: 138);

the use of *sententiae*, proverbs, quotations, etc., and yet other devices. Nor have we discussed the more technical aspects of transition: the use of cadencing to slow the movement of a section (also applicable to closure; see Hamori 1992: 19–34), the use of transitional markers such as the *wāw-rubba* construction (cf. Hamori 1969: 13–15), verbs in the perfect tense, and so on. Since these are relevant not merely to transitions but to the division of the poem into segments, they will be considered in Chapter 4. Now, however, we shall turn to how poems end.

Endings

Critics both East and West seem to have paid less attention to the endings of poems than to their beginnings and, in Arabo-Persian, to transitions, and problems of closure are sparsely dealt with. Of course, all poems come to an end; but in the case of Arabic and Persian, how they do so has often been considered problematic.

While early Arab critics sometimes commented on good or bad endings, the first clear statement on the subject seems to be al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī's observation that "a skilful poet takes pains to make the opening, the transition and after these the end, beautiful; for these are the places that attract the attention of the listeners and should induce them to listen" (van Gelder 1982a: 78; al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī 1966: 48). Van Gelder attributes this relative lack of interest in endings on the part of earlier critics to the fact that "the 'adding' style of early, oral poetry ... remained characteristic of Classical Arabic poetry throughout the ages" (1982a: 79), citing von Grunebaum's view that "the Arabic poem was essentially an open form in the purely mechanical sense that its conclusion or end, as that of its subordinate parts, was not necessarily inherent in its purport" (von Grunebaum 1971: 346). Ibn Rashīq commented on the brusque endings of

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some pre-Islamic poems, which leave them seemingly "unfinished" (1972, 1: 240). That he should consider them "unfinished" suggests an aesthetic shift; and the increased interest in endings from the fourth/tenth century onwards, like that in transitions, may well reflect a perceived contrast between the practice of the Ancients and that of the Moderns.

Commenting on von Grunebaum's theory of the "open-ended" poem,[25] van Gelder observes,

> There are, of course, many exceptions in the form of short poems that have a clear 'point', a punch line. Disregarding these (as did the critics) we find that, among the several types of *qaṣīda*, those containing a 'message' are most likely to have some characteristic endings in common: one can expect a peroration consisting of a summary, a dedication, a final request, a blessing or curse, a maxim. But the possible endings were still far more diverse than the possible ways of beginning the poem. Consequently, the ending failed to draw much attention and even after the 10th century it was not included in a number of works on poetry and *badīʿ* in which *ibtidāʾ* and *takhalluṣ* each found a place. (1982a: 79)[26]

But while endings may not have received much attention from the critics (who often made statements similar to that of al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī – statements which should not be regarded as merely perfunctory, since calling attention to the three major "points of beautification" within the poem suggests that there is also a relationship between these points), they received a good deal of attention from the poets, and not only in short poems with a "punch line", but in long *qaṣīda*s as well.

In her study of poetic closure Barbara Herrnstein Smith observes that "the sense of closure is a function of the perception of structure" (1968: 4). While closure is often perceived as the final event in a highly organized sequence of events, "a confirmation of expectations that have been established by the structure of the sequence," it "need not, however, be temporal," but may "refer to a quality of visually perceived forms, spatial structures which exhibit relatively clear, coherent, and continuous shape" (ibid.: 2). What is important is the audience's perception of the shape of the poem, their feeling that it is "complete, coherent, and stable," a perception which may be produced in a variety of ways. (Cf. also C. Segre's comments on literary perception referred to in Chapter 1, n. 21.)

Smith argues that in poems with paratactic structure (which is frequent in both Arabic and Persian lyric) the "generating principle that produces [such a] structure cannot in itself determine a concluding point;" consequently, "special terminal features are needed if the conclusion is not to appear arbitrary" (ibid.: 100, 102). Such features seem to include what van Gelder has listed as the "characteristic endings" one might expect to find in a *qaṣīda* containing a "message": "a peroration consisting of a summary, a dedication, a final request, a blessing or curse, a maxim" (1982a: 79; he derives these categories principally

from Jacobi 1971: 65–100, and especially 79, and Scheindlin 1974: 110–32); and it is indeed such endings that are most often praised by the rhetoricians. Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī states, "We rarely find an eloquent (poet) who does not end his discourse on an excellent [*badīʿ*] *maʿnā*, or (with) a beautiful, elegant phrase." "The end of your *qaṣīda* should be its finest *bayt*, and that most directly pertaining to the *maʿnā* you intended in composing it [the *qaṣīda*]," he states, citing the concluding line of a *qaṣīda* by al-Zibaʿrī "in which he apologizes to the Prophet and seeks his sympathy:"

> Choose virtue over sins of the past, and accept the plea of a penitent
>   begging for hospitality.

In this line the poet "made himself (as) one who begs for hospitality, and it is the right of such a one to be protected; and he mentioned his plea and his repentance for what had gone before, and made forgiveness under these circumstances a virtue; so he combined in this *bayt* all that was required of him in seeking pardon" (1986: 443). Other "excellent conclusions" include several with sententious or proverbial statements or striking comparisons (ibid.: 445–51; Abū Hilāl's discussion of *maqāṭiʿ*, subsumed under *faṣl wa-waṣl*, "separation and joining", applies to techniques for ending single lines as well as poems or sections of poems).

Ibn Rashīq observes, "The conclusion is the base [*qāʿida*] of the *qaṣīda*, the last thing which remains in the ears (of the hearers), and the way in which it becomes firm and unsusceptible of addition, as nothing that follows could be better. If the beginning of a poem is its key, the end must be its lock" (1972, 1: 239). Al-Mutanabbī, he says, is known for the excellence of his endings; by contrast, many of the "Arabs" did not conclude their poems, but simply stopped, "while the soul was still attached to them and greatly desirous of (more), so that the discourse remains truncated [*mabtūr*]." He cites as an example the end of Imruʾ al-Qays's *Muʿallaqa*: "He did not make this the base (of his poem) as did the other writers of *muʿallaqāt*, although this is the best of them." Ibn Rashīq also criticizes poets who conclude the *qaṣīda* with a *duʿāʾ*, "except in (poems written) for kings, for they desire this" (ibid., 1: 240–1; cf. van Gelder 1982a: 120–1).

In his study of the poetry of al-Muʿtamid ibn ʿAbbād (d. 488/1095), R. Scheindlin noted that poet's "decided preference for . . . two types of conceptual resolution, namely universal statements, whether formulated as aphorisms or as rhetorical questions, and apostrophe of all types; wishes, commands, and optative clauses" (1974: 113). Examples include a poem which ends with a *taḍmīn*: the opening hemistich of Abū Tammām's *qaṣīda* on the conquest of Amorium:

> So here is a selection [or: an excerpt] which you may envy: "The sword
>   gives truer news than books." (ibid.: 115)

The poem in question is a response to one Ibn Zanjarī, who "had visited al-Muʿtamid in Aghmāṭ [where he was imprisoned following his exile], and,

before taking his leave, had asked for a poem by way of provision for his journey. . . . [He] thus responds to Ibn Zanjarī's request by offering not a poem of his own, but a poem by Abū Tammām embodying a truth which his imprisonment had taught him to feel keenly, namely, that poetry is a poor substitute for power." The response is satisfactory "because it suggests the whole poem from which it is taken," and contains an analogy with al-Muʿtamid's own situation, namely, "the hopeful but inaccurate predictions of his own astrologers in connection with the siege of Seville" (ibid.: 114–15). One cannot help feeling a certain irony in al-Muʿtamid's choice; for, in direct contrast to the circumstances surrounding Abū Tammām's poem, the astrologers had predicted victory for him, a prediction similarly invalidated (but in the reverse sense) by the swords of the enemy.

Through the use of apostrophe the poet, "by bringing the auditor into the poem at its end … evokes a situation, whether real or imaginary, which is the occasion for the poem as a whole" (ibid.: 119, *à propos* of a *marthiya* in which the poet compares himself to a bird lamenting her lost companion). In brief love poems, it functions to restore attention to the beloved following the description of the lover's suffering (ibid.: 119–20; cf. the poem of al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf quoted in Chapter 2); while al-Muʿtamid's panegyric poems, addressed to his father, conclude with a benediction or prayer (ibid.: 123). Scheindlin concludes that "although none of the patterns which are typical of conclusions is found exclusively in conclusions," there appears to be "a predilection for certain forms at the conclusion of the poem, and an avoidance of certain [unspecified] other forms," which "allows us to believe that at least al-Muʿtamid, if not other poets as well, did try to distinguish the last verse or verses of the poem in some way" (ibid.: 132).

Such examples suggest that the "special terminal features" of which Smith speaks (some of which we shall examine further below) may perhaps not be as arbitrary as they seem, but are indeed planned, and selected because they bear a close (though not necessarily temporal) relationship to the poem as a whole (as well as to its occasion and purpose). Smith finds further that there exists "[a] relation between the sense of closure in poetry and something we might call 'the sense of truth'" (1968: 152); and this is certainly the effect of al-Muʿtamid's line. Closure can of course be achieved, or at least enhanced, by formal devices such as those described by Scheindlin: parallelism of members, rhythmical effects creating a "slowing pattern" which bring the poem to its end, *enjambement*, ring composition and so on (see 1974: 125–32; compare Smith 1968: 158–71; see also Hamori 1992: 1–5; Williams 1980: 98–102). While such devices do not seem to have received much comment from the rhetoricians (with the partial exception of Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī; see 1981: 282–6), they are abundant in poetic practice, and will be discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters; as they are closely allied to the overall structure of the poem, they can only with difficulty be extracted from their larger context, at the cost of losing their effect.

Before turning to such strategies as sentential endings, the use of quotations, proverbs or aphorisms, and other such methods which were remarked upon by the rhetoricians (and which often relate not merely to concluding lines but to the entire final segment of a poem), it may be useful to consider some which would seem to constitute "special features" which bring closure to an otherwise arbitrary sequence, particularly in connection with the view that Arabic (and to a lesser extent Persian) poems are "open-ended" in either a structural or a semiotic sense. One of these, states Smith, is to conclude with a statement which produces an impression of cessation, rest, stability or stasis (1968: 33–7). This brief love-poem by al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf (1986: 282) provides an instance.

1 The lover is obliged to stand between union and separation.
2 Sometimes he reproaches, thereby arousing his hidden illness.
3 His anxiety leads to suspicion; his suspicion leads to wrongdoing,
4 Until, when his passion burns him, he goes back to his love regardless.

The movement between the poles of the lover's experience is maintained throughout the poem; the final line implies not only cessation and stasis, through the temporal phrase *ḥattā idhā mā maḍḍahu shawquhu*, "Until, when his passion burns him," but circularity, through the verb *rājaʿa*, which means not only to return in a literal sense, but to return in one's thoughts, to the beloved, and thus to the state of suspension announced in the opening line.

Another poem by al-ʿAbbās (ibid.: 220) begins,

1 A night-travelling phantom visited you in the garden; it alit in the form of Fawz, while my soul yearned.
2 By my father! what a visitor it was, that visited us, which remained my companion; and what an excellent companion![27]

After describing his suffering in love the poet concludes by reaffirming his devotion:

8 My heart will never be guided to any but you: as if the road were barred before it!

The *tajnīs* between *ṭarūq*, "night-travelling" (1a), and the final rhyme *ṭarīq*, "road", reinforces the sense of closure (particularly through its emphatic sound); there is, moreover, an echo of the sharp *ṭ-q* combination – fate knocking at the door? – in the rhyme-words of lines 3 (*mā lā uṭīq*, "what I cannot bear") and 5 (*wa-bukāʾī ṭalīq*, "my tears fall freely"), enhanced by the fact that the rhymes are stopped, not vowelled and open. An analogy is established between the night-travelling phantom and the poet, who journeys on the path of love and will never be guided to any but his beloved.

Statements involving a cessation of activity, a return to stasis, loss, sleep, death, and so on, which Smith terms "closural allusions",[28] are frequent in lyrics celebrating love or wine and describing the state of the lover or the pleasures of the drinking party, where closure involves some type of terminal motif. Abū

Nuwās concludes a *khamriyya* describing a visit to the tavern, the wine, and the *sāqī* thus (1958, 3: 157):

8 So I kept on drinking (the wine), and pouring for my companions,
   until we could no longer stand,
9 And plying (the *sāqī*) with wine, and delighting in his face, bestowing
   on him the affection of a helpful friend.

Termination is conveyed by the motif of the drinkers succumbing to the effects of the wine; on the other hand, a sense of stasis is produced by the poet's continued actions (*mā ziltu*, "I did not cease, I kept on [doing]"), especially in his attentiveness to the youth who holds his affection. Closure and timelessness are in balance.

A longer poem by Abū Nuwās, which describes the pleasures of a New Year's feast (ibid., 3: 145–6), begins,

1 May God cause abundant rain to fall upon a gazelle who shows
   flirtatiousness in his walk, swaying gracefully like the willow bough
   with his slender waist.

After describing the boy's beauty and his own suffering, the poet repeats the opening formula [*saqā llāhu*] as he moves to another topic:

8 May God cause abundant rain to fall upon days when we were not
   parted, and love's aloes-tree trembled with fresh leaves;
9 When the New Year came early to us in the shadows of dusk, bringing
   flowers on the branches like brilliant stars.

The description of spring leads to that of the drinking party, where wine is accompanied by the sweet strains of music which reveal lovers' secrets, the singing girl voices a plaintive love-song, and the boon-companions rejoice or weep drunkenly by turns.

22 And I lent them a hand, knowing what passion brings, that love's
    madness is kindled by the noble man.
23 May God cause abundant rain to fall upon days which passed when
    they were fresh; would that they would return and remain till
    Resurrection!

While closure is produced by the sense of loss aroused by the evocation of past happiness, we can see that the poem has been building towards this conclusion through the reiteration of the formulaic *saqā llāhu/suqyan li . . .* (23), its phrasing subtly changed in the final line. Thus while it first appears to refer to the present time, and second to link present separation with past union (8), it is with the final line only that we realize that all that is being described is in the past, of which the entire poem is a nostalgic evocation.

Motifs of death and continuity are combined to somewhat paradoxical effect in this poem by al-ʿAbbās (1986: 20):

1 I desired union with you, but remained cut off from hope.
2 You it is who have charged my eyes with sleeplessness and with weeping.
3 If passion could be affected by my command or decree,
4 I would summon it and collect it from every land or sky,
5 And divide it between myself and my soul's love equally.
6 Then we'd live out our lives in unmixed love and felicity,
7 Until, when we die together – and all things are destined to perish –
8 Passion would die after us – or live on among faithful lovers.

The second *miṣrāʿ* of line 7, with its sentential statement (we may recall Bashshār's use of the *sententia*), sets up the expectation of the first part of the conclusion ("passion would die after us"); but this is then qualified by the second ("or would live on…"), promising an alternative ending, an after-life, so to speak. Far from marring the sense of closure, however, the notion of love's living on after the lovers themselves are dead (but only among those who are themselves faithful lovers) presents a future in which the two particular lovers will not only be revived in the true love of others, but provide an example for them through memory, thus implying both stability and continuity with respect to their personal, mortal experience of love.

The motif of death also closes a longer poem by al-ʿAbbās (ibid.: 21–4), a 44-line complaint which begins as a letter to the poet's beloved, Fawz, in which he tells of their past happiness and present separation (1–20). He then turns to address other suffering lovers, urging them to intercede on his behalf with the people of Yathrib (Medina), where Fawz now resides. Movement towards closure is signalled by a series of imperatives addressed to these "friends" which is also reminiscent of Bashshār:

36 Tell her [Fawz's confidante] my words to Fawz: "Have sympathy for a body stripped of its soul."
37 Take for me from her a potion in a glass vial; for she is, did you know it, my physician.
38 Then set off; and should you find in me a last breath pulsing faintly in the region of my breast,
39 Sprinkle (that potion) upon my face that I may recover from my affliction; and the Lord of the Throne will give you the best of rewards.
40 And if my people ask, "What have you brought?" – for every intelligent person can give a good explanation –
41 Tell them, "We have brought him water from Zamzam in a bucket to cure him of an illness."
42 But should you come when there has intervened between you and me a hot day bearing death,
43 And I have gone from this world to the depths of a pit, sworn to a covering grave-slab and a sand dune,

44 Scatter some of that water over my grave, and mourn for one slain by a
      buxom maiden, not in wars.

The poet anticipates martyrdom, not on the field of battle but on that of love
(like the wine-poet who regards falling dead drunk a more fitting end – indeed,
a holy sacrifice – than death in battle), unless perhaps the beloved's "potion" –
her saliva, whose likening (should an explanation be required) to the holy water
of Zamzam further strengthens the "religion of love" motif – reaches him in
time, before his last gasp. The final line recalls the classical epitaph in which
a passer-by is urged to pray over the grave or offer an appropriate dedication to
the deceased. The motif seems to have originated in wine poetry; further
examples will be discussed below.

An obvious way of concluding a poem "is simply to announce that one is
doing so" (Smith 1968: 63). A poet may state that his poem is finished; or he
may bid himself cease speaking, often invoking the inexpressibility *topos*
popular in panegyrics (e.g. "your deeds defy description") and in love poems.
Thus Ḥāfiẓ bids the *sāqī* pour the wine so that he may forget the pains of love
(*P*48; discussed in Chapter 6 below):

7 Love's words are not those which come (easily) to the tongue;
    sāqī, bring wine, and cut short all this talk.
8 Ḥāfiẓ's tears have thrown wisdom and patience into the sea.
    What could he do? he could not hide the burning of love's grief.

The inexpressibility *topos* combined with an injunction to silence is especially
popular among mystical poets, reinforcing as it does the ineffability of the
mystical experience. A *ghazal* by ʿIrāqī (d. 688/1289) recounts the classic
encounter between the pious hypocrite and the *pīr*, the mystical guide, drunk on
the wine of love – an encounter which invariably results in the ascetic's
conversion. It begins with the speaker's visit to the (mystical) tavern, moves on
to the *pīr*'s advice to him to abandon hypocrisy and follow the path of love, and
concludes,

10 "If love's *sāqī* should give you, from the vat of anguish,
      some dregs, don't ask for the first fermenting!
11 "Leave everything to him, and be content;
      even if he should give you poison, drink it."
12 ʿIrāqī, since this cannot be made right
      by all this talk, be silent! (1959: 218)

The *pīr*'s discourse has its own closure in his final admonition (10–11); while
the concluding line, with its imperative *khāmūsh*, "Be silent!", expresses the
speaker's perplexity at this advice.

This device is a favorite of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 672/1273), who avoids self-
naming in his *ghazals*, which he most often concludes with the name of his
master and inspiration, Shams-i Tabrīzī, and/or with an exhortation to silence.

This latter is used so frequently that Rūmī has sometimes been credited with adapting "Khāmūsh" as his *takhalluṣ* (cf. Schimmel 1982: 97); but it is, rather, both a closural device and a substitution for self-naming. An example is the following conclusion to a mystical *ghazal* (n.d., 1: 257, no. 648):

11   Be still! for your words are like the Nile; they flow over the Egyptians
       like blood, and support the Chosen People.
12   Be still! for your words are ripened figs; but not every bird in the sky is
       deserving of figs.

(The allusion in the penultimate line is to the plague of blood which was visited on the Egyptians but spared the Israelites; cf. Koran 7: 131–137.)

A poem often ends with greetings to its addressee, as in Bashshār's *qaṣīda* to ʿUqba ibn Salm:

54   Then peace be upon ʿUqba, (whether) dwelling at home or advancing
       under the shadow of the banner.

The greeting provides a sense of closure by summing up the preceding praise of ʿUqba's generosity and hospitality, bestowed when he is "at home", and his prowess in war. It is also semantically linked with the root *s-l-m*, present in ʿUqba's patronymic Salm, plays on which root are repeated throughout the poem (see further Chapter 7 below). Finally, it produces an impression of circularity, as the poem began with the apostrophe to the travelling companions to give greetings to the poet's beloved Umm al-ʿAlāʾ (see further Meisami 1985c: 48, 50–1).

Conveying greetings provides a natural closure for poems in the form of letters, popular in the Abbasid period, and discussed in more detail in Chapter 6. The form's popularity ensures that it can be referred to allusively, as in this brief poem by al-ʿAbbās (1986: 46).

1   I was – when I knew you not – in a state of rapture, among gardens and
      sweet waters.
2   You drew me forth from them, and gave me in exchange a rainless
      cloud, falsely promising.
3   Until, having caused me to thirst, you said to me, "Before you, O
      thirsting man, is the shimmering mirage."
4   Had I known then what I know now of you, I would not have suffered
      this torment,
5   To the point that, when I write complaining of passion, you do not
      even grant a reply.
6   If you will not respond with what I desire, then inform me (at least) of
      the arrival of my letter.

This is one of al-ʿAbbās's more carefully structured poems; the first segment (1–4) centers on the images of water, gardens, the thirsting man and the false promise of rain, linking the contrasting motifs of suffering and hoped-for relief

by the rhyme-words *ʿidhāb/ʿadhāb*, "sweet (waters)"/"suffering", which frame this first section. The concluding lines (5–6) might, as in other poems, have been amplified to dwell on the lover's complaint; instead, the complaint is cut off (echoing the beloved's own silence) as the poet concludes with the somewhat lame entreaty (lame because desperate: nothing he says has any effect on this "mirage" of a woman), "At least inform me of the receipt of the letter." The letter's arrival (*wuṣūl*), acknowledged, seems in some small way to compensate for the union (*waṣl*) desired but not attained.

Another effective closural strategy is to conclude with a reference to the poem that has just been uttered, in a manner different from the example by Ḥāfiẓ seen above. Sanāʾī begins a *ghazal* containing advice to a lover (1962: 878–9) with the warning,

1 Do not become a lover, if you can,
   that you may not be worn out by love's grief.

The final line recapitulates this warning, at the same time identifying the poem's genre as homiletic:

9 This is the advice of Sanāʾī:
   Do not become a lover, if you can.

The body of the *ghazal* has dealt with the pains of love and the cruelty of the beloved; a variant of the final line reads, "Wretched Sanāʾī did not say himself: Do not become a lover, if you can," which adds an ironic (and possibly more authentic) twist: the lover who cannot take his own advice is in a poor position to give it.

This technique is related to the popular practice of ending the poem with a refrain or a quotation (*taḍmīn*), either for explicitly sentential purposes, as in the example by al-Muʿtamid quoted above, or for ironic effect. Abū Nuwās was well known for his use of *taḍmīn* as a device for closure (see e.g. Ibn al-Athīr 1959, 2: 345; Jones 1991: 64 counts 36 examples); as Hamori notes, "The *taḍmīn* used as a coda may be a quote from some other poet's work, or else it may come from another poem by Abū Nuwās himself," and is often put into the mouth of a singer at the drinking-party.

> Such endings, in which a character within the poem speaks or sings a few words of another poem, make for involution, much as a play within a play. It is as if the poem went into a spiral, going deeper into poetry and its separate world. The involution is perhaps most striking when the concluding *taḍmīn* contradicts the topos of the beginning, in poems which start off by mocking or rejecting the *aṭlāl* theme and yet finish with a snatch of a song about deserted encampments. (Hamori 1969: 25)

I do not wholly agree with this, first, because not that many poems which begin by rejecting the *aṭlāl* end by going back to them (more customary endings are either a contrastive statement – "this is what I prefer to the *aṭlāl*" – or the

description of the climax of a night of debauchery), and second because it seems to me that Abū Nuwās's purpose is rather different in poems which do have these features. The *khamriyyāt* do, typically, contain "plays within plays": descriptions of, and dialogues with, the companions, the tavern-keeper, the object of Abū Nuwās's affections (for the night, at least), and so on, features which were, again, remarked upon by the critics, and which give a vividness, a credibility (which should not be mistaken for mere "realism") to the scenes described. A brief example may be provided by the poem (1958, 3: 135–7) beginning,

1   Leave the abodes to him who weeps over them, and banish headache
       with wine,

which after the customary passages on the wine itself (a red wine which turns night to day; a young girl who has experienced nothing but the sun's heat) and the *sāqī* (whose cheeks blush [wine-] red), concludes with the singer, whose voice "stirs the heart with memories" as he sings,

14   "O my companion, have you seen, at al-Khabtayn, a fire belonging to
       Asmāʾ?"

This image, with its reference to the fire which would announce the presence of the beloved's tribe, is consistent with the brightness-heat-fire-red blushes of the remainder of the poem, and is wholly appropriate to it; its function here is to put the "abodes" into the never-never land of the past, in two senses: while the real abodes are irrelevant, songs about them are entirely appropriate to drinking-parties and to the befuddled state of the drinkers, who are moved to an alcohol-induced nostalgia when such songs are sung by a singer with a beautiful voice. This is less "going deeper into texts" then putting them in their proper place, or context.

A further example of putting old texts into new contexts is seen in the lengthy *khamriyya* (ibid., 3: 90–1) which begins

1   She blames me for drinking the morning cup and for joining night to
       the light of dawn.

A description of a visit to the tavern (including a parody of the conventional *raḥīl*) is broken at its centre by a verse sung by the *khammār* who produces the wine:

9   And he brought it, surging like rainwater, and began to sing an
       extemporized poem:

10   "Will you be sober – but your heart is not sober – on an evening when
       your companions intend to depart?"

The poet drinks with his friends until they are overcome by sleep. At cock-crow he approaches his companion, and describes his sexual conquest of the youth in graphic terms; as he presses to the conclusion of this exploit, the poem

concludes with another verse, this time sung by the boy, which harks back to that sung by the tavernkeeper:

19   And when I set my saddle upon him he began to sing a poem of praise:
20   "Are you not the best who rides a mount, and the most liberal in (all)
         the worlds with the depths of palms?"

The sexual puns in the final line (A-*lastum khayra man rakiba l-maṭāyā / wa-andā l-ʿālamīna buṭūna rāḥī?*) are scarcely translatable; "riding a mount" is a common metaphor for intercourse, *andā* (from *nadiyy*) signifies wetness as well as liberality, and *buṭūna rāḥī*, in the final phrase, might also be translated "the dregs of the wine."

   Both the verses quoted are from a panegyric *qaṣīda* by Jarīr addressed to the Umayyad caliph ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān; the vintner's "improvised" verse is its *maṭlaʿ* (see Jarīr 1964: 76–8).

   ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān bore Jarīr ill-will because he was not a supporter
   of their [i.e. the Marwānids'] propaganda. When he heard him recite, "Will
   you be sober – but your heart is not sober," he reviled [Jarīr] and said, "Your
   heart, you son of a whore!" and remained angry until Jarīr reached the
   words, "Are you not the best who has ridden a mount?" Then ʿAbd al-Malik
   was pleased and said, "Let whoever of you praises us praise us in such wise,
   or be silent." (ibid.: 76 n. 1. Al-Iṣbahānī gives a longer and somewhat
   different account [1955, 8: 64–8], in which ʿAbd al-Malik is said to have
   responded to the line by saying, "So we are, and so we always were.")

Often cited as one of the greatest lines of praise in Arabic (cf. al-Iṣbahānī 1955, 8: 6, 40), the line presents itself as a highly suitable *taḍmīn*, especially since it and other verses from Jarīr's poem were often sung (ibid., 8: 44). But the context, and the double or triple entendre to which it lends itself in that context, add an element of shock to its use by Abū Nuwās to conclude his poem (a shock carefully anticipated by quoting the *maṭlaʿ*), giving it the effect of a highly ironic "punch-line".

   A similar effect is produced by ʿAlī ibn al-Jahm in a poem which concludes with a *taḍmīn* from the *Muʿallaqa* of Imruʾ al-Qays, of which the poem itself is a parody (n.d.: 52–6; see further Meisami 1993a: 21–3). It begins:

 1   We alighted near the Karkh gate at the best of halting-places, among
         the beauties of al-Mufaḍḍal's singing-girls.

The rhyme-word of the opening *miṣrāʿ, manzilī*, is identical with that of the *Muʿallaqa* (*Qifā nabki min dhikrā ḥabībin wa-manzilī*, "Stop, let us weep at the memory of a beloved and a halting-place"); the metre of both poems is also identical. Other explicit allusions to the *Muʿallaqa* are seen throughout the poem, which extolls the pleasures of the house and concludes, like the previous poem by Abū Nuwās, with a description of a sexual conquest culminating in the final *taḍmīn*:

19 Stopping-places whose frequenters do not follow the rain, nor are all aspects of pleasure remote from them;

20 Stations had Imruʾ al-Qays visited them he would have refrained from mentioning al-Dakhūl and Ḥawmal.

21 Then he would have seen me bestow my love on a fawn the train of whose gown was gathered up, not flowing loose,

22 (Who), when night approached our bed, would not say, "You have galled my camel, Imruʾ al-Qays! now get off!"[29]

Both the above examples use concluding *taḍmīn* for ironic, not to say parodic, effect; in so doing they are, of course, adapting the convention whereby *taḍmīn* is used for more serious, sentential purposes (as for example by al-Muʿtamid) by invoking the authority of a famous poem. Here that authority is used to support the subversive and humorous topics of the counter-genre of *mujūn*. Such is also the case in Abū Nuwās's brief *khamriyya* which combines *taḍmīn* with epitaph in its conclusion (1958, 3: 222–3; preferring the variant *khuld*, "Paradise", to *khiḍn*, "companion", in 6b).

1 And one who reviled me, so as to bring forth an innovation (and, by my life! that is a course I cannot endure),

2 Insulting me so that I should not drink wine, for she places on him who tastes her a heavy burden of sin.

3 Such abusers have only increased my obstinacy in seeking her; for I am her friend as long as I live.

4 Shall I reject her, when God has not rejected her name, and the caliph here is her devotee?

5 She is the sun – except that the sun burns, and our wine surpasses it on every occasion.

6 Though we may not dwell in Paradise soon, our Paradise in (mortal) time is nothing but her nectar.

7 You who insult me: pour for me, and then sing for me – for I am devoted to her till I die –

8 "When I die bury me beside a vine whose roots may water my bones after my death!"

The poem was clearly composed with its ending in mind, as everything in it leads up to its conclusion (and its metre, *ṭawīl*, is the same as that of the poem which supplies the *taḍmīn*). It is designed to refute the suggestion that the poet should abandon his adherence to wine with the authority of the *taḍmīn*'s author, the Christian poet Abū Miḥjan (d. after 16/637), noted for his wine poetry. Abū Miḥjan's fragment was a famous one; it inspired many other poets, both Arabic and Persian.

1 When I die bury me at the root of a vine, that its roots may water my bones after my death.

2 Do not bury me in the desert waste, for I fear lest, when I am dead,
        I may not taste it.
3 Let my flesh be watered with bright saffron wine; for I am now her
        prisoner, though I used to drive her. (al-Iṣbahānī 1955, 18: 294)

A variation on this technique involves self-reference, by using the opening of
another poem by the same poet as a concluding *taḍmīn*, as in Abū Nuwās's
khamriyya referred to in Chapter 2 above (1958, 3: 5–6; for the poem alluded to
see ibid.: 2–3).

1 Does it not cheer you that the earth is in bloom, while the wine is
        there for the taking, old and virginal?

After describing the beauties of spring, the visit to the tavern, and the wine, the
poet concludes,

12 And its seller continued to pour it, and I to drink it, in the company of
        a round-breasted maiden, fair and lovely. . . .
14 Who sang – and no blame could be attached to us – "Leave off blaming
        me, for blame is an incitement."

The self-reference functions as an authoritative statement which both
concludes the poem and justifies the actions described in it. According to
Alan Jones, Abū Nuwās "quotes his own poems more than any other poet"
(1991: 65); it may have been his example that was imitated by Saʿdī (see
below), who holds a similar distinction in Persian.

A similar conviction of truthfulness is achieved when the poem ends with a
sentential generalization, a proverb or maxim, or an epigram (cf. Smith 1968:
196–210). This type of ending, found in all types of poem, was much praised by
the rhetoricians: Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī terms ending a poem (or a segment) with
a gnomic or persuasive statement *taḥjīl* (the "white fetlocks" of a horse;
analogous to *taswīm*, the "blaze", in beginnings [1981: 297]). Al-Mutanabbī in
particular was noted for his sententious endings. He begins a panegyric to Sayf
al-Dawla, which deals with the latter's aborted campaign against the Byzantines
in Kharshana (when bitter weather and heavy snow forced his army to retreat),
with a *nasīb* decrying the envious "blamers" (n.d. 242–5; the *madīḥ* is translated
and discussed by Hamori, 1992: 64–70, and see also 17, 22):

1 Those who blame that maiden with the mole on my account are
        envious; the outcry of soft maidens against me (is) because I am
        noble. . . .
4 If you feared ignominy in every private meeting, beautiful, modest
        maidens would not captivate you.

He describes his lovesickness and his visit to the traces of the beloved's abode,
then moves to the *raḥīl*, telling of his swift steed and the dangers of the journey,
which force him to travel sword in hand. The *takhalluṣ* incorporates a reference

to his poetry, harking back to the "blamers" motif, while linking poet and prince:

14 O my (two) friends, I see only one poet (in the world); so why do (others) make claims, while I make poems?

15 Do not be surprised (at this); for swords are many; but Sayf al-Dawla is today unique.

(Ibn Jinnī [d. 392/1002] comments: "How excellently he accomplished this transition! For (he says): I am among poets as Sayf al-Dawla [whose name means "sword of the state"] is among swords" [1988, 2: 230–1]; we may compare the reference to "fine steeds and true friends" in the *qaṣīda* to Kāfūr quoted earlier.) He goes on to praise Sayf al-Dawla's generosity and, more especially, his prowess in war, referring to his many victories against the Byzantines. Midway through this praise (19–36) comes a brief reference to the Kharshana campaign:

28 A man who desires that the land be broad and time long, for time is too narrow for him, and no goal is far enough,

29 A man of raids whose swords are never absent from their necks unless the Sayḥān freezes,

30 So that not one of them is left except those whom their dark lips and high breasts protect from the sword.

Following further praise of Sayf al-Dawla and his son, compared to other heroic fathers and sons of the past, the poet concludes by recapitulating the motifs of devotion and superiority:

41 O sun and moon of the Age, I love you even if al-Suhā and al-Farqadān [lesser stars] find fault with me for this,

42 Because your virtue shines bright, not because the life one leads with you is one of tranquil ease.

43 To love a few wisely is sound; to love many without discrimination is wrong.

The final line puts the poem's theme in its proper perspective by establishing a general truth: only the noble are worthy of love, and are loved by the noble despite jealous fault-finders. The whole *qaṣīda* stands as an apology for Sayf al-Dawla, who fails only due to extreme circumstances and not because of any innate shortcoming, and for the poet, who will celebrate him regardless because of both the ruler's, and his own, nobility.

We will encounter more examples of this type of ending when we discuss larger structures in the following chapters. General statements can also be used for humorous or ironic purposes, as can the device of concluding a poem with a proverb, maxim, or epigram; an extreme example is seen in this brief *mujūniyya* by Abū Nuwās (1962: 130).

1 And a blaming woman, who reproached me for preferring a youth
   luminous as a wild cow,
2 Said, "You'll not prosper! You've not succeeded in gaining the good
   love of union with pretty girls."
3 I told her, "I know not! (But) the likes of me does not deceive himself
   with shams.
4 "Should I choose the seas over dry land – or even, at times, over the
   desert gazelle?
5 "Leave me alone; don't reproach me; I'll persist in what you despise till
   I die.
6 "For so has God's Scripture enjoined us to prefer boys over girls."

The Koranic allusion (37: 154: *A-ṣṭafā l-banāti ʿalā l-banīna*, "Has He chosen daughters in preference to sons?", addressed to the people of Mecca who claimed their female idols were the "daughters of God"), taken radically out of context to justify the poet's preference, provides an ironic ending to the poem – an ending anticipated by the use of *iṣṭifāʾ* ("preferring") in its opening line, as in the Koranic verse (the verb is also used for God's selection of Muḥammad as His Prophet, and *muṣṭafā*, "the Chosen One", is one of the Prophet's epithets). The use of the verbs *ḥarima* (in the passive, "to be denied prosperity, be ill-fated") and *jahila* "to be ignorant", that is, to embody those qualities of excess represented by the Jāhiliyya, the period before Islam, have similar Islamic and Koranic overtones; the culmination is thus well prepared for by the poem's beginning.

Although Persian poetry features explicit formal devices for closure – the *duʿā* in the panegyric *qaṣīda*, the poet's self-naming (*takhalluṣ*) in the *ghazal* – these are often used in conjunction with other closural strategies. While Arabic critics criticised the use of the *duʿāʾ* except in royal panegyrics (cf. Ibn Rashīq's remark quoted earlier), it is a normative feature of Persian *qaṣīda*s and, like opening lines, must observe strict principles of decorum (cf. Shams-i Qays 1909: 380). Yet it should not be considered a mere appendage "tacked on" to the end of a poem to satisfy either convention or royal vanity; it often serves important thematic purposes and, like the *nasīb*, can provide a key to the poem's meaning.

In a *qaṣīda* by Farrukhī (1932: 84–7; see further Meisami 1990b: 34–6), which begins,

1 The garden laughs constantly like the beloved's face, and the earth
   gives off fragrance like precious musk,

the *nasīb* describes a spring garden emblematic of the prosperous Ghaznavid state. The *duʿā* returns to the same topic; thus the garden imagery frames the *madīḥ*, which deals at length with Maḥmūd of Ghazna's military triumphs. Its final catalogue of his achievements concludes with the following line, itself indicative of closure, before the poet moves to the *duʿā*, formulated in terms of the garden.

54 Now whoever has seen those places exclaims at their lesson of warning,
      "God is great!"
55 So long as the tall pine tree in the garden resembles the beloved's stature;
56 So long as the newly-opened, unplucked rose resembles the beloved's
      cheeks,
57 Be pleasure's companion and live in joyous fortune; be ruler of the
      world and enjoy long life,
58 With nature, honour, and courage ever fresh, rich in treasure, wealth,
      and armies.

The return to the garden suggests that the *du'ā* is meant to do more than merely reaffirm the prosperity brought by the ruler's conquests, as the audience are encouraged to contrast Maḥmūd's military exploits with the peace represented by the garden, depicted in the *nasīb* as tranquil, prosperous and fertile, and evoking the analogy between the ruler and spring. While the final catalogue (and, implicitly, the entire *madīḥ*) is presented as an object lesson ('*ibrat*) ostensibly directed at the king's enemies, the suggestion is that the king himself might do well to contemplate that lesson; the catalogues of vanquished dynasties and defeated armies, recalling the *ubi sunt topos* of homiletic poetry, should remind him both of the transience of worldly power and of the necessity to attain salvation not merely by destructive conquest but by building a prosperous and peaceful state. This reading is further supported by the use of anaphora, a device typical of homiletic poetry, in the catalogues of Maḥmūd's victories (see further Chapter 4).

   The *du'ā* typically invokes images of stability and continuity: "as long as the rose resembles the beloved's cheeks" is another way of saying "as long as the world turns." Figures of difference can also be used to express stability – differences being universal and eternal – as well as to suggest instability and impermanence, as in the *du'ā* of Farrukhī's Ramaḍān *qaṣīda* to Amīr Muḥammad, the *nasīb* of which was discussed earlier in this chapter. Following his somewhat ambivalent praise of the prince, the poet moves towards his conclusion with a conventional, if enigmatic, *aporia*:

47 God be thanked that today I am in this place, to which all the kings of
      the world come as suppliants.
48 The rhymes of this poem would be exhausted and it would still not
      end, were I to retell what he did to the idol of Kālanjar.[30]

In the *du'ā*, rather than invoking motifs of continuity and stability through resemblance, the poet stresses the eternal nature of difference:

49 As long as the marigold is not like the apple-blossom and the
      grenadine not like the waterlily;
50 As long as the sap of the mouse-ear is not like rosewater and the water-
      mint's scent and fruit not like the jasmine. . . .

53 May he spend a thousand such feasts in rejoicing, victory-starred in
     kingship and in fortune.

Farrukhī's reservations about Muḥammad's ability to rule and his awareness of
the prince's impending fate are reflected once more in the *duʿā*, whose emphasis
on differences recalls the stress on Muḥammad's likeness to his father in the
madīḥ, and suggests further that the differences between the two princes, like
those between water-mint and jasmine, are not only in kind but in quality. The
contrast between marigolds and apple-blossoms is doubly ironic, since
Muḥammad was enthroned in the spring and deposed in the fall. Thus the
garden provides an emblem, not of stability, but of eternal change: as fall
replaces spring, so does ruler replace ruler.

   Far from being merely a conventional conclusion, the *duʿā* functions
thematically as well as structurally by recapitulating certain important topics or
suggesting others relevant to the circumstances of the poem but not stated
elsewhere. Such is the case in a final example by Farrukhī, a *qaṣīda* dedicated to
Masʿūd on ʿĪd al-Fiṭr 422/September 1031, barely a year after his accession
(1932: 145–7; see also Meisami 1990b: 38–43). It begins,

 1 I am always happy with the role of lover, but now even happier that
     I have found a worthy love....
 6 Last night was such a joyous night that I would have bought that night
     with my very life....
10 Such is my joy, last night and today; such were my hopes, last year and
     the year before;
11 Today I am happier than yesterday; this year my state is far better than
     last year;
12 And each day and each year will be even happier through the farr of
     the fortune of the world-ruling king.
13 King Masʿūd, son of Maḥmūd, he whom the days have made
     continually both praised and happy.

The closure of the *nasīb* is stressed through the repetition of the rhyme of the
opening *misrāʿ*, *hamvār*, "always, continually"; while the word-play on Maḥmūd
("praised") and Masʿūd ("happy") suggests that Masʿūd embodies the virtues and
qualities of his father Maḥmūd. Clearly the *nasīb* is meant to convey the poet's
joy at Masʿūd's accession and at his own finding of a beloved – a prince – worthy
of his devotion and praise.

   The *madīḥ* praises Masʿūd's generosity (noting a sizeable gift to the poet) and
his valour, and refers to his triumphs in Rayy, where he had been left by his
father after the conquest of that city – not, the poet is quick to insist, "out of
contempt" (32) (although Masʿūd was, he states, "faced with a treacherous and
crafty army," and Maḥmūd had taken from him "his arms, troops and elephants"
[30–31]), but because

33 ... he wished that kings might know that he, without help, would
    make his skill apparent.

34 He knew that (even) without a well-equipped army he would triumph
    in battle over all the world.

35 And it was as the sultan had planned; ask of his army and his general.

The *duʿā* introduces a darker note:

37 May he live long, that king who never forgave any drunkard for his
    evils;

38 Let he who wishes him well (reign) on a throne, and his ill-wisher (be
    raised on) the scaffold.

39 May he rejoice at this blessed feast, and may those who wish him ill be
    anxious and sorrowful.

Lines 37–38 allude to the fates of two of Masʿūd's victims in the vindictive purge
which followed his accession: Maḥmūd's former vizier Ḥasanak, executed on
charges of heresy in Ṣafar 422/February 1031, and the Turkish general Aryāruq,
arrested (while drunk) and imprisoned in Rabīʿ I/March of the same year. They
thus lend considerable irony to the poet's insistence that he is happier this year
than last, an irony increased by the fact that in that same spring Farrukhī's
patron, Sultan Maḥmūd's younger brother Yūsuf, to whom the poet was closely
attached, had also been arrested and sent to the prison in which he was to die.[31]

    The *ghazal* has a built-in mechanism for closure in the *takhalluṣ*, the
"signature verse" which incorporates the poet's self-naming. The *takhalluṣ* is said
to have been introduced by Sanāʾī, and is found with increasing frequency in
the *ghazals* of that poet and his contemporaries; it becomes a normative feature
by the end of the sixth/twelfth century. (On the development of the *ghazal* see
Chapter 2 above; on the *takhalluṣ* see Reisner 1989; Losensky 1994: 232–8,
1998a; Lewis 1995: 95–103.)[32] The term itself may have been derived from the
takhalluṣ of the *qaṣīda*, which generally incorporates the patron's name, and
applied by analogy to the "exit line" of the *ghazal* which includes that of the
poet, called *ism-i takhalluṣ* or simply *takhalluṣ*. (Both Arabic *takhalluṣ* and Persian
gurīzgāh imply "freeing onself" from one genre, e.g. the *ghazal* of the *nasīb*, to
move to another, e.g. the *madīḥ*.) Self-naming occurs far more frequently
in Persian *qaṣīda*s than in Arabic; in Farrukhī's Ramaḍān *qaṣīda*, for example,
the poet's self-apostrophe occurs in one of the "false *gurīzgāh*s" which delay the
transition to the *madīḥ*, and the same poet concludes another panegyric to
Masʿūd with the following line:

30 In this feast may God make Farrukhī's praise of you an auspicious
    portent [*farrukh kunād*] for you. (1932: 155)

In the brief "erotic panegyrics" popular in Sanāʾī's time the transition to the
brief concluding *madīḥ* often incorporates the names of both poet and patron, as
in the poem by Ḥasan-i Ghaznavī quoted in Chapter 1:

5 Rejoice, Ḥasan, as you for his sake grieve;
   he's both the affliction and the remedy. . . .
7 Shāh Bahrāmshāh, son of Masʿūd, who is
   the very form of sovereignty, image of life.

Here self-naming marks the transition from the love theme to the *madīḥ*; it is not difficult to see how conflation of the two types of transition, with their emphasis on naming, might have given rise to the use of *takhalluṣ* for the closural procedure in which the poet himself is named. While the convention itself automatically ensures closure, it is generally combined with other strategies either in the *takhalluṣ bayt* itself or in the line(s) which precede it; in such cases true closure can occur independently of the *takhalluṣ*, which may function as an additional sentential or epigrammatic cap.

While the *takhalluṣ*, by naming the poet, identifies him both as the author of the *ghazal* and its principal focus, it can often serve at the same time to distance him from it, in particular when such references are made in the second or third person, thus achieving a degree of ambiguity (cf. Meisami 1990d: 134–5). Losensky distinguishes between what he terms "the 'shiftless' and 'shifty' signatures": the former "do not involve a change in pronoun reference or a violation of the integrity of the lyric 'I,'" whereas in the latter "the lyric voice is fragmented along with the poet-speaker's personality" by means of a pronoun shift; in such cases, "we can often understand the *takhalluṣ* as the quoted speech of a daemon [or a persona] … with the citation verb and the explicit identification of the speaker suppressed" (1998a: 245, 252). It is also possible to see this voice as that of an implied listener who praises or reprimands the poet.

The devices used in conjunction with the *takhalluṣ* to produce closure are basically the same as those seen in the Arabic poems discussed above. Saʿdī concludes one *ghazal* with the motif of death, associated with the *topos* of the "martyr of love" (1972, 1: 50):

6 Assuredly one day men will see me, slain by love,
   grasping the skirt of my slayer with both hands of desire.
7 If they bring out Saʿdī's bier from the beloved's street,
   (say), happy a life of good repute and going to a martyr's death!

Here actual closure is achieved in the penultimate line, supported by the repetition of the rhyme of the opening *miṣrāʿ*, *irādat* "desire". The final line amplifies the topic of martyrdom for love by expressing the poet's joy at having met such an end.

Many *ghazal*s conclude with an apostrophe – to the audience in general, to the patron, to the beloved, to a supposed critic, or to the poet himself. The apostrophe to a minstrel reflects the *ghazal*'s performance context, and occurs in courtly and mystical *ghazal*s alike (cf. Farrukhī's use of this strategy in his Ramaḍān *qaṣīda*). A *ghazal* by ʿAṭṭār which describes a mystical gathering, praises the beauty of the *shāhid* and celebrates the joys of mystical communion (1960: 103) concludes:

8 Minstrel, play one of those affecting airs:
  sing greetings for the lovers' feast tonight.
9 All this fair tale is that of ʿAṭṭār's pain,
  that sweet sad song that minstrels sing tonight.

Similarly, Ḥāfiẓ concludes his "Shiraz Turk" *ghazal* (QG3) by exhorting himself to sing the lyric he has composed, deftly combining self-praise with the suggestion of an expected reward from the patron:

9 You have composed a *ghazal*, and strung pearls; come and sing sweetly
   now, Ḥāfiẓ,
  that the sphere may cast upon your verse the necklace of the Pleiades.

There are many other ways of effecting closure both in the *qaṣīda* and the *ghazal* which will be seen as we consider other poems. I shall turn in the next chapter to more general aspects of disposition involving the construction of larger segments within the poem and of whole poems, where the importance of the specific features examined in this chapter will become even more apparent.

4

DISPOSITION: LARGER STRUCTURES

> A palace of my poem I'll make, in which
> from its verses I'll form flower beds and verandas.
> One spot I'll raise up like a lofty prospect,
> another make wide and spacious like a courtyard.
>
> Nāṣir-i Khusraw

The medieval Arabic and Persian critics devoted considerable attention to the beginnings, transitions, and (to a somewhat lesser extent) endings of poems. This attention to what were perceived as critical points in the poem's structure implies an awareness of poems as wholes: a good beginning, transition or ending is not so in and of itself, but in relation to its function in, and appropriateness to, the poem in which it occurs, as well as to the poem's decorum (hence the concern, for example, that the poet should avoid inauspicious or offensive openings).

While the fact that the critics rarely discuss larger structures, or whole poems, in detail has raised questions not only about the critics' awareness, but about the very existence, of principles of overall organization, poetic practice reveals a variety of techniques for organizing poems on a larger scale, some of which have been discussed in earlier studies referred to in this book. In this chapter, I wish to focus on features which have, by and large, received less attention: the use of proportion and balance as an organizing principle; the function of amplification and abbreviation to vary a poem's basic proportional structure; and the overall shape (or shapes) of the poem.

Segmentation: Proportion and balance

Medieval European critics both analysed the division of a discourse into segments on the basis of sentential content and identified larger divisions within it (chapters, books, etc.), much as the classical critics identified the parts of an oration. The same principles obtain in discussions of the parts of the poem by Arabic and Persian critics: they either deal with larger structural units (e.g. Ibn Qutayba's description of the *qaṣīda* [Chapter 3], al-ʿAskarī's discussion of al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī's panegyric to al-Nuʿmān ibn Mundhir [Chapter 2]) or with the poem's sentential divisions (as in Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī's analysis of a *nasīb* by al-Mutanabbī; see below).

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Sentential divisions are perhaps the smallest meaningful units of the poem, and generally consist of from one to three *bayt*s. The principle by which they are organized into larger segments (which are generally of consistent length) may reflect the fundamentally oral quality of poems which, even when composed in writing, were intended to be performed (often sung) and to be committed to memory, and involve considerations other than thematic ones. But before embarking upon a discussion of this issue, let us look at Ḥāzim's discussion of the rules of segmentation. (On this discussion see also Meisami 1999.)

Poets, says Ḥāzim, divide their poems into segments (*fuṣūl*) which treat different aspects of their purpose, paying special attention to the beginnings of the *fuṣūl*. which should announce the topic treated (1981: 296). It is better, and more effective, to begin *fuṣūl* with individual topics (*maʿānī juzʾiyya*) which have a personal import, and then move to general topics (*maʿānī kulliyya*) with a typical or universal import, rather than the reverse (ibid.: 295). The poet may also combine imaginative with persuasive statements: al-Mutanabbī would often begin a *faṣl* with imaginative verses and conclude with a supporting persuasive verse (*bayt iqnāʿī*); because of this, "his discourse was the most effective" (ibid.: 293).

Four rules pertain to the establishment and ordering of *fuṣūl*: (1) "determining the appropriateness of the matter of the segments and selecting their essential characteristics" (this clearly falls partly into the province of invention); (2) "arranging the segments and achieving continuity between them"; (3) "arranging what falls within the segments"; and (4) "determining which segments should come first, which follow, and which conclude (the poem)." The *fuṣūl*

> must be proportionate (both) to the hearing and to the understanding, well connected, not allowing the composition (of the poem) to slacken, and not distinguished from one another in such a way as to make each as if it were separate in itself and (as if) it and the other verses were not contained in a structure of words and meaning by virtue of which it is placed in the position of beginning with relation to the end or end in relation to the beginning. . . . *Fuṣūl* can be of varying extent as to length or brevity; abbreviation of *fuṣūl* is permissible in *muqaṭṭaʿāt* and for (poetic) goals treated in a graceful manner, for in such amplification would be heavy. . . . But in long *qaṣīda*s and goals treated in an ornamental and imposing style amplification is permissible. . . . (ibid.: 288)

A segment should not be longer than can be grasped, understood and retained by the audience (and as we shall see, there is an optimal length for segments which is rarely exceeded); and the length of the segments should be both appropriate to the poem's genre or purpose, and proportionate.

With respect to overall arrangement (rule 2), those segments should come first which announce "the intended purpose [*gharaḍ*] of the discourse;" and shorter segments should precede longer ones. As for the arrangement of the *bayt*s within a segment (*buyūt al-faṣl*; rule 3), "One should begin with the topic

appropriate to what precedes; and if it is feasible ... that this topic be the chief topic of the *faṣl*, and that which has the greatest portion of nobility, this is most brilliant.... But many poets delay the most noble topic, so that it may conclude the segment" (ibid.: 289). Moreover, "the segment may be concluded with a bit of the *aghrāḍ* of that which follows, or an allusion to one (or another) of its topics" (ibid.: 290). Such connections enhance the continuity between segments, and produce a certain allusive overlapping between the *aghrāḍ* of contiguous segments.

Connections between segments (rule 4) are of four types: (1) those which connect "both expression [*'ibāra*] and genre [*gharaḍ*]," in that there is both a generic relationship between the end of one segment and the beginning of the next, and a verbal connection "in that some of the words in one segment demand some of the words in the other;" (2) a verbal connection without a generic one, in which the segment's opening statement (*ra's kalām*) "is connected to what precedes with respect to meaning" (such a statement should contain an expression of surprise or an invocation, so as to vary the treatment of the topic); (3) "that which connects with respect to genre but without regard for expression" (which is inferior to the preceding two); and (4), that in which there is neither a verbal nor a generic connection, "but which rushes upon the segment without containing any indication of what precedes it or any relationship between the two. Composition of this sort is fragmentary [*mutashaṭṭiṭ*] in every respect; but some excellent poets are allowed this at the transition [*khurūj*] between *nasīb* and *madīḥ*" (ibid.: 290–1).

In addition, Ḥāzim maintains that short poems should be "simple" (*basīṭa*), i.e. constituted of a single genre (*gharaḍ*), because it is difficult for any but the most skilled poet to handle more than one genre effectively within the scope of a short poem; but long poems may be "compound" (*murakkabat al-aghrāḍ*), composed of more than one genre or purpose; and indeed this is preferable (ibid.: 303).

Ḥāzim's discussion of segmentation precedes his analysis of the *nasīb* of al-Mutanabbī's panegyric to Kāfūr referred to in Chapter 3 (ibid.: 298–9), which he divides into *fuṣūl* and discusses the ways in which transition is accomplished between them. The *nasīb* in full is as follows (al-Mutanabbī 1967: 96–9; Arberry's translation).

1 I contend with my yearning regarding you, and yearning prevails, and
     I marvel at this banishment, and this union were more marvellous.
2 Will not the days err concerning me, in that I may see them remove far
     the hated one, and bring near the beloved?
3 How remarkable my journey was! How little was my tarrying on the
     evening I passed on the east side al-Ḥadālā and Ghurrāb
4 the evening when the most liberal of men to me was he I treated
     unkindly, and the more straight-guiding of the two ways was the one
     I was avoiding.

5 And how many a helping hand with you of the darkness of the night
   has proved that Manicheeism was a pack of lies,

6 protecting you from the malice of the enemies amongst whom you
   were travelling, and in that darkness the coyly bold beloved visited
   you.

7 And many a day like the night of lovers I have hidden through,
   watching the sun when it should set,

8 my eyes fixed on the ears of a bright-blazed horse which was as if a star
   of the night remained between its eyes,

9 having a superfluity of skin on its body which came and went over a
   broad breast;

10 I cleaved with it the darkness, drawing close its reins so that it rebelled,
   and at times slackening them so that it played,

11 felling with it any wild beast I followed, and dismounting from it and it
   the same as when I mounted.

12 Fine steeds, like true friends, are few, even if to the eye of the
   experienced they are many;

13 if you have seen nothing but the beauty of their markings and limbs,
   their true beauty is hidden from you.

14 God curse this present world as a place for a rider to halt, for every man
   of far aspirations is tortured there.

15 Would I knew whether I shall ever compose a poem and not complain
   in it or reproach,

16 there being with me, that the least part of which fends off verse from
   me; but my heart, O daughter of the folk, is full of shifts,

17 and the virtues of Kāfūr, whether I desire to praise him or not, dictate
   to me, and I write.

Ḥāzim cites lines 1, 3, 5, 7, 12 and 14 in his division of this *nasīb* into *fuṣūl*. In
the first four *fuṣūl* (1–11), the poet links the topics of astonishment at separation
from those he loves with the swiftness of his journey from them, his pangs at
separation and his fears of enemies, concluding the fourth *faṣl* (7–11) with a
reference to his horse. "He continues his discourse … with description of the
horse, in which he moves from individual to general topics, which makes it
possible to consider this discourse one *faṣl* or two, with the beginning of the
second [*faṣl*; i.e., the fifth] his statement, 'Fine steeds, like true friends, are few'"
(1981: 298–9). While the sentential quality of this statement suggests that it may
be opening a new *faṣl*, its relation to the horse description, of which it constitutes
a kind of summation, makes it possible to read it also as a continuation of the
preceding one.

> Then he opened the fifth *faṣl* – or the sixth, by the second reckoning –
> with blame of this world and what it brings to him and (how) its
> adversities follow him … saying, "God curse this present world as a place

for a rider to halt. . .". Throughout he has connected his discourse with the finest continuity [*aḥsan iṭṭirād*], and has moved from one thing to another appropriate to it, or to its cause, and combined them purposefully. In this way his discourse is arranged and segmented [*mufaṣṣal*] in the best fashion, and each part placed in the firmest position.

This (Ḥāzim concludes) is the proper procedure with respect to the openings of *fuṣūl* and their positioning. Only the most talented of poets can aspire to mastery of this procedure, which "is one of the greatest pillars of disposition [*rukn ʿaẓīm min arkān al-ṣināʿa al-naẓmiyya*]" (ibid.: 299–300).

While Ḥāzim's analysis proceeds along largely sentential and topical lines, he is also attentive to the expressive devices by means of which topics are combined into a continuous discourse. In the first *faṣl* (1–2) the topic of wonder (*taʿjīb*) links the opposition between separation and (past) union, the remoteness of loved ones and the nearness of enemies; the second (3–4) extends this topic to encompass the parallel between the swiftness of his separation and that of his journey; the third (5–6) contrasts this separation with the beloved's night-visit and the protection of darkness with the threat of enemies. What is noteworthy is Ḥāzim's awareness of relations of contrast and congruence between segments. While one might view his divisions of the *nasīb* as more narrow than is necessary, he is clearly aware of the connections between segments, of their function in the *nasīb* as a whole, and of their implications for the remainder of the *qaṣīda*: such topics as pain at separation, fear of enemies, loss of loved ones and hope of renewed prosperity, and blame of the world create the background against which the *madīḥ* (in which many of these topics recur) must be read.[1]

Van Gelder says of this analysis, "Apparently Ḥāzim has no hard-and-fast rule by which to distinguish the passages unambiguously. Any such segmentation of a poem cannot be but impressionistic" (1982a: 182–83). Ḥāzim's analysis by *divisio* nevertheless shows a clear understanding that poems observe principles of proportion and balance, as does his insistence that *fuṣūl* must be proportionate to both the hearing and the understanding. Moreover, as we shall see, ambiguity of division is built into the concept that topics and genres should overlap so as to provide continuity, and that this overlap may produce different readings. To some extent, Ḥāzim's discussion supports Scheindlin's analysis of the poems of al-Muʿtamid ibn ʿAbbād (1974), although Scheindlin's approach is largely syntactic, while Ḥāzim's is topical: both tend to begin by isolating groups of two or three lines (although we should not forget that Ḥāzim also has in mind the *nasīb* as a larger unit). But, clearly, both approaches are only a beginning.

Proportion and balance are marked features of Arabic poetry at least from the early Abbasid period onwards, and of Persian poetry virtually from its beginnings.[2] But there are differences in how these principles operate in short and in long poems – differences which raise questions with respect not only to composition but to the manner in which a poem was transmitted and presented

– that is, to memorization and performance. Before embarking on a broader discussion of these questions, we may consider the type of proportional divisions seen in a short lyric, and the suggestion that such symmetries are far from accidental.

André Roman has argued that the love poems of Bashshār ibn Burd "demonstrate a conscious and multiform poetic art in which the play of words, sound and sense unfolds in the framework of a poem whose plan is often precisely structured – the exactness of this plan, moreover, corresponding to a poetic requirement more widespread than is commonly admitted" (1978: 185). Much of this careful organization, he suggests, has been damaged or destroyed by the habits of transmitters and anthologizers (ibid.: 186); yet sufficient examples remain to support the view that symmetrical structure constituted the rule rather than the exception.

Roman analyses a poem of fourteen lines (Bashshār 1950, 2: 16–18; translation based on Roman 1978: 187).

1 Well then, diviner of the city, who looks into the oil:
2 Do you think I will live long enough to see 'Abda in my house?
3 He answered: "Come close … I see a death, and a turning wheel which comes before death!"
4 – A woman told us, prophesying in loud cries,
5 "Is it from failed desire you weep? Do not weep over failure.
6 "I'll enchant her, and she'll come to you, even were she (perched) on a fish!"
7 Said I, "Proceed for us then, with deliberation, with your fasting and praying.
8 "How fine is what you've told me, your good tidings to me, what you've promised me!
9 "When she thinks of us you will be with that thought, dictating it;
10 "And if she tends to forget, you will remind her, and mention my name.
11 "And life will be pleasant for me because of her; she will weave her weft through your warp.
12 "Take my affection for what you have granted me and bestowed upon me.
13 "Ah, would that what is hidden is like what she will show, and what you have shown."
14 And she: "In what we have brought to you is refreshment from such wishes!"

Roman suggests that this poem can be divided in two fashions according to its interpretation: into two dialogues of three lines each, a monologue of seven lines, and a concluding single line (3 + 3 + 7 + 1), or into two dialogues of three lines, a monologue of six, and a conclusion of two consisting of the lover's final prayer and the diviner's response (3 + 3 + 6 + 2) (1978: 194).[3] Here we find

ourselves in the realm of what van Gelder calls "ambiguity": the distinction rests on whether line 13 is read as a confirmation (and thus a conclusion) of what has gone before, or as a prayer. The second reading seems more probable (bearing in mind Ḥāzim's observation about how transitions link different *fuṣūl*), especially as it parallels the opening line); but Roman feels that there is sufficient ambiguity to make either possible. A further feature which seems to support the second reading is the repetition of *a-lā yā layta*/*min layti*, "would that"/"from such wishes" (literally, "from saying 'would that!'") in lines 13 and 14, signalling movement towards closure, the emphatic *a-lā* which links 1 and 13, and the rhyme-words *awlaytī* "you bestowed" and *laytī* "would that", with their parallel sound and *jinās*, in 12 and 14. Roman introduces another consideration when he asks, in conclusion, "Might either of the different possible interpretations coincide with a symbolic number?" (ibid.: 194). Perhaps; but for the moment I will postpone this particular problem, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

It might seem that short poems, because of their brevity, are easier to organize symmetrically; but in fact it is short poems (and especially the *ghazal*) that are often accused of incoherency. Perhaps we ought to ask: what makes a short poem different from a long poem, other than the obvious feature of length? The critics provide some answers: Ibn Rashīq cites authorities who concur that short poems fall easier on the ear, are appropriate to informal gatherings, and can be memorized, while long poems are directed towards the understanding (1972, 1: 186); Ḥāzim states that short poems should be "simple", because of the difficulty of combining *aghrāḍ* in a small space, while long poems can – preferably should – be complex, combining different *aghrāḍ*.

Memorization is not the real issue, however, as both long and short poems were routinely memorized; and we shall return to this issue later. The distinction which both Ibn Rashīq's and Ḥāzim's statements reflect is, it seems to me, one between short poems designed for immediate, affective impact (some of which may have been composed to be sung; long poems were typically excerpted for that purpose), and long poems which were intended to be dwelled on and thought about as they unrolled, as it were, to the hearing. There is considerable debate (and very little hard information, mostly of an anecdotal nature) about the relationship between poem and song; the impression left by accounts in the *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī's fourth/tenth-century anthology of the "top hundred" songs of the time (and much, much more besides), and by studies based on this work (e.g. Sawa 1989), is of the enormous frequency and popularity of gatherings in which poems were sung to musical accompaniment, in particular in the early Abbasid period but also, it should be noted, from the early Islamic period onwards (cf. also Hamori 1990; Schoeler 1990).

Although it appears that in the context of such performances the text was primary and the musical accompaniment secondary (though musicians were judged on the skillfulness of their accompaniment, singers on their rendition;

see Sawa 1989: 170–4), and therefore that musical requirements, in a technical sense, did not influence the prosodic features of the text itself (although musicians felt free to change texts when they did not suit their requirements; see ibid.: 190–2), this does not preclude the likelihood that poets sometimes composed poems intended as song-texts. Performance was the principal means of gaining both substantial reward for, and widespread dissemination of, a poem; Bashshār's poems, for example, were widely sung, and there are many accounts of publicity (in both positive and negative senses) being gained by the performance of a poem. Poetry was also an important means of propaganda, which perhaps accounts for the number of short panegyrics produced in this period, and for the rise of the panegyric *ghazal* in Persian: they were eminently portable, and eminently effective.[4]

As suggested in Chapter 2, this association with song had a profound impact on the development of the so-called "minor" forms of *ghazal*, *khamriyya* and *zuhdiyya*. Even Abū al-ʿAtāhiya is known to have had at least one of his *zuhdiyyāt* performed – appropriately, in a cemetery – by the famous singer Mukhāriq (Sawa 1989: 135; al-Iṣbahānī 1970, 18: 347–8). Isḥāq al-Mawṣilī's ill-conceived panegyric to al-Muʿtaṣim (see Chapter 3) may have been sung (hence its emotional beginning, inappropriate to its purpose; hence, too, the strength of its effect). It is quite likely that those of Abū Nuwās's *khamriyyāt* which begin with a rejection of the *aṭlāl* topic, or which end with a *taḍmīn* featuring that topic, were performed in gatherings which featured both "Ancient" and "Modern" poetry (cf. Sawa 1989: 167–8), and thus constituted responses to another poem, also performed in the gathering, rather than ideological statements (as may also be the case with those of Abū al-ʿAtāhiya's *zuhdiyyāt* which employ the *aṭlāl* topic, or refer to topics associated with love and wine poetry); or that the gathering in which wine became "licit" to him was in fact that in which his panegyric to al-Khaṣīb was performed.

It is easy to see how the simple, flowing diction, the high affective-emotive content, and the vivid description characteristic of short lyrics relate to their function as song: their impact is emotional and sensuous, conducing to an immediate, often intense, response on the part of the hearer(s) (cf. ibid.: 132–8, especially 136). This is true of the *nasīb* of the *qaṣīda* as well, and raises questions regarding the actual presentation of *qaṣīda*s, about which we know even less than about songs. But does the fact that poems are (or may be) sung affect their structure? I believe that it may, and that Bashshār's poem discussed above may provide an example, with its division into four segments of unequal (but proportional) length.

Let us look back briefly on al-ʿAbbās's "concealment of love" poem, discussed in Chapter 2 above. Its twelve lines can be divided into four segments (3 + 4 + 3 + 2), the final two constituting a "cap" devoted to praise of the beloved, the shorter length of the segment signalling closure: 1–3 (Concealment of love); 4–7 (Reminiscence of past loves); 8–10 (Lovers' hearts unequal); 11–12 (Praise of beloved). Another poem (1986: 15–16; to be discussed in Chapter 6), which

employs the epistolary form popular among Hijazi poets and often used by al-ʿAbbās (when is a letter not a letter? when it is sung?), virtually replicates the same structure (though not the same topics): 1–3 (The letter; the state of the lover); 4–7 (Contents of the letter); 8–10 (Lover deserving of reward); 11–13 (Request for answer; greetings) (3 + 4 + 3 + 3).

That this structural similarity is not accidental can be demonstrated by yet another poem by al-ʿAbbās (ibid.: 179).

1 Tell me of the Hijaz; for I think I will never tire of hearing of the Hijaz;
2 Describe to me what lies between the Buṭḥān valleys; and the mosque: what is around it, what opposite?
3 Somewhere there is one who satisfied a promised meeting with fulfillment:
4 That is Fawz – may God curse the old man who came between us with shameful acts!
5 My suffering has been long since she left me – the heart's sorrows are easily moved –
6 And my tears have worn out the lustre of my face; and my heart is like a rider who travels long.
7 – She stood out among the shy virgins, they heavy of buttocks and haunches,
8 And Fawz wished for reunion with me; but between us are vast deserts through which camels wander in helpless confusion.
9 They wept together; then (the maidens) said, sincere in their prayer for her, and not mocking,
10 "May God unite Fawz and ʿAbbās, and may they live in pleasure and glory."

This poem is also divided into three more or less equal segments plus a cap (4 + 2 + 3 + 1): 1–4 (Hijaz/Fawz); 5–6 (Separation); 7–9 (Fawz among the maidens); 10 (Prayer for reunion). The first section, unified by the "Hijaz" motif, begins *khabbirūnī ʿani l-Ḥijāzi*, "Tell me of the Hijaz," and continues by explaining why the Hijaz is important: because Fawz is there (*la-shakhṣan*, "there is one" … *tilka Fawzun*, "that is Fawz"). The curse in line 4 leads into the next segment, the suffering and affliction caused by the "*shaykh*'s" action, which occupies the central portion of the poem, focussed (as usual with al-ʿAbbās) on the speaker. Lines 7–9 depict Fawz among the maidens, concluding with their expression of mutual sympathy (9: *fa-tabākayna*, "they wept together"); line 10, the cap, constitutes both their prayer and the poet's own wish. Moreover – as in the preceding poems, whose structure is similar (the opening segment sets the scene; the middle sections both reminisce and place the focus on the speaker) – the final section, the prayer (like the praise of the beloved, or the request for a response), brings us back to the present moment, the moment in which the poem is performed.[5] The similarities between these poems, and between them

and that of Bashshār (and of others that we will see later on) suggest a pattern for short lyrics consisting of balanced (but not necessarily equivalent) segments, an alternation between longer and shorter segments, with apocopation as the poem moves towards closure.

I suggested in Chapter 2 that the generic linkage between the topics treated in each part of a typical love poem (or song) made it possible for the poet to dispense with explicit linkage of, or transitions between, segments. But perhaps we can now look at such poems in another way. Each segment represents a phase in the depiction of interrelated states (separation/deprivation; reminiscence/hope for the future, etc.). Each lends itself to being rendered in a manner different from the others, with regard to musical accompaniment, to bring out its emotional effect. Each is, moreover, susceptible to independent repetition (if so desired), possibly even by different performers (cf. Sawa 1989: 162–4). Because of the absence of explicit transitions, pauses between segments, for emphasis or for musical interludes, would not appear disruptive of the poem's flow. The degree of symmetry in the poem itself is marked; but it is a symmetry based on the balance of segments of differing (but closely similar) length, rather than of equivalencies, with a marked tendency towards apocopation as the poem moves towards closure, and with the frequent presence of a disjunctive, sometimes apparently unrelated, cap which concludes the poem.

The Persian *ghazal* originated under much the same conditions as did the short Arabic lyric types: in the gatherings, and especially drinking parties, which were so much a feature of court life, and which provided both their occasion and their self-referential setting (cf. de Bruijn 1983: 158). As was noted in Chapter 2, few early *ghazal*s have come down to us, perhaps because of their informal, oral-performance nature: there was no Abū al-Faraj to provide us with the "top hundred" hits of, say, the Samanid or Ghaznavid courts (although for the Samanids, al-Thaʿālibī provides many Arabic examples in his *Yatīmat al-dahr*, as does his continuator al-Bākharzī in his *Dumyat al-qaṣr* for both the Samanids and the Ghaznavids). There are some lyric fragments by the early poets Rūdakī and Daqīqī (d. 367/978?), as well as by Manūchihrī (see Clinton 1972: 64–9); but it is not really until the latter part of the fifth/eleventh century that recognizable *ghazal*s are recorded in any number, and it is difficult to speculate (as Humāʾī has done; see Mukhtārī 1962: 569–76, n. 1), on the basis of rhythmical features alone, which might have been "sung", which "literary", or which, for that matter, both.

Even "literary" *ghazal*s retain many of the characteristic features associated with song; moreover, from the many addresses to a singer (*muṭrib*) or references to singing which occur as late as Ḥāfiẓ (if not later) we may assume that many *ghazal*s were originally sung, and others not necessarily intended for performance may have been (as they still are) set to music and sung as well.[6] As an example of a "literary" *ghazal* we may take another look at the *ghazal* by Ḥāfiẓ discussed in Chapter 2 (*QG9*), which is based on two-line units combined into larger segments (4 + 4 + 2).

Love	1–2	Appearance of spring; separation (absence)
	3–4	Appearance of the "Magian child"; separation (concealment)
Homily	5–6	Hypocrites vs. men of God
	7–8	Renounce transient world/power; human mortality
Conclusion	9	Address to the "Moon of Canaan"
	10	*Takhalluṣ*: self-naming
		Recapitulation: Honest love (1–4) better than pious hypocrisy (5–8)

The first segment (1–4) is devoted to the spring/love theme: the beauty of the season and of the *sāqī* (1, 3) are contrasted with the motif of separation (2, 4). The second (5–8) consists of admonition; the transition between the two is effected by the verb *tarsam*, "I fear" (5), while they are linked by the motif of wine-drinking (*kharābāt*, 5). Moreover, the closing phrases of 4 (*ay ki*, "you who") and 8 (*har ki*, "whoever") are parallel, identifying the beginnings of separate segments; while the second segment is framed by the movement from specific to general (*tarsam*, "I fear"/*har ki*, "whoever") which encloses the imperatives of 6 and 7 (*yār . . . bāsh*, "be the friend of"/*biraw*, "go"). Closure is anticipated by the *sententia* which concludes the second segment –

8 To all whose last resting place is a handful of dust, say:
   what need is there to raise a palace to the skies? –

and by the shift of focus provided by the address to the "Moon of Canaan" (9), which recapitulates the love motif. The *takhalluṣ* line, with the poet's self-apostrophe –

10 Ḥāfiẓ, drink wine, be a libertine, be happy; but
    do not, like others, make the Koran a snare for hypocrisy –

links the motifs of love and wine with those of admonition, summing up the *ghazal*'s theme: honest *rindī* is preferable to hypocritical piety.

A similar structure is seen in Ḥāfiẓ's "Shiraz Turk" *ghazal* (QG3; see further Meisami 1990d: 136–7), which presents a pattern of 3 + 2 + 3 + 1.

1 Should that Turk of Shiraz take my heart into his hand,
   I'd give up, for his Hindu mole, all Samarqand and Bukhārā.
2 *Sāqī*, bring the last of the wine, for in Paradise you'll not find
   the banks of Ruknābād's stream, or Muṣallā's rose garden.
3 Alas! those jesting gypsies, so disgraceful, so disturbing,
   have robbed my heart of patience as Turks plunder the feast.
4 Of our imperfect love the beloved's beauty has no need:
   how should the beauteous face want rouge and whitener, mole and kohl?
5 From that daily-growing beauty that was Joseph's, I knew
   that love would bring Zulaykhā out from the veil of chastity.

6 Though you revile and curse me, yet I will pray for you;
   for bitter answers well become those sugared, ruby lips.
7 Listen to this advice, my love; for better than life itself
   do the fortunate young love the counsel of wise elders:
8 Talk of the minstrel and of wine; seek less the secret of Time,
   for none has solved, nor ever will, through wisdom that enigma.
9 You've sung a *ghazal*, threaded pearls; now come and sweetly sing,
      Ḥāfiẓ,
   that on your verse the sphere may fling the necklace of the Pleiades.

The first section of this *ghazal* (1–3) stresses, again, the love theme, expressed on the individual level and focussing on the speaker as lover, with the address to the *sāqī* occupying its central line (2). The second segment (4–5), at the poem's center, is generalized, despite the continued presence of a first-person speaker, which shifts from "we" (lovers in general) to "I" (introducing the specific example – the irresistible Joseph – which supports and illustrates the preceding generalization). Line 6 provides a transition between the love motif and that of advice, which must be offered even though the speaker may be reviled or rejected; the verbal repetition of the opening segment, however, which again represents a movement from general to specific (1: *agar ān Turk-i Shīrāzī* "if that Shirazi Turk", unspecified; 6: *agar dushnām farmāʾī* "if you curse me"), in moving from third to second person, statement to address, wish to *ḥāl*-clause, indicates that this is indeed the opening of a new segment. The conceit of "bitter answers adorning sugared lips" is, moreover, ambiguous: might not the "bitter answers" take the place of the sweet kisses the poet would prefer to offer his beloved?

The answers, however, are not that bitter. The advice itself (7–8) incorporates the twin imperatives *naṣīḥat gūsh kun* "listen to this advice", and *ḥadīs ... gū* "talk of", addressed to the "you" of line 6; instead of being admonitory, however, as in the previous *ghazal*, it conveys the message of *carpe diem* suggested in line 2, which 8 balances. Line 9, in which the poet addresses himself with the imperative "Come, sweetly sing" – almost as if the words were those of the prince, or a responsive hearer – functions as a cap, extolling the poem which has just been performed by insinuating a repetition, and also hinting at an appropriate reward; it also alludes to the poem's musical setting. While there is clearly a gap between composition and performance (the poet, in effect, tells his *rāvī* to summon him – the poet – to "replay", as it were, the *ghazal*), the association with song cannot be in doubt.

The *qaṣīda*, as the critics remind us, is a different matter – often polythematic (as indeed are many of Ḥāfiẓ's *ghazal*s, although in miniature, so to speak), declaimed rather than sung, performed in a more formal context, aimed at "the understanding". How then can a *qaṣīda* – which may often run to well over a hundred lines (Farrukhī's *qaṣīda* celebrating Maḥmūd of Ghazna's Somnath campaign, discussed in Chapter 6, is 175 lines long; some of Ibn al-Rūmī's run well over two hundred) – be organized so that it may be retained in the memory

of its reciter, and so that the audience can keep track of its progress, and know where they are at each successive stage?[7]

The answer is deceptively simple: the poet chooses a basic unit of length, on which he builds larger segments, often varying (but rarely radically) the basic unit, by means of amplification and abbreviation, for emphasis, to mark transitions (which also involves linking segments), and to move towards closure. This procedure can be illustrated by a *qaṣīda* by al-Buḥturī which celebrates Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Thaghrī's victory over the rebel Bābak, in which the basic unit is five lines (al-Buḥturī 1963, 2: 1253–6; the *qaṣīda* is discussed by Sperl 1989: 28–37; text and translation in ibid.: 181–3, 194–6. Sperl's division of this poem into larger segments differs slightly from my own; but his breakdown into smaller units is roughly the same. On the patron and the victory over Bābak see al-Buḥturī 1963, 1: 5–9, nn. 35, 37; Sperl 1989: 196 n. 33).[8]

The *qaṣīda*'s structure may be analyzed as follows:

Nasīb (1–8)	5	1–2: The reprovers +
		3–5: The *aṭlāl*
	5	6–8: The lady +
Madīḥ (9–38)		9–10: The patron (transition)
	5	11–15: General
	5	16–20: Warfare
	5	21–25: Battle (1)
	5	26–30: Battle (2)
	5	31–33: Battle (3) +
		34–35: Digression (Rūm)
	3	36–38: Conclusion

Lines 1–5 link the topics of the blamers and the *aṭlāl*:

1 Why do you hasten to blame [an] ardent love? Did I bemoan anything other than campsite remnants and spring abodes?...

3 O abode which Time has altered and whose gathered folk the Fates have separated from it....

5 Do not ask for my tears to be betrothed to you, for the pain of parting has left none in my eyes.

The address to the blamers (1) is followed by a third-person reference to them (2: *ʿadhalū fa-mā ʿadalū*, "They reproved but did not restrain [my heart from love]"), forming a tightly-constructed opening segment and introducing the topics of blame and of heedlessness (2: *wa-daʿaw fa-mā wajadū sh-shajiyya samīʿā*, "they called but found no listener in the afflicted one"). The transition to the *aṭlāl* is effected by means of *iltifāt* (see Chapter 7): *Yā dāru ghayyarahu z-zamānu*; the line also introduces the motif of division and integration (*farraqat ... shamlahā l-majmūʿā* "[the Fates] have separated ... its gathered folk"), alluding also to the rhetorical figure of *jamʿ wa-tafrīq* which is an informing figure in this

poem (see Sperl 1989: 29–33, and Chapter 7 below), echoed again in line 5 (*jawā l-firāqi* "the pain of parting").

The transition to the next segment, which juxtaposes the lady (who exemplifies separation) and the patron (who unites in himself all the causes of glory), is marked by the shift to the former (6: *wa-marīḍati l-laḥaẓāti* "a lady of languid glances"); the segment concludes with a repetition of the separation motif which echoes the phrasing of line 5 (8: *hawla l-firāqi* "the dread of parting"). Lady and general are linked by the motifs of firm resolve and of disclosure/surrender:

7   At her sight ["when she appears", *tabdū*] the lover wilfully reveals [*yubdī*] his secret and the steadfast one is left confounded.
8   Her resolute strength [*ʿazamātuhā*] when she saw the dread of parting to be gruesome, nearly restrained my tears.
9   To the firm resolves [*ʿazāʾimu*] of Abū Saʿīd al-Ṣāmiṭī the vicissitudes of Time offer surrender [*tubdī . . . khuḍūʿā*].
10   A King who divides [*mufarriqun*] what his hands possess while in him all implements of glory are united [*jumiʿat . . . jamīʿā*].

Line 9 might be considered typical of al-Buḥturī's abrupt transitions; but as Sperl notes, the repetition of words derived from the verbs *ʿazama* "to resolve" and *badā* "to appear" establish relations of both congruence and contrast between lady and patron: "*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. . . . [The lady's] appearance makes the lover wilfully divulge (*fa-yubdī*) his secrets, while the ruler's resolve makes Fate offer (*tubdī*) surrender" (ibid.: 36). The strong semantic connection compensates for the seemingly abrupt transition: in fact, the entire segment (6–10) constitutes the transition, concluding with a line of general praise of the patron's virtues (10) which reiterates the unity/division motif. Lines 1–10 thus constitute a macrosegment incorporating both *nasīb* and *takhalluṣ*.

Line 11 begins the *madīḥ* proper, which culminates at 33 (followed by a 2-line digression), and is divided into smaller segments, the whole framed by *tajnīs*:

11   He outstrips [*badhdha*] Kings in nobility and grace and for the star of munificence sets the time of rise.
33   Until you captured [their city of] al-Badhdh [*ẓafarta bi-Badhdhihim*] and left it downcast while its boundary had been well fortified.

The division into smaller segments is accomplished by the use of verbs in the past tense to begin them, and of various other devices to conclude them. Lines 11–15, introduced by *badhdha* "he outstrips", and containing further variations on the "unity/division" motif, enumerate the patron's virtues in a series of parallel phrases, each of which occupies the same position at the opening of the line: *mutayaqqiẓu l-aḥshāʾi* "alert in his innermost being" (12); *samḥa l-khalāʾiqi*

"generous of character" (13; followed by *lil-ʿawādhili ʿāṣiyan*, "he defies the reprovers", i.e. with his noble deeds, an allusion to the opening line which contrasts the patron's firm resolution with the lover's distress); *ḍakhma d-dasāʾiʿi* "magnanimous of nature" (14); concluding with *mutatābiʿa s-sarrāʾi waḍ-ḍarrāʾi*, "he follows good and bad (days) successively" (15; emending Sperl's translation to preserve the parallelism).

The shift to a negative verbal construction (*lam yukhlaq*, "He was not created"), the two words of which connect 15a and b (*mutatābiʿa . . . lam/yukhlaq . . .*), paves the way for transition to the next segment (16–20), introduced by *talqāhu*, "You meet him", which continues according to the same pattern (a slight variation [18] anticipates closure of this segment): *mutanaṣṣitan li-ṣada s-sarīkhi ilā l-waghā*, "He hearkens to the echo of the cry to battle" (17; establishing a further contrast between heedful patron and heedless lover); *wa-laqad yabītu l-layla* "often he passes the night" (18); *mutayaqqiẓan kal-ufʿuwāni* "[he is] alert like the snake" (19). Definitive closure of this first part of the *madīḥ* is achieved by the formulaic *lillāhi darruka* which introduces a summation of 15–19:

20 How excellent you are, Ibn Yūsuf, a hero who gives noble actions their unattainable due!

Lines 21–25 amplify what has gone before by depicting the relations of the patron with his tribe. Introduced by another verb – *nabbahta min Nabhāna majdan*, "You have reawakened in Nabhān a lofty glory" (21), this segment focuses first on the general (21–22), then on the tribe (23–24), to conclude by repeating the *lillāhi darruka* of the opening line (20):

25 How excellent you were on the day of Bābak, a knight and hero knocking at the gates of death!

This line (and, in fact, the segment as a whole) forms the transition to the lengthy passage which focuses primarily on the battle of Badhdh (26–35); it too is divided into smaller segments by the use of verbs in the past tense: *lammā atāka* "when he came to you" (26) introduces a description of the heated battle and the general's prowess (26–30), while the conclusion is marked by the shift to the second person:

30 You adorned it [the battle] with the radiance of a head rendered bald by wearing battle helmets.

The parallel construction *lammā raʾawka* "when they saw you" (31) prefaces the account of the enemies rout and the capture of Badhdh (31–33), announced in the central line of this segment:

33 *Ḥattā ẓafarta bi-Badhdhihim fa-taraktahu / lidh-dhulli jānibuhu wa-kāna manīʿā*

33 Until you captured [their city of] al-Badhdh and left it downcast while its boundary had been well fortified.

As Sperl points out, *taraktahu* "you left it" echoes line 7 of the *nasīb*: "the beloved 'leaves' the steadfast one confounded (*tattariku*, 7), the ruler 'leaves' the city of the enemies cast low.... Again, the moral victory of the beloved is countered by a victory of the ruler;" by contrast, the despairing lover "has not even a tear to leave behind (*la-taraktu*, 4), as opposed to beloved and King who 'leave' their victims confounded." Similarly, just as the lady's "mere appearance disconcerts the lover, the mere vision of [the ruler] confuses the enemy" (ibid.: 36–7).

Lines 34–35, a digression which refers to the general's other victories against the Byzantines, concludes with a repetition of the verbal pattern which links this segment:

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 [*lammā ramayta*] the Byzantines in it with lean
     [racehorses] that gave the battling knights their swiftest pace.

Sperl connects 35 with 36, and it might be possible to see 35–37 as parallel to 31–34; but 36 functions better as a general conclusion to praise of the general's achievements in battle which, through its summary nature, suggests the move towards closure, while the final line reaffirms the general principle:

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?

The only significant anomalies in this fairly regular succession of five-line units are the linking of *nasīb* and *takhalluṣ* (effectively underscoring the parallel between lady and general) and the apocopated movement towards closure (36–38) which follows the digression of 34–35. This sort of patterning used to conclude segments, rather than to begin new ones, is frequent, and will be seen in Farrukhī's New Year *qaṣīda*, discussed below. The recurrence of such devices as noted above is consonant with those discerned by Hamori in his analysis of al-Mutanabbī's *Sayfiyyāt* (1992), and shows that far from being specific to that poet, they were widely used by other poets both earlier and later.

The five-line unit is widely used in both Abbasid and later poetry (see e.g. Farrukhī's Somnath *qaṣīda*, Chapter 6; Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī's praise of the Prophet, Chapter 7; Abū Tammām's Amorium *qaṣīda*, Chapter 9), perhaps because, having an uneven number of lines, it allows for different shades of balance and contrast, as well as for special effects at the center of the segment (e.g., the transition to the *dār* in line 3 of al-Buḥturī's *qaṣīda*). Also, its relatively short length makes it easy to memorize and to grasp on hearing. But it is not the only unit employed. Farrukhī's Ramaḍān *qaṣīda*, for example (53 lines), is based on a unit of six, with some variation.

Nasīb

1–6	6	Departure of Ramaḍān (*Ramaẓān raft*)
7–12	6	Arrival of the feast; description (*Ramaẓān gar bi-shud*)
13	1	Self-address (center of *nasīb*)
14–19	6	Obligation (amplification of 13); transition to *ghazal* (19: *muṭribā*)

[20: *Tajdīd-i maṭlaʿ*]

20–25	6	*Ghazal*: love-plaint > *takhalluṣ* (25b)

Madīḥ

26–31	6	*Takhalluṣ* (name at 26, center of *qaṣīda*); first segment of praise (lineage); concludes with summary (*gar hunar bāyad hast . . .*)
32–36	5	Evil eye; address to the *sipandī*
37–41	5	Second segment of praise: Muḥammad's magnificence (comparison to moon); Muḥammad as exemplar (41: *har ki shāhanshāhī . . .*)
42–47	6	Third segment of praise: Muḥammad as ideal of kingship (framed by *malik ān bāshad . . . shukr-i Īzad*)
48–53	6	Aporia > *duʿā*

The first segment (1–6) concludes with the "cutting short of discourse" *topos* (*chikunam qiṣṣa-yi dirāz īn ba-chi kār ast ma-rā*, "Why should I make a long story (of this); what is it to me?") which introduces the description of the feast (7–12). The verbal parallelism between 1 and 7 (*Ramaẓān raft; Ramaẓān gar bi-shud*) neatly marks the openings of the first two segments as well as stressing the contrast between past and present. The poet's self-apostrophe (13b: *Farrukhī tā bi-tavānī ba-juz īn bāda ma-khur*, "Farrukhī, as long as you can, drink nothing but this wine") stands at the numerical center of the *nasīb*, separating the preceding *waṣf* (7–12) from the related third segment (14–19): the benefits enjoyed by the poet (represented by the feast) make it incumbent upon him to produce a panegyric to his benefactor, Amīr Muḥammad. This is not yet to be, however, as the poet, concluding this segment with the apostrophe to the minstrel (19), moves to the *ghazal* of the fourth segment (20–25), a move emphasized by the *tajdīd-i maṭlaʿ (20)*.

This *ghazal*, in effect, provides a thematic parallel to the first segment (departed Ramaḍān = departed beloved); the *nasīb* is thus carefully balanced around its central line:

Ramaḍān > feast > self-naming < obligation < departed beloved.

By contrast, the *madīḥ*, which begins with the naming of the *mamdūḥ* at the *qaṣīda*'s central line (26, neatly paralleling the poet's self-naming at 13), is arranged in segments of 6 + 5 + 5 + 6 lines, framed by the patron's name and the poet's exclamation and reference to "this place". The two longer segments

consist of general praise; the two shorter ones – the address to the *sipandī* (32–36; strictly speaking, a digression) and the description of Muḥammad's magnificence as he reviews his court (37–41, which includes the ambivalent comparison of him to the moon) – direct attention to specific places in which problematic topics are to be found. Both, moreover, focus on the motif of sight, the effects of the evil eye (32) contrasted with the actual sight of the ruler (36), linked by the transitional motif of 36:

36   It is no marvel that at the sight of that great lord the vision in the eyes
        of the weak-sighted man is increased.

The final segment of praise (42–47) ends with the extravagant, and ironic,

47   Thanks be to God that today I am in this place to which all the kings
        of the world flee for refuge.

It is followed by the equally ironic and enigmatic *aporia* (see Chapter 3) which introduces the five-line *duʿā*.

   In this *qaṣīda* transitions are indicated primarily by shifts of focus: from departed Ramaḍān to the arriving feast (6–7), from the feast, and the *sāqī*, to the poet (12–13), from the poet to (momentarily) the *muṭrib* (19) and back to the poet (now speaking as lover, 20), from poet to interlocutor to prince (25–26), to *sipandī* (33), to poet and interlocutor (37–38), to poet (47–48). Moreover, in the *nasīb* each transition from segment to segment also involves a "false transition" suggesting the much-delayed move to the *madīḥ*. Such rapid shifts of focus are typical of much poetry, both Persian and Arabic; here they lend a quality of "shiftiness" to the *qaṣīda* as a whole, reflecting the unstable situation of the prince himself (and the shifting allegiances of his courtiers – among them, his court poet).

   In Farrukhī's New Year *qaṣīda* to Maḥmūd of Ghazna the basic unit of segmentation is, again, five and multiples thereof.[9]

<div align="center">Nasīb</div>

1–10	5	1–5: Description of garden
	5	6–10: Praise of spring

<div align="center">Madīḥ</div>

11–15	5	*Takhalluṣ*; general praise of the victorious ruler
16–25	10	First catalogue: Maḥmūd's conquests (Samanids at center of list [21], Indian rulers at end [24–25])
26–35	10	Transition; Maḥmūd's exploits in India (amplification of Indian motif, above)
		Second catalogue: war elephants
		Result: land cleansed of pagans
36–54	9	Transition: Maḥmūd as universal ruler
		Third catalogue: his achievements; their status as object lesson
55–58	4	*Duʿā*

The first segment of the *nasīb* (1–5) concludes with the apostrophe to spring, which together with line 6 forms a transition (again, at the center of the *nasīb*) linking this with the next segment (6–10), in which spring is directly addressed throughout (*bahārā . . . ba-ṣūratgarī*, "O spring … in image-making") and the beauties of the garden ascribed to spring's matchless artistry. The *takhalluṣ* (11–12), followed by three lines of general praise (13–15), sets against spring's achievements those of the ruler whose assembly is the setting for the poem:

11 How fair and pleasing you are; but not as (beautiful) as the assembly of
     the victorious ruler.

If spring is an artist which triumphs over others (Mānī, Āzar, 8), Maḥmūd, the *shahriyār-i muẓaffar*, is a conqueror whose triumphs over other kings bring to his people the prosperity represented by the royal assembly.

Each of the catalogues which follow (16–25, 26–35, 36–54) begins with a brief two-line preamble. Lines 16–17 address the ruler directly (*Ayā az hama-yi shahriyārān muqaddam*, "O foremost of all rulers") before listing those who opposed him and so met their ruin (17–25). In 26–27 the poet congratulates the kingdom (*zahī mulk-rā . . . zahī khalq-rā*, "Happy the kingdom … happy the people") which enjoys such a ruler, then addresses him again (*tu kardī tuhī*, "you emptied"), which introduces the catalogue of war elephants. This catalogue ends with a summary which moves towards closure of this segment prior to beginning the third and longest catalogue.

33 With such mighty elephants you seize the treasure of Kisra; with such
     mighty elephants you destroy the palace of Caesar.
34 You have cleansed the land of the pagan's unbelief; you have emptied
     [*tuhī kardī*] the world of heresy.
35 The age has found tranquility from your activity; the faith of the
     Prophet has been made strong by you.

This emphasis on tranquility marks the closure of this segment; the next, the third and final catalogue, is introduced by two lines of generalization (36–37, paralleling 16–17, 26–27): the ruler's enemies cannot sleep for anxiety; what ruler would dare to oppose him? The movement towards closure in this lengthy catalogue is reminiscent of al-Buḥturī's *qaṣīda* discussed above: lines 48–49 depart from the predominant anaphora (resumed at 50), both dissipating its potential monotony and anticipating closure –

47 How many difficult mountains and high passes through which pigeons
     threaded their way,
48 On whose summit no eagle ever cast a shadow, nor has any guide found
     the way around it,
49 Have you traversed in a moment, with success and strength (granted
     by) God the Creator.

Lines 52–54 repeat this pattern (the insertion of a descriptive clause), leading up to the final summation:

54 Now whoever has seen those places repeats, in admonition, "God is Great!"

This line, in which closure is also marked by the initial *kunūn* "now", contrasting the present situation with the events described in the past, is followed immediately by the apocopated *duʿā* (55–59).

In the *qaṣīda*, both congruent and contrasting topics are arranged in contiguous and/or non-contiguous segments which observe relations of proportion and balance and are often combined into longer passages. The length of basic units is seldom less than four or more than seven lines; but the length of the larger passages they constitute may vary, particularly with respect to the *nasīb*. The length of the basic unit is generally established at the outset of the poem (though there are some exceptions – but these also observe rules of proportion, as in al-Mutanabbī's *qaṣīda* to Kāfūr discussed above); once established, variation becomes possible, as it will be recognized as such.[10]

Amplification, abbreviation, digression

Amplification and abbreviation function to create variety, to relieve the potential monotony of a series of equivalent segments, to indicate transition and closure, and to call attention to important places in the poem. Classical and medieval writers in the West discussed such techniques extensively: Aristotle, for example, noted the suitability of amplification for epideictic orations (under which panegyric was subsumed; see *Rhetoric* I.ix.40–41);[11] Cicero considered it appropriate for digressions, especially in the exordium of an oration, which was designed to appeal to the emotions (*De Oratore* II.lxxvii. 310–12; on ornament as a means of amplification see ibid. III.xxvi.104; on amplification in the peroration see *idem*, *De Partitione Oratoria* XV.52–60).

Geoffrey of Vinsauf, for whom amplification is a means of providing variety, lists eight techniques: "refinement or dwelling on a point [i.e. repetition, *interpretatio* or *expolitio*]; periphrasis; comparison [either overt, *aperta*, or hidden, *occulta*]; apostrophe; *prosopopeia*; digression; description; and opposition" (Gallo 1978: 70; cf. Kelly 1969: 133, 1978: 245; and see Geoffrey of Vinsauf 1967: 24–40). Amplification overlaps with ornamentation in that it "is the extension of tropes and figures.... The principle common to both ... is deflection from direct discourse.... Amplification provides the author with modal or formal techniques by which to achieve topical invention" (Kelly 1978: 245). Abbreviation (*brachylogia*, *brevitas*), by contrast, involves the minimalization of a topic; its techniques are seven: emphasis, *articulus* (brief, "staccato" speech), the ablative absolute, avoidance of repetition, implication, asyndeton (the avoidance of conjunctions), and the "fusion of many concepts in one, so that many may be seen in a single glance of the mind" (Geoffrey of Vinsauf 1967:

40–2; as Cairns points out, these techniques derive from the "figures of thought" of classical rhetoric – not "the over-precisely categorized 'figures of thought' of developed rhetoric," but the categories of "lengthy treatment magnifying the subject [*macrologia*]", "brief treatment minimizing the subject [*brachylogia*]", and "innovation upon old subject-matter" [1972: 118–19]).

Arabic rhetoricians customarily discuss amplification and abbreviation (or prolixity and brevity) under the rubrics *iṭnāb* and *ījāz* (the middle term being *musāwāh*, equivalency of wording [*lafẓ*] to idea or topic [*maʿnā*]). According to van Gelder, the first to make *ījāz* a technical term was al-Rummānī (d. 384/ 994) in his *Kitāb al-nukat fī iʿjāz al-Qurʾān* (1981: 83–4). Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī's *Kitāb al-Ṣināʿatayn* contains a lengthy chapter on *ījāz* and *iṭnāb*. Following al-Rummānī, he defines *ījāz* as being of two types, *qaṣr* ("paucity of words, multiplicity of meanings") and *hadhf* (ellipsis), strategies "restricted to the level of the sentence" (1986: 175; van Gelder 1981: 85). *Ijāz*, he states, "is for the elite," whereas *iṭnāb* is shared "by both the elite and the masses," which accounts for its use in royal decrees, "so that the populace may understand" (ibid.: 190); each has its appropriate place.

For early critics, discussions of *ījāz* remained restricted to sentences and individual lines; but some later writers considered it in relation to long portions of texts or to whole texts (van Gelder 1981: 86–7). Ibn Rashīq, however, notes that *tafsīr* ("explanation"), one of the figures of amplification, normally exceeds a single line, though it should avoid *taḍmīn* (syntactical dependence between lines). Among his examples (many of which consist of brief catalogues used to support an opening generalization) is this five-line segment from a *qaṣīda* by al-Mutanabbī addressed to the Būyid vizier Ibn al-ʿAmīd (1972, 2: 37; al-Mutanabbī 1967: 132; Arberry's translation).

39 Who will inform the desert Arabs that after leaving them I have
      beheld Aristotle and Alexander?
40 I was weary of the slaughter of bearing camels, then I was given
      hospitality by one who sacrifices purses of gold to those he entertains;
41 and I heard Ptolemy studying his own books, being at once king,
      Bedouin and city-dweller,
42 and I met all the men of learning, as if God had restored their souls and
      the ages.
43 They were set out as a calculation is set out first, then when you came,
      the whole was summed up at last.

The last line, Ibn Rashīq comments, "is a witty *tafsīr* with few equals in the poetry of others;" but in fact the whole passage is a *tafsīr* of the vizier's urbanity and erudition: he is the antithesis of the barbarian Arabs (a sentiment worthy of an Abū Nuwās), the heir to the culture and learning of the ages past, their living embodiment.

Further exceptions are provided by Ibn Sinān al-Khafājī (d. 466/1074) and Ibn Abī al-Iṣbaʿ (d. 654/1256). Ibn Sinān defines "the way in which words

indicate meanings" (*dalālat al-alfāẓ ʿalā al-maʿānī*) as of three sorts: *musāwāh*, equivalence; *tadhyīl* (the editor adds: or *iṭnāb*, or *taṭwīl*), "where the wording is in excess of the meaning;" and *ishāra*, "where the meaning is greater than the wording; that is, the brief [*mūjaz*] wording indicates a lengthy meaning [or: topic] by means of an allusion to it or a quick glance [*lamḥa*] at it" (1953: 243). "Praiseworthy *ījāz*" is "an indication [*īḍāḥ*] of the topic in the fewest possible words," he continues, finding this a sounder definition than al-Rummānī's "that (*ījāz*) is the expression [*ʿibāra*] of the topic in the fewest possible words," since "by saying 'indication' we guard ourselves against (cases where) the expression of the topic does not clarify it, so that people may differ in their understanding of it" (ibid.: 248). *Ījāz* is not praiseworthy in itself because it is not sought for itself; "the goal is (rather) the *maʿānī* and *aghrāḍ* whose expression is required, so that the wording becomes the path to the intended meanings; and if there are two ways, each leading with equal ease to the goal, one of them will be, however, more immediate [*aḥḍar*] and closer (to it) than the other" (ibid.: 251).

Ibn Sinān's later compatriot Ibn Abī al-Iṣbaʿ connects *ījāz* with the narrative portions of poems or prose works. Having discussed the classic example of *ījāz*, al-Aʿshā's treatment of the story of al-Samawʾal (1963: 459–61; see Chapter 6 below), he goes on to say:

> If someone asks, "What is then the difference between *ījāz* and *musāwāh*?" I would say: *musāwāh* can only pertain to a single *maʿnā* expressed by wording equivalent to it, which neither exceeds nor falls short of it, (while) *ījāz* relates to the relation of stories and anecdotes [*qiṣaṣ wa-akhbār*] which contain numerous different topics. In short, *musāwāh* pertains to the meanings of phrases [*jumal*] of which *bayts* and *fuṣūl* are composed, while *ījāz* pertains to *abyāt* and *fuṣūl*. (ibid.: 465)

Unlike Ibn Sinān, who devotes little attention to the topic, Ibn Abī al-Iṣbaʿ also discusses amplification (*basṭ*), defining it "as when the poet comes to a single topic which he could indicate in few words, and does so in many words in order that the wording may include other topics which will increase the beauty of the discourse" (ibid.: 544). He distinguishes *basṭ* from *istiqṣāʾ* (defined as the exhaustion of all aspects of a *maʿnā*, usually over several lines; ibid.: 540), on the grounds that "*istiqṣāʾ* consists in bringing together all those things which branch off from the topic or are generated by it," exhausting all possible aspects of the topic, "while *basṭ* consists in transferring the topic from *ījāz* to *iṭnāb* by expanding its expression, even though it may not exhaust all its aspects" (ibid.: 465). He does not, however, enumerate the techniques utilized for this purpose, although he discusses various appropriate figures under their separate headings.

Ibn Sinān's Persian contemporary Shams-i Qays, however, provides a list of figures of amplification, which he, too, terms *basṭ*.

> *Basṭ* is when (a poet) expresses an idea in many words and reinforces it in several ways, so that if a word has shared meanings he expresses his intent

thereby, and if an explanation is necessary to remove some obscurity he brings in something more. Metaphors and similes [*istiʿārāt va-tashbīhāt*] all pertain to *ījāz*; while *īghāl, takmīl, tabyīn, tafsīr, taqsīm, istiṭrād, tafrīʿ* ["penetration" (presumably combining topics), completion, clarification, explanation, division, digression, partition], and all those figures used to increase an expression or remove error pertain to amplification. (1909: 349)

Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī also discusses amplification and abbreviation with respect to description. "Some poets," he says, "aim at exaggeration in the multiplication of descriptions connected with their topic, and will bring together [*fa-yastaqṣī*; or "exhaust"; cf. Ibn Sinān] everything it actually possesses, and perhaps go beyond these to invent [*yukhayyilu*] descriptions which might be imagined to be true in that respect but are not so," in order to make them more affective. This is like exaggeration in "narratives and accounts [*al-ḥikāyāt wa-al-iqtiṣāṣāt*]." Other poets may take the road of abbreviation or that of equivalence; "and just as there are some poets who take in all aspects of a topic [*arkān al-maʿānī*], there are others who bring in all the descriptions by which the continuity of the segments is effected ... [while] others choose from descriptions only that aspect which is convincing and sufficient, and the segment contains no more than that" (1981: 292). Amplification by bringing in all possible related topics ("not all of which may be appropriate with relation to the goal") is permissible in long *qaṣīda*s (e.g. those of Dhū al-Rumma) but not in short ones; in poems of medium length one should avoid the noblest topics as well as conflicting ones, though this is permitted in long *qaṣīda*s (ibid.: 294).

A few examples of amplification and abbreviation from poems already considered will illustrate their function in conveying meaning. Bashshār's *qaṣīda* to ʿUqba ibn Salm employs amplification to provide variation on the basic unit of four (established in the *nasīb* but modified considerably throughout), to expand the *nasīb* until it constitutes fully half the poem, and to call attention to important topics.

<div align="center">Nasīb (1–22)</div>

1–8	Introduction	1–2	Greetings to the lady; her flashing black eyes; affliction/remedy
	Reminiscence	3–4	Past love (general: *rubba mamsan*)
		5–6	Past love (specific: *wa-ghadā l-khamīsi*)
		7–8	Separation (*thumma saddat*)/slander
9–12	Transition	9–11a	Don't blame the lady; deliver my message to her
		11b–12	Remind her of the past ...
13–21	Message	13–18	and of the girl's words (*wa-maqāla l-fatāti*)
	Response	19–21	"Everything passes" (*fa-stahallat*)
22	Conclusion	22	The poet reconciled (*fa-tasallaytu*)

Raḥīl (23–28)
(28–29 *takhalluṣ*)

Madīḥ (29–54)

29–38	General	29	*Mālikiyyun*
		30–32	(*Ayyuhā s-sāʾilī*)
		33–37	(*ḥarrama llāhu*)
		38	*aryaḥiyyun*
39–44	Specific		Account of the slave
45–53	General	45	(*Fa-jazā llāhu* . . .)
		47	(slander)
		50	(*malikun* . . .)
		53	Climax: defender of caliphs
54	Conclusion	54	Greetings to ʿUqba

The *qaṣīda* is divided into two nearly equal parts by the *takhalluṣ* (28) which separates the exordium (*nasīb* + *raḥīl*) from the *madīḥ*. The *nasīb* begins with two linked segments: (1–4) greetings to, and introduction of, the lady, via the affliction/remedy oxymoron, coupled with a general reminiscence of past love introduced by *rubba mamsan* "many an evening"; followed by (5–8) a specific reminiscence introduced by *wa-ghadā l-khamīsi* "and the morning of Thursday" and concluding with the lady's aversion (8: *thumma ṣaddat* "then she turned away") as the result of the slanderer's words. These two four-line segments are followed by a third (9–12) which forms a transition to the next passage: the poet entreats his friends not to blame the lady (*lā talūmā*, the dual imperative paralleling that of *ḥayyiyā*, 1), and begs them to deliver his message.

The core of this message, couched in indirect discourse, begins at 13 (*wa-maqāla l-fatāti*, "and the girl saying") and constitutes the first amplified passage (13–18); it concludes with the sentential "The promise of the noble man is a binding obligation; so fulfill (yours) . . .". The following four-line passage contains the lady's response (*fa-stahallat bi-ʿabratin thumma qālat*, "she let fall a tear, and then said", *thumma qālat* paralleling *thumma ṣaddat* in 8); her equally sentential observation, "All things come to an end" (21), suggests movement towards closure; and the poet's resignation (*fa-tasallaytu*, "and I consoled myself" [22]), parallels *fa-stahallat* in 21.

The six-line *raḥīl* provides another instance of variation: while its six lines might suggest another amplification, it is in fact an example of abbreviation, as shown by the fact that the whole passage is a single clause; a normal *raḥīl* tends to be marked off into segments. Following the *takhalluṣ* at line 28, the first segment of the *madīḥ*, introduced by *Mālikiyyun* (which, with *aryaḥiyyun* at 38, frames this first larger passage of praise) contains four lines in which the poet praises ʿUqba in general terms. He then moves to a six-line segment (33–38), introduced by the oath *ḥarrama llāhu* "God forbid!", which dwells on his generosity; the combined motifs of generosity and courage (37) are carried into the concluding line of the segment:

38   *Aryaḥiyyun lahu yadun tumṭiru n-nay   la wa-ukhrā summun ʿalā l-aʿdāʾi*
    A magnanimous man whose one hand rains beneficence, the other
        poison upon his foes.

(We may also note the symmetry which surrounds the *raḥīl*: 6 + 4 // 6 // 4 + 6).

The next, six-line segment (39–44) moves to examples of ʿUqba's generosity
towards the poet (*qad kasānī* "he clothed me" [39]; *wa-habānī* "and gave me"
[40]). While in length it balances the preceding segment, in content it is totally
different; the story of the slave, magnified out of proportion, occupies five of the
six lines, concluding with *fa-tanajjaztuhu* "and I asked him to fulfill his promise"
(44). The two segments which follow are of five lines each, suggesting
movement towards closure (and we see another symmetry emerging: the first
and last segments of the *madīḥ*, of ten lines each – 4 + 6, 5 + 5 – frame
the second, central section, the story of the slave, whose importance is thus
emphasized. Moreover, the "slave" passage balances the speech of Sulaymā in
the *nasīb* in relation to the poem's center).

The first of these segments (45–49) moves from the personal back to the
general, beginning with

45   *Fa-jazā llāhu ʿan akhīka bna Salmi   ḥīna qalla l-maʿrūfu khayra l-jazāʾī*
    May God requite your brother Ibn Salm, when generosity is sparse,
        with the best of rewards

(with a perhaps ironic echo of *ḥarrama llāhu* [33]), and concluding:

49   *Yashtarī l-ḥamda bith-thanā wa-yarā dh-dham   ma faẓīʿan kal-ḥayyati
    r-raqshāʾī*
    He purchases praise with praise, and considers blame as abhorrent as
        the speckled serpent.

The final segment begins

50   *Malikun yafraʿu l-manābira bil-faḍ   li wa-yasqī d-dimāʾa yawma d-dimāʾī*
    A king who exalts the pulpits with his virtue, and draws copious blood
        on the day of bloodshed

(again, with an echo of *Mālikiyyun* [29]), sums up with a few more hyperbolic
generalities, and concludes with the greeting to ʿUqba, wishing him health
wherever he may be.

The variations in this poem may reflect the fact that it dates from an early
period as yet little affected by the increasing tendency towards regularization; in
many ways its symmetries resemble more those of the brief lyrics discussed
above (including Bashshār's own) rather than the more predictable proportions
which mark the poetry of later generations. But the symmetries are none
the less pronounced. Moreover, circularity is achieved by the repetition of the
"greetings" motif in the opening and final lines and the positioning of the
takhalluṣ at the center; while two of the references to slanderers (8, 47 [the third

is at 14], occupying the same numerical position in relation to the poem's opening and closing lines) and to death (21, 41, separated by equivalent intervals) establish thematic links important to the reading of the poem.

Farrukhī's New Year *qaṣīda* to Maḥmūd of Ghazna, in which the image of the garden links *nasīb* and *duʿā*, expands the *madīḥ*, as we have seen, by the insertion of three catalogues. The first (18–25) lists the opponents Maḥmūd has defeated; the second (28–32) names the war elephants taken from India; the third and longest (38–51), including feats both of personal bravery and of military conquest and thus both more extensive and more generalized, concludes with mention of the many fortresses levelled and armies defeated by Maḥmūd, presented as an object lesson (54). The effect of these catalogues (unusual in panegyric; narratives are more customary) is not merely to demonstrate Maḥmūd's achievements, but to reveal the poet's admonitory intent: each is linked internally by anaphora (*khilāf-i tu* "opposition to you", identified as the cause of the downfall of Maḥmūd's enemies, in the first; *chun* "such as", preceding the names of the elephants, in the second; *basā* "how many", "many a . . .", in the third), a device generically associated with admonition, as is the word *ʿibrat*. (See further Chapter 7.)

In Farrukhī's Ramaḍān *qaṣīda* the *nasīb* is amplified by the use of not one but four separate topics: (1) the departure of Ramaḍān and arrival of ʿĪd al-Fiṭr, amplified by the personification of Ramaḍān (1–6); (2) celebration of the feast, amplified by description of the banquet and the *sāqī* (7–13a); (3) the poet's obligation to the prince, with the explicit admission of digression (13b–19); and (4) the love-plaint, set off from the rest by *tajdīd-i maṭlaʿ*. The symmetry of this disposition has been discussed above; the amplifications give the *nasīb* equal weight with the *madīḥ*, while the three "false transitions" further call attention to its length.

The effect of this amplified *nasīb* is to establish two major contrasts essential to the reading of the *madīḥ*: between past and present – the departed month of fasting and the newly arrived feast; and between celebration and despair (note that the "lost love" motif comes after the "compensation" of the royal feast). The contrast between pious Ramaḍān and the luxurious feast parallels that between pious Maḥmūd and luxury-loving Muḥammad; that between the poet's enjoyment of his prince's favour and distress at his beloved's desertion evokes the contrast between Muḥammad's present prosperity and his impending deposition. The contrast between the departed month of fasting and the present feast is reinforced in the *madīḥ* by the repetition of words such as *kunūn* "now", *aydar* "here", and others which emphasize the present time and place, serving further to underline the instability of the present circumstances. Against this background, the topics selected for amplification in the *madīḥ* acquire deeper significance. The first of these is Muḥammad's noble lineage and his resemblance to Maḥmūd (28–30), which not only recalls the contrast between Ramaḍān and the feast in the *nasīb* but also suggests that between Muḥammad and Masʿūd; for if Muḥammad physically resembled Maḥmūd, Masʿūd was more like him in military ability and (as was at least presumed at the time) in

statecraft. The second, properly a digression, is the address to the *sipandī*. While it is not uncommon for *qaṣīda*s to contain a wish (normally in the *duʿā*) that the evil eye be averted from the ruler, Farrukhī's expansion of this topic, at the beginning of the *madīḥ*, is, to my knowledge, unique in the *qaṣīda* tradition.

32 May God keep the eyes of the evil far from him, especially today, when
      his glory is even greater.
33 *Sipandī*, do not sit idle; rise and bring *sipand*, *sipand*, that I may make a
      censer for you from my precious eyes;
34 And if you have no kindled coals ready to hand, you may light your
      coals at the flame of that great king's majesty.
35 Avert the wounding eye from such a king with *sipand*; may that
      beauteous countenance be praised!

Framed by the two repetitions of the aversion *topos*, the descriptive lines at the center evoke the lack-compensation *topos* of the *nasīb*: the poet's eyes (precious, *girāmī*, also suggesting heavy, *girānī*) are heavy from weeping for his lost love (implicitly, for the impending loss of his patron); while the notion that the *sipandī* may kindle his coals from the prince's greatness (even greater on this auspicious feast-day) is ironic, since in view of the circumstances such a procedure could scarcely be considered efficacious.

A third topic chosen for amplification is the description of the ruler on parade, surrounded by his troops and entourage, which follows the invocation to the *sipandī* (after a single transitional line) and in which the comparison of the prince to the moon, rather than the sun, is explained by a rather tenuous *tafsīr* (a figure of amplification):

37 Saw you the king today upon that vast plain, before that cavalcade and
      that auspicious banner?
38 You asked what he resembled, and I said, "He is like the moon with an
      army of stars."
39 I said the moon, because in the Arab tongue the day's source is
      feminine, while the moon is masculine.

The relevance of Arabic gender is questionable (Persian itself lacks gender); moreover, the broader implications of this comparison would scarcely have been lost on the audience: the waning moon (Muḥammad) is about to be replaced by the rising sun (Masʿūd).[12] The final amplification of Muḥammad's superiority to all other kings both past and present (46–47), which precedes the *aporia* leading to the *duʿā*, further supports the *qaṣīda*'s ambivalencies and reinforces its subtext: recognition of the prince's impending fate and the conflicting feelings thereby aroused.

Manūchihrī's New Year *qaṣīda* to Masʿūd commemorating his ill-fated campaign against Būritigīn also features an extended *nasīb* in which, as noted above, the exact point of transition to the *madīḥ* is not clearly marked, as it is embedded in a lengthy passage of indirect discourse. The amplifying techniques

are personification and extended metaphor: the conflict between winter and
spring, in which Nawrūz is personified as an absent ruler, Winter as an enemy
who seizes the opportunity to invade, the North Wind as a spy who informs the
ruler of the state of his kingdom, and the feast of Sada as the vanguard of
the armies of Nawrūz, serves as a topical allegory (see further Chapter 8). The
tension between Masʿūd's apparent triumphs and the reality of his circumstances
is reflected in the use of the optative throughout the *madīḥ*, in which two topics
are selected for amplification – the promise to restore the prosperity of Masʿūd's
court (35–39) and that of universal rule (40–50) – followed by the
(abbreviated) promise of the destruction of his enemies (51–52) which
precedes the two final topics of the *madīḥ*: the inflated description of Masʿūd's
bridge-building (51–56) and the equally inflated account of his "defeat" of
Būritigīn (57–62), in which Masʿūd's failure to dispose of this chief is given a
flattering interpretation:

61 He was a viper, and when you approach a viper it retreats in fear to its
    narrow hole in a cave.
62 If our king did not kill him it was because no prince ever committed so
    shameful an act as killing a snake.

The depiction of Būritigīn as a viper implies his continued menace; moreover,
the cause of Masʿūd's failure – his forced withdrawal across the bridge lest his
retreat be cut off by an approaching Saljuq contingent – is nowhere mentioned.
The bulk of the *madīḥ*, with its use of the optative, reads like an extended *duʿā*
against which the two actual events recorded – the bridge-building and the
campaign – stand out in sharp, and ironic, contrast.

   We will see more examples of these techniques in the following chapters. In
concluding this one, I wish to turn to more general points concerning the
poem's overall structure, before discussing specific types of structure in Chapters
5 and 6.

The shape of the poem

Poems – be they *qaṣīdas*, *qiṭʿas*, *ghazals*, sonnets, ballads, haikus – have shapes.
(I prefer the term "shape" to that of "form", to avoid the issue of fixed forms –
fourteen-line sonnets, seventeen-syllable haikus, four-hemistich *rubāʿīs* are all
forms that give specific shapes to poems.) Arabic and Persian poems have shapes
– are shaped. Their shapes are not the result of a mere accumulation of lines (as
has often been supposed), nor yet of *fuṣūl* or of the type of segments I have been
describing – which is why I object to "building-block" models. A poem is more
than a stack of blocks; it is a house the parts of which are ordered with respect to
proper proportions, a necklace whose gems have been selected and strung with
precision, according to an overall design. Fine gems strung at random lose their
value; a house built without a plan would be crooked, crazy, uninhabitable.
A shapeless poem would possess neither beauty nor effect.

What gives poems their shape? The first principle is proportion, not merely between *fuṣūl* or segments but between the larger divisions of the poem. As we saw in Chapter 3, Averroes identified three of the Aristotelian divisions of the "art of eulogy" as present also in the "poetry of the Arabs" (i.e., the *qaṣīda*): the opening, corresponding to "the part that forms the introduction to an oration," in which "they mention the abodes and traces and sing of love" (the *nasīb*); the middle (the *madīḥ*); and "the part [that] performs the function of the conclusion to an oration," usually "a plea on behalf of the praised person or an encomium of the poem that has been recited" (1953: 217). Further, a poem must be of a certain magnitude – not too short, or too long, with respect to its content and purpose (see ibid.: 212–3). It is the "middle" of the poem – the "discursive" eulogy – which carries the most weight (and, as we have noted, is the least often discussed by the critics); it is the beginning and end, however, which leave the greatest impact, as they are the first and last things to strike the ears of the hearers, attracting them into the poem in the first place, and getting them out of it with a line that sticks in the mind.

If we look at the typical panegyric *qaṣīda*, this proportional assessment seems about right. In the overwhelming majority of *qaṣīda*s, both Arabic and Persian, the preponderant weight is in the middle: the *nasīb* rarely exceeds ten or twelve lines; the *duʿāʾ* (or other peroration) is normally two to four; the middle is of indeterminate and variable length (although proportioned in terms of its own internal divisions), and may be very long indeed. The same is true of the shorter *khamriyya*, *zuhdiyya* and *ghazal*: a short "scene-setting" opening is followed by a longer mid-section (description of the wine and the drinkers; narrative or dialogue about the visit to the tavern; homiletic sermon; portrayal of the lover's distress, etc.) and by a brief conclusion (sexual conquest, or song; final exhortation to piety; praise of the beloved, plea for her favour, etc.). Even short *qiṭʿa*s or *ghazal*s generally conform to the same proportional distributions.

Generally. But then we come to the exceptions; and when there are exceptions this is often a deliberate indication that something particular is going on in the poem (or outside of it, to which it is meant to refer) that is not necessarily being said, but which is meant to be understood. Bashshār's *qaṣīda* to ʿUqba, for example, falls neatly into two halves, with the *mamdūḥ* named at the center – a position of value, to be sure, but in this case somewhat equivocal. Far too much has happened in the *nasīb* – whose length is further pointed to by the contrasting brevity of the *raḥīl* – for it to be dismissed by the hearer as yet another traditional introduction. The same is true of Farrukhī's Ramaḍān *qaṣīda* – again, with the *mamdūḥ* named at the center – where the *nasīb* contains not one but three distinct movements (the longest one – the description of the feast, with its turn at the poet's self-apostrophe – occupying its middle portion), the last of which is, in conventional terms, inappropriate to the occasion, though not to the circumstances. Manūchihrī's New Year *qaṣīda*, with its "shifty *takhalluṣ*" (to apply Losensky's term to the *qaṣīda*), its blurring of the divisions between *nasīb* and *madīḥ*, is another case in point.

Or take Abū Nuwās's panegyric to Hārūn al-Rashīd (see Chapter 5), in which wine occupies the central position, and the praise passage is extremely brief (four out of 13 lines). While this might be said to anticipate the proportions of the panegyric *ghazal*, where the love theme outweighs the brief concluding praise, there is a clear difference: Abū Nuwās's beloved, wine, is no analogue for the ruler (although they have parallel qualities), but a preferred alternative. When proportion is skewed or violated – at any level, from that of the line to that between the divisions of the poem – it should then trigger a response: Watch out! (Or, Listen up!). Something is out of balance – something besides the poem.

Averroes also compared the *qaṣīda* to an oration, as well as to a demonstrative lecture, in terms of the arrangement and proportions of its parts. This is no idle comparison, still less a misunderstanding of Aristotle – Averroes knew both his Aristotle and his logic (of which both rhetoric and poetry were a part). The principle is that of function: what does the beginning of an oration/a lecture/a *qaṣīda* do? its middle part(s)? its conclusion? Averroes does not go into detail on the subject; but we may perhaps fill in the blanks by asking, how is a *qaṣīda* (or more generally, a poem) like an oration?

The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* defined the "popular division" of the parts of a speech as six (*exordium, narratio, partitio, confirmatio, refutatio/reprehensio, conclusio*):

> The Introduction is the beginning of the discourse, and by it the hearer's mind is prepared for attention. The Narration or Statement of Facts sets forth the events that have occurred or might [have] occurred. By means of the Division we make clear what matters are agreed upon and what contested, and announce what points we intend to take up. Proof is the presentation of our arguments, together with their corroboration. Refutation is the destruction of our adversaries' arguments. The conclusion is the end of the discourse, framed in accordance with the principles of the art. (1.3.4; quoted by Vickers 1990: 68–9)

Bear in mind that this is an idealized, schematized, description of a judicial oration designed to influence a judge (compare Ibn Qutayba's idealized, schematized description of a *qaṣīda* designed to influence a patron), and that amplification and abbreviation, as well as a certain flexibility in the sequence of the "middle" parts, can be used to modify this ideal form. Discussion of the parts of the speech by the author of the *Ad Herennium* and by Cicero suggest some types of modification.

> Both ... see the structure of an oration as providing a variety of ways of bringing pressure to bear upon the judge, direct and indirect, and of affecting his judgement of the opponent. There are two kinds of exordium, the direct (*principium*), which uses plain language to make the auditor 'well-disposed, receptive, and attentive', and the subtle or indirect

(*insinuatio*), 'which by dissimulation and indirection unobtrusively steals into the mind of the auditor'. (Quoted in ibid.: 69)

Say no more; we can already distinguish between, say, Abū Tammām's "The sword gives truer tidings than books" and Farrukhī's reference, in his love-plaint, to the "market of the heart-sellers of Khurasan". Further, "The *narratio* is by no means a neutral statement of facts, for if used skilfully the orator can 'turn every detail to our advantage so as to win the victory', both by 'winning belief' and 'incriminating an adversary'" (ibid.) – al-Mutanabbī's Kharshana *qaṣīda* comes to mind.

> There are three types of narrative ... 'legendary, historical, and realistic' ... [but] whichever form we use, the *narratio* ought to be 'brief, clear, and plausible' ... plausibility being achieved if the story told has character-istics 'that appear in real life', such as action appropriate to character (*decorum personae*), coherent motives, opportune time and space for 'the events about to be narrated', all of which will bring verisimilitude. (ibid.)

Here we come up against an apparent problem (or perhaps a pseudo-problem): a *qaṣīda* can have two *narratio*s – one of events concerning the poet, one of events concerning the patron; again, the Kharshana *qaṣīda* provides an instance. As for the *partitio*,

> Since the opposed parties are bound to disagree, [it] divides up the points at issue, showing 'in what we agree with our opponents and what is left in dispute; as a result of this some definite problem is set for the auditor on which he ought to have his attention fixed.' ... Here brevity, completeness, are essential, above all the orator should refer to the heads of his division, no more. (ibid.: 70)

In the *qaṣīda*, the "*partitio*" often occurs (implicitly or explicitly) in the *nasīb* or the *takhalluṣ*: Abū Tammām's "The sword bears truer tidings than books," al-Mutanabbī's "Fine steeds are like true friends," are examples. Next come the crucial stages of *confirmatio* and *confutatio* (or *refutatio*): "'The entire hope of victory and the entire method of persuasion rest on proof and refutation, for when we have submitted our own arguments and destroyed those of the opposition, we have, of course, completely fulfilled the speaker's function'" (ibid.; *Ad. Her.* 1.10.18). "The emotional or affective intent of the orator dominates all accounts of the peroration, which was said to have three parts, 'the summing-up; the *indignatio* or exciting of ill-will against the opponent; and the *conquestio* or the arousing of pity and sympathy'" (ibid.)

43 My joy when I beheld you was no innovation; I always hoped to behold
     you, and rejoiced in that hope.
44 My rhymes and my aspiration reproach me, as if I sinned in praising
     before praising you;

45   but the way was long, and I was continually being pestered for these
    words, and they were plundered,
46   so they travelled eastwards until the east had no more orient, and they
    travelled westwards until the west had no occident.
47   When I utter them, no high-raised wall or well-roped tent prevents
    their arrival.

So al-Mutanabbī concludes his *qaṣīda* to Kāfūr, combining all the elements of a
well-constructed peroration.

"Roman law courts," Vickers comments, "must have resembled theatres;" and
"both Cicero and Quintilian compare the orator's art with the actor's" (ibid.:
71). The Arabic or Persian poem is no less a performance than the oration or
the drama (cf. Miner 1990: 224); and the poet's role, as he confronts patron and
audience, seems no less dramatic than that of orator or actor.

How is a *qaṣīda*, or other poem, like an oration? In that it uses manifestly
similar means to sway, persuade, influence judgement. (Cf. J. Stetkevych 1993:
6–9.) Studies such as those by Vickers (1990) or Tuve (1972) demonstrate a
close connection between pre-modern European poetics and the other logical/
rhetorical arts, a connection born of, and instilled by, pedagogical methods.
Without wishing to posit a similar causal connection between poetry and logic
(or dialectic), as for example Suzanne Stetkevych does for the development of
badīʿ (rhetorical figures; see Chapter 7), I still feel that there may be a
connection (unless we are talking about universal modes of discourse, which is
a possibility but not one I wish to explore at this point) between the two dating
from, approximately, the third/ninth century, when Aristotle was being
translated and discussed, when theological dialectic (*kalām*) was developed by
the adaptation of logical categories of argument now turned around, so to speak,
to argue against the *falāsifa* themselves, and when poets moved in circles where
such matters were heatedly and vehemently discussed and took part in those
discussions. Some poets, as well as critics, must have studied formal logic
(Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī, who was both, comes to mind); others most probably did
not, but its methods could scarcely not have rubbed off on them. Thus it is not
surprising to see, in many poems, structures which resemble those of the oration.

For example (to glance backward at some of the short poems looked at
earlier), many of al-ʿAbbās's poems – often considered structurally problematic,
particularly with respect to closure – exhibit the typical divisions of a speech.
Take, for instance, the "concealment of love" poem discussed in Chapter 2 and
above. We might think of it in this way: A (1–3): concealment of love/*exordium*;
B (4–7): reminiscence of past loves/*narratio*; C (8–10): lovers' hearts unequal/
confirmatio; D (11–12): praise of beloved/*conclusio*, meant to arouse sympathy
and persuade that the lover's suffering has not been for no good reason. Or the
poem beginning "Tell me of the Hijaz", discussed in the present chapter: lines
1–4 (Hijaz/Fawz) constitute the *exordium*, attracting sympathy and interest and
setting out the situation; 5–6 (Separation) and 7–9 (Fawz among the maidens)

are the *narratio*, 10 (Prayer for reunion) the *conclusio*, designed for emotional effect.

We could go on at length with examples from more lengthy *qaṣīda*s; but I do not wish to belabour this point, merely to call attention to the resemblances in both structure and function which exist. Some poems may indeed have been designed as rhetorical speeches or arguments; in the majority, however, I think, the resemblance is coincidental (though not accidental), arising from familiarity with such techniques rather than deliberately intended. We may, however, bear these resemblances in mind, as we turn in the next two chapters to some of the specific shapes poems may take.

DISPOSITION:
THE *QAṢĪDA* AND ITS
ADAPTATIONS

Fill your poem with love songs, humour and jests,
you who praise the ignoble, and seek to obtain their bounty.

Anon.

The *qaṣīda* is the most distinctive form of Arabo-Persian poetry and the standard for critical discussions of the poetic art. Its formal divisions, established by tradition and hallowed by centuries of practice, are at once conventional and flexible, lending themselves to adaptation to a variety of purposes, both serious and parodic, both in the *qaṣīda*-form itself and in briefer forms such as the *qiṭʿa* and *ghazal*. The bipartite model of the Abbasid panegyric *qaṣīda* (*nasīb* + *raḥīl/ madīḥ*) was to influence later modifications of the form by both Arabic and Persian poets; it is to the relationship between the two major parts of the *qaṣīda* that we shall turn first.

Functions of the *Nasīb*

Just as classical and medieval rhetoricians paid considerable attention to the exordium of a composition, Arabic and Persian writers stressed, as we have seen, the importance of the poem's beginning. For not only is the beginning of the poem "the first to strike the hearer's ears" and to capture his attention; it arouses expectations, sets the scene, provides the background for what will follow.

The *nasīb* is often the most complex and finely crafted portion of the *qaṣīda*. Such an expenditure of skill and artistry demonstrates that it was not conceived of as merely an attractive opening or a stylistic *tour de force* meant to capture the audience's (and patron's) attention and gain their sympathy, but played a major role in conveying the poem's overall meaning. Indeed, it may often be said to generate that meaning, which may on occasion be at odds with the ostensible purpose of the poem.

The purpose of the panegyric *qaṣīda* is to praise; its generic focus is on the *mamdūḥ*, the ruler or patron whose justice and virtue ensure the prosperity of the state and of its individual members – including, of course, the poet who

sings his praise. Conventionally, the *nasīb* both anticipates and reinforces this praise through relations of contrast or congruence. Stefan Sperl has described the structure of the *qaṣīda* as antithetical: the exordium (*aṭlāl/nasīb/raḥīl*) depicts the poet's hardship, deprivation and isolation, the *madīḥ* his compensatory re-integration into the community.

> The panegyric *qaṣīda* is . . . 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. (1989: 26, and see 9–27)

But not all *qaṣīda*s are antithetical in structure; many, as we have seen, begin with descriptions of prosperity and fertility, often figured by the coming of spring or by the garden. The garden's prosperity mirrors that of the state, spring the ruler's life-giving powers, as seen for example in al-Buḥturī's panegyric to Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Thaghrī or Farrukhī's New Year *qaṣīda* to Maḥmūd of Ghazna; the inversion of this motif (the destruction of a once-fertile land) characterizes the opening of ʿAlī ibn al-Jahm's elegy on al-Mutawakkil.

Such inversions are characteristic of generic transfer, as seen for example in Abū al-ʿAtāhiya's *zuhdiyyāt*, where the "abodes" of pre-Islamic poetry become the graves. But even in panegyric the powerful conventions which characterize relations between *nasīb* and *madīḥ* are not inviolable – that is, they do not lead always to ritualistic repetition, but can be exploited, because of their very power and apparent fixity, in ways which demand of the audience a re-evaluation of the praise voiced in the *madīḥ*. Such is the case with Bashshār's *qaṣīda* to ʿUqba ibn Salm, parts of which have been discussed in preceding chapter, and which falls into two parts: *nasīb*+*raḥīl* (1–28) and *madīḥ* (29–54). The *nasīb*, which presents the beloved's eyes as holding both "affliction and remedy", introduces as well the motifs of slander (8) and of the obligation to fulfill a promise (16–18). Slander has caused the lady's aversion and her consequent failure to fulfill her promise; the poet accepts with resignation her message that all things come to an end, and embarks on his journey to the patron.

The *madīḥ*, which stresses ʿUqba's generosity (his hands, which mete out death to his foes and largesse to his friends, parallel the lady's eyes), manages to instill a note of doubt with the inserted story of the dead slave and the promised replacement (40–45), which appears on the surface to amplify the topic of generosity. We are not told whether the promise was fulfilled, since this topic is abandoned abruptly as the poet returns to the motif of slander:

45 May God requite your brother Ibn Salm (when generous deeds are few)
    with the best of requitals! . . .
47 I care not for the snubs of the ungenerous, nor do my tears flow for
    treacherous friends.

48 Enough for me a command which overcomes avarice with a hand
    praiseworthy and beneficent.

This seems curiously backhanded praise, with its mention of lack of generosity,
blamers, avarice, and ʿUqba's dislike of blame (49; Bashshār was a formidable
master of *hijāʾ*); moreover, the poet's disregard of slander is not directly
connected to ʿUqba's protection of him, but is separated syntactically and
semantically. The recapitulation of motifs established in the *nasīb* suggests that
between ʿUqba and the lady there exists, not a contrast, but a parallel.

   Al-Mutanabbī's panegyric to Sayf al-Dawla on the occasion of the abortive
Kharshana campaign (n.d.: 318–21; translated by Hamori [1992, Text 8]; and
see Chapter 3 above) uses the *nasīb* to establish the implicit context of the
madīḥ. In his discussion of this poem Hamori ignores the *nasīb*, despite its
importance for the interpretation of the *qaṣīda* as a whole. That the poem
features a *nasīb* at all is noteworthy; victory poems customarily omit the erotic
exordium. The poet begins (1–7) by referring to the blamers who censure his
beloved, who loves him because he is noble (and who loves only noble men),
thus establishing the motifs of base envy versus noble dedication to one worthy
of love. Ostensibly, the blamers are associated with those who envy his poetry:

14 O my friends, I see only one poet; so why do they make claims while
    I write poems?

But the linkage of the poet with Sayf al-Dawla in the *takhalluṣ* –

15 Do not be surprised (at this); for swords are many; but Sayf al-Dawla is
    today unique –

suggests another dimension, especially with its emphasis on "today" – after all,
the occasion for which the poem was composed was something of a non-event.
Mention of that occasion itself is buried (but positioned so as to be clearly
marked) at the centre and turning-point of the *madīḥ* –

28 A man who desires that the land be broad and time long, for time is too
    narrow for him, and no goal is far enough,
29 A man of raids whose swords are never absent from their necks unless
    the Sayḥān freezes –

marked by the phrase *fatan yashtahī*, "a man who desires", which divides the
madīḥ into two equal sections (19–27, 28–36). The first, beginning "Most
wretched of lands is this", deals with Sayf al-Dawla's campaigns against the
Byzantines, the second with the universal devastation wreaked upon them,
concluding:

36 You have despoiled so many of their lives that if those lives could be
    added to yours, the world could be congratulated upon your endless
    life.

The peroration (as it were) returns to the motif of love:

41 O sun and moon of the Age, I love you even if al-Suhā and al-Farqadān
      [lesser stars] find fault with me for this,
42 Because your virtue shines bright, not because the life one leads with
      you is one of tranquil ease.
43 To love a few wisely is sound; to love many without discrimination is
      wrong.

Three parallel situations are suggested here: the love of the lady for the poet
(because he is noble); the love of the poet for Sayf al-Dawla (because, as the
madīḥ proclaims, he is most virtuous); and, implicitly, the love of the prince for
the poet (because he is the best of poets). Moreover, even Sayf al-Dawla's
defeated foes love him:

33 … because of the nobility of your valor, you, though their killer, are
      loved like a benefactor among them,
34 And the blood you shed is proud of you, and the heart in which you
      strike fear sings your praise,
35 For everyone sees the ways of courage and generosity, but their mind is
      governed by its temper.

The poem's message is clearly directed towards any "lesser stars" (princes,
courtiers) who might be tempted to criticize Sayf al-Dawla for failing to achieve
his goal, or the poet for "celebrating" this failure.

Farrukhī's Ramaḍān *qaṣīda* to Amīr Muḥammad contains, as we have seen, a
composite *nasīb* employing a variety of topics any one of which would be
sufficient (as indicated by the false transitions at various appropriate points).
The topics of departing Ramaḍān, the arrival of ʿĪd al-Fiṭr, and the poet's good
fortune, concluded by his self-exhortation to stop digressing and get on with the
poem, are all thoroughly conventional in this type of poem; the fourth, however
– the *ghazal*, marked by *tajdīd-i maṭlaʿ* – is not, stressing as it does the motifs of
deprivation and loss found, it is true, in many a *nasīb*, but rarely in poems
celebrating ʿĪd al-Fiṭr, where the customary motif is the joy of union rather than
the pain of separation. Moreover, Farrukhī's delaying tactics arouse the
suspicion that all is not right – as, later, does the invocation to the *sipandī*.

A comparison of the structure of *nasīb* and *madīḥ* reveals more ambiguities, as
there is both parallelism and contrast between them.

Nasīb		*Madīḥ*	
1–6	Ramaḍān's departure	26–31	Muḥammad's lineage + general praise
7–13a	The feast; the *sāqī*	32–36	The evil eye + *sipandī*
13b–19	The poet's fortune, etc.	37–40	Praise; Muḥammad with his retinue
20–25	*Ghazal* + *takhalluṣ*	41–48	"Here is kingship", etc.
		47–51	*Duʿā*

The parallelism between lines 1–6 and 26–31 – departed Ramaḍān, Muḥammad's resemblance to his father – calls attention to the differences between the pious Maḥmūd and his pleasure-loving heir; the amplification of the motif of resemblance reinforces this contrast, as does the motif of difference in the *duʿā* (positionally parallel to 1–6 and 26–32). The happy occasion of the feast (7–12) contrasts with the invocation to the *sipandī*, bracketed by the motif of the evil eye (32–36), suggesting that this occasion is less than joyous. The poet's emphasis on his good fortune (13b–19), and his marked indication that this is a digression, is diminished by the somewhat backhanded praise of Muḥammad (37–40) which also contains a digression in the comment on the metaphor of moon and stars; while the loss described in the *ghazal* (20–24), though seemingly compensated by the poet's being in the presence of a ruler who possesses all the qualities of kingship (41–48), is rendered ambivalent by the repetition of the motif of presence ("In this city no one has an extra heart" [21]; "Here is what Jamshīd had hidden … here is what all call Kawsar" [45–46]; "Thank God I am in this place today" [47]). Further, the rejected *aporia* of 23 ("How can you ask how I, in such a state, can sing the praises of the prince?") is paralleled by the genuine *aporia* at 48 ("The rhymes of the poem would be exhausted were I to tell what he did with the idol of Kālanjar"), with its apparent non-sequitur. The *duʿā* caps this series of ambivalences emphatically.

The motifs of separation and loss typical of the *nasīb*, and conventionally compensated by the patron's favour in the *madīḥ*, also appear in poems of apology (*iʿtidhār*), which may include *madīḥ* and, not infrequently, *hijāʾ* of the poet's detractors or rivals. (The use of *nasīb* to introduce *hijāʾ* itself will be discussed later in this section.) Ibn al-Athīr calls attention to this practice (apparently a well-recognized one) in a *qaṣīda* by Mihyār al-Daylamī (d. 428/ 1036–7) which begins,

1 Indeed – and (I swear by) love for her, as excuse and vindication – the slanderer bore (tales) to her, scheming, intriguing!
2 He worked hard at his slander; but he overstepped his bounds, saying much, so that she had doubts; had he wished, he might have said less! (1923, 3: 193)

Here, says the critic, Mihyār introduces his intended meaning with his very first words. "Do you not see how elegant is the apology which he expressed in this form of words, and produced in the context of the *nasīb*; for his purpose was apology to the *mamdūḥ*. This is the most brilliant [*abdaʿ*] of this sort of opening" (1956: 191–2).

A *qaṣīda* by al-Buḥturī combines praise of the caliph al-Muʿtazz (252–5/866– 9) with *hijāʾ* of his predecessor al-Mustaʿīn (1963, 1: 213–18; dated to 252/866, when al-Mustaʿīn was deposed and al-Muʿtazz ascended the throne. See also al-Ṭabarī 1985: 104–22; the translated excerpt from this poem is inaccurate). The *nasīb* begins,

1 He avoids us in love whom we would not avoid; he is far from us in passion to whom we would be close.

2 No doubt some slanderer is destined (for us), despite remoteness; calamities may attract that which is far off.

3 Is there each day a dissembling enemy who pours out his attacks on us, or a spy we must watch out for?

4 His grief and yearning saddens the infatuated lover, and his overwhelming love for 'Alwa has overcome him.

5 But neither is union with the beloved within his reach, nor is the beloved's abode before him.

The poet complains of his suffering and his sleepless nights yearning for his beloved, then moves to the *hijā'*:

12 Has she not heard that the night's gloomy darkness has grown bright, and that life has become easy?

13 And that we have returned that borrowed (ruler), rebuked, to his people, and truth has been resumed by its lord?

14 I am amazed at this age: its adversities are exhausted; and what is time but its vicissitudes and wonders?

15 When did that chicken-breeder have cause to hope that the loops of the crown would be cleared for him, or its bindings tied upon him?

The "chicken-breeder" (*al-dayyāk*) is al-Mustaʿīn, whose residence in Kaskar was famous for its chickens (ibid., 1: 214 n.). A lengthy attack on al-Mustaʿīn (15–22) is followed by praise of al-Muʿtazz, in two sections: the first (23–29) describes his pursuit of al-Mustaʿīn and his humiliation by the rightful caliph, the second (30–44) praises al-Muʿtazz for his righteousness and virtue.

30 I swear by the Shrine, by the pilgrims embraced by its valley, and its Mount Akhāshib,

31 That al-Muʿtazz has borne Aḥmad's [Muḥammad's] community to ways [*sunan*] whose clear path leads to truth.

Al-Buḥturī's *nasīb* combines convention with opportunism by implying that it was al-Muʿtazz, rather than al-Mustaʿīn, who was the true object of the poet's devotion. (This is stressed by the use of *taṣrīʿ* in line 4, the centre of the first segment, where the poet names his beloved, 'Alwa, a name clearly implying al-Muʿtazz, as both names mean "elevated".) But if al-Marzubānī's account is correct, the poet appears to have been disappointed in his efforts to ingratiate himself with the caliph. Citing a report by al-Mustaʿīn's poet Aḥmad ibn Khallād (also mentioned in the invective in this poem), who asserted, "I know of no one more base, in root and branch, nor more ungrateful than al-Buḥturī," al-Marzubānī relates that when al-Buḥturī went to al-Mustaʿīn and praised him, the caliph ordered no reward until he (Ibn Khallād) interceded in his favour. Then the caliph "threw him a bag he had in his hand, filled with *dīnār*s –

a thousand *dīnārs* – and called for a bag of scent and poured it over his hands. When al-Mustaʿīn was deposed and al-Muʿtazz succeeded, the first *qaṣīda* (al-Buḥturī) recited to him was, 'He avoids us in love whom we would not avoid,' in which he attacked both al-Mustaʿīn and Ibn Khallād. "But, by God, he did not receive the slightest thing from al-Muʿtazz for this *qaṣīda*, so that he went away disappointed" (al-Buḥturī 1963, 1: 216–17; al-Marzubānī 1924: 333–5).[1]

Abū Tammām employs the same method in a series of *qaṣīda*s to his patron Aḥmad ibn Abī Duʾād al-Iyādī (d. 240/854) – who had introduced him before the caliph al-Muʿtaṣim to present his Amorium *qaṣīda* – when he fell from that patron's favour (see al-Ṣūlī 1937: 143–4; on the quarrel between Abū Tammām and Ibn Abī Duʾād see ibid.: 147–57).[2] The poet was restored to favour through the intercession of Khālid ibn Yazīd al-Shaybānī the governor of Armenia; he praises both Khālid and Ibn Abī Duʾād in a *qaṣīda* (1951, 1: 384–99) beginning,

1 Have you seen what fair necks and cheeks showed themselves to us between al-Liwā and Zarūd,
2 Companions who are heedless of the nights, who have bound the knots of passion into bracelets and necklaces. . . .
5 No seasoned (man) can be firm before them, nor can the mighty (leader) of a tribe resist them.

The next segment begins with *tarṣīʿ*, which marks the line and its shift from the general to the particular through the use of the *aṭlāl topos*:

6 What do I have from them, in a quarter they were wont to frequent, but grief and the resolve of the steadfast? . . .
8 They departed; for a year I wept after them, and then desisted; for that was the judgement of Labīd.

The allusion to Labīd's half-line ("He who weeps for an entire year has made apology") introduces the motif which informs the poem as a whole. Its *raḥīl* (9–13) links the motif of love's sorrow with that of the hardships of the journey:

9 Better the embers of love be extinguished by tears than that their burning go on any longer.
10 I do not ready my camel with sad songs, nor do I tighten my saddle in the company of one who dallies with women.
11 Longing – I've cleansed my drinking-place of its impurities; love – I've stripped its bark from my staff. . . .
14 Then (my camel reaches) a much-praised meadow, so that she may halt before the most-praised Aḥmad (ibn Abī Duʾād),
15 The resort of the Arabs who find in him safety for the fearful and support for the distressed. . . .
19 O Aḥmad ibn Abī Duʾād, you protected me with the protection (of one) like myself, and administered to me a remedy (appropriate to one) like myself.

20 You bestowed on me a love which I guarded like a sacred trust, a
       covenant, from separation and aversion.
21 How many an enemy has said to me, sententiously, "Many a lover there
       is who's not loved."

In the customary manner, Abū Tammām attributes his loss of favour to a
slanderer who claimed the patron did not return his affection; restoration of favour
will clearly prove this false. Lengthy praise of Ibn Abī Du'ād is followed by the
poet's apology (30–32) and by further praise both of him and of Khālid ibn Yazīd:

33 You were the spring before him [the poet], and behind him (was) the
       moon of the tribes, Khālid ibn Yazīd:
34 Assuaging rain from Zuhr [Aḥmad's tribe] is a raincloud of mercy,
       support from Shaybān a mighty mountain of iron.
35 Tomorrow it will become plain how clear (of guilt) is my expanse,
       should you search my Tihāmas and Nujūds [i.e., my mountains and
       valleys, my outward and inward qualities].

These lines are followed by an historical exemplum relating to the pardoning of
Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab by the Umayyad caliph al-Walīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik, due
to the intercession of Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik, 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn al-Walīd,
and Sulaymān's son Ayyūb.[3]

39 Khālid is to me no less than Ayyūb or 'Abd al-'Azīz, nor are you less
       than al-Walīd.

Employing this flattering exemplum to exhort his patron to clemency, the poet
then proceeds to denounce his detractors (to whom, of course, the patron is too
just to listen). After inserting another, pre-Islamic, exemplum (43; a reference
to the poet 'Abīd ibn al-Abraṣ, unjustly slain by the Lakhmid ruler al-Nu'mān
III; see Abū Tammām 1951, 1: 401 [the note (has "killed by 'Amr ibn Hind"];
al-Ṣūlī 1937: 157) which balances the reference to Labīd in the *nasīb*, the poet
concludes his suit.

Apologies often include both *madīḥ* and *hijā'*, the latter directed at the poet's
detractors (generally accused of slander), and may incorporate a passage of *fakhr*
which stresses both the poet's dedication to the patron and the excellence of his
poetry. The *nasīb*, beyond its conventional function of gaining the patron's (and
the audience's) sympathy, presents a situation analogous to that between poet
and patron. The Persian poet 'Unṣurī begins an apology addressed to Amīr Abū
Ya'qūb Yūsuf, younger brother of Maḥmūd of Ghazna, in the following manner
(1944: 51–4):

1 How can I gain union with that heart-ravishing idol? The fire of
       separation from him has consumed the heart within my breast.
2 The lover desires to enjoy the beloved; but in this world there is no
       matter more contrary,

3 Since no one is a lover who does not give up his heart; but when he gives it up he cannot reclaim it from the heart-stealer.

4 For the sake of union with him I venture every trick; perhaps through strategy I may be united with him.

Abandoning the love-plaint, the poet turns to praise:

8 What good are love-songs and the description of beauties? Why do you not describe and praise the glory of mankind,

9 That bright star of good actions, Mīr Abū Yaʿqūb, than whom, for men of good actions, there is no other goal.

(I prefer the variant *sitāra* "star", in 9, to the text's *salāla* "offspring, progeny"). Ten lines later the poet turns to direct address –

18 O you, loyalty to whom is a bond that cannot be fled, whose generosity is a sea that cannot be crossed –

and begins to complain of the "two amazing things" that have befallen him (19): first, his impression that the prince has "become tired of his eloquent slave" (21), which has so distressed him that he has given up poetry altogether and ceased to attend the prince (24); and second, his astonishment at being told he has offended his lord by committing the impropriety of offering him a poem composed for someone else. He hastens to protest his innocence:

33 If I composed that poem in other than your name, know that I am a faithless ingrate before God and His Prophet.

34 That person who falsifies to you the words of others: may his mouth be filled with earth and ashes!

35 In this judgement consider with the eye of wisdom; by your virtue be an arbitrator between us.

36 I have no need to steal poetry; for conceits gush forth from my mind and my talent.

The poem's final section (37–49) links the poet's boast of his talents with the inspiration provided by the prince –

44 You are nobler than all meanings; whatever I may say, my thoughts are always inferior, praise of you superior –

and concludes with the customary *duʿā*.[4]

Along slightly different lines, Manūchihrī begins a *qaṣīda* addressed to Masʿūd – a suit for favour which incorporates *madīḥ*, *fakhr* and *hijāʾ* – with this *nasīb* (1947: 84–6; on the date of composition, see 205–6; see also Clinton 1972: 82–90):

1 O well-protected idol, if you've nothing else to do, why not arrange a party? why not bring on the wine?

The poet wishes that his beloved may, like he himself, pass his days in pleasure and joy (2); then he admonishes:

3 If truly you do love me, O Turk of fairest face, you must pay me far
      more courtship than you are doing now. . . .
5 You are a cruel Turk, and I an obedient lover; cruelty is ugly, obedience
      is fair.
6 If you persist in practicising such cruelty to me, indeed, you'll only
      make yourself seem base in my opinion.
7 I entrusted my heart to you, that you might weigh my efforts; I gave my
      heart to you that you might reward me with my due.
8 If, since I committed a crime in giving you my heart, I should ask you
      to have pity, and give me back my heart,
9 Give back my heart kindly, or else, from the King's court, tomorrow
      I will bring for you a Tartar Turkish trooper
10 From the court of the King of kings, felicitous Masʿūd, beautiful in
      kingship, wise in sovereignty.

Five lines of *madīḥ* (11–15) are followed by a brief *invitatio* (16–17) in which the ruler is urged to take his rest and drink wine, whose opening line – *ay shahriyār-i ʿālam*, "O ruler of the world" – (16) parallels that of the *nasīb* (*ay luʿbat-i ḥiṣārī*), and by an expression of the poet's gratitude:

18 You have ennobled me, your slave, through your mercy, O king! May
      your good fortune endure, may you ever enjoy good fortune.
19 You sought my poetry, out of your magnanimity; bravo, your generous
      nature; bravo, your nobility!
20 Double the words which you have heard of my poetry be your good
      fortune and mercy, your happiness and pleasure.

This segment (16–20), of which Clinton considers the first two lines a *duʿā* and the remaining three "rather puzzling" (1972: 85–6), forms the transition to the main section of the poem, in which two passages of *fakhr* (21–25, 41–50) frame a lengthy attack on an unnamed rival (26–40). First, the poet addresses the prince:

21 The poetry you have heard – behold, 'tis licit magic: that is sweetest
      measure, that is true eloquence.
22 To speak ill of that person who is your panegyrist comes from bad
      repute, comes from lack of worth.

He then turns to the attack:

26 O fickle-minded poet! What do you have against me? I thought you
      had more intelligence, and more good sense than that. . . !
31 Be either foe to me, or friend. – Woe upon you! You're neither friend
      nor foe; bravo, you wicked rogue!

Here in Masʿūd's court, however, one cannot make hypocritical claims about poetry; because here there are masters of poetry who have tested the poet and proven his worth. Because that poetry pleased the king, his envious rival accused him of being insincere in his praise; but, says the poet (beginning a new segment),

41 Since I have been in these lands I have praised no one, save my
       praising and lauding the king for his great justice.

In a sort of mini-*raḥīl* he describes his difficult journey, inspired by hope for the king's favour:

45 I traversed these deserts, these mountains, on foot, with both feet
       wounded, with both eyes darkened,
46 Hoping that one day the king would summon me, my fortune turn
       propitious, my day turn to spring....
49 Would that those who envy me as you do were a thousand, now that
       the prince's eye sees hopefulness in me.
50 When enviers are more, good fortune runs swifter; when the wind is
       stronger, the boat runs swifter.

With this sentential statement the lengthy diatribe concludes; the final lines (51–54), beginning with direct address to the ruler, combine a suit for favour (51–52) and the concluding *duʿā* (53–54).

   Far from constituting a "double qaṣīdah", as Clinton suggests (1972: 87; he considers lines 18–25 as "the nasīb of a new qaṣīdah"), Manūchihrī's poem is an example, not of straightforward *madīḥ* (although it of course includes praise), but of *ʿitāb*, reproach, directed at the rival poet (who had evidently treated him with friendship on previous occasions) and buttressed with frequent references to the prince's approval of his poetry. It is as well to remember that not all *qaṣīda*s are panegyric. In this one, we see an example of what Gordon Williams calls "structural anticipation": "the poet has almost deliberately created a divisive and potentially incoherent structure, and has sought to produce unity by a number of means but especially by thematic anticipation" (1980: 122). The first segment (1–20), which Clinton suggests could be a complete *qaṣīda* in itself, falls neatly into two parallel halves: the *nasīb* (1–10), in which the poet pleads for the friendship of the "cruel Turk" (with an almost passing reference to a "crime" he may himself have committed), and which concludes with the *gurīzgāh*; and the *madīḥ-cum-invitatio* (11–20), which recapitulates the "party" motif and ends with a combined reference to the king's justice and the poet's poetry. The "crime" motif is taken up again in 21–25, as the poet protests his "innocence"; the *ʿitāb* follows, with its repeated references to insincere friendship (announced in the *nasīb*); the whole concludes with the mini-*raḥīl* and the *duʿā*, both featuring more references to the envious. Lines 45–54 parallel the *nasīb*; and indeed, we would normally expect the *raḥīl* to follow the *nasīb* directly. That it does not calls attention to what separates them: the motif

of loss, of division, is carried over into the *madīḥ* and *ʿitāb* and is never fully resolved. Moreover, the fact that the emphasis in this poem is ostensibly not on the prince, except briefly and then emphatically, linking him with the poet, implicates him in those parts of the poem from which he is absent – *nasīb* and *ʿitāb*. Thus it appears that the real object of reproach is the prince – who cannot be addressed directly in this connection – who has failed to support the poet against his detractors, and is called upon to redress this injustice.

Nasīb and *Hijāʾ*

Many *qaṣīdas* are the obverse of panegyric, that is, *hijāʾ* (invective), in which the poet attacks his rival(s) in language which is often unrestrained and frequently obscene. That such poems may also be introduced by a *nasīb* has raised problems because of the apparent conflict of *aghrāḍ* which results.

> Among the most perplexing features of classical Arabic poems is surely the juxtaposition of *nasīb* or *ghazal* and *hijāʾ*, the combination in one poem of tender, elegiac, chaste love poetry with scathing, foul-mouthed, obscene vituperation; two themes utterly unrelated, employing discordant types of diction, yet not rarely found together without any attempt at a logical transition. (Van Gelder 1992: 14)

Perplexing though it may be, the practice is not unusual, and is seen from pre-Islamic times onwards.

Van Gelder suggests that the form combining *nasīb* and *hijāʾ* "arose more or less fortuitously, and was not created consciously as an artistic whole embracing two extremely contrasting parts … [but] is the result of the merging, in the course of time, of diverse elements, together with the abandoning … of other elements" (ibid.: 14–15). This explanation may account for some instances, but it cannot do so for all, nor for the deliberate choice of some poets to compose in this manner. Van Gelder considers that the procedure may sometimes be appropriate – for example, where there may be "thematic connections between the love poetry and the invective," as in cases of "a *nasīb* in which amorous adventures are described involving the women of the opponents," typical of poems by Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt (ibid.: 19). He also suggests that the *nasīb* "is the 'key of the poem' [which] helps the poet in triggering off whatever follows," and that "poets began poems with *nasīb* because this was the thing to do" (ibid.: 20; see also 1988: 105–6). But these are only partial explanations, as is the citation of critics who censured the technique. The earliest of these seems to have been Ibn Rashīq, who lived in the somewhat conservative Maghrib where, as in al-Andalus, *hijāʾ* did not flourish (see van Gelder 1988: 125–7); still later, Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī (another Maghribī) seems to condemn the practice (see van Gelder 1992: 17).[5] *Hijāʾ* itself begins to be looked on askance in later periods (see van Gelder 1988: 134), as well as in the West (and in Persian poetry, with some exceptions); the period of its florescence was the age of the

Umayyads and early Abbasids, and it is poets of this period who, often deliberately, introduced invective poems with *nasīb*.

That the practice was deliberate (and that it was not universally approved) can be seen from a brief *qiṭ'a* by Ibn al-Rūmī (d. 283/896) (1973, 1: 328; translated by van Gelder 1992: 17):[6]

1 Don't you see that I let my invective poems
    be preceded at the beginning by love poetry?
2 So that they penetrate the ears; then follows
    my *hijā'* that burns and brands the hearts:
3 Like a bolt of lightning that comes after a shower,
    or the "laughter" of white ones that let wailing follow.
4 I am surprised at him who, in his delusion, contends with me:
    he exposes himself to an arrow that hits the mark.
5 "I shall constrain him" who thwarts me "to a hard ascent"
    and I shall "brand his sides" with my branding irons.

Van Gelder considers these lines "almost as an apology for the combination of *nasīb* and *hijā'*, as if the poet wanted to justify this towards an unnamed critic or, not improbably, towards himself." In them, the poet both refers to the "customary explanation" of the *nasīb* – "that is, to open the ears and make the audience receptive to whatever follows; going via the ears to the hearts" – and

> contrives to lay a connection between the two modes in three different ways. First the simile derived from nature: rain and lightning or water and fire; then a simile for warfare: the glitter of sword resulting in death; and finally, in the same words, laughter of girls changing to weeping. The key word in the third [and central] line, *bīḍ*, refers both to the girls of the *nasīb* and to the metaphorical weapon of *hijā'*.

Another ambiguity is created by variant readings of this line. Van Gelder's translation follows the reading *wa-ḍiḥki* ("and the laughter"), "a genitive still dependent on *ka-*." Naṣṣar's edition gives *wa-ḍiḥku* ("and the laughter"), in which case

> the second hemistich is an independent sentence: "the laughter of white ones is followed up by them with wailing", which sounds, or pretends to sound, as a general truth and a justification. The poet seems to say, "Don't be surprised that my love poetry is followed by invective. After all, the laughter of bright swords must needs be followed by wailing" (ibid.: 18).

But despite this, van Gelder still finds the intent puzzling:

> Usually . . . love poetry is supposed to put the patron in a favourable mood towards the poet. Similarly, one could imagine that an impartial audience would be induced by a delightful *nasīb* to accept the poet's blackening of someone else. But in Ibn al-Rūmī's poem the ears to be penetrated and the

heart to be branded, mentioned together in one line, obviously belong to the same person, the victim of the invective, not an audience whose favours are to be curried. What Ibn al-Rūmī describes is a form of cheating: he aims at deception rather than reception; the two genres are not in collision but in collusion. (ibid.: 19)

Indeed they are; for such poems, while directed at one specific individual in terms of the invective, were recited before audiences which would have included the poet's patron and other persons as well as (though not necessarily) the victim. After all, what is the point of private slander? Moreover, just as the *nasīb* in panegyric, or in apology, can present a situation analogous to that of the poet *vis-à-vis* his patron, it can also do so in *hijāʾ*, as seen in another poem by Ibn al-Rūmī which van Gelder seems to feel lacks any logical connection between its two parts (1992: 16; Ibn al-Rūmī 1973, 3: 1259–60; van Gelder omits both the beginning of the *nasīb* and the transition from *nasīb* to *hijāʾ*, which I have supplied).

[1 She left me unjustly, because of a slanderer's false charge, and her
    absence has prolonged my forlorn state.
 2 She launched two opposites against me, water and fire: the tears of my
    eyes pouring forth, and a boiling ardour.
 3 What did the slanderers have against me? May God grant me
    satisfaction and make every slanderer sick and weary!
 4 They frightened away he whom I loved [*man hawaytuhu*], that I might
    see him (as) withdrawing his affection.]

The change of gender in line 4, the *nasīb*'s central line (*man hawaytuhu*; the beloved was referred to in the feminine up to this point), while allowed by convention, suggests (as in Bashshār's *qaṣīda* to ʿUqba) a more general context for the theme of estrangement, developed in the next three lines as he describes his sleepless nights.

 6 . . . Since [he] persists in avoiding me, I do not sleep at night except for
    a quick doze.
 7 My heart worn out, my passion old, my yearning hidden, my illness
    spreading.

Then, with one of those formulaic transitions so decried by the critics, he turns abruptly to the *hijāʾ*:

 8 Now mention something else [*ʿaddi ʿan dhikrihi*] and describe Nifṭawayh
    with rhymes of *hijāʾ* that spread around,
[9 Travelling over the earth, east and west; and proceed to (give) offense,
    without fear.
10 Do not fear a sinful deed with your reviling of him, even though you
    reach the height of obscenity.]

11 A wicked lout who is all smiles when seeing any plump and chubby
    youth with a big penis....

This obscenity introduces an attack on Nifṭawayh which proclaims (among
other things) his fickleness and lack of intelligence –

12 He claims (to possess) reason and intuition, but shows himself to be
    the most frivolous of the thoughtless –

and his cuckoldry:

19 You have a female [*unthā*] who deceives you in every nest and who
    takes her nourishment from other nests....
21 And then presents you, Nifṭawayh, with her contemptible bastard
    chick, in accordance with the law of the marriage bed.

(The "law of the marriage bed" means that, by custom, children born to a
female slave are considered belonging to her owner; the "female" is either
a concubine, or a wife whose husband is further degraded by the comparison.)
The poet concludes:

22 Here, take her [the wife; or it, the poem], from a poet who expresses
    eloquently your disgraceful acts, revealing (disinterring) them
    clearly:
23 The like of which the Nābighas of old never uttered, nor could the
    Aʿshās produce.

This bit of *fakhr*, proclaiming the poet's superiority to ancient practitioners of
hijāʾ (the "Nābighas" are al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī, al-Jaʿdī, and Shaybān, the
"Aʿshās" al-Aʿshā Maymūn, Ḥamdān, and Bāhila) sets the seal on the poem.
    The circumstances of the poem are unknown; nor is much known about
Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad Nifṭawayh, a grammarian who may have been a
member of the circle of Ibn al-Rūmī's patron al-Qāsim ibn Sulaymān ibn Wahb,
one of a famous family of secretaries (see Guest 1944: 41). Whether he was
someone (like al-Akhfash) with whom the poet quarreled over criticism of his
poems is also unknown; but that particular quarrel (which included charges that
Ibn al-Rūmī's invective poems were written by his slave Mithqāl; suggestively
paralleled by the illegitimate "chick" presented to Nifṭawayh) produced several
invectives against al-Akhfash (see ibid.: 40, 110).
    Could Ibn al-Rūmī's *hijāʾ* of Nifṭawayh be part of this series? Could the
previous *qiṭʿa*, with its allusion to "fire and water", also refer to it? Could
Nifṭawayh be the "taleteller" who reported al-Akhfash's criticism? (See also Ibn
al-Rūmī 1973, 3: 1258–9.) The poet's boast that his poem surpasses those of the
Nābighas and Aʿshās of the past, his references to his own eloquence and to
Nifṭawayh's ignorance and fickleness, suggest this, although we can never be
sure. On the other hand, it is said that Nifṭawayh "was with the poet on the day
that he died" (Guest 1944: 41); perhaps (as was the case with Manūchihrī's

reproach) the poet is here criticizing him for false friendship. The *nasīb* presents the conventional situation where a bearer of false tales estranges the poet's beloved, suggesting a similar estrangement from the patron caused (as usual) by slander. While the precise details cannot be established, the poem itself, with its linkage of *nasīb* and *hijā'*, provides a telling picture of the probable circumstances.

Abrupt transitions seem to be a feature of *nasīb-hijā'* combinations, perhaps designed to enhance the shock value of the shift in mood. In a *qaṣīda* by Bashshār, a twenty-line *nasīb* and a ten-line *hijā'* are separated by what appears to be a summation of the *nasīb* but which serves equally as an introduction to the *hijā'* (1950, 1: 225–9). The mixture of genres here is particularly marked, and extends beyond that of *nasīb* and *hijā'* to encompass other shifts.

The *qaṣīda* begins with the tone of a *mujūniyya*, a less than elevated or "courtly" erotic prelude:

1   By God! love for Salmā is tiresome! And I neither husband nor suitor!

As the poet continues, the mood shifts to a love-plaint in the style of al-'Abbās ibn al-Aḥnaf (who presumably learned much from Bashshār):

3   I say – with a tear in my eye, and on my tongue the utmost surprise –
4   "Woe is me! Wāhib has gained her; may the one who gives her away
      [*wāhibu*] never have any good of it!"

As the editor helpfully explains, the first *wāhib* is the name of the man to whom Salmā (clearly a slave and no bedouin lady) has been given, the second the giver, who has sent her off to Syria – much as al-'Abbās's Fawz, a generation later, was carried off to the Hijaz. The distraught poet calls on the *kāhina*, the diviner (whom we have met before, in Chapter 4) to ask her, "Will my tranquillity return?" (8b).

Apparently not; and a passage of reminiscence of past joys with Salmā (9–13) gives way to an address to the blamer –

14   O you who blame (me for my) love of her: don't you see I'm worn out
      by her? –

followed by a description of Salmā's irresistible charms. Then comes the transitional passage –

21   Will there return to me something of what passed at al-Mayth; or is her
      separation incumbent?
22   I used not to incline towards any lady-friend who was begrudging; nor
      was I saddened by one who departed [*al-dhāhibu*];
23   But then was converted to her love – how amazing how one who has
      lost his wits [*al-dhāhibu*] changes! –
24   And a friend who is not sincere in his generosity, who guides a realm,
      and shields himself (from any approach)....

Bashshār's editor comments, "His saying, 'And a friend,' is a *takhalluṣ* from stating that he does not cling to a lady-friend who begrudges him and is not saddened by one who departs, indicating that he is noble of soul, to mention of his encountering from friends the like of what he encountered from lovers." He speculates that the intended object of the invective may have been al-Mahdī's vizier Yaʿqūb ibn Dāʾūd, a frequent victim of Bashshār's *hijāʾ*.[7] He notes, moreover, that the poet has skilfully avoided *īṭāʾ* (a defect of the rhyme; see Chapter 7 below) by repeating *al-dhāhibu* in two different senses.

And yet the parallels are not exact: Salmā has not gone of her own accord but been given to a new master (one wonders who her former master might have been). Further, the two *dhāhib*s are significant: the first (22) means, quite simply, "one who departs", the second, literally, "one who has lost his wits because he has obtained much gold [*dhahab*]". Hence the strength of the reference to one whose generosity (like his gold?) is not pure; who leads a kingdom (*yasūsu mulkan*), but is yet unapproachable (*lahu ḥājibu*; alluding to the Abbasid practice of concealing the caliph from view by a curtain [*ḥijāb*]; the *ḥājib* is also the chamberlain who regulates access to the caliph); who, when you visit him in the capital (*dār al-mulk*), "his greed contends with his generosity as to which will overcome" (25–26); and who, when generosity is defeated in the struggle, becomes *ʿabbās*, "frowning", towards his supplicants (28). "When I found that his sweet herbs were avarice," says the poet, "and that generosity was absent from his gatherings" (29) – recalling the earlier

10 . . . And I was called to remembrance by a wind redolent of fresh herbs,
  and a jar of sweet oil that came after it:
11 A gathering of pleasure whose enviers were absent, gazed upon by a
  plump maiden with full breasts –

it is his turn to depart:

30 I bade him farewell; for I am a man of resolve, disinclined towards him
  and his like.

The poem ends on a note of *fakhr* – "I am not one who worships money" (32); "I don't keep accounts of my generosity" (33). The suggestion is strong that this invective is directed against an official, and that the Abbasid caliph himself – alluded to indirectly in *ʿabbās* – is himself implicated by his employment of such a person.

Thus while *nasīb* and *hijāʾ* are often clearly marked off from one another, they may also be closely linked by relations of contrast and/or congruence. A brief poem by Jarīr, more properly classed as *ʿitāb* than as *hijāʾ*, begins with the topic of *shayb* (old age) (1982: 56–7).

1 Do you rejoice when signs of hoariness appear to you? How much more
  amazing were you now struck by passion!

2   Far off now the familiar folk who arouse in him the terror he had once
      mastered.
3   Umm Qays is now remote, no longer my neighbor; but even had I died
      she would continue lamenting me.
4   Who was the youth you knew when your folk camped in the dried and
      barren lowlands, watered only by drought?
5   Though that abode is far off, yet I may see you in the valleys, for your
      halting-place is near.
6   Perhaps God will bring you back to us, and a dry year and the wolf will
      destroy all you have.

While the poet laments his lost love, he would not wish her back; nor is she
linked (as often in the *nasīb*) to untouched, blooming meadows, but to drought,
barrenness, sterility – in short, with the sickness so often associated, in pre-
Islamic poetry, with youthful passion. In the past she camped in barren lowlands
(*ajrāz*), in contrast to the watered valleys (*ajwāf*) her tribe now inhabits; but her
return would bring calamity on her people, whose wealth would be destroyed by
drought and predators.

   Without apparent transition, the poet begins his reproach with a line which
echoes that with which the poem began:

7   I see, Ḥakīm, that hoariness has come upon you; but why does your
      forbearance not mature with age?
8   And 'Amr: I despair of reproaching 'Amr, so abundant are his faults and
      sins.
9   He wished I might die. And where is my like for your tribe, when death
      parts me from you?

As his tribe's spokesman, the poet protected them against the heaviest (poetic)
blows struck against him; and he warns, "Have no doubt; this blade can still
slice through iron" (11). Any affliction dealt him will rebound on the tribe,
bringing dearth to them. Thus it is that "The tribe have become angered with
you, even as I, who stand behind them, am angry" (13). The thematic
parallelism is clear: while old age has brought the poet wisdom and *ḥilm*
(whereas the return of youthful passion would bring back its "sickness") – his
brothers remain thoughtless and callow as impetuous youths. The sterility of
nature associated with Umm Qays images the moral sterility of the brothers,
who in turning against their kinsman threaten the cohesiveness of the kin-
group. The parallelism between the poem's apparently contrasting halves
conveys the poet's intent far more eloquently than might a more closely-knit
progression of ideas; it also alerts us to the varied potentials of linking *nasīb* with
hijā'.

Variations on the *Qaṣīda* form

More might be said concerning the relations between the *nasīb* and the rest of the *qaṣīda* in connection with genres such as *fakhr* or *rithā'* (where it occurs infrequently); but the above examples have made the point. It is the *qaṣīda*'s well established formal structure which makes possible both such connections and the adaptation of its form for use in both panegyric and non-panegyric contexts. Manipulation of the *qaṣīda*-form dates from pre-Islamic times, when (as Suzanne Stetkevych argues) the ritualistic movement of the *qaṣīda* from isolation to integration (paralleled in later panegyric) is subverted or parodied by the *ṣuʿlūk*, or brigand, poets (see S. Stetkevych 1983, 1984, 1986a, 1986b, 1986c). Even when the poetry of such poets does not employ the *qaṣīda*'s tripartite structure, it can "be interpreted ... as a *rite de passage manqué* ... in which the passenger does not achieve reintegration into the community or tribe," but continues in his liminal state (1984: 662). But many *ṣuʿlūk* poems both mimic the *qaṣīda*'s structure and parody its motifs. A poem by the pre-Islamic poet Ta'abbaṭa Sharran begins, like many a *nasīb*, by describing the lover's wakefulness; it is he, however, who has broken the bonds of love (text and translation in ibid.: 671–2; I use the more reliable translation in Jones 1992: 205–22).

1 O frequent memory, what yearning and sleeplessness you bring with
    that ghostly image that comes by night, despite the terrors [of the
    way]!
2 Travelling through the night barefoot, despite the scrub and the snakes
    – may I be your ransom against one who travels on foot by night.
3 As for me, when my beloved is stingy with her favours and holds me
    with a bond that is loose and frayed,
4 I escape [from her] as I escaped from the Bajīla, when I ran at top speed
    on the night of the sandy tract at al-Raht.

In a sort of anti-*raḥīl*, the poet describes his flight through the desert from his beloved's outraged clansmen; he then returns to a recapitulation of the (inverted) love motif and a bit of praise for his companion:

9 I do not say when a (woman) friend has cut the ties between [us], 'Alas,
    my soul', out of longing and compassion!
10 No! my weeping – if I am brought to weeping – is for a man skilled in
    acquiring praise, who is always ahead. . . .

(Here the various recensions differ; that used by Stetkevych has several additional lines; I follow the numbering in Jones.) After further describing his companion (11–13), the poet turns to *fakhr* (14–24), boasting of his harsh life, and rebutting the "blamer" who accuses him of wasting his wealth. Regardless (he concludes),

26 You will gnash your teeth in regret for [the loss of] me [as a member of the tribe], when one day you remember some of my good qualities.

This is not, of course, true parody: that the poem ends in isolation rather than reintegration is somewhat mitigated by the poet's final appeal to tribal values (reminiscent of Jarīr's poem discussed in the preceding section of this chapter). Nonetheless, it may be argued that this image of the "heroic outcast" contributed to the subsequent manipulation of pre-Islamic motifs, as of the structure of the *qaṣīda*, by later poets.

Manipulation, whether of motifs or of structures, serves two main, often related goals: the generation of new poetic types, and parody (both serious and humorous). The two are often combined in the independent poetic types developed by the early Abbasid poets: in the *khamriyya* and *mujūniyya*, where the parody is light-hearted or satirical, and in the *zuhdiyya*, where it is serious. The *khamriyya* appears particularly indebted to *ṣuʿlūk* poetry, in that its persona is a marginal individual whose life-style flouts accepted norms; he prefers like-minded companions to the representatives of social order; he is often bisexual; he is a trickster who uses devious means to attain his ends. To this dimension of *ṣuʿlūk* poetry the *khamriyya* adds the flouting of all authority, but specifically religious, as well as of poetic convention itself. The eminently conventional *qaṣīda* form provides a useful vehicle for such flouting.

In what constitutes a *qaṣīda* in miniature, Abū Nuwās exploits both the form and its conventions in what is dangerously close to mock panegyric (1958, 1: 119–20).

1 Long have I wept over the traces of the abodes; long have I been agitated by them, and suffering;
2 As if I sought in the abodes some elusive prey, seeing it sometimes before me and sometimes behind.
3 But when despair showed itself to me I turned my camel from the abode, overcome by sorrow,
4 To the house of a tavern-keeper whose dogs do not bark at me, nor resent my staying long;
5 From which I did not budge until I was divested of all I possessed, even my fine mantle and my shoes.
6 If the golden wine has wiped out my inheritance, it has not made me forget my nobility and modesty.
7 Many a cup like heaven's lamp have I drunk, to a kiss or a promise of meeting,
8 Over which the ages have passed, until they seemed like rags of light pouring down from rents in the sky:
9 You can see its light rising from the outside of the glass towards you, even though you cover it with a lid.

10 Blessed be He Who guides (men's) affairs through His power, and has
      made Hārūn superior to (all other) caliphs.
11 We live in comfort as long as we cling to piety, and as long as our
      worldly affairs are led by Abū al-Umanā':
12 A leader who fears God as if he hoped to see Him from morning till
      night,
13 Haughty in bearing, long-armed, as if his sword-straps were hung from
      a spear.

("Abū al-Umanā'" was Hārūn al-Rashīd's *kunya*; his sons were titled al-Amīn,
al-Ma'mūn, and al-Musta'min.)

    This poem, which consists of two four-line segments framing one of five, is a
succession of non-sequiturs. It begins with an apparently conventional *nasīb*
depicting the suffering lover among the ruined abodes; but the *raḥīl* – evoked
allusively by the (also conventional) transitional formula *'addaytu nāqatī*,
"I turned my camel" (3), leads to a less conventional destination, the wineshop.
The central segment (5–9) is devoted to a description of this visit. The
concluding panegyric (10–13) begins without transition; we may note the
ambiguity of the opening invocation, which might at first be construed as
referring to the caliph, but in fact refers to God, who has made Hārūn superior
to all others.

    The first two segments (1–4, 5–9) contain echoes of *ṣu'lūk* poetry, to which
the anti-heroic persona of the winebibber is clearly indebted (e.g. 5–6, in which
the poet boasts of having squandered everything he has on wine, a frequent
motif in pre-Islamic poetry). The *madīḥ*'s opening line (10), in which praise of
God precedes that of the caliph, links the two apparently unrelated segments
by implying that the poet's affairs, as well as those of the community, the *umma*,
are guided by God; the verb *sāsa*, "to lead" (as a horse), is repeated in 11, now
predicated of the caliph, who guides men's worldly affairs (*dunyā*), implicitly in
contrast to God, Who alone controls their spiritual affairs. The position of the
winecup at the center both of the second segment and of the poem, marked by
the *waw-rubba* construction – *wa-ka'sin ka-miṣbāḥi s-samā'i*, "Many a cup like
heaven's lamp" (i.e., bright as the sun) – suggests that this is the true focal point
of the poem, which is linked throughout by verbal echoes and contrasting or
parallel motifs which impart circularity to what is otherwise a linear movement:
ṭāla, in line 1 (twice) is echoed by *ṭūl* (4) and by *ṭuwālu* (13), suggesting
compensation for the speaker's long suffering by the imposing majesty of the
caliph; *amāmī* "before me" (2), in the context of the speaker's searching for "an
elusive prey" (perhaps the memory, or phantom, of the beloved), is paralleled by
imāmun (12), implying that the "prey", the object of the poet's search (the
detour to the wineshop being only a temporary distraction), has finally come to
hand. The poet's (individual) despair (3) is compensated by the comfortable
state enjoyed (collectively) by those ruled by Hārūn, as long as they conduct
themselves with piety (11), just as the wasting of the speaker's worldly goods, all

sold to the wineseller (5: *ḥattā atā dūna mā ḥawat yamīnī*, "until I was divested of all I possessed"), is compensated for by the maturity of the wine, over which many ages have passed (8: *atat dūnahā l-ayyāmu*). Throughout, the poet steers a precarious course, treads a fine line between impiety and reverence.[8]

Abū Nuwās's manipulation of both the conventions and the form of the *qaṣīda* is seen to advantage in another poem in which the movement towards dis-integration is clearly marked (1958, 3: 323–5; see further Meisami 1994a). It consists of four generically balanced segments – *ghazal* (1–5), *waṣf al-khamr* (6–11), *madḥ/hijāʾ* (12–17), *mujūn* (18–22) (5 + 6 + 6 + 5) – without apparent transitions, but linked by repeated motifs. The first segment (1–5) appears as conventional *ghazal*: the poet reproaches his beloved for his/her cruelty, laments the "secret revealed", and complains of his suffering:

1 O you with bewitching glances, you are eternally languorous; secrets
   (kept) in hearts are revealed by your eyes. . . .
5 I see you striving to slay me without requital, as if killing me were a
   sacrifice before God.

The motif of "secrets revealed" dominates the segment; both it, and that of sacrifice, will be recapitulated in the final one. The next segment (6–11) turns to praise of wine, the lover's consolation:

6 Drink wine at dawn even though it be forbidden; for God shows
   forgiveness even for grave sins:
7 Golden wine, forming bubbles when mixed, like pearls set in gold.

The wine's ancient age is praised: she was with Noah in the Ark; she was concealed by a *dihqān* in a cave, where age upon age passed over her,

12 In a land where Kalb never attached a rope to a tent, no, nor ʿAbs nor
    Dhubyān,
13 (A land) not belonging to Dhuhl, nor the homeland of Shaybān, but
    the land of nobles;
14 A land in which Kisrā built his palaces, wherein there were none of the
    uncouth. . . .

Lines 12–17 contrast the civilization of the Persians and their glorious past with the crudity of the Arabs, alternating the two motifs to praise the Persians in a segment which balances that praising wine, and disguising *madḥ* and *hijāʾ* in the guise of *waṣf*. This, along with the initial *ghazal*, provides the backdrop for the final segment, in which sophistication and crudity are similarly mingled, and which is introduced without transition:

18 O night whose stars rose with auspicious omen, and the drunkard
    continually slew the drunkard;
19 (When) we remained following the religion of Iblīs, piously obedient
    to him, until the monk's bell sounded the night's death-knell;

20 Then he rose, dragging luxurious robes touched by my hands with
     cruelty and assault,

21 Saying, "Alas for me" – overcome with tears – "you have torn away
     that which I had kept safe!"

22 And I said, "A lion saw a gazelle and pounced on it! Such are the
     changing ways of the nights of time!"

The situation in the opening segment is reversed: instead of the lover being
victimized by the cruel beloved, the beloved becomes the victim of the drunken
libertine. The closing line echoes the wording of the opening: the beloved with
the bewitching eyes (conventionally associated with those of the gazelle)
becomes the gazelle-prey; his eternal languor (*anta d-dahra wasnānu*) is
destroyed by the vicissitudes of "the changing ways of the nights of time"
(*ṣurūfu layālī d-dahri*). The sacrifice of love which closes the first segment is
replaced by the drunken brawl which opens the last. The poem's symmetrical
structure holds these contrasting segments in a precise counterpoise.

  The juxtaposition of *ghazal* and *mujūn* in the opening and closing segments
of the poem makes clear its parodic intent; but it is an intent which is not
without its serious aspect, as it also provides a comment on two generically
distinct ways of composing love poetry, "an exploration of the way in which . . .
two literary genres treat similar themes" (Williams 1980: 232). If the *ghazal*-
poet (and the poet of the *nasīb*) is a victim of love for the gazelle, it is the
gazelle who becomes the victim of the *mujūn*-poet's lust. Each genre has its own
specific speakers and situations, which function as inversions of each other; and
in *mujūn*, it is ultimately *ghazal* itself which is stripped (*ʿuryān*) of its
pretensions.

  The *ghazal/mujūn* reversal also recalls the parodic form of the *ṣuʿlūk* poem,
just as the persona of the *mājin* evokes that of the *ṣuʿlūk*, described by
Stetkevych as "sly and nocturnal," a predatory being on the margins of "normal"
(or at least of "polite") society. Taʾabbaṭa Sharran says,

  A night does not go by but that I plunder a brave youth or terrify the
     whole herd [of gazelles] (Stetkevych 1984: 664),

motifs conflated in the image of Abū Nuwās's closing line. Stetkevych observes
of the *ṣuʿlūk* poem:

  In terms of the classical Arabic *qaṣīdah*-form, we should expect to see [in
  such poems] elements of the *nasīb* and *raḥīl*, but without the tribal *fakhr*
  and its images of the hunt and commensal meal in which the poet/
  passenger's newly acquired adult status in the tribe and the life-sustaining
  and propagating functions of the tribe are praised. Rather *fakhr*, when it
  occurs in *Ṣuʿlūk* poetry, should consist exclusively of the poet's boasting of
  himself or his *Ṣaʿālīk* companions and praising the anti-social individu-
  alism that characterizes the brigand-poet. (1984: 662)

This is indeed what we find in Abū Nuwās's poem: tribal (Arab) *fakhr* is replaced both (apparently) by pro-Persian *fakhr* and (in reality) by implicit praise of the drunken companions; the image of the hunt gives way (as in Ta'abbaṭa Sharran) to the rape of the gazelle, the commensal meal to the drunken brawl. The *khamriyya* itself takes on a quasi-ritualistic status, as the antithesis of the norms and values which inform the conventional *qaṣīda*, whether pre-Islamic or Abbasid.

Abū Nuwās's use of the *qaṣīda* form to generate a new type of *qaṣīda* which both adapts and subverts that form is paralleled by other poets in both *khamriyya* and *mujūn*. We have already noted 'Alī ibn al-Jahm's parody of Imru' al-Qays (Chapter 3) in a *qaṣīda* combining *khamr* and *mujūn*; an earlier example is seen in a *mujūniyya* by Bashshār (al-Iṣbahānī 1955, 3: 177–8; see Meisami 1993a: 19–21),[9] whose very popular erotic poetry got him into trouble on more than one occasion, so that the caliph al-Mahdī forbade him to compose poems mentioning women.

The *qaṣīda* (or *nasīb*, in one recension [Bashshār 1963: 99]) opens with a conventional reproach to the blamer –

1 'Umar reproached me concerning my sweetheart – and blame, without a proper cause, is vexing –

who advises the poet to give up his love, which has brought him criticism and reproach. The poet condemns the hypocrisy of his critics –

4 What do they have to do with it? What's the matter with them, who would shut up if they looked at their own faults –

and launches into a self-justification:

7 It's enough for me, and for her whom I love, to talk together, to exchange glances,
8 Or (to steal) a kiss in the meanwhile; nothing wrong with that, as long as my garment's not loosened.

But the list escalates until the innocent exchange of words and glances is left far behind. Suddenly there is a shift to the woman's voice (12b), as she protests tearfully at the poet's importunities, calling him an insolent womanizer, begging God to protect her, and bewailing her lot should her absent family discover the affair, the signs of which are all too visible.

19 I swear by God you would not have saved your skin! Now go! You've been a successful assailant!
20 What if my mother should see my [scratched] lips; or what if this story about you gets around?
21 I was afraid of what you would do to me; what shall I tell them, you false one?

The experienced poet consoles her; he has an excuse that will explain everything:

23 Tell her it was a gnat with claws – if there are gnats that have claws!

This poem is an exercise both in literary parody and in self-parody, and specifically of Bashshār's own "courtly" *ghazals* addressed to his beloved ʿAbda. It begins with a motif typical of many of those poems, the poet's remonstrance to his reproachful friend(s) who fail to understand both the intensity and the purity of his love – a purity quickly belied, however, by the escalating catalogue of his desires (biting, entwining limbs, caressing her under her shirt) and by the encounter which follows. The lady's own reproach is similarly parodic: not only has the poet besmirched her honour, but even worse, he has left the visible marks of his lechery – the scratches from his beard, the bruises where he clasped her bracelet – which will reveal her secret to her absent family. His rather cavalier response – "Tell them it was a gnat with claws!" – echoes her accusation in the *tajnīs* between *ẓāfir*, "successful", and *ẓufūr*, "claws", neatly paralleling victor and conquest.

The climax (so to speak) of the parodic manipulation of the *qaṣīda* comes with the poems of that uncontested master of *mujūn* Ibn al-Ḥajjāj (d. 391/1000), who wrote both serious poetry and obscene *sukhf* and *mujūn* for various Buyid rulers and officials. In several of his panegyric *qaṣīda*s he mocks both the form and the conventions of traditional panegyric, poking fun at and vulgarizing both Bedouin and courtly love motifs. One of these, addressed to Bahāʾ al-Dawla Fīrūz (r. 388–403/998–1012), begins with the motif of the distraught lover lamenting the departure of the women of the tribe, the *ẓaʿāʾin* (1977: 323–5; see further Meisami 1993a: 24–6; on the *ẓaʿāʾin* see Ezz el-Din 1994).

1 My friend, among the departing women are young gazelles of the coverts.
2 See what is upon the mounts, and what beauties they wear....
4 What has the raven of parting against me? He's stirred up my tranquil members.
5 He told me nearly a month ago that my love who dwelt (here) would depart.

The descent into common language anticipated by the pedestrian *mundhu naḥwi shahrin*, "nearly a month ago" (such precision is not typical of the abstractions of *ghazal*, which dwells on events vaguely but definitely situated in the past) becomes complete in the next segment (8–17), a graphic description of the beloved's most intimate parts which fluctuates between high-flown hyperbole and metaphors drawn from the market-place.

8 May I be sacrificed for her! Her cunt holds a well whose water's not brackish,
9 Clothed in wool so thick it might be sold in the market for linings....

This amplified description concluded, the poet moves to a brief transitional passage which leads to the *takhalluṣ*:

18 I and my kinfolk – those who are absent from me, and those who dwell
    with me in these lands –
19 Would all sacrifice ourselves for the Buyids; for reverses make virtues
    show forth.
20 And with the sacrifice of my soul a king – the eighth of those kings –
    would be brought forth:
21 Khusraw Fayrūz, a full moon perfect in good fortune, kingship and
    blessings.

The panegyric, linked to the *nasīb* by the repetition of the rhyme *maḥāsin* (in
2, the beauteous qualities of the women on their mounts; in 19, the ornaments
of the ruler's virtues) and by the motifs of sacrifice and devotion, with which the
descriptive passage was introduced (7: *fadaytu man fī stiha qulaybun*; 19: *nafdi
jamīʿan Banī Buwayhin*; 20: *yughtadā fī l-fidā bi-nafsī*), mixes panegyric
conventions with those of *mujūn* in its praise of the patron:

22 A noble youth, by that paragon of nobility, ʿAlī – and this is an oath
    neither false nor dissimulating,
23 The oath of an elder not weakened by Ibn Durayd's equivocations –
24 One who, had Zulaykhā looked upon his face, the beauty of what she
    observed would have torn her apart,
25 And she would not have summoned Joseph in Egypt to seek her
    husband's treasures.

(Ibn Durayd's *Kitāb al-Malāḥin*, alluded to in line 23, "contains about 400
ambiguous words for the benefit of such persons who, when unjustly forced to
take an oath, want to take refuge in mental reservations" [*EI*[2], art. "Ibn Durayd"
(J. W. Fück)].) Only the final segment (26–35), which incorporates a
comparison of the ruler to the Prophet (29; his defeat of his treacherous
enemies is like the Prophet's victory over the tribe of Hawāzin at the "Battle of
the Parties") acquires a more serious tone and concludes with a properly pious
duʿāʾ (33–35).

A longer *qaṣīda* addressed to Abū Shujāʿ Bakrān, which expresses the poet's
gratitude for help in financial difficulties (1977: 326–31; see also Meisami
1993a: 26–30), begins with the motifs of the sickly lover and the difficulties of
old age (*shayb*).

1 My sickness is clear; it tells you of my state; so read my letter from the
   beginning.
2 Know that I – since love is divided among its ancients, as well as its
   youths –
3 Was, when a young man, set to nurse by love at the breasts of young
   girls, like pomegranates,
4 Until I reached seventy and was commanded to sin by one who did not
   fear my disobedience.

The tone of this segment, with its reference to the "letter", recalls the poems of al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf; while the word *fisq* "sin", and the allusion to Iblīs (who appears frequently in Ibn al-Ḥajjāj's poems, as tempter and as the source of his inspiration – quite literally, his *shayṭān*) – recall Abū Nuwās and suggest a move to the mode of *sukhf*. This move is delayed as the speaker continues to lament his old age, despite which he is afflicted with love for "some person" (*insān*), or for a woman (*li-insānatin muḥabbabatin*), whom he fears to name in his poems lest some envier reproach him, but whom he conceals "in the black (pupil) of my eye, and in the depths of my heart" (8–9). He then recalls a night of love:

11 Whatever I forget of her, let me never forget my night with her – and
      I do not think that her swollen clitoris will forget me:
12 The night that I bedded her – to veil her from the eyes of men behind
      my eyelids –
13 On my mat, under the blanket with me, sleep covering her cunt, and
      (it) covering me.

The opening of this segment, with its formulaic "Whatever I forget … let me never forget …" (*mā ansa … lā ansa …*) echoes serious *ghazal*. Al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf declares,

2 *Mā ansa lā ansa yumnāhā muʿaṭṭifatan   ʿalā fuʾādī wa-yusrāhā ʿalā raʾsī*
      What ever I forget, let me never forget her right hand folded upon my
      heart, and her left upon my head. (1986: 180)

Fawz's wish –

5 ʿAbbās, would that you were the garment upon my body, or that I were
      a garment for ʿAbbās –

is also echoed in Ibn al-Ḥajjāj's image of the lovers covering each other in sleep (*ghashā* "to cover" has the same sexual double-entendre in Arabic as in English). But such chaste imagery is far removed from Ibn al-Ḥajjāj's intent; and his description of their sexual congress and of his beloved's many beauties quickly descends into obscenity as a loud and fragrant fart from his beloved reveals their secret:

17 It spread about, amongst my neighbours, what I had been concealing in
      my enjoyment of beauty:
18 A woman with two essences [*maʿnayān*] for those who would enjoy her
      behind and before:
19 For in my beloved's cunt and arse are twins for fucking, and other than
      twins.

(The allusion to Abū Nuwās's "I have two intoxications, my companions one; and one is exclusive to me alone among them" [1958, 3: 107] – by which he means the wine, and the saliva of the *sāqī*'s mouth – is clear.)

The lengthy description is followed by a brief passage reminiscent of *wasf al-khamr*, in which the poet laments his inability to give his boon-companions so much as a drink of water (25–28); this leads to a complaint of his straitened circumstances (29–42), caused by a failed well which he had not the funds to dig out. He sold his horse to the Amīr for the money; now the well brings copious water, but he is obliged to travel on foot. This comic passage leads ultimately to the panegyric, as he addresses his patron (somewhat aggressively, though at one remove, through a fictitious messenger) with exaggerated hyperbole (43–61):

43 My friend, go early [*bakkir*], before dawn, to the presence of Amīr Bakrān;

44 Tell him the words of one who is not humble towards him, nor helpless nor weak:

45 O best shepherd of the realm, who guards it with a gaze in which is no languor;

46 O (prince) who, when he travels with his retinue, the kingdom trembles in Khurasan. . . .

48 O prince whose sister's son is a king; who is one with the full moon;

49 Who, if Bilqīs had seen him, she would not have been content to enter the Glass Palace with Solomon. . . .

51 Whose nobility drew me close and honoured me, whose generosity encompassed and sheltered me. . . .

54 O you who filled me when I complained of hunger, and gave me to drink when I complained of thirst. . . .

61 Abū Shujāʿ, you are our lord – on this no two persons disagree. . . .

63 A youth who rewards the praise of his servant who excels in his praise with generosity. . . .

The *madīḥ* continues with further praise and a scatological aside directed at the Amīr's enemies ("May their beards be up the asses of Ibn al-Ḥajjāj, his brother, and the whole family of Ibn al-Ḥajjāj, from *qāḍīs* to the lowly" [67]). The concluding *duʿāʾ* (73–80) includes wishes for a felicitous ʿĪd al-Fiṭr; the poet bids the Amīr welcome the feast with mirth, music and wine,

76 And be safe from blemish [*fa-slam*]; God forbid you should ever be seen ought but drunk on the Friday of the Feast.

77 Should you see swelling breasts, do not refresh yourself with ought but (their) pomegranates;

78 And should you see cheeks (blushing) in shame, rejoice in roses which may be smelled free of charge. . . .

80 And drink in well-being, and say to the cuckold who envies you, "Death (to you), O you with a thousand horns!"

The combination of low and high registers of diction, of literary allusion and a mockery of religion which outdoes even that of Abū Nuwās. To take but one

example: the allusion to Bilqīs, the Queen of Sheba, entering the Glass Palace (al-Ṣarḥ) "with Solomon", *maʿā Sulaymān*, recalling the test in Koran 27: 43–45 which brought about her conversion (on the phrase *aslamtu maʿā Sulaymān* see further Chapter 7 below), is echoed in *fa-slam* – verbal form I of *salima*, which means "be healthy, free from blemish", form IV of which verb means "submit to Islam" – makes of this *qaṣīda* a parodic *tour de force*.

While these *qaṣīda*s are most notable for their parody of the topics of *ghazal* and panegyric, their manipulation of the *qaṣīda*'s form is also evident, as is their evocation of the similar efforts of earlier poets. Although Ibn al-Ḥajjāj was quite capable of composing conventional poems (as his elegies and serious panegyrics demonstrate), numerous self-references make it clear that this was the type of poetry expected of him, and for which he became justly famous. Moreover, his parody may have had a specific target in the type of poetry exemplified by al-Mutanabbī's panegyrics to Sayf al-Dawla, with their conventional "Arab" motifs such as the departing ladies of the tribe, or the night of love spent under a cloak in the desert or in a tent (not under the mundane blanket which conceals Ibn al-Ḥajjāj and his paramour from view).[10]

Parody may also be serious. Whereas the type practised by Bashshār, Abū Nuwās and Ibn al-Ḥajjāj is often light-hearted (though it may be sharp-edged as well), at other times it may be geared towards demonstrating, by manipulating certain forms and conventions, the irrelevance, immorality or perversity of the ethos seen to have informed them. This is true of much religious poetry (and, for example, of the poetry of al-Maʿarrī; see Sperl 1989: 99–100, and see Chapter 7 below), where the serious purpose dominates, less to mock than to show the futility of empty forms and conventions and urge their transformation for more laudable or meaningful ends.

Such is the case with the *zuhdiyya* as developed by Abū al-ʿAtāhiya, who rejects both the elevated diction of court poetry and, in many cases, the *qaṣīda* form itself, producing poems which often seem like strings of homilies, sermons in verse. But on other occasions, Abū al-ʿAtāhiya manipulates the *qaṣīda* form to his own ends, as in this *zuhdiyya* selected by Stefan Sperl as a "paradigm poem" illustrating the relationship between *zuhdiyya* and *qaṣīda* (Abū al-ʿAtāhiya 1886: 272; Sperl 1989: 209; translation based on Sperl).

1 Alas for the fates; alas for separation and death!
   Every gathering in this world is destined for separation!
2 Time wears out every new thing that was once beautiful;
   and Fate severs (the link) between two who are close.
3 [You] have seen that the hand of the world disperses all:
   have no trust in the hand of the world where two are joined.
4 Praise be to God, eternal and lasting praise!
   Indeed, the greedy are adorned with shame.
5 There is no beauty save for he who's content that it be little!
   Contentment is the garment of honour and beauty.

6 The abode – did you but know, O pleasure-lover –
   is an abode before you, where there is (true) joy for the eyes!
7 How much longer will we continue to count our days
   when we only stand between two:
8 A day that is past and one that we hope for,
   which may be that which most quickly brings our death.

Sperl comments that the first three lines of this poem recall the usual *topoi* of the *nasīb*, with their emphasis on separation and loss. (We may note, however, that *manāyā* ["fates", "death"] does not typically occur in *nasīb*; the opening words, then, already carry their portent.) But with the next 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 ... as Abū l-ʿAtāhiya confronts himself and his readers with the futility of the hopes entertained by man. (Sperl 1989: 71)

The poem's central lines (4–5), which might, with their invocation of praise, have suggested a move towards *madīḥ* (cf. Abū Nuwās's panegyric to Hārūn al-Rashīd), in fact form a unit contrasting praise of God – the only fit subject of praise – and of the pious man with blame of the greedy who desire this world. They are framed by the motifs of separation (1–3) and of the (true) abode (6–8); the deliberate allusion to the *aṭlāl* points not only to the effacement of the worldly *dār*, over whose traces the pre-Islamic poet wept but which is clung to by the "pleasure-lover", the "seeker after joy" (*akhū maraḥ*), but also to the existence of another one in which there is true "joy for the eyes". The final lines (notes Abū al-ʿAtāhiya's editor) are said to have been adopted from a saying of one Abū Ḥātim al-Zāhid ("the ascetic"): "Between me and the kings there is but a single day. As for yesterday, they will not see its pleasures (again); and both they and I will know the same dread tomorrow. (That day) is today, which might be (the day of) calamity" (1886: 272, n. to line 8). The futility of man's hopes is not absolute: it is only his hopes in this world that are doomed to disappointment; those who choose the next world over this will gain Paradise.

That the analogy between *zuhdiyya* and *qaṣīda* is not merely thematic but formal may be seen in another, longer poem also discussed by Sperl (Abū al-ʿAtāhiya 1886: 227–30; Sperl 1989: 209–10; and see Chapter 2 above).

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....
9 It suffices for you [in misery],
   when its chest descends upon a people.

The opening invocation, with its formulaic *li-man ṭalalun*, gives way to a meditation on fate and the ravages of time; the allusive reference to the *raḥīl* (5) marks the transition between the first and second segments of the exordium (1–4: the abodes; 6–9: time). Line 9, marked by *kafāka bihi*, "It suffices for you," concludes the exordium, which moves from the specific "I question" (1) to the general "upon a people" (9). The next segment (10–18), beginning "How many a king has been exalted" (10),

> depict[s] 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 ... 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. (Sperl 1989: 83)

Summing up this segment with a generalization on the futility of worldly ambition –

19 How many a wish was nurtured for long
    but never attained by the wishful –

expansion on which forms a transitional passage (19–24), the poet then turns to address the graves (25–33):

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....
33 They have settled at a place whose settler
    has all ties cut off for ever.

The *aṭlāl* of the opening lines are now identified explicitly, not as the abodes of those who have departed but as the graves in which they now dwell. The traveller on life's journey dismounts, not at the court of a patron or chief but at the grave, and drinks deep from the fount, not of generous bounty, but of death

(34). The lengthy catalogue of the graves' inhabitants is linked by anaphora and syntactical parallelism (*wa-man kunnā nutājiruhu, nuʿāmiluhu*, etc.; "with whom we used to trade," "work" and so on) repeated through each half-line throughout most of the passage. The poem concludes with an exhortation:

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!

The final line recalls the conclusion to panegyric in which the ruler is encouraged to continue in his victories; but true victory comes from righteousness and piety, the only provision for life's journey.

    This poem illustrates the structural parallelism between the panegyric *qaṣīda* and the *zuhdiyya*. The allusion to the *aṭlāl* motif evokes the *nasīb* with its emphasis on the poet's isolated state; traditionally, the *aṭlāl* do not reply (although we shall shortly see an instance in which they do), increasing the sense of isolation. "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" (Sperl 1989: 93). In panegyric, the speaker's failure to heed those who reproach him in the *nasīb* is frequently contrasted with the patron's responsiveness to calls for assistance (cf. al-Buḥturī's *qaṣīda* to Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Thaghrī, Chapter 4); here, however, the ruler – like the *aṭlāl* – is unable to respond. Yet he will be obliged to answer another questioner:

37 Let it be known by all who know
    that God will ask them (for a reckoning).

"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. [In the *zuhdiyya*,] unlike the panegyric, man's position and purpose is not defined in relation to society, but in relation to God" (ibid.: 94)

    The movement of the *zuhdiyya* is towards disintegration in this life, in a quite literal sense as the grave dissolves mortal flesh, with reintegration possible only in the next world. Kingship, when invoked, provides the ultimate example of human futility: where panegyric

portrays the King as victorious in his struggle against Fate, [the *zuhdiyya*] 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

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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. (ibid.: 82)

In the *zuhdiyya*, *madḥ* (the expanded middle of panegyric) is replaced by *waʿẓ*, admonition; while the *duʿā*, rather than asking God to bless the king and grant him long life and victory, exhorts man to ask God, his only support and hope, for guidance and forgiveness.

Persian poets similarly manipulated the *qaṣīda* form, both for *khamr* and *mujūn* (which become predominantly the realm of the *ghazal*, employed also for brief erotic panegyrics), and for other purposes, especially homiletic and religious, often with typical Persian modifications (see Meisami 1996). While such poems are not always of the type developed by Abū al-ʿAtāhiya, they often contain similar elements, in particular the substitution of admonition for panegyric.

Nāṣir-i Khusraw begins a homiletic *qaṣīda* with a lengthy spring song (1993: 139–41). As I have discussed this poem elsewhere (Meisami 1996: 168–73), I will only note its main features here. Spring brings an end to winter's "cold cycle", making "this ancient world young again" (1). The description of spring contains various personifications typical of the panegyric *qaṣīda* – once-naked willows decked with earrings and brocaded jackets, tulips like the beloved's cheeks, the narcissus's eye like that of a distraught lover – as well as other images which liken the garden to the sphere and to Paradise (2–14). With the third segment (15–21), which begins,

15   Like ʿAmr ibn ʿĀṣ before ʿAlī, Day's month is helpless, put to shame by
      spring,

the personification becomes more specific: Winter and spring are, as in Manūchihrī's Nawrūz *qaṣīda*, in combat, and that combat is, again, a political allegory. But here, the combat is between true belief and unbelief, and is thus of both cosmic and exemplary dimensions. Winter is routed by Spring like ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ by ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, the crow expelled from the garden like the opponents of the ʿAlids (16), its unbelief and hypocrisy (like that of the Abbasids) revealed by its black robe (17). The triumphal sun "has become a Fatimid" and has risen from its previous decline (18); its light is like the sword of ʿAlī; the vigorous rosebush is like the grey mule Duldul, sent to the Prophet by the ruler of Egypt, which ʿAlī is said to have ridden at the battles of the Camel and Ṣiffīn (19). Such references to ʿAlid history and hagiography reveal the *qaṣīda*'s intent: it celebrates the Fatimids, compared to spring and light, and their triumph over the Abbasids, figured by winter and darkness.

Yet although the *qaṣīda* clearly celebrates an actual triumph (the brief success of the Turkish general al-Basāsīrī, who wrested Baghdad from the Saljuqs in 450/1058, proclaimed the Fatimid caliphate and sent the caliphal insignia to al-Mustanṣir in Cairo),[11] that victory is not just a political one: it anticipates the ultimate triumph of the Fatimid cause and the new world that this triumph

will usher in, a world informed by the principles of justice and knowledge embodied in the teachings of Ismāʿīlism. It is these qualities which are celebrated in what follows.

24 Why was the world dark as the ignorant heart? Why has it now become
      like the wise mind?
25 Because the Lord of all the planets has, entering the Ram, become
      empowered through Justice.

Line 25 constitutes the *takhalluṣ*: the sun entering Aries (the beginning of spring) has become empowered and triumphant through justice, as has the Fatimid "sun", the caliph al-Mustanṣir. But it is not the caliph who is praised; rather, it is Justice, the source of good, which is in turn associated with and dependent upon knowledge (ʿ*ilm*) – that is, knowledge of the true faith. The imagined interlocutor (whose presence identifies the homiletic nature of the poem) is enjoined to

31 Adorn yourself with knowledge; for true beauty is not for one adorned
      with mere brocades.

The key to knowledge, and to the comprehension of justice in the cosmic, and not merely the temporal, sense, is reason; knowledge and justice, placed in balance, are both the twin causes of the world's creation and the twin means by which its divinely ordained order is maintained. In the concluding lines the poet advises the seeker of wisdom to emulate those who have become great through knowledge, to humble himself before those whom knowledge has raised high; for such persons control the entire created universe, through their humility and their obedience to the teachings of the Imām.

43 Be like the noble: for the man of worth nobility's both ending and
      beginning.

The reference to endings and beginnings (the ending of false knowledge and hypocrisy, the beginning of that true knowledge which leads to justice and good) imparts a circular movement to the *qaṣīda*, whose end invites a return to its beginning to ponder the significance of the allegorical garden.

Nāṣir-i Khusraw's *qaṣīda* begins with a descriptive *nasīb* reminiscent of panegyric; proceeds to a narrative account of a battle (albeit an allegorical one); moves through a *takhalluṣ* to a brief passage of praise; and substitutes for *madīḥ* a homily which concludes with an exhortation in place of a *duʿā*. For him, however, it is not merely the manipulation of form that is significant, but the fact that that form evokes Ismāʿīlī beliefs concerning the ordering of the cosmos, as we shall see in Chapter 6. If his poem presents an antithetical image to that of the panegyric *qaṣīda*, it yet remains closely tied to it.

Khāqānī Sharvānī's "Madāʾin" *qaṣīda* (1959: 358–60; see also Clinton 1976, 1977; discussed in detail in Meisami 1996: 174–81) blends Arabic and Persian elements into a lengthy admonition on mortality and transience. Like

al-Buḥturī's "Īwān Kisrā" *qaṣīda*, Khāqānī's poem was inspired by the ruins of the palace of Khusraw II Parvīz at Madāʾin (Ctesiphon); but Khāqānī's treatment of the same topic is far different. For al-Buḥturī the description of the ruins of Madāʾin, the remembrance of its past glories, is linked to a personal theme: the ruins provide consolation for the poet, disillusioned by the baseness of his times. He describes them first in tones reminiscent of the *zuhdiyya* (Arberry 1965: 72–80; Arberry's translation):

11 Anxieties attended my lodging, therefore I turned my sturdy she-camel
      in the direction of the white (palace) of Ctesiphon

12 Consoling myself for what chances had come (upon me), and grieving
      for a decayed abode of the House of Sāsān.

13 Successive vicissitudes reminded me of them – and vicissitudes are apt
      to make a man remember, and forget –

14 When they dwelt at ease in the shadow of a tall (palace) overlooking
      (the surrounding land), wearying and weakening the eyes (that
      gazed at it)....

16 Abodes that were not like the traces of the encampment of Suʿdā in
      smooth-swept wastes of wildernesses....

Time has transformed these once splendid palaces into "worn-out rags of (cast-off) garments;" the great hall of the Jirmāz, once thronged with nobles, "is fallen into decay, is the edifice of a tomb" (18–19).

20 Were you to see it, you would know that the nights have conducted a
      funeral in it, after a wedding-feast,

21 Whilst it informs you of the marvels of a people, the account of whom
      is not clouded by any obscurity.

The poet recalls scenes from the past depicted in the palace's wall-paintings – Khusraw Anūshīrvān's conquest of Antioch, Khusraw Parvīz's feasts (22–50) – and concludes:

51 All I can do is to succour it with tears dedicated in mortmain to deep
      affection.

52 That I have, yet the house is not my house by virtue of any proximity
      to it, neither is the race my race

53 Other than the favour her people did to my people; they have planted
      the best of plantations of its fulness.

This example – which refers to the Sasanians' help to the Arabs in battle in the pre-Islamic period (54–55) – stirs the poet to his final declaration:

56 And I see myself thereafter in love with noblemen altogether, of
      whatever stock and base.

The ruins both remind al-Buḥturī of his own sorrows and strengthen his renewal of resolve to love, and praise, "noblemen altogether, of whatever stock and

base." The echoes of Abū al-ʿAtāhiya in lines 19–20 (the great hall of Jirmāz now like a tomb; a wedding-feast followed by a funeral) are rejected for the immortalization of nobility the ruins represent for al-Buḥturī.

For Khāqānī, by contrast, the ruins provide an object lesson (*ʿibrat*) on the ultimate fate of all royal courts, and he exhorts his heart to heed their lesson:

> 1   Awake! O heart, heeder of warnings; reflect on what you see; awake!
>   Know Madāʾin's Ayvan as admonition's mirror.

The exordium's first segment (1–7) adapts the motif of weeping over the vanished abodes: the poet bids his heart (his companion on this, spiritual, journey) to halt at Madāʾin and contemplate its message, to turn aside and weep over ruined abodes, not of the beloved, but of ancient kings (2). The principle motifs of the exordium, and its play on the *aṭlāl topos*, are combined in the phrase *Az dīda ʿibar kun* (1; preferring the variant *ʿibar kun*; with its multiple resonances, to the more prosaic *az dīda naẓar kun*, "look with your eyes"). This phrase can mean both "take admonitions from what you see" and "let tears flow from your eyes;" it also suggests "pass by with your eyes". Like a distraught lover, the Tigris weeps bloody tears and exhales fevered sighs, as its liver (the seat of the emotions) is roasted by its burning sorrow (3).

The second segment (8–14) takes up a related motif: the silence of the ruins. But where the *aṭlāl* typically remain silent when questioned, the ruins of Madāʾin respond with advice.

> 10   Each palace battlement will give you counsel again and again; heed the
>   advice of the battlement's head from the bottom of your heart.
> 11   It says: "You are of earth, and we are now your earth; so take two or
>   three steps upon us; scatter two or three tears as well."

The battlements, which were for al-Buḥturī signs of the ruin's continued fortitude, a testimony to its glory (41), here exemplify decay: no longer lofty and soaring into the clouds (even in the mind), they have become the habitation of owls, harbingers of death and dwellers in ruins. The owl's laments have given the battlements a headache; they ask the poet,

> 13   "Indeed, why should you marvel so? for in the world's pleasance the owl
>   follows the nightingale; laments follow sweet songs."

This allusion to al-Buḥturī's description of the desolate Jirmāz conveys a message diametrically opposed to that of the Arab poet: the justice represented by the palace in which Anūshīrvān held court is itself wronged, human law overturned by a higher one: "by command of the turning sky itself, or of Him who turns the sky" (15).

In the third segment (15–21) the poet exhorts himself to "make Madāʾin and Kufa one" by calling forth from his burning breast a flood of tears comparable to Noah's Flood (18). The court of Madāʾin becomes an emblem of decay, to be equated with the vanished splendours of Iram, Sadīr and Khavarnaq (cf.

Meisami 1998b). The ensuing descriptions, both derived from and contrasting with those of al-Buḥturī, form the central portion of the *qaṣīda*. They begin with a comparison of the Īwān's past glories with its present state (15–21); in the next two segments (22–35), mingling description with admonition, the poet conjures up scenes from the past, as did al-Buḥturī, and like him names two vanished kings associated with Madā'in, Anūshīrvān and Khusraw Parvīz. Here, however, the centrepiece is not Anūshīrvān's conquest but Parvīz's slaying in 602 of the last Lakhmid king of Hira, al-Nu'mān ibn al-Mundhir, whose fate demonstrates the universality not of nobility but of death, exemplified through the use of an elaborate chess metaphor in which the observer is reminded that he, too, is a pawn in this game.

23 Dismount, and place your face upon the mat of earth, and see how great Nu'mān is checkmated beneath its elephants' feet.

24 Nay, nay: see, like Nu'mān, those elephant-felling kings themselves slain by the elephants Night and Day in the winding turns of time.

25 How many an elephant-slaying king has been slain with a king-elephant by the chessplayer of his destiny, mated, deprived of hope.

In death's game, slayer and slain are balanced, and the reversal of fortune exemplifies divine justice. As mirrors for princes enjoin the prince to play chess so as to learn military strategy, so Khāqānī observes its utility in learning the lesson of the vanity of worldly power.[12]

The transitional line (28) pairs Anūshīrvān with Khusraw Parvīz, whose feast al-Buḥturī described as if it were yesterday; but here, Khusraw's kingly trappings have turned to dust. Echoes of Abū al-'Atāhiya resound throughout this passage: the ruins are graves which house the bodies of past kings. The garden of the courtly feast, its golden herbs and carpets, are vanished; the wine itself testifies not to new life, as with al-Buḥturī, in whose poem it "[renewed] with joy and delight the drinker as he sips,/Poured into the glass of every heart, and it the beloved of every soul" (31–32), but to death: it is the beloved's life blood, offered in the king's body:

33 It is the blood of Shīrīn's heart, the wine the vine gives forth; it is Parvīz's clay that forms the jar its grower offers.

"Where are his golden herbs?" (*zarrīn tara kū*), puns the poet (31); "Go, recite *kam tarakū*" – "How many gardens, sweet wells, sown fields, noble dwellings and blessings did they abandon [*kam tarakū*] . . . and We bequeathed those things to other peoples" (Koran 44: 26–29).

In the final segment (36–42) the poet, in the homiletic version of *du'ā*, prays for his own, spiritual, wellbeing.

36 Khāqānī: like a beggar, seek admonition ['*ibrat*] from this court, that at your door, hereafter, the Khāqān will seek charity. . . .

40 Look on this sea of insight; don't pass by without a drink; one cannot
     leave the shore of such a sea with thirsting lips.
41 When friends return from journeying they bring with them a gift; this
     bit of poetry's a gift brought for the hearts of friends.
42 Observe then, in this poem, what magic he displays, the dead man with
     a Christlike heart, the madman with a wise soul.

Khāqānī's spiritual enrichment will place him above the ruler, who will beg at
his door for advice (37). The "licit magic" of his poem demonstrates the power
of poetry, and of the poet, to furnish spiritual renewal.

Khāqānī's *qaṣīda* responds to al-Buḥturī's by substituting for the former's
positive affirmation of the perdurance of nobility the negative lesson of its
transience. True nobility is spiritual, not temporal and material. To consider the
poem merely a variation on the *ubi sunt topos*, as did Rypka (1959: 200), or as
both "profoundly Islamic" and "with a clear anti-monarchical and anti-
nationalist coloration", as did Clinton (1977: 176), is to miss the point. Like
Abū al-ʿAtāhiya, Khāqānī adopts the persona of the *wāʿiẓ*, the preacher, a
persona generically opposed to that of the panegyrist; yet like the panegyrist, he
prefaces his poem with a lament for a lost love, a lost world. Lament and
admonition combine to make his poetic "gift for Sharvān" one of enduring value.
The "provision of Madāʾin" (*zād-i Madāʾin*, 38), like that *zād al-taqwā* which,
Abū al-ʿAtāhiya reminds us, is the only true provision for the journey from birth
to death, is also that most necessary for kings who, because of their high state,
are in far greater peril than ordinary men; and we sense here not merely
generalized homily, but admonition directed at his prince, the Sharvānshāh.[13]

Light-hearted (not to say obscene) parody is not absent from Persian poetry,
and encompasses both *qaṣīda* and *ghazal*, often with a concomitant manipulation
of form. Anvarī (d. after 560/1164–5?) is particularly noted for manipulations of
the *qaṣīda* (see Meisami 1987: 68–75), among them the conceit that it is the
beloved, rather than the poet (who has been rendered incapacitated, either by
drink or by his suffering in love), who is the actual author of the *madīḥ* (see e.g.
Anvarī 1959: 19–20, 135–7) or who reminds the poet of his duty (ibid.:
118–19). A variation on this conceit is seen in a *qaṣīda* dedicated to a certain
ʿUmar ibn Makhlaṣ (ibid.: 144–6; see also Meisami 1987: 72–3).[14] The *qaṣīda*
boasts a lengthy *nasīb* followed by a panegyric of extreme brevity, the whole
dominated by a light-hearted tone.

The poet begins by complaining of his love for an Indian maiden:

1 A Hindu who caused tulips to pour from my eyelids, Hindu-like
    consumed my soul with sorrow's fire.
2 Turning dewdrops to blood, and burning in the fire: in their religion
    Hindus have mastered both these arts. . . .
5 Love of a Hindu is, in any case, more burning, since fire is accustomed
    to burning in coal.

6 It was a fatal chance, a heavenly decree that love attacked me and that
    fitting things should follow.

7 I saw her from the window of the slave-dealer's room: she was in her
    nest, and I in the midst of the market.

There follows a lengthy description of the Hindu and her spellbinding effect on
the poet. When she descends from the window they converse:

21 Said I, "Envy of idols, happy be my love for you; for with a hundred
    hearts I've embraced the grief of your love." . . . .

23 Said she, "If you have gold, then your love will be blessed; with gold
    the foot can reach the head of the wandering star.

24 "If you buy me from my master, tomorrow night you will enjoy both
    me, and union with me; don't worry."

25 Said I, "If I've no gold, what should I do then?" Said she, "Take my
    advice: go away, and don't scratch your beard."

The disappointed poet grieves so loudly and bitterly that the girl takes pity on
him:

29 "Don't wail," she said; "I'll show you what to do: go to your lord, take
    him a poem, and bring back silver:

30 "The just lord of the world, successor to Ḥātim Ṭayy, obeyed by fate,
    Grandeur of Viziers, torch of all regions;

31 "He who has easily (for example) given to lesser than you ten better
    than I, will give you once, if not a hundred times."

    This, the poem's center, is also its *gurīzgāh*, and leads to brief praise of the
patron's generosity (31–33), put into the mouth of the slave. The poet, who
fears going to his patron with such a request, returns home, and spends the night
weeping and lamenting; at dawn, he finds himself unexpectedly confronted by
his patron.

44 Then, as I blinked, I saw my patron, (seated) on a golden carpet on the
    dais of the court.

45 He said, "O Anvarī, what has befallen you, that you are depressed and
    griefstricken as a heron?"

The poet tells his patron the sad tale; he laughs, and orders that the slave be
bought and given to the panegyrist. But at the very moment that he clasps her
in his embrace, he awakens:

50 There was no patron, no beloved; just me, with my own self, asleep like
    a dog in its hole.[15]

Several more lines of lamentation are followed by an address to the patron in
which the poet apologizes for his long story, begs his lord's indulgence, and
concludes:

63 As long as love is, in the minds and hearts of physicians, a disease, an
    affliction of the heart, and the lover a sick man,
64 May my heart be afflicted with such an illness, and may you, my lord,
    always have sympathy for me.

Anvarī uses many of the strategies we have already seen in discussing
relationships between *nasīb* and *madīḥ*. His *gurīzgāh*, though appropriately
centrally placed (30–31), is a false one, and the anticipated praise is delayed by
his long story of unrequited (or unfinanced) love. The praise itself (54–61) is
broken up by further allusions to the poet's poverty and by fervent
proclamations of devotion to his patron, for whom he would even write
panegyrics in his sleep (59); while the conclusion of the *duʿā* makes clear the
link between beloved and patron.

As we saw in Chapter 2, the *ghazal* is often used for panegyric, and may
resemble a *qaṣīda* in miniature, as does this brief panegyric to Bahrāmshāh by
Sanāʾī (1962: 87–8).

 1 Last night I went to the top of the lane to look upon the friend;
    I saw night put to rout by the two bright cheeks of the friend.
 2 So that they might gain honour before his neck and lips,
    I saw the moon was the slave, Venus the servant of the friend.
 3 All ears gathered sugar as from his speech there poured
    sugared words from those two sugar-lumps of the friend.
 4 All eyes became a place of spectacle for the soul –
    not because of some juggler, but to look upon the friend.
 5 Before a single eyelash of his gazelle-like eyes, gone weak,
    the lions of the world became a thread of the turban of the friend.
 6 Turned to octagons, like honeycombs, from twisting,
    was the deaf granite rock, by the bloodthirsty glance of the friend.
 7 Each moment a pretender, from his own prideful heart,
    shed fresh blood, slaughtered in the twists of each curl of the friend.
 8 When he travelled forth in his caravan, from his smile, like the sphere
      itself,
    it was bedecked with stars – the caravan of the friend.
 9 His sweet lips joined together, for the sake of the order of life,
    the justice of Nūshirvān with the tyrannous eyes of the friend.
10 Last night, through his nurturing, my sustenance was gained;
    today again a night of grief is mine, reproached by the friend.
11 Why should Sanāʾī tell this tale? for by way of lip and curl,
    he has seen the whole world filled with the fame of one cast aside by
      the friend.
12 There is a road to his private chamber by way of the roof of the sphere;
    the high resolve of the world's king dwells in the chamber of the friend:
13 The mighty *shāh*, Bahrāmshāh, that *shāh* whose palm is ever
    the cause of affliction for his foe and of relief for his friend.

14 May his blows, his mercy, his bad, his good, through creating and
   destroying,
   be forever the downfall of his foe and the support of his friend.

This highly mannered *ghazal*, which imitates not only the form but the
diction of the *qaṣīda*, signals its panegyric intent from the outset. Its *nasīb* (if we
may call it that) employs topics typical of *madīḥ* – the ruler's victory over his
foes and generosity to his friends – in language which expresses these topics in
terms of love: the "friend's" bright face chases night away like a defeated army
(1); the very planets are ennobled (like the ruler's subjects, and particularly the
poet) by service to him (2); his generosity and eloquence are manifest by
sugared words poured from sugared lips (3), and so on. An allusive attack on the
poet's rivals (likened to the false lover of *ghazal*, the *muddaʿī*), whose claims are
defeated by the friend's twisting curls (7), becomes further clarified by the
suggestion of past favour and present deprivation of the poet (10). The
recurrent references to "observing" and "contemplating" the friend (1, 4, with
the repetition of the initial rhyme of 1a, *nazzāra*, in 4b), and to his "caravan" (8;
an allusion to the departing beloved of *nasīb*), suggest the appearance of the
ruler amid his retinue (the "stars" that adorn the caravan) before his admiring
subjects; while mention of "Anūshīrvān's justice", joined with the friend's
"tyrannical eye" (9), recapitulates the ruthlessness/generosity doublet.

The *aporia* (11), which includes the poet's self-naming, proclaims that the
poet has spread the friend's fame throughout the world (as is the duty of
the panegyrist); this paves the way for the *gurīzgāh* (12) and the identification
of the "friend" as Bahrāmshāh (13), in which the standard doublet is repeated in
such a way as to effect a shift of focus and a change of meaning: the "friend" is
now the well-wisher of the ruler. The concluding *duʿā* (14) again combines the
topic of ruthlessness and generosity (*zakhm u raḥm*, "wounding and mercy")
which are, respectively, the downfall of the ruler's enemies and the support of
the "friend" who must now be identified with the poet, who has composed what
is clearly a plea for support against his rival (the *muddaʿī* of 7, the *ghazal*'s central
line) who has (as line 10 suggests) caused his estrangement from the prince.

An even closer adaptation of the *qaṣīda* form for panegyric *ghazal* is seen in
this *ghazal* by Ḥāfiẓ (QG390), which begins with a spring song and in which the
panegyric intent is clear from the outset.

1 The crown of the king of flowers has appeared on the meadow's edge;
   O Lord, blessed be his arrival for cypress and jasmine.
2 Happy and fitting was this princely accession;
   now everyone may sit in his proper place.

The poet then turns to address the prince directly:

3 Give Jamshīd's seal good tidings by the beauty of your seal,
   for (God's) Exalted Name has loosed it from the hand of Ahriman.

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4 May this house ever prosper from the earth of whose sill
   every moment the wind of Yemen blows with the breath of the All-
     Merciful.

Following this apparent *duʿā* the poet moves, by way of a topical allusion, to explicit praise of the prince:

5 The grandeur of the son of Pashang, and his world-conquering sword,
   have through all the *Shāhnāmas* become a tale (told) in gatherings.
6 The polo-horse of the sphere has become tame beneath the saddle;
   O kingly horseman, now that you have come into the field, strike the
     ball.
7 The stream of the kingdom is watered by the blade of your sword;
   plant the tree of justice; uproot your ill-wishers.
8 Hereafter it will not be surprising if, from the sweet breeze of your
     nature,
   there should arise from the plain of Aydhaj (the scent of) the musk-sac
     of Khotan.
9 Those who sit in a corner await your beautiful manifestation;
   tilt your cap aside; raise the veil from your face.
10 I consulted with Reason; it said, "Ḥāfiẓ, drink wine;"
   sāqī, bring wine on the advice of a trusted counselor.
11 O breeze, ask that the cupbearer of the Atabeg's feast
   grant me a draught from that gold-scattering cup.

The opening spring song (1–2) celebrates the rose's "princely accession" and his regaining of his royal seal from the demon who had usurped it (3). From his prayer for the prosperity of the ruler's house (4) the poet moves to explicit praise (5–9); he concludes with an evocation of the setting in which the *ghazal* is performed (10–11). The poem blends the language of praise with that of love in the images of garden, polo game (battle), and veiled beloved; there is even, at the centre, a *gurīzgāh* at which the *mamdūḥ* is named, if allusively (*shāhsavār*, "kingly horseman", is an epithet of Shāh Shujāʿ, whose *kunya* was Abū al-Fawāris). The topical nature of the *ghazal* was clearly seen by Ḥāfiẓ's Turkish commentator Sūdī (1979, 4: 2135–40); but he does not seem to have got it quite right. He saw in the opening line an allusion (*kināya*) to the restoration of Shāh Manṣūr after he had retaken Shiraz from the rebellious Turkmens of Shiraz. (The epithet Shāhsavār suggests Shāh Shujāʿ, however; and I have found no reference to the event Sūdī mentions.) He comments on line 2 ("now everyone may sit in his proper place") that "with respect to rule, the Turkmens are foreigners, and not fitting for the throne; but now the throne has found ... its rightful king. So let all others occupy their own places: meaning, viziers, judges, army, secretaries and other officials should each know his own duty and occupy his proper place." "Jamshīd's seal" (3) is in fact Solomon's seal (the two rulers are often conflated), which, so the legend goes, was at one time stolen by a demon ("Ahriman").[16]

Now it is possible that the restored ruler was indeed Ḥāfiẓ's patron Shāh Shujāʿ; but other allusive references in the poem suggest otherwise: for example that in 4, to the ḥadīth "I find the Wind of Mercy comes from the direction of Yemen" (innī la-ajidu rīḥ al-raḥmān min qibal al-Yaman), which Sūdī interprets as meaning, "May this house ever manifest the odour of justice and nobility." We might note that the wind that comes from Yemen is a south wind. Even more explicit is the mention, in 5, of the "son of Pashang" (pūr-i Pashang), who, says Sūdī, was a bold warrior whose deeds were recorded in books of history (Shāhnāmahā). "Pashang" has been identified as Pīr Aḥmad-i Pashang, the Atabeg of Luristan, whose capital was Aydhaj (or Īdhaj) – specifically mentioned in 8 (and for which Sūdī has "the plain of Īraj", a barren desert between Shiraz and Lār, which the ruler's generous nature will transform into a scented garden) – whose son was famous for his martial prowess. It seems more likely that the "son" was Pīr Aḥmad-i Pashang, whose father, Shams al-Dīn Pashang (r. 756–80/1355–78), had been helped to regain his throne by Shāh Shujāʿ, after he had been ousted by the latter's brother Shāh Manṣūr; and, indeed, R. Lescot held that the ghazal was dedicated to Shams al-Dīn. (On the identification, and the events in question, see Āhūr 1984, 1: 156; EIr, art. "Atābakān-e Lorestān"; Lescot 1944: 79.)

The "corner-sitters" (9), says Sūdī, are "the men of God and the shaykhs who await [the ruler's] beautiful epiphany." The reference to the "cap" echoes another ḥadīth, "I saw my beloved with his cap awry," in which the Prophet is equated with the Sufi shāhid, exemplar of perfect beauty (on Shāh Shujāʿ's reputation for beauty see Meisami 1990a); the designation of reason as a wise counselor alludes to another "proverb and ḥadīth," al-mustashār muʾtaman, "he who is asked for counsel is trusted." The final line is an example of ḥusn-i ṭalab, and appeals to the Atabeg's generosity; the address to the Ṣabā (the lovers' messenger) suggests that the poet is not present at the Atabeg's feast, but has sent the poem to him, from Shiraz, and asks for his reward. (The address to the sāqī in 10 further suggests that it was performed, in the first instance, at that court.)

In this poem, whose diction and imagery combine those of ghazal and qaṣīda, the poet has managed to praise not one, but two princes: the newly restored Atabeg, and his own patron Shāh Shujāʿ. Various elements of the qaṣīda are employed (with some variation from their normal order of succession): nasīb (1–2), duʿā (3–4), madīḥ (5–9), coupled with the "outdoing" motif, references to the ruler's triumphs in battle, his life-giving powers, his justice, generosity, and support of the faith, and a final request for generosity. The poem's diction and imagery combine those of ghazal and qaṣīda, with the former predominating. Other ghazals may be seen to condense, or "miniaturize", other types of qaṣīda; thus for example QG9 (discussed in Chapters 2 and 4), which describes the spring garden and the epiphany of the Magian child, manipulates both the panegyric and homiletic forms (somewhat in the manner of Nāṣir-i Khusraw): nasīb (1–4: spring song + ghazal) > Admonition (5–8) > Panegyric allusion (9) > Admonitory cap.

The strength of the homoerotic convention in Persian love poetry, as we have seen, enables the treatment of poet-patron relationships within that framework in much the same way that, in Augustan Roman poetry, "homosexual love provided a ready framework for treating a personal relationship with an *amicus*" (Williams 1980: 214); and, indeed, the convention (if not always the actuality) of a close bond of friendship and emotion between poet and patron is equally strong. Both conventions are seen, for example, in the *qaṣīda*s of the Ghaznavid panegyrists (though not, notably, in those to Maḥmūd), in Anvarī's "Hindu" *qaṣīda*, and of course in the panegyric *ghazal*; and both lend themselves to more light-hearted treatments in downright obscene poems which parody both serious treatments of the topics and the forms associated with them (cf. ibid.: 216). Sūzanī (6th/12th c.), a poet at the court of the Qarakhanid rulers of Samarqand and more or less a Persian counterpart of Ibn al-Ḥajjāj, is famous for his *hazliyyāt* ("jesting poems"), which are often both satirical and highly obscene. The following poem is addressed to an unidentified "Jalāl al-Dīn" (presumably a vizier) (1959: 401; see also Meisami 1995a: 253–4).

1 I saw a hill of purest silver, cleft in twain:
    who has ever seen a hill of silver cleft in twain?
2 A hill of purest silver; yet, you would think some one
    had cleft that hill into two halves with a sword.
3 A hill the hue of camphor, made of roses;
    within a palace, a *mīm*-like ring of ruby.
4 Within that hill a well, its colour made of silver,
    its two halves crowned with rose and grenadine.
5 Its ascent all of silver, its descent all of gold,
    its edges full of terror, its midst all full of fear.

The description continues (6–10), as the "hill" is styled the envy and cynosure of roses and lilies, soft and white as a heap of jasmine, pure and chaste as flawless pearls, with its "fine wellspring, in which / the twisting snake can settle, and the scaly fish" (9). It is a truly Paradisal place; and

10 He who has seen the shadow of that hill, that wellspring,
    has seen the shadow of Ṭūbā and the wellspring of submission.
11 But the road is terrifying, and none can reach that place
    except the one to whom his lord extends a generous hand:
12 Jalāl al-Dīn, the boast of the four elements,
    from whom the seven climes' expanse has gained its order.

This elaborate description evokes the garden imagery of the spring song; but this is no garden, for what the poet describes (in language which is, for Sūzanī, relatively chaste) is his beloved's nether regions, in a parody of the imagery of the panegyric *qaṣīda*, in which Paradise is the court, and, more explicitly, of the panegyric *ghazal* as practiced by such contemporary poets as

Sanā'ī and Ḥasan-i Ghaznavī. Also parodied is the poetic blazon, in which the beloved's beauties are likened to the attributes of the garden.[17] Sūzanī stands the blazon's conventional imagery on its head, in more than one way: as in Anvarī's "Hindu" *qaṣīda* (and Abū Nuwās's panegyric to al-Khaṣīb), it is the patron's generosity which will allow the poet to attain his much-desired Paradise.

Another poem by Sūzanī which combines panegyric and *hijā'* manipulates the panegyric model by inverting its motifs (1959: 387; see Meisami 1995a: 254–5). It describes "a bewitching one [who] became a base catamite," and whose beauty was, as a result, transformed to ugliness.

> 2 That mouth so tiny it was like the point of a compass
>   became so wide it was like the compass's circle.

The beloved's musk-scattering curls became chains on his moon-like face, his beard a strumpet, his curls a girdle-like rope (3); on his neck, which once "seemed like bouquets of roses, meadows of thorns appeared" (4); his carnelian lips turned to worthless clay (5). Poems describing the beloved boy's transformation into a (less desirable) adult male are frequent in both Arabic and Persian (see Rowson 1991); but here, this "maturity" is linked to the beloved's moral decline:

> 6 Fistfuls of scattered gold had been the price of his kisses;
>   he sprouted whiskers and became worthy of farting sounds.
> 7 A thousand turbans and cloaks were in pledge for him,
>   till that night he slept with a pederast and lost his trousers. . . .
> 11 All around his town, with relatives and strangers, so many
>   tools did he consume that he became a treadle.
> 12 With a world of ass-pressers, he did not leave the house;
>   but afflicted by Sūzanī, he was outcast from his family.

The poet concludes that, because of all these sins, "Fortune did not allow him to become the intimate of Commander Shujā' al-Dīn … Aḥmad-i Masʿūd," the poem's dedicatee, of whom he states, finally, that, because of his auspicious fortune, "whoever becomes his friend, felicity too is his friend" (14).

Thus a former object of desire becomes transformed into a target for derision. The mock-*nasīb* (1–6) prepares the way for the *hijā'*, which excoriates the victim's sexual promiscuity, indulged in, it is suggested, to curry favour – unsuccessfully, however, thanks to Sūzanī's invective. The poet's self-naming concludes the *hijā'*, just as it does the "erotic" section of the panegyric *ghazal*; the final lines praise the patron primarily, it would seem, for his nobility in resisting the advances of one who seems to have been the poet's rival, as is implied by the final line, which appears to express gratitude. The identification of the desire for union (in the crudest terms) with that for favour points the moral: unwelcome advances are a breach of protocol; corrupt sexuality figures both corrupt morality and *lèse-majesté*.

Thus the panegyric *qaṣīda* both generates other, non-panegyric forms and enjoys a peculiarly symbiotic relationship with briefer lyric forms. It will be seen to provide a model for yet other types of structural organization based on other, external organizational principles; we will turn to a discussion of some of these principles in the next chapter.

6

DISPOSITION:
VARIETIES OF STRUCTURE

Rhymes are, as you're striving to find them,
like pearls, when you hit on each one –
Scattered gems; but when you combine them
they're that exquisite necklace: a poem!
Abū Tammām

Spatial and numerical composition

Proportional segmentation establishes relations of balance and symmetry among the segments of a poem. Such symmetries often enhance the poem's meaning: for example, the parallelism between the segments of *nasīb* and *madīḥ* in Farrukhī's "Ramaḍān" *qaṣīda* establishes relations of congruence and contrast between the two sections which are essential to interpreting the poem. This is also the case with Manūchihrī's so-called "double" *qaṣīda*, in which the *ʿitāb*, because of its positioning, can be seen to be directed (obliquely) at the prince. But such symmetries do not convey meaning in and of themselves, beyond the poems in which they occur; in other words, they are not signifiers in their own right, in the sense that they do not refer to structures located outside the poems in which they figure. In other poems, however, symmetrical patterns – both spatial and numerical – function not only to enhance, but to establish, meaning.

Spatial and numerical composition in pre-modern Western literatures have been the subject of considerable study, and have begun to arouse interest with respect to Arabic and Persian as well.[1] R. G. Peterson observes,

It is almost impossible to believe that concentric organization or having seven cantos or twelve books or thirty-three chapters is accidental: such things may be fundamental to all art and as unconscious as the symmetry of the leaf or the crystal. . . . Man, by virtue of his physical shape, is conceived to be in proportionate and symmetrical relationship to two of his most portentous symbols: the circle, symbol of heaven and unity, and the square, symbol of earth and the elements. Proportion and symmetry may be the most common ways in which the mind copes with the outside world, nature as well as artifact. (1976: 369)

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Peterson goes on to suggest two necessary cautions: first,

> although number and pattern can have esthetically relevant meaning, they do not always have it and they do not have it independently of the work's content; second, the unresolved, and perhaps unresolvable, problem of intention (did the authors – or anybody? know what they were doing?) should warn us away from claims of number and pattern that are less than self-evident. (ibid: 374)

While the problem of intentionality is often insoluble, it is indeed difficult to believe that obvious instances of numerical and spatial patterning are accidental rather than deliberate, especially when they clearly reflect contemporary conceptions of the universe as divinely ordered in terms of measure and proportion.

The most obvious method of establishing the presence of spatial or numerical patterns in a given poem is by counting; yet, as Peterson emphasizes, it is important to select the right, that is, the significant elements to be counted.

> Symmetry in the simplest sense is the relationship of individual parts to a center (as concentric circles), to a line (as related objects on either side of a picture), or to a plane (as related objects within a 3-dimensional space, like a statue or a model of the cosmos). Because the work of literature is apprehended in time – words read or heard one after another – the only possible expression of symmetry is in relation to a center, the midpoint in a group of points arranged along a line.... The only question is whether that center will be significant in some valid artistic sense. If so, the work is probably symmetrical; if not, then it is lacking in symmetry and may be fragmentary or incomplete.... The criterion to be observed ... is this: the element to be counted should be in fruitful relationship (harmony, contrast, conflict, etc.) with obvious narrative, thematic, or symbolic concerns in the work. (ibid.: 369–70)

The most significant of spatial patterns is ring composition, in which "the beginning and end will be in some obvious way the same, and a midpoint or center (either a single element, an X, or the coming together of two similar elements, D and D) will be clear;" others include "alternating-parallel (AB, AB, AB, ... or ABCD, ABCD ...) or triadic (ABA, ABA, ... or ABA, CDC, ...) – but what is rare is the direct ABCDEFGH ..., one thing after another, the history of an unstructured life" (ibid.: 369–70).

Peterson rightly emphasizes the importance of the centre of a work, an importance which, as we have already seen, is no less great for Arabic and Persian poetry. Significant things happen at the centres of poems: the naming of the *mamdūḥ*, for example, or a major shift in focus, or a transformation in mood, tone, or direction of movement (see e.g. Sperl 1993; and compare Williams 1980: 2, 42 on the pivotal role of the central stanza in much Augustan poetry.

See also, more generally, Arnheim 1982). But there are other ways of creating symmetry, both with and without reference to a centre.

While Peterson considers simple linear structures rare, we have already seen some examples of this type. Al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf's short poem on the "concealment of love" defeats the expectation of symmetry by the addition of a two-line cap in praise of the beloved, so that its progression is ABCD (A: *kitmān*, 1–3; B: past loves, 4–7; C: lovers' hearts unequal, 8–10; D: praise of beloved, 11–12). While without the cap the first three segments might appear to be organized around the longer central segment (3 + 4 + 3), this symmetry is offset by the final lines, which provide both a shift of focus from lover to lady and the necessary closure. (It might be argued that al-ʿAbbās is manipulating the panegyric convention of the *duʿāʾ*; but other examples suggest that linearity is characteristic of his style.) Similarly, those of Abū al-ʿAtāhiya's *zuhdiyyāt* which resemble poetic sermons or strings of admonitory aphorisms are often characterized by a straight linear progression. We should also note the comment of, for example, Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī, that poets often "save the best for last" (1981: 289), in what Hamori terms the "schema of increasing adequacy", exemplified by Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī's (d. 606/1209) comment on Koran 12: 5 ("I saw eleven stars, and the sun and the moon; I saw them prostrate themselves before me"). "Why, al-Rāzī asks, do sun and moon come after the eleven stars. 'He puts them last because of their eminence over the stars, for specific naming indicates that the thing is held in greater esteem.' At the very least, the notion of a crescendo ordering the text is present here" (Hamori 1991: 18).

Examples of alternating-parallel structure are often seen in parallel segments of a long poem (e.g., in Farrukhī's "Ramaḍān" *qaṣīda*, in which there is reference to the centre, in which the *mamdūḥ* is named; on this pattern in narrative poetry see Meisami 1987: 206–8). They are also found in brief lyrics, such as this *ghazal* by Saʿdī of Shiraz (d. 691/1292) (1976: 71–2).

1 I practiced love; my reason quickly rose to blame:
   "He who becomes a lover, to safety's lost all claim.
2 Whoever sits in private with a beauty, rosy-faced,
   will never raise himself up from the path of blame again.
3 When did you hear that someone roused the stallion of love's grief,
   that the dust of sad regret did not arise behind him soon?"
4 Love won; and among those pious solitaries, my name
   for temperance quite vanished, and my honourable fame.
5 In that rosegarden where that laughing rosebush reclined,
   the noble cypress suddenly arose to pay a fine.
6 I know not with what brilliance bloomed the hundred-petalled rose,
   nor how the pine tree grew to such a lofty height and form.
7 Last night a while, enamoured, he lay in Saʿdī's arms;
   temptation rested; when he rose, the Day of Judgement came!

The sequence is ABCABCB; A (1, 4) repeats ʿishq, "love", at the beginning of each line, and shares the motif of the loss of good repute as a result of love. B (2, 5, 7), linked by bi-nishast, "reclined", which concludes the first miṣrāʿ of each line (and which forms an antithesis with the radīf bar khāst, "arose"), develops the motif of private communion with the beloved, first in a general context ("whoever"), second as an exemplum couched in figurative language (the rosebush figures the beloved, the cypress the lover, who incurs blame, in the form of a fine, for his inferiority), and third with a specific instance, as the speaker recalls a fleeting moment of closeness and the anguish of the ensuing separation. C (3, 6), which constitute, first, a question, and second, an expression of bewilderment, uses two figurative descriptions of love's overwhelming power in two contrasting aspects: the "dust" which is raised when the "stallion of love's grief" gets under way, and the overwhelming beauty of the beloved's epiphany, compared to the blooming of a spring garden. This parallelism occurs with relation to the central line (4): "love won" (over both the speaker and, implicitly, the "blamer", reason) marks a shift to the rebuttal of reason's reproach through the example which proves that love can lead to the joy of union as well as to the "dust of regret"; this makes it all worthwhile. There is also a tendency towards circularity: malāmat "blame" (1) leads to qiyāmat, literally "Resurrection" (7), implying, figuratively, turmoil and confusion, but perhaps also the lover's ultimate salvation.

Tendencies towards circularity have already been seen in a number of poems, not all of which exemplify true ring composition (that is, where the members are arranged chiastically); such symmetries call attention to significant moments in the poem or provide points of reference (as for example in Bashshār's qaṣīda to ʿUqba ibn Salm). In panegyric, the frequent practice of placing the mamdūḥ's name at the poem's center provides orientation, and may lead to either a parallel or a chiastic organization of segments around that center, as in Abū Tammām's Amorium qaṣīda (see Chapter 9), an example of loose ring composition with a sequence ABCXBCA whose approximate center is marked by the first reference to the caliph al-Muʿtaṣim (line 37). Similarly, love poems often place the beloved at the centre (or, in Abū Nuwās' case, the wine); or they may focus on the lover, placed in central position, as in al-ʿAbbās's "Tell me of the Hijaz" (Chapter 4), whose segments are arranged chiastically around the centrer.

A^1	1–2	"Tell me of the Hijaz"
B^1	3–4	Fawz
X	5–6	The lover's state
B^2	7–8	Fawz among the maidens
A^2	9–10	Prayer

The prayer for union balances the poet's opening plea to be told of the Hijaz, where Fawz dwells; his description of Fawz balances that of Fawz among the maidens; while the centre (5–6), describing the lover's grief at separation, is the

poem's focal point. If we think of the "expanded middle" of the poem as encompassing lines 3–8, we see that this middle is occupied by Fawz and the poet (though in reality they are separated): the latter is framed by the Fawz-segments in an embrace that adds further poignancy to the concluding prayer. The clear marking of this poem's centre contrasts with the "concealment of love" poem in which the expanded middle conveys the same information but focuses primarily on the lover.

Placing an object of value, or one on which the audience is invited to focus attention, at the centre of a poem is a common technique. Such objects are, not uncommonly, round – winecups, pearls or other gems, necklaces; at other times they are simply items (or persons) of particular importance or significance.[2] In many of Abū Nuwās' *khamriyyāt* wine occupies the central position (as in the panegyric to Hārūn al-Rashīd; see Chapter 5), signalling its valorization. Such valorization is even clearer in a brief poem referred to in Chapters 2 and 5 (1958, 3: 106–7).

1　Weep not for Laylā; do not grieve for Hind; drink, amongst the roses, a
　　(wine) red as the rose:
2　A cup (of wine) which, as it slips down the drinker's throat, bestows its
　　crimson upon him in eye and cheek.
3　The wine is a ruby, the goblet a pearl, in the hand of a maiden of
　　slender build,
4　Who gives you wine to drink from her hand, and from her mouth wine,
　　so that you must become drunken twice over.
5　For me there are two drunkenesses, for my boon-companions only one;
　　this is what singles me out from among them.

The central line (3), which provides the transition from the topic of wine to that of the cup-bearer (the joys of both conflated in the final line), also valorizes wine by describing it in terms of material value: ruby wine in a cup of pearl.

In this love-poem by Abū Nuwās (1958, 4: 270–2) the central objects are fraught with ambivalence.

1　I fell – amongst all my troubles and pains! – for a girdled (Christian),
　　the Cross round his neck.
2　He approached, on the way to his church, and I nearly died (on the
　　spot) of terror.
3　"Who are you," I asked, "by the Messiah, and the Gospels, which
　　you've committed to paper,
4　"And by the Cross which you worship?" He answered, "The heavenly
　　moon, (risen) on its horizon."
5　I asked him, where was his church? He replied, "(May you be) in His
　　Hellfire and flames!"
6　Woe is me! to desire one cloistered, lying in ambush for him on his
　　path!

7 How often do you see an impassioned lover to whose anxiety
   deprivation is added!

The poem is divided into three sections: A (1–2), the speaker's encounter with
the Christian youth, B (3–5), the dialogue between them, and C (6–7), the
consequences of their encounter. The youth's symbol of piety, the crucifix,
associated with him in the opening line and evoking both his piety and chastity
and the speaker's suffering from deprivation (the lover's martyrdom, implied by
ḥirmān in 7b), is linked in the central line with his appearance: as the very
moon of beauty, both radiant and remote. This linkage suggests the conflicting
values represented by the speaker's desire (5: *saʾaltuhu ʿan maḥalli bīʿatihi: bīʿa* is
the church or monastery where the youth dwells, hence also where he might
be obtained for pleasure, playing on *bayʿa*, "purchase", "commerce") and the
youth's rejection, and the ironic contrast between the poet's invocation of the
Christian symbols on which he swears and the youth's emphasis on the fires of
Hell awaiting sinners.

Ring composition is frequent in the short lyric, which easily lends itself to
tight construction. A loosely chiastic arrangement characterizes this *ghazal* by
Saʿdī in which the central line provides the key to its interpretation (1976:
63–4; see also Meisami 1987: 277).

1 Happy that spot wherein my love abides;
  there soul's ease and the sick heart's cure resides.
2 Here, I am but a lifeless form, no more;
  my soul is there where that rash love abides.
3 Here is my body, sick; there dwells my soul;
  here is the sky; its planets there reside.
4 O Zephyr, should'st thou chance to bring a breeze,
  pass by Shiraz, where my dear love resides.
5 To whom shall I tell my woes? in whom confide?
  let me go there, where secrets' lord resides.
6 My heart longs not to gaze on meadows fair:
  my gaze is there, where my beloved resides.
7 What worth this ruin, Saʿdī; 'tis not thy place;
  pack up! the lovers' dwelling there abides.

Line 4 provides the focal point which clarifies the *ghazal*'s meaning: the poet, far
from his home and his beloved (presumably also his patron) in Shiraz, longs to
return, and bids the Ṣabā bear his message to his love. The *ghazal* is based on the
antithesis between "here" and "there", with the preference for "there"
announced by its use in the *radīf ānjā-st*, "is there". Further circularity is
achieved by the parallel between *ārāmgāh* (1) and *manzilgāh* (7), both referring
to the beloved's abode, and by the move from the general "Happy that spot", to
its identification in the central line as Shiraz, to the specific "Pack up!" in the
final line.

A *ghazal* by Ḥāfiẓ evokes echoes of Abū Nuwās, as it features a pearl at the center; but it is a pearl with many meanings (*P*93; *QG*42 has a slightly different order. For an analysis of the latter version see Meisami 1976).

1 To tell you my heart's state is all I wish;
   to hear your heart's reply is all I wish.
2 To sweep dust from your path, for honour's sake,
   with my eyelashes' tips, is all I wish.
3 On such a noble, precious Night of Power
   to sleep by you till dawn is all I wish.
4 Ah! in the dark of night, to pierce so fine
   and delicate a pearl, is all I wish.
5 See what a callow hope? to hide a tale
   so plain, from rivals' eyes – how vain a wish!
6 O Eastern breeze! tonight, give aid to me:
   to flower anew at dawn is all I wish.
7 Ah: like Ḥāfiẓ, to utter poems of love,
   despite pretenders: that is all I wish!

The speaker addresses his beloved, to whom he wishes to speak of love. His desires escalate from wishing merely to speak to him, to longing to serve him in true courtly fashion, to desiring to sleep all night in his embrace, culminating in the central and pivotal line (4) with the wish to "pierce the delicate pearl [*durrdāna*]" – a metaphor not only for sexual congress, but for composing poetry. But the speaker's indiscretion threatens to disclose his secret, and may even place him in danger (a reference which evokes the courtly context of the poem and suggests that, more than a mere love-plaint, it is a suit for favour). The final line repeats the motif of the first, the desire to speak – in this case, to utter "licentious" verse (*shiʿr-i rindāna*) "like Ḥāfiẓ" – which, of course, the poet has just done. The central pearl (not randomly strung), with its double association with beloved and poem, provides the transition between the poem's two fields of reference, love and poetry, looking backwards to the first and forwards to the second, as well as between the ascending and descending movements of the two halves of the poem (rising and falling desire), while furnishing a unifying focal metaphor. Circularity is further achieved by the parallels between the opening and closing lines, again, as in the case of Saʿdī, marked by a movement from general ("To tell my state") to specific ("To write love poetry"). The poem's overall structure, which incorporates not only circularity but an alternating pattern within the circle, may be schematized as follows:

A^1	1	Talk of love: private communion
B^1	2–3	Love brings honour > sleeping with the beloved till dawn
X	4	Pearl: union, poetry
B^2	5–6	Love brings disgrace > threat of not surviving till dawn
A^2	7	Talk of love: public expression (love poetry)

Ḥāfiẓ, like Abū Nuwās before him, places a symbolically valuable (and round) object at the centre of his poem – the central jewel, so to speak, in his well-ordered necklace of verses – which links "beloved" and poem, each peerless of its kind.

Ring composition is also the basis for this "brief *qaṣīda*" (so classed by the editor) by Khāqānī, where the central line again serves to clarify the poem's meaning (1959: 744).

1 Set forth for non-existence; there friends seek;
   and loyalty's sweet fragrance from them seek.
2 Soar high above the world; seek your own kind;
   dive to the sea's dark; its coral seek.
3 No earthly halting-place is fit for you;
   the heights of heaven's revolving vault then seek.
4 When you produce the Table of the soul,
   on mediation bent, a fit guest seek.
5 The demons' troops have overwhelmed the earth;
   kindle a bright lamp, Solomon to seek.
6 O wounded heart of Khāqānī, arise;
   grasp friends, that you a remedy may seek.
7 Like Khiẓr, first drink the poison of the journey;
   then venture forth, the Fount of Life to seek.
8 Sharvān's confines will never be "Khayr-vān";
   rise, and outside of "Sharr-vān"'s boundaries seek.
9 Into the flask of kinsmen throw a stone;
   a different sort of kinsmen, near ones, seek.
10 You've seen what Joseph gained from brotherhood;
   turn from your brothers, and true brethren seek.
11 Sharvān's water-source is full of crocodiles;
   in Khurasan an easy source then seek.
12 Turn towards the sea; when you pass over it,
   in Ṭabaristān a place of pleasure seek.
13 Know that the goal of your hopes is in Āmul;
   go to Gurgān, lost Joseph there to seek.

The poem's thirteen lines are divided into two sections (1–6, 8–13) arranged around the central line (7); within each section verbal and thematic links signal relationships with the other.

	1	loyalty
	2	*daryā*
	3	*markaz*
A: search at home	4	guest
	5	demons
	6	Khāqānī

X: journey	7	*safar*
	8	Sharvān
	9	close ones
B: search abroad	10	brothers
	11	*mashrab*
	12	*daryā*
	13	Joseph

The central line (7) provides the pivot or "turn" between the two sections by announcing the decision to travel. Travel is not, clearly, the desired choice; at first perceived as poison (*zahr*), it must somehow be transformed into antidote (*nūsh*) by invoking the example of that consummate traveller Khiẕr, whom the poet will emulate by going to the Realms of Darkness, if need be, to search for the Water of Life. (We hear here an echo of the "affliction-remedy" oxymoron: what is potentially dangerous is also the only cure.)

Loyalty, the object of the poet's quest (1) – a quest announced by the *radīf ṭalab* "seek" (an ellipsis for *ṭalab kun* which suppresses the Persian verb of the compound), is linked with the exemplum of Joseph (13) in two contexts: the disloyalty of Joseph's brothers (10), who cast him into the pit (compensated by his rise to eminence in a foreign land, Egypt), and the steadfastness of his father Jacob, who refused to believe that he was dead (a steadfastness paralleled by the poet's refusal to accept "death" in Sharvān; the parallel is bought out by *bū-yi vafā*, literally "the scent of loyalty", which alludes to Jacob's recognition of Joseph's shirt by the odour it gave off; cf. Koran 12: 95–97). Lines 2 and 12 are linked by *daryā*, "sea": as the diver must brave its perils to obtain precious coral, so must the poet in order to find the "place of pleasure". Lines 3 and 11 posit a parallel between the "earthly halting-place" (*markaz-i khākī*) of Sharvān, and its "water-source" (*mashrab*, also "drinking-place"), both of which are equally unsuitable for the poet. Lines 4 and 10 contrast the "guest" (i.e., the stranger) that the poet will invite to partake from his "table of the soul" (an allusion to Koran 5: 113–116, in which God sends a "table laden with food" to Jesus as a sign of his prophetic mission), with the "brothers" who, like Joseph's, are envious of him and lacking in loyalty. Lines 5 and 9 similarly contrast the "demons" who control Sharvān (and who require a prince as wise and pious as Solomon to master them) with the "close ones of a different kind" that the poet will seek elsewhere. Lines 6 and 8, bracketing the centre, juxtapose Khāqānī with Sharvān and suggest that the movement between them, like the movement of the poem, will be in opposite directions with respect to that centre (7): the poet will travel forwards, leaving Sharvān behind. The self-apostrophe (6) serves, quite literally, as a *takhalluṣ*, a transitional or "exit" line, prefatory to the poet's decision to make the perilous journey across the sea.[3]

Among the complexities of this highly mannered poem (to which we will return in Chapter 7) is the ambiguity of the language of the first section and the ambivalence of the treatment of the journey. Such expressions as "turn towards

the realm of non-existence" (*'adam*), "earthly centre", "the table of the soul" and so on, suggest strongly that the journey to be undertaken is a spiritual one in search of like-minded brethren (which may indeed be one aspect of it), an expectation reinforced by the exhortation to become "like Khiẓr" and seek the Water of Life. But as the second segment makes clear, it is a real journey that is contemplated: it is not this world but this place, Sharvān, that must be abandoned. Both the concrete nature of the journey, the reality of its dangers, and the poet's obviously ambivalent feelings about it, are expressed in the increasing use of place-names – chiefly as rhyme-words – as the poem moves toward closure (Khurasan, Ṭabaristān, Āmul, Gurgān) and by the intensification of punning which characterizes this second segment. Thus the centre of Khāqānī's poem is occupied by something whose value is fraught with ambiguities.

Such examples of ring composition, in which parallel or contrasting motifs, images, words, constructions and so on are arranged around a centre occupied by an object of value and/or desire (wine, the beloved, the *mamdūḥ*; a pearl, a place, an action), show the importance of this technique in conveying meaning, and their symmetries often (though not invariably) carry symbolic value. In other poems, spatial and numerical composition carry an even greater weight of meaning which, to some extent, derives from other patterns which exist outside the poem and are incorporated into its structure. In a brief lyric by al-Muʿtamid ibn ʿAbbād, for example (on which see Scheindlin 1974: 142–5; for a full analysis see Meisami 1988b), spatial and numerical symbolism function both to organize the poem and to establish its meaning. The five-line poem is an example of ring composition, framed by the *tajnīs* on *awṭān* "homelands" and *waṭṭin* "accustom yourself" (literally: "make your home").

1 Be content with your share of this world, whatever it is;
   and console yourself if you leave your home land....
5 Accustom yourself to adversity, and look forward to release after it;
   and beg pardon of God, that you may seize forgiveness in him.

The central and pivotal line –

3 Whenever a memory arousing your emotion occurs to you
   does it make your tears flow on your cheeks as a flood? –

which introduces memory, *dhikrā*, refers not merely to personal memory, but to "remembrance with the reception of exhortation," even "admonition", and provides a link between this world (1) and the next (5). Thus the poem's structure is not (an asymmetrical) AABBA, as Scheindlin argued, but ABXBA:

A^1	(1)	Frame	Looking back to the "homeland"
B^1	(2)	Context	Spiritual (divine) power (permanent)
X	(3)	Center	Memory/Admonition (linking past and future)
B^2	(4)	Context	Temporal (kingly) power (transient)
A^2	(5)	Frame	Looking forward to divine mercy

Generically, the poem is a *mawʿiẓa*, an admonition in verse, and shows features typical of homiletic poems: imperatives (1, 5), anaphoric echoes, repetition, parallelism, balanced phrases, and direct and simple language. The opening apostrophe clearly identifies the poem's genre. (That this poem was received as a *mawʿiẓa* is seen, for example, from its inclusion in al-Maqqarī's *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*, not in the sections dealing with the poet's reign, exile or imprisonment, but with a group of similar poems; see al-Maqqarī 1968, 4: 116.) The poem begins by asking, "What is man's lot in this world?" and ends by defining that lot as adversity in this life, compensated by divine mercy in the next. The opposition between the two is signalled by the *tajnīs awṭānā/waṭṭin*, which requires the hearer to reconsider the first line in the light of the last; while both words are linked by the notion of a homeland, their senses are antithetical. Similarly, lines 2 and 4 contrast spiritual and temporal power, God and kings (*īmān*, "faith"/*sulṭān*, "power").

The invocation of memory contains a further allusion to the senses and the mental faculties, and to the relationship between memory and the senses (five external, five internal), suggesting a numerical symbolism underlying the five-line structure of this poem, which forms the symbolic image of the circle as the poet counsels movement from the material to the spiritual poles of existence, a symbol which ultimately resolves both the binary oppositions set up within the poem and its apparent linear movement from material to spiritual, and serves to contrast two views of time: material, human time, a linear progress from birth to death, embodied in the concept of *dahr*, and spiritual, divine time, a circular movement from source to return, from *mabdaʾ* to *maʿād*.

The Persian poet Nāṣir-i Khusraw, forced into exile in remote Yumgān because of his Ismāʿīlī missionary activities, nevertheless continued to use his poetry to convey the doctrines in which he believed. Much of that poetry cannot be understood without recourse to Ismāʿīlī *taʾwīl* (allegorical exegesis), of which number symbolism is an important element. Number symbolism frequently provides a structural basis for Nāṣir's *qaṣīda*s and is crucial to their interpretation. In the "spring" *qaṣīda* discussed in Chapter 5, for example, the politico-religious allegory of the *nasīb* is supported by the poem's division into five segments of seven lines and a final one of eight: the five heptads reflect the importance of seven as the number of the Imāms and of the prophetic cycles, the final octave signals the new cycle announced by the triumph of spring over winter. The central line of each segment contains a contrastive statement which reinforces the contrast between winter and spring, darkness and light, ignorance and knowledge, false and true belief. (See further Meisami 1996: 167–73.)

Similarly, a structure based on seven-line segments is seen in Nāṣir-i Khusraw's *qaṣīda* (referred to in Chapters 1 and 3) which begins, "Now it is fitting that I change the state of things" (1993: 303–5; see further Meisami 1993c). The body of the *qaṣīda* consists of 56 lines; two final lines of "personal" observation function as a cap, much like the panegyric *duʿā* or the *zuhdiyya*'s

final exhortation. The 56 lines are divided into eight seven-line segments, linked in larger groups of three, two, and three segments arranged symmetrically around the poem's central line (28).

Nasīb	A	(1–7)	Garden	(Nīsān/*rawshan-bārān*)
(1–21)	B	(8–14)	Palace	(*ḥayrān*)
	C	(9–21)		Human form (*Furqān*)
Zuhd	D	(22–28)	Purification/body	(*Mīzān*)
		(22–35)	Center	
	E	(29–35)	Purification/soul	(*Raḥmān*)
ʿItāb	F	(36–42)	Body (slave)	(Amīr-i Khurasān)
(36–49)	G	(43–49)	Court	(*ghūl-i biyābān*)
Fakhr	H	(50–56)	Books	(*īnsān*)
Cap	X	(57–58)		(*zindān/zandān*)

The exordium (1–21) manipulates varies themes of the panegyric *nasīb* – the royal garden, the magnificent building erected by the *mamdūḥ*, the beautiful beloved; the "newness" of the poet's project may be seen as his turning from panegyric, while still employing typical motives and imagery, and the "that which is best" of line 1 is revealed, at the end, as his dedication to and propagation of the teachings of the Imām. The three extended metaphors of the "*nasīb*" are not chosen at random, nor is their disposition accidental, but deliberate, as we move from garden to human form through the mediatory figure of the building. In a pattern repeated throughout the poem, each segment is ordered around a crucial central line, and the eight segments themselves are arranged chiastically around the center. The final rhyme-word of the exordium, *furqān* (21), a metonymy for the Koran whose root meaning is "to separate", points not only to the separation of these segments from those that follow, but to the need to distinguish the poem's esoteric from its surface meaning.

The central segments (D and E, 22–35) develop the topic of purification. In D, (22–28) the poet proposes to purify himself so that he may be able to distinguish between good and evil,

28 And make my own person, between good and evil, poised like the
tongue of a balance.

The central rhyme *mīzān*, "balance", both stresses the notion of moral equilibrium and calls attention to the poem's balanced, carefully equilibrated structure. Segment E (29–35) treats the same topic on an ascending trajectory: the poet will increase goodness and decrease evil in his soul so as to make himself worthy of divine mercy. He concludes by addressing the generic interlocutor of homiletic poetry:

32 If I'm not able to make my body, over the demons' train, a Solomon,
33 the demon within my body and my soul, in any case, with Reason's
blade I'll make a Muslim.

34 Of speech and deed I'll place on it saddle and bridle, and make its reins
     from the wisdom of Luqmān.
35 Though you may hasten towards the court of Gilan, I'm headed for the
     court of the All-Merciful.

Lines 34–35 form the transition to a *raḥīl* which contrasts the poet's quest for
divine grace with the journey of his interlocutor to the court of the ruler of
Gilan in search of material gain.

Segments F and G further develop this contrast between the spiritual and
the material values, as, in F (36–42), the poet rejects the invitation to be
introduced into the court of the "Amīr of Khurasan" (i.e., the Saljuq governor
of Khurasan),[4] stating instead that he will set his face towards the "True Guide"
and the family of the Prophet (36–37, i.e., the Fatimids and the Imām, the
Fatimid caliph al-Mustanṣir),

38 So that my name, by glory of the Imām, I may inscribe upon the book
     of meanings;
39 And, from that Sun of knowledge, make my heart shine forth as
     brightly as the Moon in Cancer.

The transition between F and G (43–49) via the rhyme *Amīr-i Khurasān*
contrasts the prince's court, an emblem of materialism and unbelief, with the
spiritual palace of B.

44 How should I throw away my honour like you, fool, wishing only to fill
     my pouch with bread?
45 The Turks were once my slaves and servants; how should I enslave my
     body to the Turks? . . .

Were he to cast aside the garment of his honour – his "religion, perfection, and
knowledge," he would become stripped of virtue, "like a desert-wandering
ghoul" (*ghūl-i biyābān*; 49),

50 And empty of merit, like the ghoul: how should I be the servant of
     demons?

Line 50 contains a political allusion, embodied in the play on *dīvān*, meaning
both "demons" (*dīv-ān*, the plural of *dīv*) and (loosely) "administration, court".
The allusion is to the Saljuq Turks, who supplanted the Ghaznavids in
Khurasan, persecuted the Ismāʿīlīs (and forced Nāṣir himself to flee from Balkh
to exile in Yumgān), and who embody the evils both of a materialistic court and
of unbelief.

Following the *ʿitāb* of F and G comes a passage of *fakhr* in which the poet
boasts of his achievements (H, 50–56):

51 It's enough for me to boast, that in both tongues I order wisdom in
     prose and verse. . . .

54 In treatises, with logical discussion, I produce proofs as brilliant as the
      sun;
55 Over intellectual problems I place sensibilia in charge, as shepherd and
      guardian –
56 The *Zād al-musāfir* is one of my treasures: I write prose like that, and
      poetry like this.

The poet's chosen subject defines the "whatever is best" of the first line, as
the statement of poetic method clarifies the nature of the "new roads" he
intends to follow; while the final line, whose rhyme *īnsān* "like this" echoes the
twice-repeated *Nīsān* "April" of 2, provides proof of his success. In the final cap
the poet turns away from his poem to contemplate his state: a prisoner both in
this world and in Yumgān, he yet pursues his purpose, the end of which is not
merely literary but the achievement of real punishment, in the next world, for
enemies of the true faith.

57 A prison for the believer is this base world; and so I dwell forever in
      Yumgān,
58 Till, on the Day of Judgement, burning fire for the party of Muʿāwiya
      I'll kindle.

This complex *qaṣīda* draws on many elements of Ismāʿīlī thought, and
particularly on its cosmological and numerical symbolism; its organization into
seven-line segments reflects the special significance of seven in Ismāʿīlī
cosmology and prophetology.[5] Scripture, as *furqān*, separates believer from
unbeliever, the knowers of esoteric meaning from those who see only the
exoteric.[6] That the centre of the *qaṣīda* is line 28, with its rhyme-word *mīzān*,
also has symbolic meaning: Twenty-eight is the number of speech (there are
28 letters in the Arabic alphabet, the language of Revelation), of the source of
speech (the Universal Intellect), and of the twenty-eight chapters of the Koran
which prove the truth of the Ismāʿīlī doctrine (cf. Ivanow 1948: 65; Nasr 1978:
101).[7] The Balance itself is both an eschatological symbol and a metonymy for
Scripture.[8] Thus *mīzān* connotes not only equilibrium, but speech, prophecy,
and true belief. It also alludes to the esoteric "science of the balance" which
reveals the correspondences "between the manifest and the hidden, the outward
and the inward, the exoteric and the esoteric" (H. Corbin, in Nāṣir-i Khusraw
1953: 71, and cf. Corbin 1986: 55), that is, between spiritual and corporeal
worlds (see especially Marquet 1976: 259).

Seven, the number of the cosmos (comprising three, the number of the soul,
and four, the number of the material universe), transforms the poem into a poetic
microcosm. The act of poetic creation symbolised by the garden is analogous to
that of renewal in the natural cycle of the macrocosm; the poet's efforts will
bring joy to the believer just as spring brings joy to nature. The garden too is an
important symbol in Ismāʿīlism; for if Paradise is a garden, for Nāṣir-i Khusraw
Paradise itself is the "garden of the speaking soul" (*bustān-i nafs-i sukhan-gūy*) in

which the wise man reaps his intellectual reward in the Hereafter (1959: 167). The garden itself is "a symbol of * taʾwīl*" (ibid.: 169); it is no doubt as such a garden that Nāṣir-i Khusraw envisions his poetry as functioning. Garden, palace, and human form are analogues, infused with the wisdom and illumination transmitted from the World Soul through the Imām to the poet; together they illustrate the fundamental principle of *taʾwīl* enunciated in segment H: that *sensibilia* (*maḥsūsāt*) are signs of *intelligibilia* (*maʿqūlāt*).[9] Poetry and prose, inspired by divine illumination, like the divine Word itself employ the visible and sensible, the *ẓāhir*, to convey the invisible and intelligible, the *bāṭin*, emulating the work of nature and exemplifying the distinction between the "natural" – the work of the universal soul – and the "crafted", the work of the "partial", human soul (cf. ibid.: 173).

Nāṣir-i Khusraw's literary microcosm affirms his own creative power, analogous to that of the First Intelligence.[10] Its eight segments may further be read as alluding to the turn of the symbolic "wheel" of the Ismāʿīlī cosmos, constituted by eight heptads of the Imāms of a "millennium" (see Marquet 1982: 115). The letter *nūn* chosen for the rhyme is also a symbol of esoteric wisdom; the *radīf*, *kunam*, evokes the *kāf-nūn* of the divine fiat, *kun* "Be!". The symbol of the circle imparts unity and meaning to the whole.

Two final illustrations of spatial structures which in themselves convey meaning are provided by two *ghazal*s of Ḥāfiẓ which share the same basic form. The first (QG81) begins with a dialogue between nightingale and rose (on this *ghazal* see also Meisami 1987: 286–98).

1 At dawn the bird of the meadow said to the new-risen rose,
   "Less coquetry! for many like you have flowered in this garden."
2 The rose laughed: "Indeed, the truth does not disturb us;
   but no lover ever spoke a harsh word to his beloved.
3 "If you desire to drink the ruby wine from that bejewelled cup,
   many a pearl must you string with the tips of your eyelashes.
4 "The scent of love will never come to the nostrils of one
   who does not sweep the sill of the wineshop with his forehead."
5 Last night in Iram's Garden, when, with the gentle air,
   the hyacinth's curls were stirred by the dawn breeze,
6 I said, "O Throne of Jamshīd, where is your world-seeing Cup?"
   It answered, "Alas, that waking fortune slept."
7 The words of love are not those which come to the tongue:
   Sāqī, bring wine, and cut short all this talk.
8 Ḥāfiẓ's tears have cast wisdom and patience into the sea:
   what can he do? he could not hide the burning of love's grief.

This brief *ghazal* combines several structural patterns. Its eight lines can be divided into three segments with no apparent transition between them. Segment A (1–4), the dialogue between nightingale and rose, presents the former's admonition and the latter's rebuff: the nightingale complains of the

rose's cruelty, the rose reminds him that the lover must suffer, humble himself and weep many tears ("string many a pearl") to prove himself worthy of the beloved's favour (the "ruby wine" of her kisses, bestowed by the "bejewelled cup" of her mouth, with its pearl-like teeth). Segment B (5–6) presents a second dialogue, between the speaker and the personified Throne of Jamshīd; it, too, is set in a garden, this time the legendary royal garden of Iram.[11] The conjunction of the two gardens adds a further dimension to the nightingale's warning: kings, like roses, are doomed to perish; worldly power, like worldly beauty, is transient. In segment C (7–8), set presumably in the tavern (which would also have boasted a garden), the lover beseeches the cupbearer to pour the wine of consolation and repents having revealed the secret of love.

Each segment features an address by a distinctive speaker: nightingale, poet, and lover, all conventional singers of lyric and, moreover, analogues; nightingale and rose are the archetypal lovers of Persian poetry, the poet ("I") addresses the personified emblem of royal power (the implied addressee is the prince), the lover ("Ḥāfiẓ") addresses the cupbearer but also, implicitly, the absent beloved. Two of these addresses meet with responses; the third goes unanswered. The *ghazal* moves from the impersonal, reported dialogue of A to the increasingly more personal dialogues of B and C, a progression marked by increasing specificity in time from an unspecified "at dawn," to the more specific "last night," to the present. The settings of each segment are also increasingly specific: a generalized garden, an explicitly royal garden, and the tavern. All the analogues and parallels are conventional; but the *ghazal*'s structure clarifies their relationships still further.

The first of the *ghazal*'s complementary structural patterns is linear, and may be said to represent a syllogistic argument, as well as repeating, in microcosm, the structure (partial and highly compressed) of the *qaṣīda*; the second, circular structure (slightly asymmetrical due to the amplification of the rose's speech in segment A) establishes the poem as a literary microcosm recreating the structure of the cosmic hierarchy.

		A: *Exordium*	
1	*Narratio* +	Rose/	Garden	Macrocosm
2–4	*Refutatio*	Nightingale		

		B: Admonition	
5	*Quaestio*	Poet/	Royal Garden	Body Politic
6	*Exemplum*	Throne		

		C: Conclusion	
7–8	*Recusatio*	Poet/*Sāqī*	Tavern	Microcosm

The linear progression of the formal divisions of the *qaṣīda*, the movement from general to specific in terms both of the speaker and of time, and the syllogistic pattern of the argument may be read as representing linear, human, historical and logical time (reflected in the Aristotelian divisions of beginning, middle

and end); the encompassing circular pattern reflects divine time and the unchanging cosmic order, in which the body politic, symbolized by Iram's royal garden and Jamshīd's throne, mediates between macrocosm (the generalized garden of rose and nightingale, the world garden mirrored by the text itself) and the microcosm (the human dimension represented by the plaint of the lover and the mundane setting of the tavern). As the rose is the focal point of the garden world and the beloved of the human world of love, the ruler is the focal point and center of human society, the state or body politic, which mediates between macrocosm and microcosm. The sequence of the segments, far from being random, places human time in its cosmic context, and reaffirms the relations between the three constituents of the cosmic hierarchy.

This paradigmatic pattern is repeated, with some variation, in a second *ghazal* (*P*468; *QG*486; I prefer the reading of *P*, which reverses the order of lines 5–6 as found in *QG*).

1 The nightingale, from the cypress branch, to a Pahlavī air
   sang last night the lesson of spiritual stations:
2 "Come, for Moses' fire has put forth a rose,
   that you may hear from the tree the subtle sentence of Unity."
3 The birds of the garden are all poets and wits,
   that the lord may drink wine to the sound of Pahlavī songs.
4 Jamshīd bore nought from this world but the tale of the cup:
   beware! do not fasten your heart on worldly things.
5 How pleasant is the beggar's mat and secure sleep;
   such ease is not within the grasp of the royal throne.
6 Hear this strange tale of upside-down fortune:
   my beloved has slain me with his life-giving breath.
7 Your eyes have, with a glance, destroyed men's homes;
   may you suffer no headache, who walk so gracefully drunken.
8 How well the ancient Gardener put it to the Youth:
   "Light of my eyes, you shall reap only what you sow."
9 Did the *sāqī* give Ḥāfiẓ more than his share,
   that the end of his divine's turban has become disarrayed?

This *ghazal* differs from the preceding one in that the transition from world-garden to courtly garden is made explicit by line 3, there is an additional recapitulation of the admonition of lines 4–5 in 8, and 9 functions as a cap, the theme of human love having been introduced in 6–7. Moreover, the topics are formulated as statements rather than in the form of dialogue, which gives them an explicit sentential status. Otherwise the basic structure of QG48 is repeated:

A (1–3) *Exordium*		Description	Garden	Macrocosm
Narratio	Nightingale	Argument		
Transition			Royal Garden	Body Politic

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B (4–5)		Poet	*Exemplum*	
			Sententia	
C (6–7)		Poet-lover	*Exemplum*	Wineshop	Microcosm
			Admonition	
D (8)	Conclusion		*Sententia*	
X (9)	Cap		*Recusatio*	

The "lesson of spiritual stations" announced by the nightingale is clarified on the level of the body politic by the exemplum and sententia of 4–5 (the transience of worldly power; the superior value of contentment) and on that of the microcosm by the lover's warning to his beloved (whom we may identify with his patron or prince) against pride and heedlessness in 6–7, and summed up in the *sententia* of 8 – "as ye sow, so shall ye reap," a favourite *topos* for Ḥāfiẓ – applicable on both levels. The final cap functions in much the same way as does the *aporia* in the final line of QG48: to distance the poet from his poem and attribute this outpouring, not to the effects of love as in the previous *ghazal*, but to the effects of wine. "Unity" (*tawḥīd*) thus refers not merely to divine Unicity (as might be expected from its "spiritual" context) but to the application of belief in that Unicity in this world: dedication to the good, both on the level of the body politic and on that of human love, sincerity (what Ḥāfiẓ refers to in other contexts as *yikrangī*), matching deeds to principles, practising virtue as well as aspiring to it.

Such poems demonstrate the importance of spatial patterns in conveying meaning. Without reading these patterns, their sense remains incomplete, restricted, one might say, to the *ẓāhir*, the verbal text; when they are taken into account, that meaning is placed in its universal, metaphysical and eternal context, as reflecting the divine Plan which orders relations between human beings, and between God and man, according to the particular metaphysical context invoked: the soul's progress from its origin in the divine to its return, the hierarchical structure of the cosmos as revealed in the esoteric teachings of the Ismāʿīlī Imām, the ordered hierarchy of macrocosm, microcosm and body politic.

Other strategies: Letters, dialogues, narratives, debates

Various other "external" organizational strategies can be used to structure the poem. We have already mentioned the popularity of the "letter" form in Abbasid love poetry (see Chapter 3) – a form that originated in earlier Hijazi *ghazal* and that also reflects the courtly love convention of lovers' correspondence – and the convenient devices for opening and closure it provides. The letter-poem is a favourite of al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf; the following example demonstrates both al-ʿAbbās's preference for linear movement and his use of proportional segmentation (1986: 15–16).

1 The lover has written a letter to the beloved; his eye has not dried from
   weeping,

2 His body has been wasted by distress, and his heart does not heed those
     who counsel him to desist.

3 He has grown slender as a thread from thinking of you, and no longer
     hears those who call him.

4 This is a letter I send to you: whoever hears it or reads it will weep.

5 In it are marvels concerning a faithful lover who has been overcome by
     love of you, O beloved, and who expires.

6 I have been patient until all my patience is exhausted, and have loved
     you, O heart of my heart, to distraction.

7 I have concealed my love for you; know this, and be certain; and
     I reject – might I give my life for you! – love for another.

8 Is there no honour ensured me for this? for this is there – might I give
     my life for you! – no reward?

9 Jamīl never loved as I do – know this, verily – and neither did ʿUrwa,
     love's martyr.

10 No, no, nor was al-Muraqqish like me when he loved Asmāʾ until the
     appointed, fatal end.

11 Give me your hands and be, for once, reconciled with me, that we may
     cut those who, my soul, have suggested that we part.

12 Send an answer to my letter, and be sure that a letter from you will
     prove my remedy.

13 I send greetings to you, my treasure, as many as the stars, or the birds in
     the sky.

The poem's thirteen lines are divided into four segments (3 + 4 + 3 + 3); the letter itself, describing the lover's self-sacrifice and suffering, together with his plea for reward, supported by exempla of famous lovers he himself excells, constitute the weighty middle of the poem. It is perhaps by design that this poem occupies the first place in al-ʿAbbās's *dīwān*, as it establishes both the topics of his *ghazal* and its primary focus on the lover in a programmatic fashion. Nada Tomiche sees it as organized on the basis of the opposition between lover and beloved (1980: 289–90); but this reading disregards both the intense focus on the lover himself, virtually to the exclusion of the lady (whose "presence" in this poem is merely as the addressee of the letter) and important aspects of its structure. While its progression is essentially linear, as befits its epistolary form (ABCD; A: the letter, 1–3; B: contents of the letter, 4–7; C: lover deserving of reward, 8–10; D: request for answer, greetings, 11–13), what Andras Hamori terms "de-linearization" (see 1969: 14–19) is achieved by the symmetrical balance of its segments, the sole imbalance being the amplification of the letter's contents and the appeal for favour (B + C) which constitute the poem's expanded middle, the central line of which, and of the poem (7), links the lover's suffering with the lady ("I have. . . . Know this"). The preamble (A) which precedes the actual letter, and the conclusion (D) in which an answer is requested, balance each other, with the greeting occupying the final line. The

central catalogue of the "marvels of love" and the examples of famous lovers, into which are inserted the topics of *kitmān* (marked by its central position), the lover's boast, and the implication that his conduct deserves reward, constitutes an argument for that notion, explicitly stated in 11, which begins the third and final segment; the entreaty to the lady to respond, and the concluding salutation, suggests that response will itself constitute reward.

Dialogue is often used to organize whole poems or segments within a poem, and is frequently combined with other organizational strategies such as letters, narratives and so on; we have seen various examples, as in Bashshār's *qaṣīda* to ʿUqba ibn Salm, Anvarī's "Hindu" *qaṣīda*, Ḥāfiẓ's dialogue of nightingale and rose, among others. Ibn Ṭabāṭabā's chapter on "uneven verses" (*al-abyāt al-mutafāwit al-nasj*) includes a discussion of the exigencies placed on the poet when "relating an account or a narration" (*iqtiṣāṣ khabar aw ḥikāyat kalām*) which cannot be broken up, which requires that the poet "organise [his poem] in a fluent manner" and employ amplification and abbreviation in such a way that neither is deficient. In illustration, he cites a passage combining narrative and dialogue from a poem by al-Aʿshā (1928: 126–27, 1983: 228–31 [poem no. 25]; Ibn Ṭabāṭabā 1956: 43–44; Ibn Ṭabāṭabā cites lines 5, 7–21).

The poem is addressed to Shurayḥ ibn Ḥisn, the great-grandson of al-Samawʾal ibn ʿĀdiyāʾ, a Jewish chieftain and poet famed for his hospitality and loyalty, who lived in Taymāʾ, in the Syrian desert, in a fortress called al-Ablaq ("The Piebald") because it was built of black and white stone. The story related by al-Aʿshā, and for which al-Samawʾal's loyalty became proverbial, concerns his refusal to give up the armour and weapons entrusted to him by the poet Imruʾ al-Qays, prior to the latter's journey to Byzantium which resulted in his death, at the demand of the Ghassanid chieftain al-Ḥārith ibn Ẓalīm (or: Ibn [Abī] Shamir). Al-Samawʾal shut himself up in his fortress; but his son was captured while hunting and held hostage by al-Ḥārith, who threatened to kill him if the arms were not handed over. Al-Samawʾal refused again; his son was killed; and he returned the armour and weapons to the kinsmen of Imruʾ al-Qays. Al-Aʿshā is said to have composed this poem extemporaneously, when Shurayḥ visited him, in order to persuade him not to leave; this fact (says the editor) accounts for "the *qaṣīda*'s weakness of structure and lack of fluency" (al-Aʿshā 1983: 228).

The poem begins with the poet's entreaty to Shurayḥ not to leave him (1–4). He has travelled from Bāniqyā to Aden and through the lands of the Persians, he says, and has found no one as faithful and loyal as al-Samawʾal, nor as generous and brave. The passage cited by Ibn Ṭabāṭabā, which constitutes the bulk of the poem (5–21), begins with an injunction to follow al-Samawʾal's example.

5 Be like al-Samawʾal when the great warrior (al-Ḥārith) came to him
    with a heavily laden army, thick as the black of night....

7 His dwelling was in Taymāʾ, in peerless Ablaq: a strong fortress, and a
    protector who was not treacherous.

8   When two base courses were imposed upon him, he said to (al-Ḥārith),
        "O Ḥārith, whatever you say, I am listening."

A dialogue between the two follows (9–10): al-Ḥārith tells al-Samaw'al, "Choose between betrayal and bereavement, though no happiness lies in either choice;" al-Samaw'al hesitates, "filled with misgivings," then answers: "Slaughter your prisoner; I will be steadfast towards him I protect." He warns that, should al-Ḥārith do so, and slay "one who is noble, not cowardly and weak," his son still has an heir, who possesses "great wealth, and honour unstained, and (has) brothers like himself, who are not evildoers," but who "have inherited from me right conduct, without inconstancy; nor, when war girds her loins, are they inexperienced" (11–13).

14   "There will follow me in his place, should you kill him, a noble lord,
        and (women) fair, fruitful and pure,
15   "Whose secrets are not divulged or dissipated by me, and who conceal
        my secrets when they are entrusted to them."
16   Then said (al-Ḥārith), by way of preface – for he was about to slay (the
        son): "Look down, Samaw'al, and see the blood flow.
17   "Shall I kill your son in cold blood? Or will you bring them (the arms)
        to me in obedience?" But (al-Samaw'al) refused utterly.
18   He severed (the son's) head, while (al-Samaw'al's) breast burned with
        pain, like a breast-plate hot with fire.
19   Thus he chose (to protect) his armour, that he might not be
        disgraced with respect to them, and did not betray his oath (to
        protect) it,
20   Saying, "I will not purchase shame in exchange for nobility; I choose
        honour in this world over shame."
21   Such endurance was of old a habit of his nature, and his loyalty was
        ever piercing and kindling.

Ibn Ṭabāṭabā comments,

    Observe the evenness of this passage, its ease of articulation, the completeness of its ideas, and the veracity of its narrative; how every word occupies the place for which it was intended, without an undue concentration (of words) or a marring deficiency. And observe al-Aʿshā's subtlety in saying so economically, "Shall I kill your son in cold blood, or will you bring them?", and his ellipsis of the suffix pronoun "his" in "And he chose (to protect) his armour, that he might not be disgraced with respect to them," following that gap with the explanation. He who listens to these lines does not need to hear their story, because they contain the whole account in the briefest words and most eloquent narration, the best organization and the subtlest of indications. (1956: 45; on this poem see also al-Qarṭājanni 1981: 105–6)

Ibn Ṭabāṭabāʾs analysis shows that both poets and critics were concerned with the organization of such passages and the manner in which poets moved from one topic to another, suggesting connections rather than merely stating the whole story as it might be found in a prose account. Despite an occasional awkwardness of diction, Ibn Ṭabāṭabāʾs judgement of the poem must be preferred to that of the *Dīwān*'s editor; its close-knit structure reveals its exemplary, as well as its narrative, purpose. It consists of four segments plus a concluding one-line cap which summarizes the story and makes clear its import.

1–4	Prologue: appeal to Shurayḥ
5–9	Introduction (marked by the imperative *kun kas-Samawʾal*, "be like al-Samawʾal!"): identification of situation and protagonists, concluding with al-Samawʾal's "choice"
10–15	Amplified middle (introduced by *fa-shakka ghayra qalīlin*, "he hesitated not a little"): al-Samawʾal's decision, expressed in his own words (with a turn at the center with *khalaf*, "heir")
16–20	Result (introduced by *fa-qāla taqdimatan*, "and he said by way of preface"): death of the son; al-Samawʾal's grief; his nobility
21	Conclusion

The two five-line segments (5–9, 16–20) which frame the central six-line segment (10–15) balance each other, presenting the circumstances of the situation and its dénouement, motivated by al-Samawʾal's decision to choose honour over his son's life. The central segment, amplified because of its importance for the poem as a whole (and not merely for its place in the "story"), dwells on the topic of al-Samawʾal's (other) successors, introduced in the poem's central line (11), which joins to the nobility of the doomed son that of those who will succeed him, and tells of their wealth, generosity, and courage, of the virtues they have inherited from al-Samawʾal himself, and of the pure and trustworthy women who will produce yet more sons to carry on the line and emulate the nobility of its ancestor. The primary function of this passage is not, as might be assumed, to give further depth to the story of al-Samawʾal by providing a rationalization for his decision – his reason (the choice of honour over disgrace) is explicitly stated in lines 19–21 – but to give weight to the poet's entreaty to his addressee, Shurayḥ, by reminding him that he himself is one of those "successors" of whom al-Samawʾal boasted that they would carry on the tradition of honour and loyalty which was their heritage from him. The narrative itself (as Ibn Ṭabāṭabā noted) is elliptical; many details (including the background to the story) are not stated explicitly, and the audience is assumed to know them well enough to fill in what is missing. The focus is less on the story (however dramatically it is presented) than on what that story means, the virtues that it exemplifies.[12]

Abū Nuwās often included dialogues in his *khamriyyāt* and *mujūniyyāt* which employ an easy diction and give an impression of vividness and "realism" to the poem, as in the following example (1958, 3: 141–2), divided into two large

segments of twelve lines each, the first of which is a dialogue between poet and wineseller.

1 A black-eyed Dhimmī to whose courtyard I came by night, with honest youths among whom you would find no severity:
2 When we knocked on his door he started up, fearful, hastening to the door, filled with anxiety,
3 And said, "Who are these who travel by night to my courtyard?" and we answered, "Open! we're young men seeking wine!"
4 Then he unlocked his gates, no longer afraid, and caused to shine forth from his turban's tassels a (face like a) full moon,
5 And preceded us, robes trailing, buttocks contending with waist as he walked.
6 I asked, "What's your name, may you live long!" He replied, "My father named me Sabā, and nicknamed me Shimr."
7 And at the sweetness of his words we all nearly went mad, and could not wait to hear him speak again.
8 So I said to him, "We've come to you to buy wine, ancient, which has enjoyed many ages."
9 And he said, "Sit down; I have what you seek; she has been veiled in her vat for tens of years."
10 Then I said, "What is her bride price?" He answered, "Her price is up to you;" so we gave him five golden coins,
11 And I told him, "Take them, and bring her, that we may pass her around!" and he went to her, filled with joy because of us,
12 And pierced with his implement the belly of a propped-up (vat), and she (the wine) poured forth, her brightness mimicking the full moon.

Following the epiphany of the wine (at the poem's center), the second half of the poem opens with its (her) description (13–17): she is "a well-brought-up, sheltered maiden" (*rabībatu khidrin*) who, when embraced by the cup, gives off a scent like perfume (though she wears no perfume). This is followed by an account of the drinking party at which the wineseller entertains the group with song until he is overcome by sleep (18–22), and their final sexual conquest of him (23–24). This conquest, in position and in language, parallels the wineseller's opening of the wine: *wa-qāma ilayhā*, "and he approached her" (11b)/*fa-qumnā ilayhi*, "and we approached him" (24a); the verb *qāma ʿalā* (here: *ilā*) is a common expression for the sexual act. The parallels between the Dhimmī youth and the wine are established not merely by the use of the sexual image in connection with both – metaphorically for the wine, literally for the boy – but by the fact that both shine like the full moon (4, 12). The use of dialogue gives the first section of the poem a quick and urgent pace – reflecting the urgent search for wine and, later, sex; the second section, which is chiefly descriptive, moves at a much slower pace, as the wine is admired, night falls, the

boy sings and finally sleeps, only to be somewhat rudely awakened by the importunings of the young men.

24   But when he saw there was no escape from this, and compliance suited
         him, he pressed juice for us extremely well!

Narrative and dialogue are combined in this *ghazal* by ʿAṭṭār which features a highly symmetrical structure (1960: 104).

1   At dawn I made my way towards the tavern,
      to preach to the drinkers with vainglorious speech.
2   My staff in hand, my prayer-mat on my shoulder;
      for (indeed) I am an ascetic who can work miracles.
3   The tavern-keeper said to me, "Shaykh, say,
      what mission of importance brings you here?"
4   I said, "My task's to lead you to repentance;
      because if you repent, you'll gain reward."
5   He told me, "Go away, you dry ascetic,
      that you may be moistened by the tavern's dregs.
6   Should they pour you one drop from those dregs,
      you will abandon (both) the mosque and (private) prayers.
7   Go, don't sell your show-off asceticism here;
      none here will buy your hypocrisy or piety.
8   He upon whose face this colour falls:
      how should he worship idols in the shrine?"
9   He said this, and gave me a bit of the dregs;
      my wits were dazed, and escaped (these) idle tales.
10   A sun arose from deep within myself;
      my inner (self) went out (of me) beyond the heavens.
11   When I had been annihilated by that ancient cup,
      I found myself face to face with the Beloved.
12   When I had escaped the Pharaoh of existence,
      like Moses, I was every moment at the Meeting-place.
13   When I found myself beyond the two worlds,
      I saw that I had acquired these (mystical) degrees.
14   I asked, "O you who know the secret, tell me:
      when shall I attain nearness to this Essence?"
15   He answered, "O proud and heedless one,
      does anyone ever arrive? Alas! Would it were so!
16   "You will see many moves forward and backward,
      but in the end you will remain checkmated.
17   "In that place where shines the light of the sun,
      there is no existent, no non-existent, not (even) atoms.
18   "All the atoms of the world are drunk with love,
      suspended between negation and affirmation."

19 What is it that you're saying then, 'Aṭṭār?
    Who understands these symbols and allusions?

The structure of this *ghazal* is alternating-parallel (ABCABC):

A^1 1–4   Scene-setting + statement by the speaker to the tavern-keeper
B^1 5–8   Response of the tavern-keeper
C^1 9–10   Transition: the drink and its effect
A^2 11–14   Scene-setting + question to the tavern-keeper
B^2 15–18   Response of the tavern-keeper
C^2 19   Cap: closure

Segments A^1/A^2 and B^1/B^2 observe strict proportions, consisting of four lines each; while the transitional segment (9–10) and the cap (19) are characterized by brevity. While the poem's centre (occupied by the mystical wine) is clearly marked, and while circularity is suggested by the contrast between the ascetic's *ṭāmāt* (referring to the Sufis' boasting of their piety and miraculous deeds) and the *rumūz va-ishārāt*, "symbols and (mystical) allusions", by which the poet describes his poem, the alternating-parallel sequence contrasts the state of the ascetic before and after his drinking of the wine of love and opposes to his hypocritical but self-confident asceticism his subsequent devoted but bewildered mystical love. Here again a tension is implied between human time (with its before and after sequence) and divine time.[13]

A longer poem by Muslim ibn al-Walīd (d. 207/823) combines letter and dialogue forms (1957: 191–3). It is introduced in the *Dīwān* by the rubric *wa-lahu ayḍan yataghazzalu wa-yamjunu*, "another (poem in which) he speaks of love and *mujūn*," and begins with a description of a letter, though not (as in al-'Abbās's poem) of its contents.

1 (Here is) the letter of a young man most distressed, unhappy, to a maiden living in luxury, playful.
2 I long for you, in sadness and desire – yes; a lover may long for the beloved.
3 And she might answer, if I write – may copious rain and (God's) mindful regard fall on one who answers –
4 Writing her letter with a supple twig from the fragrant *rand*-tree, with musky ink upon the twig:
5 A letter in which there is "How much?" and "To" and "What if?"; and my wonder would be complete at her letters.
6 We would make (our correspondence) obscure to the ignorant on purpose; but it would not be concealed from the perceptive and understanding.

This segment, in which the poet summarizes the nature both of the letter he writes and of that he hopes to received, sets the scene for the central segment (7–18), a lengthy monologue by the lady in which she describes her own beauties, followed by an exchange between her and her friends.

7 She said to some fair women who steal the hearts of both young and
   old:

8 "I am the shining sun when it appears, but I know no setting.

9 "God freed me (from fault) when He created me, a creation (in which)
   I became safe from defects. . . .

14 "My saliva is the water of the morning raincloud, mixed with virgin
    honey; nothing is more delicious than blended honey."

15 They said to her, "You are right; then will you not show compassion for
    a man captivated by you, afflicted,

16 "A stranger who has come to you (for his salvation)? Therefore release
    him, for reward is sought with respect to strangers."

17 She said, "He has shown some faults; faults appear in one who arouses
    suspicion.

18 "I went to him, and he spoke to me of Siḥr; even so is every flattering
    deceiver."

The final segment (19–25) consists of the poet's self-exculpation, and his
ultimately unsatisfactory attempt to please the lady:

19 She was not unjust; but I had been unjust; and I soon repented to her.

20 I was entranced with suffering for love of Siḥr, just as the Christians are
    entranced by the cross.

21 I forgave her sins and pardoned her; but she did not pardon me nor
    forgive my sins.

22 If the south wind would respond to me, I would send my greetings with
    the south wind.

23 – And she who said: "Get over your love for Siḥr." I replied, "You don't
    know anything; you've got it wrong.

24 "You commanded me to leave her, foolishly; repent to God for what
    you said, repent."

25 Would that I were a judge, to be obeyed; I would decide for the lover
    against the beloved.

    The poem is based on units of six, established in the first segment (the
letter); the amplification in the second segment effectively conveys the lady's
self-centred superiority, her excessive boasting of her own perfection, a
perfection belied by her behavior towards her lover. While her maidens remind
her that perfection has its obligations (a common *topos* of love poetry, which
recalls the exchange between Sulaymā and Umm al-ʿAlāʾ in Bashshār's *qaṣida* to
ʿUqba ibn Salm), her response (like Umm al-ʿAlāʾ's) is negative, and her love
not healing but wounding, belying her boast (10), "If I were to speak to a sick
man, he would not need a physician."

    What led the compiler of the *Dīwān* to call this poem *mujūn*? Presumably the
very negation of the idealised image of the lady common to courtly *ghazal*: this is
no Fawz who would wish to be a garment for ʿAbbās, but a petulant and

vindictive lady who cannot forgive the poet his brief infatuation (as implied by the name of the "other woman", Siḥr, "magic"). But clearly too this infatuation is not so brief, for he declines, in the final segment, to give it up – perhaps because his endeavours to reinstate himself with his lady have come to nought. The final line which caps this segment – were he a judge, he would decide for lovers against their ladies – is itself a most uncourtly sentiment.

Dialogue is often used to support argument, either of a serious or a non-serious nature, as in Muslim's poem. Occasionally an entire poem consists of a dialogue; this is especially true of "debate poems" (*munāẓara*) which argue the comparative merits of two opposing items (often personified): rose vs. narcissus, pen vs. sword, and so on. (See Mattock 1991; Heinrichs 1991; van Gelder 1987, 1991.) Van Gelder has noted that the opposition in Abū Tammām's Amorium *qaṣīda* between "sword" and "books" was used by later writers of debates between pen and sword (the two arms of rule, administrative and military) as an exemplary illustration (1987: 342–3). While true "debates" between the two do not seem to occur until the fifth/eleventh century, in Spain, when pen and sword are personified in a poem by Aḥmad ibn Burd the Younger (ibid.: 348–52), they become common in the poetry of later periods.[14]

W. Heinrichs has discussed an early example of the debate between rose and narcissus by al-Ṣanawbarī (d. 334/945–6) (al-Ṣanawbarī 1970: 498; and see also Chapter 8 below), itself based on an earlier poem by Ibn al-Rūmī in which, however, the contestants did not speak, but were talked about (Heinrichs 1991: 186–7; see also Schoeler 1974: 204–17, for an overview of such poems).

1 The rose alleged that he was more beautiful (*abhā*) than all the flowers and fragrant herbs.
2 Thereupon the eyes of the fresh narcissus answered him, with humility and meekness in their words:
3 "What is more beautiful: the rosy colour (of the cheeks) or the eye(ball) of a white gazelle with languid lids?
4 "Or: what does the cheek wish (to do) with its redness, if it does not have a pair of eyes (to look at it)?"
5 At that the rose grew haughty, then said answering with an accepted analogy and clear statement:
6 "The roses of the cheeks are more beautiful than an eye in which there is yellowness from jaundice."

Here the debate serves to lead to the punch-line, which constitutes a twist on the conventional comparison of the eye to the narcissus (on the basis of shape) by recalling the flower's yellow color, generally suppressed in the comparison. The structure of this brief poem is appropriately simple: lines 1–2 set the scene (the rose's boast, the narcissus's reaction), 3–4 present the narcissus's argument, 5–6 the rose's rebuttal.

Some critics did in fact comment on the use of dialogue as the basis for whole poems. Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāṭ, discussing the figure of *suʾāl va-javāb*,

"question and answer", notes its use both in one or several verses and, in Persian specifically (where it is particularly admired, *muʿtabar*), in entire *qaṣīda*s (1960: 679–80). It is a favorite device of panegyrists like Farrukhī and, later, Anvarī, who often begin a *qaṣīda* with dialogue between lover and beloved which leads to the *madīḥ* with some sort of clever transition, as in Farrukhī's panegyric congratulating his patron Amīr Yūsuf on the birth of a son (1932: 130).

1 My beautiful beloved, that, moon-faced idol, silver-breasted, asked me about the hardships of the road and the troubles of the journey.
2 First he asked, "Love, what has befallen you, that you look so shattered, so full of grief?
3 "You were like the silvery cypress; now you're a yellowed reed: perhaps you've suffered some illness on the way?
4 "Perhaps your heart was enticed elsewhere; perhaps you're dazed with love for another?
5 "Perhaps someone mistreated you? Perhaps you risked danger in some perilous place?...
8 "Perhaps your heart's desire was taken from you by force? Perhaps you've eaten bitter herbs instead of sweet?"

No, says the poet, none of the above:

10 "It's separation from the court of Mīr Abū Yaʿqūb that has made me so thin, so downcast and so weary...."

For three months he has been far from the prince, and as a result has neither slept nor eaten; but now that he has returned to the "victorious ruler" and his "blessed court",

13 "I have become strong with hope and rich with joy; my heart has found ease, my suffering is ended:
14 "For I came there at a time when that noble lineage was augmented by an angel from this prince of angelic *farr*."

The remainder of this sixty-line *qaṣīda* praises the prince and congratulates him both on the birth of his son and on his newly-completed palace.

Another panegyric, addressed to Amīr Muḥammad, exemplifies the Persian *suʾāl va-javāb* style (ibid.: 273–5). It too begins with a dialogue between the poet and his beloved.

1 Said I, "O sun of idols, grant me kisses three."
Said he, "In this world you'll gain no houri's kiss."
2 Said I, "Don't ask another world for a kiss's sake."
Said he, "No one can obtain Paradise for free." ...
11 Said I, "Separation from you has made me an old man."
Said he, "Praising the world-king will make you young again."

12 Said I, "What king is this? Show me the way to him."
     Said he, "The fortunate son of the ruler of the age."
13 Said I, "The king Muḥammad, son of fortunate Maḥmūd?"
     Said he, "The king Muḥammad, son of successful Maḥmūd."

"What will guide me to his service?" the poet asks; "A clear mind, talent, heart and tongue." – "Can I attend him at court?" "Yes, if you bear a panegyric in the new style." – "Should I take tribute to him?" "The poet's tribute is praise" (14–16). And so it goes, the dialogue extending through the *madīḥ* to the concluding *duʿā*:

38 Said I, "May he live happily, that chief among kings."
     Said he, "Happy! And happy as well those who rejoice in him."
39 Said I, "May the age submit to him, throughout the years and months."
     Said he, "May God eternally grant him His support."

The poem is clearly a *tour de force* meant to display the poet's rhetorical abilities, and it is tempting to speculate that it might have been one of the earliest addressed to Muḥammad, when Farrukhī was first introduced into his service (his praise of the prince is far more extravagant than those of poems of a demonstrably later date); it is a piece of self-advertisement in which the poet boasts of a "new style" which will set him apart from other panegyrists.

    Dialogue is a common feature of love poems, as its use in the *nasīb* attests. A lovers' debate determines the structure of this *ghazal* by Ḥāfiz (P189):

1 Said I, "I grieve for you;" said he, "Your grief will end."
    Said I, "Come, be my moon;" said he, "If it should shine."
2 Said I, "Come, learn from lovers the rule of loyalty;"
    Said he, "From moonfaced beauties the like is seldom seen."
3 Said I, "Upon your image I fix my vision's path;"
    Said he, "It walks at night a different road along."
4 Said I, "The fragrance of your curls has set my world astray;"
    Said he, "Did you but know, it is a guiding hand."
5 Said I, "How sweet the air that comes from morning's breeze;"
    Said he, "The cool east wind comes from the loved one's lane."
6 Said I, "I'm slain by the desire to taste your ruby fresh;"
    Said he, "Now serve; for servants compensation gain."
7 Said I, "When will your merciful heart decide on peace?"
    Said he, "Speak nought of this, until the time has come."
8 Said I, "See how the time of pleasant life is o'er;"
    Said he, "Be still, Ḥāfiz; for this grief too will end."

As in Farrukhī's *nasīb*, the form of the *suʾāl va-javāb* is announced by the exchange in the opening line, the statement and response (*guftā/guftam* "he said/I said"). The progression is essentially linear: each line contains the poet's wish and the beloved's (generally unsatisfactory) response. The dialogue is organized

by the unifying figure of *muṭābaqa* (antithesis; see Chapter 7): each line presents a contrast between the poet's experience of love and the beloved's knowledge of it – suffering/solace (1a, 8), dark/light (1b), loyalty/fickleness (2), presence/absence (3), straying/guidance (4), morning breeze/east wind (5), desire/service (6), plea/silence (7) – and circularity is produced by the repetition of the motif of present suffering/promised relief in the opening and closing lines, together with the repetition of the rhyme (1a: *gham-at sar āyad*; 8b: *īn ghuṣṣa ham sar āyad*).

While the *zuhdiyya* tends to be a monologue – a sermon or homily in verse in which the poet delivers a string of admonitions – the mock-*zuhdiyya* may vary the form. Thus a *hazliyya* by Sūzanī of Samarqand (d. 569/1173–4), which includes *hijāʾ* and *rithāʾ* and concludes on a serious note, combines a variety of techniques to produce an effect both humorous and dramatic (1959: 71–3).

1 Ḥusayn-i Ghātafarī has taken his things to Hell, all hope cut off for mercy from God All-Merciful.
2 Iblīs came to welcome him, and said to him, "My son, how was it that you came here, with all your silvery talk
3 Of fasting and of prayer, alms, pilgrimage, holy war; of the pure faith and religion of Muḥammad and Abraham?"
4 "I came here by that route which you assigned to me; I came here by that route of which you taught me well.
5 "I have offended God, and all His creatures too; I had no shame of men, nor any fear of God."

The unfortunate Ḥusayn (who is unidentified; his *nisba*, Ghātafarī, refers to a suburb of Samarqand) enumerates his sins in a passage of mock-*fakhr* (6–17): he has abased noble families and set his pen against ancient houses (6; suggesting that he held an official position, perhaps as a financial secretary), has raised the banner of sedition and spread the carpet of oppression (7), has coveted the goods of others, taken bribes, confiscated wealth and property. He made his own dwelling "a golden palace" and, with Satan's aid, "pared something away from all the sons of Adam – for [he says] I'm a shoemaker's son" (10–11).

12 "In oppression I became incomparable [ʿadīm al-misl] throughout the world; now I'm non-existent [ʿadīm], but time has not effaced my wrongs,"

he boasts, playing on ʿadīm/adīm, the latter meaning "leather", the sign of the shoemaker's trade. (Here I am assuming that, in performance, the ʿayn of ʿadīm would not have been strongly pronounced, as is customary in New Persian; in any case, the quasi-*tajnīs* is close enough.) His many tyrannies caused people to pray to God for his destruction; their prayers were efficacious, and he sickened and died (13–16), disdaining even to ask for divine mercy (17).

Iblīs welcomes Ḥusayn as his most adept pupil, and pays him great respect and homage; he boasts to Pharaoh (the type of the unjust ruler), "What a man I had hidden under my carpet!" (20), and bids him bow down before his

creation (alluding to the Koranic story of his own refusal to bow down before Adam; see e.g. Koran 2: 35 and many other places):

22   "Cast him forever into the sea of curses and treachery; let him swim or
       sink, like the white duck or the scaly fish."

(The "scaly fish", *māhī-yi shīm*, also refers to the whale that swallowed Jonah.) Iblīs seats Ḥusayn next to Pharaoh, to be his partner and boon-companion in "upright rule" (*mulk-i rāshidī*, 23); Pharaoh replies that they will share equally whatever donations (*futūḥ*, the charitable donations given to ascetics and Sufis) should come his way in Hell. Pharaoh's vizier Haman (Hāmān), seeing that Ḥusayn enjoys the monarch's protection, kindly proffers him *zaqqūm* and *ḥamīm*, the bitter fruits and burning draughts of Hell; and Mālik, the angel who is lord of Hell, entertains him with lavish torments.

28   His dwelling place is now in the mouths of serpents who make the rod
       of Moses look like a mere silkworm.

After expatiating on the justice of this punishment (31–33), the poet moves to a celebratory mode: by Ḥusayn's death, God has liberated all the people of the world; but how shall so many thousands give thanks to God for the death of one person? (34–35). He then expounds the moral of this cautionary tale:

38   By the truth of Sūra Hā Mīm and Sūra Ṭā Hā, that the tyrant's place is
       jīm with *ḥā* and *mīm* [*jaḥīm*, Hell]:
39   Since the last abode of tyrants will be just such a place, men of
       intelligence and wit will not pursue wrongdoing.
40   Therefore, O noble men, do not choose the path of oppression, for
       neither the noble nor the base approve oppression's wrongs.
41   Although God is forbearing, His wrath is powerful: all those with
       wisdom thus avoid the wrath of the Forbearing.
42   Whoever shall repent of tyranny, O Lord, send for his crime a fresh
       breeze of the Zephyr of mercy.

This is a good old-fashioned hellfire-and-brimstone sermon, with a twist: its effect comes both from the impact of the immediate example (and one wonders what the unfortunate Ḥusayn, a frequent victim of Sūzanī's invective, did to deserve it) and from the dramatic spectacle of the jostling for status in Hell. Ḥusayn's lengthy confession catalogues all the typical abuses of unjust officials; he provides an object lesson to others to avoid such conduct for fear of a like fate. The final segment (38–42), beginning with the Koranic oath (the *Sūras* in question, Hā Mīm (41) and Ṭā Hā (28), warn of the fate that awaits God's enemies and tell of the punishment of Pharoah), and proceeds to direct admonition; the concluding prayer to God (which takes the place of the *duʿā* of panegyric) holds out the promise of mercy to the repentant.

Narrative structures are often used to organize a specific segment or segments within a poem. Such passages "tell a story", recount an action – an exploit of

bravery, a battle, an encounter with the beloved. They may be brief or lengthy (the latter in victory poems especially), and may be combined with description; they are linked within themselves, and to other parts of the poem, by a variety of devices. Their purpose is often exemplary: to provide comment, by way of illustration, on the poem's overall theme; they are often elliptical, alluding to, rather than describing, events (as in al-Aʿshā's poem on al-Samawʾal discussed earlier). This technique of suggestion, of implication, is characteristic even of victory poems in which the bulk of the poem is given over to description of the battle or campaign in question. A victory *qaṣīda* by Abū Tammām, addressed to the caliph al-Maʾmūn, demonstrates that poet's architectonic style in constructing long narrative passages (1951, 3: 150–9, no. 133; see also S. Stetkevych 1991: 113–34).

Abū Tammām's first "imperial Islamic *qaṣīdah*" (ibid.: 120) was composed for and presented to al-Maʾmūn on his return from campaigning against the Byzantines in 215/830–31. Its 54 lines are organized on the following scheme:

Nasīb (1–13)	(Center [7]: *la-qad arāki*; closure [13]: doves/death)
	13 lines (6 + 1 + 6)
Madīḥ (14–54)	
14–26	General praise (13 lines: 6 + 1 + 6)
	14–19: "he" (6 lines)
	20: turn (center)
	21–26: "you" (6 lines)
27–50	Narrative: campaigns (14 lines)
	27: *lammā raʾayta* ... 38: *ḥattā naqaḍta* ...
	44: *lammā raʾaytahumu* ... 50: *imāmū*
	(24 lines: 12 + 6 + 6)
Duʿāʾ (51–54)	*islam*! (4 lines)

Each of the first two 13-line segments (*nasīb*, 1–13; general praise, 14–26) is divided into two halves by a pivotal central line (7, 20); the narrative dealing with the campaign falls into three segments of twelve, six and six lines, its progressive stages marked by the verbs *lammā raʾayta*, "when you saw" (27), *ḥattā naqaḍta*, "until you abolished" (38), and *lammā raʾaytahumu*, "when you saw them" (44); the four final lines constitute a *duʿāʾ*.

The *nasīb* begins with the evocation of the ruined encampments (*diman*):

1 Ruined vestiges at which he alighted [*alamma*], giving them greetings [*salāmū*]; and how often has such alighting [*ilmāmū*] loosened the knot of his endurance!

(As was noted in Chapter 3, *ilmām* is also the name of a rhetorical figure which, generally, alludes to the *mamdūḥ*; this should be borne in mind here.) The poet curses his tribe, who blame him for weeping over the ruins (2–3), and asks, "Is a lover to be reproached whose passion sustains (deserted) traces and tents?" (3). He then describes the raincloud which was wont to water the camps,

garbing the bald hills and naked plains with green plants and flowers (5–6), and asks, at the pivotal line of the *nasīb*,

> 7 I was (once) wont to see you [*la-qad arāki*]; and shall I see you (again)
>   in joyfulness, when life is fresh, and time a beardless youth?

He recalls the years of union with the beloved, which sped by as if they were days (8), followed by days of separation, which seemed like years.

> 10 Then those years, and their people, came to an end [*thumma nqaḍat*], as
>   if both that time and those people were but dreams.

Finally, he turns to address the lover, who weeps at the sound of the doves' call at dawn (11): know, he says, that their apparent weeping is, in reality, laughter, while the lover's weeping is mere self-indulgence, something unrequired (12). He concludes,

> 13 They are doves [*ḥamām*]; but if, scattering them in augury, you break
>   the vowel of their *ḥā'*, they become death [*ḥimām*].

This self-conscious and contrived *tajnīs* (*kasarta*, "if you break/scatter", means also, "if you change the vowel of the *ḥ* from *a* to *i* [*kasra*]") – which caused the caliph to realize that Abū Tammām was an urban and not a bedouin poet[15] – marks the culmination of the *nasīb*; the *madīḥ* follows without apparent transition or connection with what has preceded.

The *nasīb* is problematical not only with respect to its relationship with the *madīḥ* but with regard to its own structure and thematics. We may note several points for future reference: (1) the opening motif of greetings (*salām*) to the ruined traces; (2) the abrupt turn from third person (*alamma* "he alighted") to first (*ʿanufū ʿalayya*, "they treated me harshly") in lines 1–2; (3) the clustering of words derived from homophonous roots (*l-m-m, l-w-m*) in lines 1, 2, and 4, providing recurrent sound echoes (1: *alamma/ilmām*; 2: *lāmū*; 4: *lawm*) and reinforcing the suggestion that to lament the abodes (which are, after all, kept alive, in memory at least, by just such poetic laments) is forbidden, *ḥarām*; (4) the references to the rain which clothed the bare landscape (5–6); (5) the address to the *diman* (7; not, as Stetkevych assumes, to the beloved [1991: 124]; al-Tibrīzī notes correctly that it is the *diyār* that are addressed [Abū Tammām 1951, 3: 151]); (6) the *tafsīr* of the doves' call (interpreted by lovers as paralleling their own lament) as being, in reality, laughter (12); (7) the climactic closure of the segment with the motif of death, marked by the deliberately contrived *tajnīs ḥamām/ḥimām* (13). For whom do the doves cry?

S. Stetkevych reads the *nasīb* as Abū Tammām's "[attempt] to translate or reinterpret for the Modern ʿAbbāsid audience the obscure, almost runic, metalanguage of the Ancient poetry . . .". She cites the transfer from actual to "spiritual barrenness" (the lands/the blamers), the "inversion of the usual image: that the waymarkers and traces are emblems that sustain the lover and refresh his memory," the Islamic connotations of the motif of "stopping" (*wuqūf*, linked

to "the 'halting' of the pilgrims on the plain of 'Arafah," an important rite of the pilgrimage to Mecca (1991: 122–3). Lines 7–13 are interpreted as "a lyrical analysis of the nature of time, reality, and human perception", as the poet realizes that there is no turning back, that time changes everything; his interpretation of the doves' cry is further comment on "the subjectivity of perceptions": "the doves are merely birds, it is only when we impose a subjective interpretation on them, as in auguring from their flight, that they acquire significance for us – fate" (ibid.: 124–5). She concludes,

> On the surface, the poet is employing the standard motifs of the classical *nasīb*.... But, the poet demonstrates, these images lack meaning and coherence until the poet imposes significance and order on them. In this *nasīb* it is clear that the poet is utilizing these traditional lyrical motifs with their ancient evocations of the archetypal Bedouin concerns of fertility and barrenness to express abstract concepts of time, emotion, and the various relations between subject and object....Thus this *nasīb* illustrates Abū Tammām's subtle manipulation of traditional themes to express contemporary 'Abbasid metaphysical concepts: the subjectivity of perception, the relativity of time, the arbitrariness of the relation of signifier to signified in the metalanguage of poetry. (ibid.: 125)[16]

I would argue that, on the contrary, the thematic thrust of this *nasīb* does not lie in the heady realm of metaphysical abstractions and musings on subject-object relationships and the subjectivity of perceptions (although perception is a key motif in this *qaṣīda*), but in the background it provides for the *madīḥ* – ruined abodes, the hope for their renewal, the doves' laughter auguring death. The Islamic overtones in the *nasīb* are also of considerable importance for the *madīḥ*, which begins abruptly:

14 God is great [*Allāhu akbaru*]! Now there has come the greatest [*akbaru*]
     one about whose essence fancies fly till they become bewildered.

God and the caliph are linked explicitly throughout the closely-knit segment of general praise (14–19) of the ruler "whose might those who describe him cannot encompass" (*man lā yuḥīṭu . . . bi-qadrihi*), so that they aver it is divinely inspired (*ilhāmū*; 15), "who banished deprivation from his lands" (*man sharrada l-iʿdāma ʿan awṭānihi*; 16), "and took charge of orphans" (*wa-takaffala l-aytāma*, 17; lines 16–17 are further linked by parallel constructions in their first hemistichs: *sharrada l-iʿdāma*, *takaffala l-aytāma*),

18 Submitting [*mustaslimun*] to God, leading a people [*umma*] whose
     refractory (leaders) submit to him [*lahu stislāmū*];
19 Who keeps clear of sins, yet then fears them, as if even his good deeds
     [*ḥasanātuhu*] were sins.

The *tajnīs mustaslimun/stislāmū* (echoing the "greetings", *salāmū*, of the opening line) and the reference to the *umma* (specifically, the "community of

Muḥammad") further reinforce the image of al-Maʾmūn as Islamic leader (*sāʾis*, which also means "to tame"; *tajahḍum*, "refractoriness", is used of male camels who assault females, or of those who take things by force, and is thus a name for the lion, a common metonym for a brave warrior [cf. Abū Tammām 1951, 3: 153]; the phrase has profoundly Islamic connotations[17]); his God-fearing nature is further emphasized in 19. Here, says Stetkevych, the poet "[expands] the description of the tribal chieftain who leads the fighting men to battle in defense of the honor of the tribe to describe the ʿAbbasid Caliph who leads his armies forth against the Byzantine Infidels in defense of empire and Islam;" and, explaining 19, "So great is the Caliph's horror of sin that he not only avoids it, but treats his *ḥasanāt* as sins: reading *ḥasanāt* as 'good deeds,' this is an expression of modesty; as 'beautiful women' (concubines or courtesans), of chastity" (1991: 128–9; the second reading anticipates the motif of the Caliph's renunciation of women prior to undertaking his campaign in Abū Tammām's Amorium *qaṣīda*; see Chapter 9 below).

The central line of this segment (20) is marked by the turn to direct address of the caliph, just as the central line of the *nasīb* was marked by the apostrophe to the abodes, thus linking both:

20 O high-minded king whose justice is a high-minded king over him in judgement [*qaḍāʾ*];
21 The face of God's decree has not ceased to shine upon [*yushriqu*] the earth from that time that (His) judgements were entrusted to you:
22 (Your) high resolve has made the horizons prisoner to you, as they have been moulded (for you) so that your course through them is like a residence [*muqāmu*].
23 Though their winds may not be subjected to you, resolution and speed are obedient to your hands.

The allusion to Solomon, to whom God gave control of the winds (cf. Koran 38: 37), paves the way for the remainder of this segment (24–26), in which the caliph's resolution and swiftness (in campaigning) make east and west as one to him, the provinces of Yemen as close as Syria (24), as he moves with his armies, mounted on fleet she-camels (*shadqamiyyāt*, 25; *aʿwajiyyāt*, 26), "which seem (as swift) as (the lightest) sparrows swooping down when the winds have dropped" (26; the traditional comparison of battle-mounts to swift eagles or other birds of prey is implicit).

With 27, the *qaṣīda*'s central line, the narrative which comprises the poem's second half begins. It is a narrative less of specific events than of exemplary actions, its purpose not to record but to praise. As Stetkevych points out, "although Abū Tammām has built the *qaṣīdah* around a particular historical event, this is not really an occasional poem. The expedition is not described historically, rather, the historical event has been transformed into a ritual" (1991: 130). This ritual (predictably, in terms of Stetkevych's approach) is identified as one of "blood sacrifice and ritual coitus", metaphorically

transformed into Islamic/Abbasid terms; but this reading (to which I will return) oversimplifies the poet's intent.

27 When you saw [*lammā ra'ayta*] that religion's heart beat slowly, and that unbelief had become arrogant and strong,
28 You struck fire [*awrayta*] from the flint of high resolves beneath the gloom, and they lit the lamps of your thought, while the lands were in darkness.

"The ritual states of pollution and purification," says Stetkevych, "are suggested in line 28 where Infidelity (Byzantine hegemony) is described as the black of night, and Byzantine sovereignty over Arab lands a blanket of gloom" (ibid.: 130). Perhaps; but the resonances of the light-dark contrast (seen in many other poems which celebrate Islam's triumph over unbelief) are Koranic (cf. Koran 2: 258, 24: 37–41, for example), and serve once again to link the caliph with Islam and, as we shall see, the *madīḥ* with the *nasīb*.[18]

The first such link between *nasīb* and *madīḥ* comes with the repetition of the verb *ra'ā*, "to see" (repeated twice in the pivotal line 7 of the *nasīb*, in the form of a question), with its emphasis on sight, which links the first and final segments of the narrative (27–38, 44–50). The caliph – whose face is made to illumine the darkened lands through God's decree – perceives, through the gloom of unbelief, the depredations wrought by the infidel, and kindles (*awrayta*, a partial *tajnīs* on *ra'ayta*) the sparks of his own brilliant resolves. The first segment of the narrative (27–38) describes the caliph's troops as he leads them in battle, in a series of interdependent clauses: (27–28) "When you saw .../you struck the flint ..."; (29–30) "You rose [*fa-nahaḍta*], trailing the train of an army .../Pouring forth like a torrent [*muth'anjirin*], whose vanguard you see [*tarā*] ..."; (31–34) "Filling the plain [*mala'a l-malā*] until it appeared [*fa-kāda bi-an yurā*] to have no vanguard nor rearguard,/With grave-faced mounts .../ And advancing troops" characterized by noble deeds and lineage, their faces "Scorched by tireless (campaigning), as if they were sons of Ḥām, not of Sām, (35) "Who take refuge in the blade from the blade (of others) [*takhidhū l-ḥadīda mina l-ḥadīdi ma'āqilan*]," (36) "Going boldly towards death as if they were its blood-kindred [*mustarsilīna ilā l-ḥutūfi ka-annamā bayna l-ḥutūfi wa-baynahum arḥāmū*; *mustarsilīn* recalls God's "messenger", *rasūl*, Muḥammad; i.e., they were both kin to, and prophets of, death], (37) "Lions of death [*āsādu mawtin*]," their only thickets (of concealment) swords and spears,

38 Until you abolished [*ḥattā naqaḍta*] the Byzantine (truce) with you with a hideous battle – a break [*naqḍ*] which would never be repaired –
39 On a battlefield where death broke its fast [*ammā l-ḥimāmu fa-mufṭirun*] between the (armies') two dustclouds, while mail-clad warriors fasted.

Ḥattā naqaḍta, "until you abolished (the truce)" provides both the closure of the first segment of the narrative and the transition to the second (39–44),

which describes the ferocity of the battle. The repetition of *ḥimām* "death" (39) explicates the "augury" of the doves (13): the armies of Islam bring death to the infidel; death now breaks its fast with the blood of the enemy, while the Muslim warriors take no time to eat or drink as long as the battle continues. The motif of death is reinforced by its repetition in various forms: *mawt* (*āsādu mawtin*, "lions of death", 37) and *ḥutūf*, repeated twice in 36 and once more in 40 –

40   Blows felled [*yuqʿidu*] the master [*qarm*; also, a stallion] of each troop,
      blows fierce in nature, while death stood straight [*qiyāmū*] –

with its *muṭābaqa yuqʿidu* (also: to make someone sit)/*qiyām*, suggestive not only of abstention from versus participation in battle (see S. Stetkevych 1991: 131), but also of prayer.

The Byzantines' helplessness before the onslaught of the armies of Islam is expressed in two images which Islamicize ancient motifs:

41   In it (the battle) you severed the bond which held them together
      [*fa-faṣamta ʿurwata jamʿihim*] while their heads were being severed
      from their supports [*ʿurāhā*, i.e. necks];
42   They cast buckets into your seas whose security-ropes and thongs
      surrendered [*aslamat*] their fill.

Line 41 contains a Koranic allusion – "He who submits himself completely to Allah and is mindful of all his obligations, is as if he has firmly grasped the surest loop [*al-ʿurwata l-wuthqā*]" (31: 22; see also 2: 256; cf. S. Stetkevych 1991: 118, note). Stetkevych reads 42 thus:

> The futility of the Byzantine offensive is described in terms of the Jāhilī image of drawing buckets of water from the sea. Except that, instead of drawing water out of the sea, these buckets only yield up what they contain. That is to say, the Byzantine warriors went into battle to draw Muslim blood, but instead yielded up their own. (ibid.: 132)

Quite apart from the question of what the Jāhilī Arabs would have wanted with sea-water (*baḥr* is not merely "sea" but any large body of water, salt or sweet, which flows continuously, and also refers metaphorically to both generosity and destruction; the pun is obviously intended), the metaphor is not about blood (except insofar as resources are imaged as fluid): the image is that of the pool into which buckets are cast; the *ʿurwa* is the bucket's loop-shaped handle, the *akrāb* (security ropes) and *awdhām* (suspensory straps) being attached to it, and *awdhām* is used of a bucket which breaks away, losing its contents. The Byzantines, pitting their resources against the caliph, come up empty-handed (or empty-bucketed), finding only destruction.[19] *Buḥūr* thus also invokes the generosity/ruthlessness doublet of panegyric.

Aslamat "they surrendered" (42) anticipates the final and climactic line of this segment, in which the Islamic nature of the caliph's victory is announced:

43　Polytheism gained no victory in a place of martyrdom [or: meeting, *mashhad*] in which God, you and Islam were present.

The caliph, submissive (*mustaslim*) to God and thus commanding the submission (*istislām*) of other leaders (18), has fulfilled his divine mission by vanquishing the infidel. The final segment of the narrative (44–50) describes the campaign's aftermath; it begins with a recapitulation of the motif and the wording which opened the narrative:

44　When you saw them [*lammā ra'aytahumu*], their kings driven [*tusāqu*] to you in droves as if they were cattle –

45　Wounded upon wounded, as if their skin were painted with dragon's blood and henna,

46　Their clothing in tattered bits [*mutasāqiṭī waraqi th-thiyābi*] as if they had bowed in submission, and consecration [*iḥrām*] (was) renewed by them –

47　You honoured [*akramta*] your sword, both blade and point, (by turning it) from them – and well it deserves honour!

("Dragon's blood", *shayyān*, is glossed by al-Tibrīzī as *dam al-akhawayn*, a red, resinous juice used, like henna, to dye the hands.) The segment concludes with two lines beginning with past tense verbs paralleling *akramta* – "you averted [*fa-raddadta*] the blade of death (from them)" (48); "you woke (them) from their sleep [*ayqaẓta haji'ahum*]" (49) and a final perfect verb connected with the enemy:

50　Their stammering tongues denied you, affirming (despite this) that you are, in (their?) hearts, the leader [*imāmū*].

The affirmation of al-Ma'mūn as *imām*, leader of the *umma*,[20] sets the seal on this Islamic triumph.

　　Stetkevych reads line 46 as involving "a complex interplay of imagery that metaphorically equates the submission (*istislām*) of the Byzantine lords to the Muslim Caliph with their submission (*islām*) or conversion to Islam. They resemble Muslim pilgrims who have donned the *iḥrām*. Their own blood is the sacrificial blood which has cleansed both them and the Islamic Ummah" (1991: 132). This reading depends on several somewhat problematic assumptions: first, that *istislām* (18) refers to the Byzantines (which is not suggested by Stetkevych); second, that the captives' torn and bloody clothing can indeed be equated with the *iḥrām* (which must, to be ritually pure, be made of seamless white cloth, and unpolluted by blood or other unclean matter); third (and least likely), that "those who have submitted to the Caliph militarily (*istislām*) should have *ipso facto* submitted (that is converted) spiritually (*Islām*) to God" (ibid.: 132), and that the "hearts" (50) are indeed those of the infidels. Nowhere, however, is this latter point explicitly stated; on the contrary, the poem seems at all junctures, and especially in its concluding segments, to maintain the diametrical opposition between Islam and the Byzantine infidel.

I will leave this question in abeyance for the moment in order to move to the concluding *du'ā'*:

51 Be (ever) safe [*islam*], O Commander of the Faithful, for the sake of a
     people [*li-ummati*] which has brought your hopes to fruition when
     hopes were barren.
52 Great deeds are still (awaiting) the caliph; God knows this, as do all
     the nations.
53 They were inscribed for him and for his forebears as (their) heritage,
     upon the Tablet, until (all) the Pens went dry;
54 And (for) those who follow in your footsteps in search of loftiness and
     glory: there (in following that path) all footsteps will become equal.

Once again, *islam*, "be safe", and *umma* link caliph and community under the
aegis of Islam. He is Amīr al-Mu'minīn, Commander of the Faithful, destined
(like his predecessors) to do battle for Islam (Tablet and Pen [53] allude to the
lawḥ al-maḥfūẓ, the Preserved Tablet, of Koran 85: 23, on which the divine Pen
inscribed "all that is to happen until the last judgement", and then dried up [cf.
Stetkevych 1991: 120n] – an odd concept in view of Stetkevych's convictions
as to the presence of Mu'tazilite imagery throughout Abū Tammām's poetry, as
the Mu'tazilites believed the Koran to be created, not pre-eternal); as he carries
on the mission of his forebears, so will his successors emulate him (perhaps an
allusion to the concept of *imām muqtadā*, the "leader who is emulated").

Stetkevych sums up the *du'ā'* thus:

> In *Islam*! (Be safe!) the closing of the poem opens, as the opening did with
> *Salām* (peace). Peace is now both wished for and achieved: the enemy has
> submitted, Islam is reestablished. This then marks the completion of the
> ritual. The fertility/barrenness imagery of line 51 recalls the poet's
> description of the flower-bringing rains that fall on the abandoned
> campsite (ll. 5, 6). The intent of the poet here is to identify the Caliph
> with the seminal element and suggest his dependence on the female
> element, the *ummah* (Nation) – a word that cannot help but suggest *umm*
> (mother) – for bringing his hopes to fruition. The image is that of ritual
> coitus (*heiros* [*sic*] *gamos*) through which the ancient kings of Iran and
> Mesopotamia ensured the fertility of the fields and livestock of the realm.
> Thus the archetypal emotional element of the *nasīb* becomes an
> archetypal political statement in the *madīḥ*. (1991: 133)

In attempting to treat Abū Tammām's poems as versified fertility rituals,
however (and despite how evocative of such rituals they may be), Stetkevych
fails to examine sufficiently many of their specific features. One such feature is
the precise nature, in this *qaṣīda*, of the relationship between *nasīb* and
narrative/*madīḥ*. *Islam* (51) and *salām* (1) are indeed linked (and echoed
throughout the poem); this linkage suggests that the elliptical and enigmatic
subject of the opening *alamma* is, implicitly, the caliph, who by addressing

"greetings" to the abandoned campsite – which may now be identified with the lands of Islam, rendered barren by the prolonged Byzantine occupation – announces his intention to restore their prosperity by retaking them from the infidel. This opposition between occupation/barrenness/loss and restoration/ prosperity, and the identification of the occupied lands with the *diman* or *diyār*, informs both the poet's apostrophe in line 7 – "I was (once) wont to see you [*la-qad arāki*]; and shall I see you (again) in joyfulness, when life is fresh, and time a beardless youth?" – and the campaign itself, initiated and concluded with the identical verb *raʾā*. Thus the contrast between fertility and barrenness enunciated in 51 does not only "recall" the imagery of 5–6 but affirms the caliph's life-giving powers: his conquest revives the lands and clothes them with vegetation, as does the spring raincloud. (Compare the use of the same imagery in the *qaṣīda* to al-Muʿtaṣim discussed in Chapter 4.)

It is in this context that whatever echoes of fertility rituals that may be heard in this poem present themselves, not in that of blood sacrifice (blood plays a relatively minimal part in this poem, in contrast to, for example, the Amorium *qaṣīda*; on this point see Sperl's review of Stetkevych 1991 [Sperl 1993]); and it is in this context as well that the image of the Byzantine captives becomes clarified: their tattered clothes (*waraqi th-thiyābi*) dropping from their bodies are contrasted to the "turbans and shawls" with which the rain clothes the barren hills and plain (6). We may recall that *waraq* also means "leaf" or "petal": the Byzantines are autumn, bringing barrenness to the land; the caliph is spring, bringing renewal. The sacred wedding (*hieros gamos*) between caliph and community, Imām and *umma*, rather than suggesting the former's "dependence on the female element" (with echoes of Graves' Mother-Goddess), declares the caliph's primacy: he has inseminated the *umma* with the spark of his resolve (*zand* [28], the stick of the fire-drill, has clear sexual implications), with the will to take back the conquered lands, and the *umma* has brought his resolve to fruition.

There remains the question of the meaning of *iḥrām* (46). In the *nasīb* the poet cursed the "blamers" of his tribe (*qawm*) for making it seem that lamenting the ruined abodes was forbidden (*ḥarām*), i.e., prohibited by Islam; as, indeed, it proves to be. Islam requires militancy, not passivity and lamentation (hence the "self-indulgence" of the weeper [12]). This militancy is embodied in the caliph who, by his victory over the Byzantines, reconsecrates the devastated abodes; this is one meaning of *fa-uḥditha fīhimi l-iḥrāmū*, "through them [the abased Byzantines] consecration [to Islam] was renewed." The second meaning relates to the tattered clothing of the Byzantine prisoners: in pre-Islamic times, *iḥrām* referred not to clothing donned for the pilgrimage, but to the ragged and stained clothing cast off (because impure and polluted) by the pilgrims as they approached the sacred site, around which they circumambulated naked. The Byzantines perform such a symbolic casting-off, thereby renewing the ancient custom of *iḥrām*; the lands, moreover, put on (after the beneficial rain) specifically Islamic garb: turbans, and *izār*, which should be read not as "shawls"

but as indicating, precisely, the lower of the two seamless cloths that constitute the Muslim pilgrims' *iḥrām*.

The abrupt shift from third to first person in 1–2 is now explained: while the poet (as poets will) laments the loss of the abodes and their people, the caliph takes upon himself their restoration. But is it not, indeed, for poets, through just such lamentation, to bring home the need for action? Is the censure justified? The tribe (*qawm*) against whom the poet inveighs for blaming him gives way to the nations (*aqwām*) who acknowledge the caliph's greatness (52); thus the caliph, who alights (*alamma*) to give greetings (*salām*) to the ruined abodes, cancels through his achievements in the name of Islam the blame (*lawm*) attached to the poet by his tribe, and the augury of the doves is proven by his defeat of the infidel.

This technique of implication, of suggestion, characterizes many other narratives whose overall meaning turns out to be both exemplary and, on another level, political. Such is the case with many of the *qaṣīda*s of al-Mutanabbī, for example that to Kāfūr discussed earlier in connection with segmentation, or his victory poems for Sayf al-Dawla (see Hamori 1992). Hamori identifies many techniques similar to those used by Abū Tammām as well as by other poets; but there is in fact little significant structural difference between poems containing narratives or chronicles and those which he terms "poems without events" (ibid.: 51). (For an analysis of examples of both types see Meisami 1999.)

Hamori notes that many poems (of both types, it should be added) begin with a *nasīb* or with a gnomic statement. He identifies what he terms "bridge-passages" (brief summaries or references to the theme leading to the narrative; see e.g. 1992: 16–17), and specific means of exiting the poem, including moving from the particular to the general, and the use of "crescendo motifs" leading to the climax (see e.g. ibid.: 36, 40). In such passages gnomic and/or panegyric motifs tend to dominate. The poem may also conclude with a reference to a particular, exemplary event presented against an expanded background of general praise (see ibid.: 46–60).

Among the poems studied by Hamori there is one whose plan he finds "intriguing but … obscure." In this *qaṣīda*,

> Gnomic statements in the introduction stress that without the use of reason bravery is insufficient. Perhaps they signal the theme at once, referring to some circumstance known to the audience. There is also a structural oddity (relative to the rest of the *sayfīyāt* with chronicles). At the head of vs. 7, *khāḍa l-ḥimāma* leads to four verses of general praise. Only then, at the head of vs. 11, does a second verb of motion – *qāda* – launch the chronicle with the syntactically cohesive army-on-the-march motif, soon to be determined with place-names. It is conceivable that this "false onset" was meant and perceived as a teasing of expectations, an interesting deviation from the norm. (ibid.: 17)

Hamori's suggestion is intriguing; but his difficulties with this poem have less to do with its apparent anomalies than with the self-imposed limitations of his

analysis: first, his disregard of relationships between the exordium and the remainder of the poem, and second, a lack of recognition of the importance of proportion. A close look at the *qaṣīda* may perhaps clarify some of its "obscurities" (Hamori 1992: 118–20, Text 21; al-Mutanabbī 1967: 82–9; Arberry's translation).

The *qaṣīda* opens with the opposition between reason (or good judgement, *raʾy*) and courage:

1 Judgement comes before the courage of the courageous [*shajāʿati sh-shujʿānī*]; the former is first, and the latter the second place;
2 so when they are combined [*ijtamaʿā*] in a haughty spirit, that spirit reaches every place of elevation.

This sentential opening presents both the opposition between good judgement and courage and the possibility of their combination "in one noble soul"; the poet employs the figure *jamʿ wa-tafrīq*, "combination and division", calling attention to it through the verb *ijtamaʿā*, "(if) they are combined". Their opposition (*muṭābaqa*) and combination will be seen to inform the poem as a whole, as the ensuing amplification of the opening statement indicates.

3 Perchance a lad spears his competitors [*ṭaʿana ... aqrānahu*] with judgement even before the adversaries thrust one against the other [*taṭāʿuni l-aqrānī*].
4 But for reason, the meanest [*adnā*] lion would be nearer [*adnā*] to nobility than man,
5 and souls would not compete for superiority, neither would the hands of warriors wield the points of the supple lances.

Lines 3 and 4 employ *tajnīs* (*ṭaʿana aqrānahu/taṭāʿuni l-aqrānī*) and *muṭābaqa/tawriya* (*adnā*, "basest"/closest") to bring home their point (another *muṭābaqa* is also implied, which will be discussed shortly); the motif of competition – between beasts who do not possess reason and men who do; between "souls" and warriors – links this first segment of the exordium (1–5) with the second (6–10), which presents Sayf al-Dawla as he who combines good judgement with valour.

6 But for him who is named after his swords [*samiyyu suyūfihi*], and his impetuosity, the swords, when they were drawn, would have been like eyelids [*kal-ajfānī*, i.e., still unsheathed].
7 He plunged with them into death [*khāda l-ḥimāma bi-hinna*] so that it was not known whether he did so out of contempt or forgetfulness,
8 and he strove mightily [*wa-saʿā*], and the people of his time and of every time lagged behind his reach [in elevation].
9 They took their places of sitting in the houses, whilst it was his view that saddles are the proper seats for noble lads;
10 they imagined that war was a game, whereas thrusting [*aṭ-ṭaʿnu*] in the battlefield is different from thrusting [*aṭ-ṭaʿni*] in the arena.

This carefully balanced passage, which contrasts Sayf al-Dawla (*khāda … wa-saʿā*, "he plunged … and strove") with his enemies (*takhidhū … wa-tawahhamū*, "they hold … they imagined") in two sets of lines with parallel construction, makes the contrast between noble and not noble a specific one between "him" and "them", the noble ruler and his ignoble foes. Nobility is a dominant motif in the exordium, conveyed also through the repetition of words derived from the root *ʿ-l-w/y*, "to be exalted": *ʿalyāʾ* "elevation" (2), *ʿawālī* "spearpoints" (5), *al-ʿulā* "elevation" (8).

The narrative begins with a construction which both links it to what has gone before and announces a new movement:

11   *Qāda l-jiyāda ilā ṭ-ṭiʿāni   wa-lam yaqud illā ilā l-ʿādāti wal-awṭānī*
      He led the steeds into the jousting, and did not lead them save to his [or: their] habits and familiar haunts. . . .
14   in a mighty army whose dust veiled the eyes, so that it was as though they saw with their ears.
15   *Yarmī bi-hā l-balada l-baʿīda muẓaffarun   kullu l-baʿīdi la-hu qarībun dānī*
      A victorious prince, to whom every distant place is near and nigh, flings them at a distant land.

These lines, which repeat the motifs of sight (6) and closeness (4) introduced in the exordium, form a transitional passage; in the next segment (16–20), the poet moves from general to particular with a description of Sayf al-Dawla's campaign against the Byzantines in 345/956, a high point of which was his crossing of the Arsanas river (see Blachère 1935: 180–1). The next segment (21–25) describes this crossing: how he built rafts for his horses to cross, and left the mighty river defeated:

21   he twisted over the river ropes of women's tresses, and constructed ships for it of crosses. . . .
25   and so you left it [*fa-taraktahu*], and when it thereafter protected from men, it was mindful of you, and made exception of the Banū Ḥamdān.

The shift to direct address paves the way for praise of the Ḥamdānids (26–28), culminating in a return to the ruler which forms the transition to the next segment (31–35).

29   The blades have submitted to your blade perforce, and your religion has abased all other religions.
30   Upon the passes – and to return were a disgrace, and to proceed was utterly impossible,
31   and the roads were completely choked with lances, and unbelief was massed [*mujtamiʿun*] against faith [*al-īmānī*],
32   they gazed at the steel strips as if they were mounting between the pinions of eagles.

The verbs *khaḍaʿat* "have submitted" (29) and *naẓarū* "they (the enemy) gazed" (32) link the two segments, the second of which, framed by the rhymes *īmānī/amānī*, "faith/safe-conduct" (31, 35), describes the battle between unbelief and faith as Sayf al-Dawla's troops, "whose souls death revived [*yuḥyī l-ḥimāmu nufūsahā*]", harry the infidels unmercifully, "as if the single sword were two" (34),

35 singling out their crania and faces, as if their bodies came to you in safe-conduct [*amānī*].

The next segment (36–40) describes the infidels' retreat under a rain of weapons, their hopes betrayed:

36 So they flung away what they were flinging with [*fa-ramaw bi-mā yarmūna ʿanhu*] and turned their backs, trampling upon every twanging bow....

40 Alas, they were barred from returning by sharp blades whereby many had been slain, and few taken captive,

41 and by a well-schooled warrior [*muhadhdhabun*] who commanded the fates regarding them, and the fates obeyed him in obedience to the All-Merciful.

The Byzantines' casting away their weapons (36) contrasts with Sayf al-Dawla's "flinging" his armies into remote regions (15); the parallel positions of the verb *ramā* – 15 lines from the beginning of the poem, 15 lines from its end – frames the central portion of the narrative (the crossing of the Arsanas; the defeat of the Byzantines), at the central line of which (as of the poem) comes a direct address to Sayf al-Dawla (*fa-taraktahā*, 25), followed by praise of the Ḥamdānids.

The final segment of the narrative (41–45), beginning with another allusive reference to Sayf al-Dawla (*muhadhdhabun* means both "a well-tempered sword" and "one who is free from defect"; see al-ʿUkbarī's gloss, al-Mutanabbī 1936: 441), briefly resumes the motif of the defeated enemy (42–43) and concludes with two sentential lines paralleling those of the opening:

44 Swords side with those whose hearts are sturdy as their hearts, when the two hosts meet [*idhā ltaqā l-jamʿānī*].

45 You will find [*talqā*] the sword, for all the boldness of its edge, like a coward in the hand of a coward [*mithla l-jabāni bi-kaffi kulli jabānī*].

Lines 46–47 praise Sayf al-Dawla's deeds as having elevated his Arab ancestors to the heights of glory; then comes the conclusion:

48 O you who slaughter whom you will with your sword, I have become one of those slain by your beneficence [*iḥsānī*],

49 so that when I behold you [*fa-idhā raʾaytuka*], my eyes are too dazzled to gaze on you, and when I praise you, my tongue is bewildered concerning you.

Hamori observes with respect to the concluding segments of the poem,

> From chronicle to closure, Text 21 follows a curious path. This poem does not have a pluralizing or contrastive line to mark the turn to general praise. Vs. 40, with its summary statement about the futility of flight, the few captured and the many slain, appears to complete the chronicle, and in 41 … we begin to hear crescendo motifs. The next two lines however return to the battle and describe its aftermath in bloodcurdling fashion. Two gnomic lines then seal the matter of the battle, the ancestry motif is touched on, and closure follows…. Here then we have an example of the interweaving of the end of the chronicle and the features of the coda. An intriguing but perhaps far-fetched question arises. As we have seen, in this text the gnomic introduction ends with a conditional cadence (which is also the *takhalluṣ* [6]) followed by a verb of motion in the perfect at the head of the line (*khāḍa l-ḥimāma* … [7]), but this verb of motion is *not* the onset of the chronicle. It introduces four lines of general praise, and only vs. 11 (*qāda l-jiyāda* …) begins the sentence that leads into the narration of particular events. Is the "false start" of the coda perhaps a formal echo of the "false start" of the chronicle? (1992: 49–50)

In my view it is not: the passage introduced by the conditional (6) and *khāḍa l-ḥimāma* (7) sets up the contrast already voiced in 4–5 between noble and ignoble, Sayf al-Dawla and his enemies, which informs the poem as a whole; *qāda l-jiyāda* itself introduces a digression on Sayf al-Dawla's battle mounts (10–14), and the chronicle proper does not begin until *yarmī bihā … ḥattā ʿabarna*, "whom he flings … until they crossed (the Arsanas)" in 15–17. Moreover, obscure rather than clear transitions (passages of three lines linking two five-line segments) are a recurrent structural feature of this poem; and a digression after apparent conclusion is seen elsewhere prior to closure (cf. Abū Tammām's *qaṣīda* to al-Maʾmūn, above). The "echo" that Hamori seeks is between the exordium and the close of the chronicle: as the *qaṣīda* opened with *shajāʿati sh-shujʿānī*, "the courage of the courageous" (1a), with *tajnīs* for emphasis, so the chronicle closes with its opposite, *jabān* "coward" (45b), repeated for emphasis.

Antithesis is central to the *qaṣīda*: between judgement and courage; between those who think war a game and those who do not; between Sayf al-Dawla and his foes. Sayf al-Dawla is, implicitly, the "haughty spirit" (2) in whom judgement and courage are joined (*ijtamaʿā*), so that even if the infidel are massed (*mujtamiʿun*) against the Muslims, when the two hosts (*al-jamʿānī*) meet (44) the brave are separated from the cowardly, the wise from the foolish, the noble from the base, the true believers from the infidel. The proof, which the chronicle exemplifies, lies in the sword, and in the sight of its deeds, motifs combined (with what seem to be clear allusions to Abū Tammām's Amorium *qaṣīda*) in 6, where swords lacking the nobility of Sayf al-Dawla's or his own keen perception would, though drawn, be like blind eyelids (i.e. still sheathed);

in 14, where the dust of Sayf al-Dawla's armies obscures the sight; in 32, where the infidel gaze on Sayf al-Dawla's swords as bearers of doom; and in 49: "Whenever I see you my eye is dazzled."

Yet this final line suggests that there is more to this *qaṣīda* than meets the eye (so to speak). It is one of the last two *qaṣīda*s al-Mutanabbī composed for Sayf al-Dawla on the latter's return from his 345/956 campaign, when relations between poet and patron had been ruptured beyond repair, and shortly before the poet's own covert departure from Aleppo to Syria and, ultimately, to the court of Kāfūr in Egypt (see Blachère 1935: 180–1). The poem's concluding line – "When I behold you, my eyes are too dazzled to gaze on you, and when I praise you, my tongue is bewildered concerning you" – sounds suspiciously like an apology for an inadequate poem; and if we look back at the *qaṣīda* we will find that it contains little specific praise of Sayf al-Dawla (except for the description of his river crossing). Moreover, in another apparent hyperbole the poet claims that he has become one of the victims (*qatlā*) of Sayf al-Dawla's beneficence (*iḥsān*), thus paralleling the victims of his sword (*yā man yuqattilu man arāda bi-sayfihi*, "O you who slaughter whom you will with your sword," 48). Conventionally, the patron's beneficence does not slay its recipient, but gives him life; it is the beauties of the *nasīb* who slay the lover (with their eyes, with their departure, and so on). (Al-ʿUkbarī glosses, "You have drowned me with generosity" [al-Mutanabbī 1936: 443]; but this too is not unambiguous.)

Although this might be explained by al-Mutanabbī's habit of addressing Sayf al-Dawla in language typical of the *nasīb* (a practice remarked upon by the Arab critics), another explanation suggests itself: that this *qaṣīda* represents what the critics termed *dhamm shabīh bil-madḥ*, "blame in the guise of praise." Further support for this view comes from line 3 – "Perchance a lad spears his competitors with judgement even before the adversaries thrust one against the other" – with its *tajnīs ṭaʿana . . . aqrānahu/taṭāʿuni l-aqrānī*. In view of the fact that both lines 1 and 4 are built on *muṭābaqa* (*raʾy/shajāʿa*; the two contrasting senses of *adnā*), a figure which informs the whole poem, another reading of 3 suggests itself: that the first *aqrān* means not "competitors" (parallel to "adversaries") but "peers", "friends", in which case it would parallel the motif of "being slain by beneficence": Sayf al-Dawla not only slays his enemies but illtreats his friends. (Al-ʿUkbarī glosses "adversaries", who may be struck by the noble man's shrewd strategy and judgement before actually coming to blows; ibid.: 434.) This would give further significance to the pairing of *shujʿān/jabān* which frames the body of the poem: if Sayf al-Dawla shows bravery and judgement against his enemies, this is not true in the case of his friends; his lack of support (equated with cowardice) makes of his power and his beneficence a sword which turns equally on friend and foe alike, demonstrating, in the end, his ultimate lack of judgement.

Al-Mutanabbī's *qaṣīda* contains only a brief chronicle of events very generally sketched and suggesting somewhat faint praise; other victory poems, however, may describe in lengthy detail a campaign or a series of victories. Such is my final example, Farrukhī's *qaṣīda* celebrating Maḥmūd of Ghazna's Somnath

campaign in 416/1025–6 (see Nāzim 1971: 115–21, 209–24), whose 175 lines are organized into segments based (with slight variation) on multiples of five.

Exordium (1–19)	Alexander (legend)/Maḥmūd (truth)
Narrative (1)	Journey to India:
(20–39)	Hardships of army
(40–49)	Bravery of king
Narrative (2)	Fortresses conquered:
(50–54)	Lodrava
(55–58)	Chikudar
(59–63)	Nahrwala
(64–68)	Mundher
(69–74)	Dewalwara
Narrative (3)	Somnath (named at center):
(75–104)	Legends
(105–119)	Battle (*fārigh*: conclusion)
Narrative (4)	Return journey:
(120–133)	Crossing the sea
(134–145)	Fortresses conquered
Madīḥ (146–170)	
Duʿā (171–175)	

The exordium (1–19), cited briefly in Chapter 3 as an example of the "newness" *topos*, contrasts two "world-rulers", Maḥmūd and Alexander, who embody more far-reaching contrasts: between present and past, new and old, truth and falsehood ("legend"), faith and unbelief, high purpose and royal whim. Its organizational pattern establishes that of the poem as a whole.

1 The tale of Alexander has become an ancient legend; bring forth new speech, for the new has a different sweetness.

The contrasts are expanded upon in the lines that follow: old legends and false histories are worthless (2); everyone knows the tale of Alexander's journeys by heart (3); even the sweetest tale told over turns bitter (4).

5 If you would tell a sweet and pleasing tale, take up the tale of the world-ruler and do not stray from it.

Line 5, the centre of this first segment (1–9), leads to the *gurīzgāh* in 6, where the ruler is named, followed by a general statement of his virtues. He is, more specifically, a king who wishes day and night to level idols and temples (7) and who leads his armies across the Jayḥūn and Sayḥūn, from west to east (8);

9 Should you read his history [*kārnāma*] from beginning to end, you will recall Alexander's deeds with laughter.

This segment concludes with repetition of the opening rhyme word, *Iskandar* (1a/9b); it has moved from the "legend" (*fasāna*, 1, 2) and "false history"

(*kārnāma-i ba-durūgh*, 2) which the story of Alexander represents to the "true" history of Maḥmūd's deeds (9). Repetition of Alexander's name also marks the next segment (10–19), which expands the contrast to include that between the character and motives of the two rulers:

10 Indeed [*balī*], Alexander traversed the world from end to end; he chose
   to travel, and crossed desert, mountain and pass.
11 But in his journeying he sought the Water of Life; our king seeks to
   please God and the Prophet.

Yes, Alexander's deeds were marvellous, concedes the poet (12), introducing the motif of marvels, which will be repeated throughout the *qaṣīda*; but when he ruled, the Seal of the Prophets, Muḥammad, had not yet appeared (13). Moreover, were there a prophet alive in this king's time, our world-ruler would perform even more miracles than he (14). Alexander's tale became famous because he set his heart on travelling (15, the central line of this segment); but if he had made but one journey with our king he would have forsaken his horse for a mule (16). His greatest journey did not take him beyond the bounds of human habitation (17); but our king has taken his armies through a route in which even demons would be lost and bewildered (18):

19 Such a journey as the king undertook this year would never in all his
   (Alexander's) life, God knows, have occurred to him.

With the final line of the exordium we have abandoned the past (and with it Alexander) and are firmly in the present, in time which is historical and not legendary, Islamic and not infidel. The next three segments (20–49, the first narrative passage) describe the perilous and desolate route, the hardships undergone by the army, and the boldness of the ruler.

20 Who would have believed that anyone could ever take an army from Taraz
   [in Badakhshan, n.e. Iran] to Sūmanāt [Somnath]? –and what an army!

Maḥmūd's army is so great it cannot be counted (21), more numerous than pebbles or raindrops (22). But, says the poet, think not of the numerous [*kashan*], endless army, but of the hard and waterless route (23), in which demons would become lost at sunset like blind men in a forest at dawn (24), a route longer than the hopeless man's grief, longer than the night of a weary soul (25, the central line of this segment), full of sand and stones (26), its wells without water, its fields without produce (27), its air gloomy, its wind like smoke from Hell, its ground black, its soil like ashes (28),

29 All trees, and among the trees abundant [*kashan*] thorns; no thorns, but
   piercing spears and blades.

The route is the army's first enemy (as the parallel between numerous troops and numerous thorns, both described as *kashan*, indicates); the next segment (30–39) amplifies its desolation and harshness.

30 No man would ever think of setting foot there; no bird would have the
    courage to fly there.

That thorny forest would strip all of their armour and helmets (31); a horseman
would rush in and come out exhausted, looking like a millipede (32), with a
thousand broken thorns all over his body (33); brave warriors would return
stripped of their adornments (34). But the forest itself provided others: it was
filled with bells like those on falcons' feet; its thorns were like silver studs for
belts (35). Sometimes spear-pointed plants appeared, sometimes ground hard as
an axe-blade (36): apparent ornaments which are in fact lethal.

  Lines 35–36 begin the movement towards closure of this segment and the
transition to the next (40–49), which deals with the topic of "king and army",
its central line occupied by mention of the poet. This segment dwells on the
marvelous nature both of the route and of the ruler who overcomes it, marvels
which contrast with the tawdry legends concerning Alexander, and which
provide admonition.

37 In that desert there were many wondrous stages; were I to tell of them
    no one would believe me.
38 Day rose from above the hills, the colour of night, so that sight was of
    no avail.
39 The mid-day prayer placed its finger on its hand; I have never seen the
    like; these are marvels and admonitions [ʿibar].
40 More wondrous still: when they told the king, "Along this route there
    are two-headed snakes without number. . .",
44 The world-ruler paid no attention to their words; he led his army with
    the help of the Just God.
45 Through such a harsh and evil way as I have told of, he passed with the
    favour of the Almighty Creator. . . .
49 He brought the entire army out of that desert, blooming like well-
    watered roses and waterlilies.

A miracle, indeed, which recalls the motif of the ruler's life-giving powers;
even when faced by the utmost desolation he is able to preserve his supporters.
The linkage of ruler and poet in 44–45 is reminiscent of similar motifs in
al-Mutanabbī's *qaṣīda*s to Sayf al-Dawla; we are reminded that Farrukhī, like
al-Mutanabbī, accompanied the ruler on his campaigns, a detail which
authenticates his report.
  The next section (narrative 2, 50–74) deals with the fortresses taken on the
way, culminating in Maḥmūd's arrival at Somnath (Sūmanāt; 75).

50 Along that road were many fortresses and great cities which he
    destroyed, razing each utterly to the ground.

The poet enumerates these fortresses and cities (on which see Nāẓim 1971:
116, 215–18), providing brief details about each: first Lodrava (Lodorva), a

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mighty fortress filled with brave warriors (51–54); then Chikudar (Chiklodar?) Hill, where the sultan obtained many treasures (55–58); Nahrwala (Anhalwara), a great and rich city (59–63); Mundher, with its great tank and its temples (64–68); and finally tree-filled Dewalwara (Delvada) with its great fortress, from which only those who had hidden themselves escaped with their lives (69–74), spared by the magnanimous ruler who had a yet greater task to accomplish:

75   He who would raze the temple of Sūmanāt does not waste his time on
        those who are weary of battle.
76   The king hastened towards the destruction of Manāt; his campaign was
        indeed for this very reason.

These lines, a reminder of the holy nature of Maḥmūd's undertaking, are followed by a lengthy digression (narrative 3: 75–104) concerning the temple, including a first legend of its origin (77–81) and of the building of the temple (82–92), followed by a second legend of origin and a description of its ritual (93–103) (see Nāẓim 1971: 209–10). The first legend asserts that "Manāt, one of the idols of the Kaʿba ... was hidden by its worshippers and transported to a land 'which had from times immemorial been the home of idolatry', namely Kathiawar, and set up there as an object of worship ... and it was called 'So-Manāt' to perpetuate its old name Manāt in a disguised form" (ibid.: 210; in Hindu legend, as al-Bīrūnī records, the idol was a linga raised by the moon-god Mahadeva in expiation of a sin [ibid.: 209–10]). The temple is made of slabs of gold, containing "a thousand pictures and images", with a jewelled canopy over the idol (82–89), whose worshippers claimed that it had emerged suddenly from the sea (90), and asserted

91   That it was the orderer of creation, creator of the world, light-giver to
        the sun and moon.
92   By its knowledge (were) all good and evil in the world; by its command
        (were) all decree and fate in the world.

Another group, however, say that the idol came down of its own accord from its home in the skies into the sea, from which it came onto dry land and was nourished by the sacred mother cow; now its worshippers wash it with Ganges water and with milk, saffron and sugar, and its temple is a place of pilgrimage. (On these rituals see ibid.: 210–12.)

104   The shamans all call that stone a god. What vain words are these;
         shame be upon them!
105   God had so commanded that that idol be uprooted by our faith-
         nourishing King.

These lines form the transition to the next segment of this narrative (105–119): the battle, ending with the overthrow of the idol. Maḥmūd seized the idol with the intent of returning it to Mecca (106), and set fire to the

temple (107); he beheaded every Brahmin he found (108), so that the temple was a sea of blood (109), and many others were slain or taken captive (110).

111 God knows how many men were there, desirous of war and fit for
       it. . . .
114 They stood fast for war, but in the end the Sultan's arrows ended their
       lives.
115 The King had ever two desires in this world which he asked of the Just
       God:
116 The first, to raze the Hindus' place of pilgrimage; the other, to make
       the pilgrimage (to Mecca) and kiss the (Black) Stone.

He has achieved one of these desires, says the poet; may God help him to achieve the other (117–118).

119 When he had eased [*fārigh*] his heart by the burning of Sūmanāt, he
       took the road for the return journey.

The account of Maḥmūd's return journey occupies the next segment (narrative 4, 120–145), patterned much like that of the outward one. First, Maḥmūd was obliged to cross "the shallow arm of the sea that runs . . . between Kathiawar and Cutch" (Nāẓim 1971: 119); triumph over water parallels that over the dry, harsh route of the outward journey.

120 A bend in the sea's course cut across his route; men suddenly
       despaired of (traversing) that route.

There was no guide, nor any crossing (121); in each direction, for a month's journey, the road was empty and difficult (122), and the sea so wide that it took two or three days to cross (123). Its full tide came twice a day (124), and when it came, fishermen avoided the shore (125).

126 When the King saw things this way he encouraged the troops; he
       pressed on, saying, "What danger is there in so much water?"

He put his hope in God, and rode into the sea, followed by his army (127); all crossed safely, and no one was harmed or suffered loss (128–130). It took two days and two nights for all the troops, horses, camels and mules to cross (131–132).

133 Along this road he was honoured thus by God; consider such honour
       of the nature of miracles.
134 In addition to what I have told, he made other raids on his return to
       his place of glory and residence.

The next section (134–145) tells of Maḥmūd's conquests on the return journey: he emptied the fortress of Kandhuh (Kanthkot) (135–39) and defeated the Carmathian ruler of the city of Mansura in Sind (140–43) (see Nāẓim 1971: 119–20). This abbreviated list of conquests, which parallels the longer one in

the outward journey, concludes with a summary which leads into the *madīḥ* (146–170).

144 Observe what he accomplished on this one journey, the ruler of the world, the prince, the hunting lion.

145 He traversed the world, slew his enemies and obtained treasures; he levelled the edifice of unbelief: here indeed is conquest and victory!

146 Bravo, O conqueror, victory-starred, supported by Fortune, who have stolen the ball from all (other) kings through your virtue and skill.

147 Of the skill you have shown, and the road you have traversed, what do negligent, drunken kings know?

This clear allusion to Maḥmūd's superiority over Alexander sets the tone for the first segment of the *madīḥ*, which contrasts his activity with the indolence and self-indulgence of other rulers, and exhorts him to further conquests (147–158).

149 You burned Sūmanāt to the ground in the month of Bahman, while other kings were burning sandalwood and amber. . . .

151 You are that king whose banner, for the sake of your holy wars, goes now to Sūmanāt and now to Kālanjar.

152 O King, hereafter when you desire to go to war, take your numerous [*kashan*] armies towards Rūm and Khazar. . . .

155 You took your army from here to the edge of the sea, to a place where there was no trace of humankind;

156 You showed us those things which, when we recall them, we will think: was this some legendary tale [*fasāna*]?

(On Maḥmūd's siege of the fort of Kālanjar in eastern India in 1022–23, mention of which concludes the catalogue of conquests in Farrukhī's New Year *qaṣīda* to Maḥmūd, see Nāẓim 1971: 113–14.) Maḥmūd's truth has outstripped legend, to become itself a legend. The second segment of the *madīḥ* (159–170) begins with a repetition of the direct address to the ruler, this time to link ruler and poet:

159 O you who outshine all rulers in manliness and victory, as did Ḥaydar ['Alī] in the Prophet's time:

160 I have heard that the sea itself is ever such: its sound deafens the ears from two stages' distance.

161 It ever shows its awesomeness; its tumult ever increases; its waves mount ever to the earth's axis.

162 Three times I have gone with you to the shoreless sea; I have seen there neither wave, nor majesty, nor agitation.

163 But on the first day that the sea saw you, it saw how deficient and truncated it was before your might.

This expanded comparison between Maḥmūd and the sea (160–168) plays on the generosity/destruction *topos* of panegyric: the sea cannot match Maḥmūd either in wealth or in power; its helplessness before him parallels the helplessness of all other kings. The poet sums up with a transitional passage which leads to the *du'ā*.

169 The whole world has become helpless before you, even to the sea; no
      man of humankind has ever held such power or station.

170 O mighty lord, the deeds your father accomplished: no father was ever
      so fortunate a father as he.

171 As long as he lived he remained a mighty ruler; and when he died
      there remained in the world as his memorial one such as you.

172 As long as the soul is not like the body, and reason not like ignorance;
      as long as faith is not like unbelief and benefit not like harm. . . .

175 May the world and all it owns everywhere praise you for kingship and
      victory; enjoy their praise forever!

In this lengthy and carefully constructed *qaṣīda* transitions, conclusions and beginnings of segments take place at approximately five- or ten-line intervals; the poem is linked throughout by verbal and semantic repetition. The thesis announced by the past tense verb and the imperative in the opening line – *Fasāna gasht . . . sukhan-i naw ār*, "has become a legend . . . bring new speech" – leads to the affirmation of the truth of the present and hope for the future announced in the final one. Markers signalling transition are both verbal and thematic: noun-verb statements (e.g. 1, 30, 75, 90, 105); conditionals (5); adverbial phrases of time (19, 35, 36, 89, 125) or place, including place names (50, 51, 55, 59, 64, 69); emphatic particles (10, 146); summary pronouns, e.g. "all", "everyone" (15, 29, 49, 169); references to the ruler, often linking him with God (5, 44, 76, 105, 115, 126); direct address to the ruler (146, 151, 159, 170); recapitulations of the "marvels" motif (20, in the form of a rhetorical question; 39–40). The placing of such markers at regular intervals ensures a smooth flow to the narrative, framed by the exordium and the *madīḥ*, which provides proof of the statement that Maḥmūd's deeds outstrip ancient, and false, history.

The Somnath campaign was the high point of Maḥmūd's military career; it is celebrated in a poem which is one of the high points of Farrukhī's poetic one. The poetic skill involved in maintaining such tight control over such a lengthy poem is every bit as formidable as the military skill exhibited by Maḥmūd. The parallelism between the exordium and the "digression" on the legends surrounding Somnath points up the contrast between unbelief and faith, between legendary (false) past and historical (true) present. The battle for Somnath itself is dispensed with rather briefly, in fourteen lines; the emphasis is placed rather on the hardships of the outward and return journeys, and on Maḥmūd's achievement in keeping his troops from harm, aided by divine support. The *du'ā*, contrasting soul and body, reason and ignorance, faith and unbelief, sums up the antitheses which inform the poem as a whole.

The Somnath campaign was both a protracted and a costly one, in which Maḥmūd was confronted not only by numerous Indian opponents but by the rigors and hardships of the desert. The sack of Somnath – accomplished on the second day of fighting, after a Muslim setback on the first – was a scene of carnage which left few survivors. The temple was looted and burned to the ground; the idol was broken into pieces, part taken back to Ghazna, part sent to Mecca and part to the caliph in Baghdad. On the return journey, blocked by outraged Hindu chieftains, Maḥmūd decided to cross the sea-arm between Kathiawar and Cutch; following the crossing he was betrayed by a guide who, in revenge for the devastation of Somnath, brought the army to a waterless desert from which the Sultan only extricated himself and his troops with great difficulty. During the whole of the return journey the army met with much hostile opposition. Farrukhī accompanied the Sultan on the campaign, and experienced both its hardships and its triumphs. The latter resounded throughout the Islamic world; and Farrukhī's *qaṣīda* provides a fitting commemoration of an event seen as unparalleled in Islamic history.

The techniques seen in this chapter have been broadly based and wide-ranging. In the next chapters we shall turn to other features which also serve to organize poems, or parts of poems, in a variety of ways, as we examine the relation of ornament to poetic structure.

7

ORNAMENTATION

> Mit worten und mit sinnen
> durchvärwet und durchzieret!
> With words and with meanings
> he thoroughly dyes and adorns!
> Gottfried von Straussburg

Concepts of ornament

The embellishment of oratory is achieved in the first place by general style and by a sort of inherent colour and flavour; for that it shall be weighty and pleasing and scholarly and gentlemanly and attractive and polished, and shall possess the requisite amount of feeling and pathos, is not a matter of particular divisions of the framework, but these qualities must be visible in the whole of the structure. But further, in order to embellish it with flowers of language and gems of thought, it is not necessary for this ornamentation to be spread evenly over the entire speech, but it must be so distributed that there may be brilliant jewels placed at various points as a sort of decoration. (Cicero, *De oratore* III.xxv.96)

Classical and medieval critics in the West payed considerable attention to ornament and, as the science of rhetoric developed, elaborated ever-swelling lists of figures and tropes, a pursuit which continued to be popular well into the Renaissance as ever more subtle means were devised to distinguish between different ornaments (see Dixon 1971: 35–44). As Cicero suggests, however, ornament was not merely an extra and fortuitous addition to a composition, but related to the entire discourse, with, however, particularly marked embellishments functioning to signal certain "high points". Geoffrey of Vinsauf, who divided ornament into two categories, *ornatus facilis* and *ornatus difficilis* ("easy" and "difficult"), stressed the necessity of subordinating embellishments to the requirements of the *materia* (Kelly 1969: 137–8; see Geoffrey of Vinsauf 1967: 42–82).

Many rhetoricians distinguished between "figures of speech" and "figures of thought" or, alternatively, between "tropes" (relating to semantics) and "schemes" ("abnormal or stylized syntactic constructions"; Kendall 1978: 153), although the criteria for these distinctions vary (cf. Dixon 1971: 36–8; Kendall 1978; Murphy 1974: 20–1, 365–74 provides a list derived from the

Rhetorica ad Herennium). Similar distinctions are sometimes made by Arabo-Persian rhetoricians, again with varying consistency; but in many cases figures defined as pertaining to wording (*lafẓ*) affect meaning (*maʿnā*) as well.[1]

The movement in Western rhetoric towards increasing complexity and sophistication in the identification of figures is paralleled in Arabo-Persian; moreover, from at least the early fifth/eleventh century onwards both Arabic and Persian poets composed "ornate" *qaṣīdas* (*qaṣāʾid maṣnūʿa*) or *badīʿiyyāt* (*qaṣīdas* in praise of the Prophet) to illustrate either single figures or the whole range of devices (see e.g. the Persian *qaṣīda* attributed to Qivāmī Ganjavī, translated and discussed in Browne 1928, 2: 47–76; on the *badīʿiyyāt* see Cachia 1988; Meisami and Starkey 1998, s.v. [P. Cachia]; Cachia 1998). Scholars have often seen the proliferating lists of ornaments as a symptom of decline; but they seem rather an effort towards increasing refinement in the treatment of the minutiae of linguistic and rhetorical usage in the wake of the increasing complexity and sophistication of poetic practice, and especially the rhetorical inventiveness of poets of the "New Style".

For it is with the appearance of this style in the early Abbasid period that critical attention came to focus on matters of ornament, known collectively as *badīʿ*. It has been argued that the emergence of this style, pioneered by poets from the urban centres of Basra and Baghdad such as Bashshār, Abū Nuwās and Muslim ibn al-Walīd, and later exploited (to excess, in the view of some Arab critics) by Abū Tammām, was linked to the rise of Muʿtazilite *kalām* (theological dialectics), which flourished in these centres and whose methods of argumentation were adapted by the poets (see S. Stetkevych 1981, 1991: 5–37). While there are clearly connections between the two (as noted in Chapter 4 above), the positing of a direct, causal link between *kalām* and poetry oversimplifies what is indeed a complex phenomenon; moreover, the new style did not replace older techniques (as suggested by S. Stetkevych, 1991: 105–6), but in fact adapted and expanded them.[2]

It has also been suggested that the critics' interest in *badīʿ*, and in rhetoric in general (but not, of course, that of the poets, who were ignorant of matters philosophical), reflects the influence of Greek theory transmitted through Arab discussions of Aristotle (see e.g. Bonebakker 1981: 586–8; Heinrichs 1969; Schoeler 1975). This too is a complex question; for while evidence of Aristotelian "influence" and "borrowings" are seen in, for example, Qudāma ibn Jaʿfar's *Kitāb Naqd al-shiʿr* (see Bonebakker's introduction to Qudāma 1956: 36–44; Bonebakker 1970a: 90–5, and especially 94–5 on parallels between Greek and Arabic terminology), it should also be remembered that rhetoric (and especially the study of figurative language) formed part of the Koranic sciences as early as Ibn Qutayba's *Taʾwīl mushkil al-Qurʾān*. (For even earlier examples see Nwyia 1970.)

Whatever the case, the fact remains that the rise of interest in the New Style, the *badīʿ* style, prompted critics both to discuss and to classify rhetorical devices. The first attempt at a systematic study of the topic, Ibn al-Muʿtazz's

Kitāb al-Badī' (274/887), was aimed at both analysing the new style and showing that its devices were already present in Ancient poetry and the Koran.[3] Ibn al-Mu'tazz identified five "figures" of *badī'* – *isti'āra* (metaphor), *tajnīs* (*paronomasia*), *muṭābaqa* (antithesis), *radd al-a'jāz 'alā mā taqaddamahā* (a type of repetition; cf. Puttenham's *epanalepsis, epizeuxis, ploche* [Browne 1928, 2: 60]), and *al-madhhab al-kalāmī* ("the theological approach") – the last associated explicitly with *kalām*, and of which, Ibn al-Mu'tazz confesses, he has been unable to find examples in the Koran (1935: 53). He also lists separately (later critics dropped this distinction) thirteen *maḥāsin al-kalām wa-al-shi'r*, "ornaments of discourse and poetry": *iltifāt* (change from statement to address and vice versa), *i'tirāḍ* (interjection), *rujū'* (retraction), *ḥusn al-khurūj* (excellent transition), *ta'kīd al-madḥ bi-mā yushbih al-dhamm* ("affirming praise with what resembles blame"), *tajāhul al-'ārif* (rhetorical question), *hazl yurād bihi al-jidd* ("humour with serious intent"), *ḥusn al-taḍmīn* ("excellent allusion, quotation"), *ta'rīḍ* and *kināya* (indirection, euphemism, metonymy), *al-ifrāṭ fī al-ṣifa* ("exaggerated description"), *ḥusn al-tashbīh* ("excellent comparison"), *i'nāt* (a device of the rhyme) and *ḥusn al-ibtidā'āt* (excellent beginnings).[4] While other critics developed different, sometimes widely divergent, categories and schemes of classification, often employed different terms to describe essentially the same figures, and added others of their own, it is with Ibn al-Mu'tazz's classification that we will begin to examine the relation between poetic ornament and poetic structure.

Ornament and structure: The five figures of *badī'*

It is scarcely necessary to rehearse the old argument that because critics discussed poetry on the basis of single lines or brief groups of lines, poets did not conceive of their poems as wholes; nor does it seem likely that critics (despite their bad habits) were unaware of this. Both Ibn al-Mu'tazz's identification of the figures of *badī'* and later discussions of individual figures suggest, in view of examples cited, just such awareness. Discussions of *badī'* range from the detailed (for example Ibn Rashīq) to the summary; the Persian critics tend to be somewhat perfunctory, often rely heavily on Arabic works, and seem to have felt that there were few significant differences between Arabic and Persian usage (for a partial exception see Smyth 1994).

But there are differences in usage, which stem, in my view, from differences between the two languages. The Arabic morphological system, in which both substantives and verbs are derived from basic (triliteral or quadriliteral) roots, makes possible, for example, the sustaining of patterns of *tajnīs* throughout a poem, even a lengthy *qaṣīda* – an effect which is difficult to achieve in Persian, so that *tajnīs* tends to be confined to single lines or groups of lines, and is often based on Arabic vocabulary.[5] Some of the functions of *tajnīs* may be taken over by the rhyme, where homonyms may be repeated with differences in meaning; but by and large, sustained *tajnīs* in Persian poetry is far less frequent than in Arabic and, when it does occur, often appears artificial. The second difference,

which is perhaps related to the first, is that Persian poetry tends to rely more heavily on the use of metaphor and of repeated image and motif patterns to organize the poem. While these are certainly not lacking in Arabic – and, indeed, are often present to a high degree – they are usually accompanied and enhanced by the type of verbal correspondences possible in Arabic but less so in Persian.

While the figures are generally discussed separately by the critics, they tend in practice to operate in conjunction. Thus it is common to find poems organized through the use of a combination of related figures – in particular, those of *tajnīs*, *muṭābaqa* and *radd al-aʿjāz* – rather than by a single one, except sometimes in the case of very short poems. With these preliminaries in mind, I shall turn to a discussion of the figures of *badīʿ* and the *maḥāsin* identified by Ibn al-Muʿtazz, as well as of some additional figures of importance – saving, however, the consideration of Ibn al-Muʿtazz's first figure, *istiʿāra*, metaphor (in many ways both the most crucial and the most problematic) for last (see Chapter 8 below) – and analyse how these figures operate in the organization of poems.

Tajnīs (*Paronomasia*). *Tajnīs* (also *jinās*; the terms are interchangeable; on others see Bonebakker 1981: 579, 583–4; al-Bāqillānī 1950: 20–1 nn.) corresponds to the classical/medieval *paronomasia* or *adnominatio*, "in which, by means of a modification of sound, or a change of letters, a close resemblance to a verb or noun is produced, so that similar words express dissimilar things" (Murphy 1974: 367). In Arabic and Persian, as in Western languages, it can be of various kinds (complete, partial, reversed, additive and so on). Arabic, as noted, lends itself especially well to this device. While *tajnīs* is generally classed as a figure of wording, it is also connected with "thought", as we shall see.[6]

Tajnīs is the second figure discussed by Ibn al-Muʿtazz as characteristic of the *badīʿ* style. Although not invented by the *Muḥdathūn*, he says, it is particularly abundant in their poetry, and Abū Tammām is often singled out for criticism for his excess (*takalluf*) in its use. Ibn al-Muʿtazz distinguishes two types of *tajnīs*, "one based on *ishtiqāq* (etymology) in which the two members ... derive from the same root and have some shared meaning, and the other based on homonymity, in which the two members share the same spelling but are etymologically unrelated" (S. Stetkevych 1991: 26; Ibn al-Muʿtazz 1935: 25). The figure takes its name from the principle of relationship of kind (*mujānasa*); for (says Ibn al-Muʿtazz) "Al-Khalīl [ibn Aḥmad] said that every sort of people and birds, prosody and grammar belongs to a genus" (ibid.; trans. J. Stetkevych). This point is of primary importance, as it underlies the whole theory of *tajnīs*.

S. Stetkevych criticizes Ibn al-Muʿtazz (as well as the later ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī, to whom we shall turn in a moment) for failing, in discussing *tajnīs*, "to realize or take into account ... the change in the consciousness from the Jāhilī to the ʿAbbasid poet" when they accuse Abū Tammām of indulging in "personal fancy", of "[surrendering] to *takalluf* (constraint, artificiality)" (ibid.: 27). She argues that

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What Abū Tammām's *tajnīsāt* express is not merely a pun, but the new etymological consciousness and self-consciousness that the new [linguistic] science of *ishtiqāq* has produced. Ultimately, he is conveying the abstract concept of etymology itself. It is precisely the poet's persistent application of this device that inculcates [his] real intention – to express through individual cases of *tajnīsat* the abstract linguistic rules behind the morphological system of triliteral roots that generates the Arabic word. (Ibid.: 27–8)

It is difficult to believe that it is not precisely this awareness of the relatedness of words that underlies Ibn al-Muʿtazz's approach to *tajnīs*, as witnessed (as Stefan Sperl points out, reviewing Stetkevych 1991) by his first, Koranic example, *Aslamtu maʿa Sulaymāna lil-lāhi rabbi l-ʿālamīna*, "Like Solomon I submit myself to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds" (Koran 27: 45; Ibn al-Muʿtazz 1935: 25). This is "far more than a 'simple pun'; it is the rhetorical culmination of the Solomon-Sheba narrative and powerfully expresses the Queen's submission and conversion when faced with the identity of Islam and Sulaymān. Etymology is here etiology, in the best fashion of Abū Tammām" (Sperl 1993: 308).[7]

Consciousness of this aspect of *tajnīs* prompted al-Rummānī (as quoted by Ibn Rashīq) to assert that "the true nature of affinity lies in its appropriateness [*munāsaba*] to the original meaning," quoting in illustration the second half of the opening line of Abū Tammām's Amorium *qaṣīda*, *fī ḥaddihi l-ḥaddu bayna l-jiddi wal-laʿabī*, "in its (the sword's) edge is the distinction between earnestness and sport" (Ibn Rashīq 1972, 1: 332): the sharp edge of the sword is the boundary between earnestness and sport. And it is, indeed, the opinion of ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī, who begins his discussion of *tajnīs* by saying, "You would not approve association [*tajānus*] between two words unless your mind accepts their meanings as praiseworthy and the sense that relates them is not far-fetched," citing as a negative example Abū Tammām's much-criticized line,

5   *Dhahabat bi-madhhabihi s-samāḥatu fa-ltawat   fīhi ẓ-ẓunūnu a-madhhabun am mudhhabū*

     Generosity followed his path; and thoughts were confused as to whether this was his way or if he was mad. (al-Jurjānī 1954: 6; for interpretations of the line see 6–7, n. 2; see also Abū Tammām 1951, 1: 136–7)

In al-Jurjānī's view this *tajnīs* is objectionable because it is sought for itself, generated by the commonplace expression *dhahaba madhhabahu*, "it over-whelmed him", and carried to extremes. "Do you consider [Abu Tammām's *tajnīs*] feeble," he asks, "because of its wording? Or because you see that its value [*fāʾida*] is feeble … and that *madhhab* and *mudhhab* do nothing more for you than that you hear repeated sounds which you wish held some value but which you find only obscure and unpleasant" (1954: 8).

Al-Jurjānī connects *tajnīs* firmly with *maʿānī*, to which words (*alfāẓ*) are subservient. He compares excessive verbal embellishment in both poetry and prose (and especially in *sajʿ*, rhymed prose) to over-embellished garments and the excessive wearing of them: it is a deceit, a disguise (ibid.). *Tajnīs* (like the rhyme in *sajʿ*, with which it is closely linked) must be demanded by the meaning; it is best (says al-Jurjānī, in a passage which itself combines the two devices) "to let your meanings flow according to their nature, and allow them to seek their wording for themselves" (ibid.: 13). He also approves of *tajnīs muṭarraf*, where the words are identical except for the last letter – as in Abū Tammām's

25 *Yamuddūna min aydin ʿawāṣin ʿawāṣimin   taṣūlu bi-asyāfin qawāḍin qawāḍibī*

They stretch forth hands, to strike and to protect, assaulting with swords, deadly, cutting (translated in al-Bāqillānī 1950: 24; Abū Tammām 1951, 1: 213–14) –

because of their effect of surprise. Unlike *madhhab/mudhhab*, which serves no purpose, such collocations are pleasing,

> because you might imagine, before the last (letter) of the word is received by you – for example the *mīm* in *ʿawāṣim* or the *bāʾ* in *qawāḍib* – that it would be (the same as) the preceding, and was about to come to you once more, and be repeated and reemphasized for you; thus when its completion becomes fixed in your mind, and you hear its end, you abandon your original notion and reject what you imagined previously. This resembles the appearance of benefit after you had despaired of it, the occurrence of profit after you had been cheated of it, so that you see that it is (in fact) the very capital. (al-Jurjānī 1954: 18)

It has been assumed that since the critics discussed *tajnīs* largely (though not exclusively) on the basis of single lines, they were unaware of its potentials for organizing larger structures. But when al-Rummānī cites Abū Tammām's line as an example of the conformity of the verbal construction to the meaning, is he referring merely to the meaning of the line (or, more precisely, the half-line)? Or does he not in fact recognize that this opening line announces the theme of the entire *qaṣīda*, that the distinction between earnestness and sport (i.e., non-seriousness) subsumes those between swords and books, truth and falsehood, faith and unbelief, which inform the *qaṣīda* as a whole? I will discuss this *qaṣīda* in more detail later (see Chapter 9); however, we may note here Hamori's concluding remarks to his analysis of this *qaṣīda*, in which he cites al-Jurjānī's observations:

> Al-Ǧurǧānī is presumably talking only of the formal tension created by the similarity of sound and difference of meaning. His definitions may, however, be made to cover the meaningfulness of the juxtaposition itself, as we find it for example in verses 1–3 and 63–66. In these passages the

coincidence of form and difference of meaning create fields of force which can be cohesive or contrastive, depending on the context. The force itself is that of the myth of the rightness of naming. It is obviously not a question of philosophical doctrine: the poet uses the myth because it is there as an expression of a possible ordering of experience. (1967: 88; cf. Kendall 1978: 161)

"Rightness of naming" is an essential feature of *tajnīs*; and awareness of it is strongly suggested by al-Jurjānī's statement that *tajnīs* must be appropriate to meaning.

Abd al-Fattah Kilito has commented on the organizational and semantic implications of *tajnīs* (as of rhetorical figures in general): "Plays on words … bear witness to a search for equilibrium and harmony.… [They support] the coherence of poetic language … *ǧinās* joins what is similar and allows a continuity which puts an end to the fragmentation of the parts of the poetic text." As Kilito reminds us (quoting Roman Jacobson's *Essais de linguistique générale*), *tajnīs* is thus more than a mere "jeu phonique": "the equivalency of sounds, projected over a sequence as its organizing principle, inevitably implies semantic equivalency" (1978: 39).

Rightness of naming characterizes the use of *tajnīs* in a number of poems considered in earlier chapters, on which we may look back briefly. In Bashshār's *qaṣīda* to ʿUqba ibn Salm, *tajnīs* on words derived from the root *s-l-m* links the patron, Ibn Salm, with the beloved's confidante, Sulaymā, and both with the "greetings" motif (*salām*) with which the poem opens and closes and which introduces Umm al-ʿAlāʾs message (21: *ballighīhi s-salāma minnī*, "send him my greetings"). This root is also associated, through partial *tajnīs*, with other important words – *mulimm*, the "distraught lover" (2), *lā talūmā*, "don't blame" (9) – and by assonance to still others: *mamsan/amsā* (3/10, 15), *istahallat* (19), *tasallaytu* (22), *sāʾilī* (30), *samāʾ* (32). In contrast to these mellifluous sound clusters there are other, harsher ones based on combinations of *dāl+hamza* (e.g. *dāʾ/dawāʾ*, 1), *dāl+ʿayn* etc.

But the most important cluster by far is that based on *s-l-m*, which recalls the Koranic *aslamtu maʿa Sulaymān*. "Salm" itself means "peace"; while "*Sulaymā*" is the diminutive of "Salmā", the feminine form of *salīm*, "sound, flawless (in a spiritual as well as a physical sense), sincere". The link with both the very root, so to speak, of Islam itself, and the specifically Islamic greeting *salām* (literally, "peace"), supports the argument that the poem expresses a conflict between Islamic values (exemplified in the speech of Sulaymā) and Arab tribal values (represented by the analogous pair Umm al-ʿAlāʾ/Ibn Salm, to whom the opening and closing greetings are addressed). By leaving the most resonant element in these *tajnīsāt* – Islam itself – unspoken, the poet calls attention to the moral implications of his *qaṣīda*.

Right naming also characterizes the *tajnīsāt* in Khāqānī's brief *qaṣīda* on the perils of travel, where its escalating presence in the poem's second half serves

to clarify the meaning of the first. Following the exhortation in the central line –

7 Like Khiẓr, first drink the poison of the journey;
   then venture forth, the Fount of Life to seek –

the *tajnīsāt* begin to build up. Line 8 plays on *sharr* and *khayr*, "evil" and "good", conceived of as places:

8 *Khaṭṭa-yi Sharvān nashavad khayr-vān*
   khīz birūn az khaṭṭ-i sharr-vān ṭalab
   Sharvān's confines will never be "Khayr-vān";
   rise, and outside of "Sharr-vān"'s boundaries seek.

Yet again *nomen est omen*: Sharvān becomes, etymologically, *sharr-vān* (the affix *-vān* means both "equal, like" and "keeper, guardian"), the "place of evil", which can never become *khayr-vān*, the "place of good" (presented as an orthographic impossibility through the pun on *khaṭṭa/khaṭṭ*, "region"/"script", also "boundary"). *Khaṭṭ-i Sharvān*, moreover, involves an allusion to the legendary "world-seeing cup" of the ancient king Jamshīd (in other traditions, Kaykhusraw), inscribed with seven lines (*khaṭṭ*) representing the seven regions of the world. The first of these, on the cup's edge, was *khaṭṭ-i jawr*; *jawr* means both "bumper, flagon" and "oppression, cruelty", a further pun hidden in the allusion to the cup.
   The next two lines play on notions of closeness and relationship:

 9 *Sang ba-qarrāba-i khīshān fikan*
    khīsh u qarābāt-i digar-sān ṭalab
10 *Yūsuf dīdī ki zi ukhuvvat chi dīd*
    pusht bar ikhvat kun u ikhvān ṭalab
 9 Into the flask of kinsmen throw a stone;
    a different sort of kinsmen, near ones, seek.
10 You've seen what Joseph gained from brotherhood;
    turn from your brothers, and true brethren seek.

The pun on *qarrāba* "flask"/*qarābāt* "kinsmen" (also evoking *qarābat* "closeness", in either relationship or favour) is strengthened by the reference to the practice of casting a stone into an emptied wine-flagon or drinking vessel, signalling, as it were, that the party's over; while the allusion to Joseph, cast into the pit by his envious brothers, anticipates the final line. The last three lines involve *tajnīs* on place-names:

11 *Mashrab-i Sharvān zi nihangān pur ast*
    āb-khur-i āsān ba-Khurāsān ṭalab
12 *Rūy ba-daryā nih u chun bi-gzarī*
    dar Ṭabaristān ṭarabistān ṭalab
13 *Maqṣad-i āmāl ba-Āmul shinās*
    Yūsuf-i gum-karda ba-Gurgān ṭalab

11 Sharvān's water-source is full of crocodiles;
    in Khurasan an easy source then seek.
12 Turn towards the sea; when you pass over it,
    in Tabaristan a place of joy go seek.
13 Know that the goal of your hopes is in Amul;
    go to Gurgan, lost Joseph for to seek.

As the *tajnīsāt* increase so does their complexity: *āb-khur-i āsān* and *Khurāsān* are both compound (*murakkab*) and "deficient" (*nāqiṣ*), in that *āb* (and the *iẓāfa*) are dropped from "Khurasan". There is a further play on *mashrab* and *āb-khur*, which mean "source of drinking-water" in Arabic and Persian respectively, and which look back to the motifs of drinking and water which recur throughout this section of the poem – *nūsh kun* "drink" (7), *khaṭṭ* (8), *qarrāba* (9), *daryā* "sea" (12) – and which contrast with references to "earth, soil" in the poem's first half. As Sharvān's earth is poisonous, so is its water not fit to drink, filled with monsters, and downright dangerous. Tabaristan (in northern Iran) and *ṭarabistān* ("place of joy") are inverted (*maʿkūs*) with respect to the order of their (Arabic) root consonants (*ṭ-b-r/ṭ-r-b*; the Persian suffix *-istān* simply means "place"); *āmāl/Āmul* are, again, "deficient", as the latter lacks the second *alif* of the former. The final pun, "seek Joseph in Gurgān", defies translation: literally it means "seek Joseph among the wolves [*gurgān*]," i.e., seek that which is precious in a place of potential danger, and suggests that, as "wolves" are better than false brethren, so Gurgān is better than Sharvān.[8]

Lastly, we may recall briefly how *tajnīs* operates at both semantic and structural levels in al-Buḥturī's *qaṣīda* celebrating Abū Saʿīd al-Thaghrī's victory over Bābak (see Chapter 4). *ʿAzamātuhā/ʿazāʾimu*, "her resolute strength"/(Abu Saʿīd's) "firm resolves" (8–9) link *nasīb* and *madīḥ* through the semantic connection between beloved and patron, and thus compensate for the otherwise abrupt transition. The *madīḥ* proper (11–33) is framed by *badhdha/Badhdhihim*, "he outstrips"/"their Badhdh", the conquered city itself bearing witness to Abū Saʿīd's pre-eminence, which may be said in effect to have made his triumph inevitable.[9]

Tajnīs incorporates several procedures which in Western rhetoric are usually considered separately. One of these is punning; another is homonymy, which Ibn Rashīq terms *mumāthala*, the use of one word in two senses (1972, 1: 321; it differs from *tawriya* [see n. 9 to this chapter] because the word is repeated), as in Abū Nuwās's line praising the vizier al-Faḍl ibn Rabīʿ –

ʿAbbāsu ʿabbāsun idhā haḍara l-waghā   wal-Faḍlu faḍlun war-Rabīʿu rabīʿū
    ʿAbbās glowers when he enters the fray; al-Faḍl is virtue (itself), and
        al-Rabīʿ is spring (ibid.: 322) –

a typical *muḥdath* example demonstrating that *nomen est omen*.

Tajnīs is also a form of alliteration (*paroemion*; cf. Kendall 1978: 159–60), although it is not discussed as such by the critics. Ibn Rashīq, however, speaks of

what he calls *muḍāraʿa*, "similarity" of sounds whose articulation (*makhārij al-ḥurūf*) is close. "This is frequent in the speech of the Arabs, and is not contrived [*mutakallaf*]," he says; "but the *muḥdathūn* labored over it [*takallafūhu*]" (1972, 1: 325–6; al-Rummānī termed this *mushākala*, and said it applied to either words or meaning [ibid.: 326]). Among his examples is one attributed to the fourth/tenth-century Ziyārid prince Qābūs ibn Vushmgīr:

> *Inna l-makārima fī l-makā   rihi wal-ghanāʾima fī l-maghārim*
> Virtues may reside in things despised, and gains in losses.

Ibn Rashīq comments on the popularity of this device with such "Persian" poets as "(Abū al-Faḍl) al-Mīkālī, Qābūs, Abū al-Fatḥ al-Bustī and their school [*aṣḥābuhum*]" (ibid., 1: 327–8). When this procedure occurs in the rhyme – as in al-Muṭawwiʿī's *wa-qtibāsihi/fī waqti baʾsihi*, "where nothing connects them in the lines except the proximity of the letters" – it is "like *īṭāʾ* but is not *īṭāʾ*" (the repetition of homonyms with the same meaning, considered a defect of the rhyme; see further below), and is a feature of wording (*lafẓ*) (ibid., 1: 329).

Muṭābaqa (Antithesis). *Muṭābaqa* (also *ṭibāq*) is the use of antithetical words, ideas, or constructs.[10] While it is generally discussed in terms of the line, its potential for organizing larger units, as well as whole poems) seems to have been recognized by the critics, as these lines attributed to Manṣūr al-Namarī (d. 190/805) suggest (Ibn al-Muʿtazz 1935: 43; Ibn al-Muʿtazz has "al-Numayrī", and *majālis* "gatherings" for *manāzil* "stopping-places" in line 1, but see al-ʿAskarī 1986: 316–17).

1 *Wa-majālisin laka bil-ḥimā   wa-bihā l-khalīṭu nuzūlū*
2 *Ayyāmuhunna qaṣīratun   wa-surūruhunna ṭawīlū*
3 *Wa-suʿūduhunna ṭawāliʿu   wa-nuḥūsuhunna afūlū*
4 *Wal-mālikiyyatu wash-shabā   bu wa-qaynatun wa-shamūlū*
1 Your stopping places at al-Ḥimā, where the companions would alight:
2 Their days were brief, but their pleasures were lengthy;
3 Their felicitous stars were rising, their inauspicious stars setting;
4 Lordship and youth, singing-girls and wine (were there).

This type of *muṭābaqa*, with its antithetical pairs – (*ayyām*) *qaṣīra*, (*surūr*) *ṭawīl*, "brief (days), lengthy (pleasures)" (2), *suʿūd ṭawāliʿ*, *nuḥūs ufūl*, "rising stars of felicity, setting stars of ill-fortune" (3) – ordered in carefully balanced phrases, characterizes many short poems, as for example this brief lyric by Abū Nuwās discussed by Hamori (1969: 6–8; 1974: 101–4).

1 I shall give you contentment and die of grief [*ghamman*]. I shall be silent, not grieving you [*lā ughimmuki*] by reproaches.
2 I knew you once when you desired our union [*tanwīna waṣlī*], but today you desire to avoid me [*tahwayna jtinābī*].
3 Time has changed you [*ghayyaraki*], but then, everything tends towards change [*at-taghayyuri*] and passing away.

4   But, if in your opinion the right course of action is to break up with me,
        may God blind you to the right course.

The opening line, "based on a clear contrast although not on a precise
antitheton" (lover : grief :: beloved : contentment), expresses "the lover's
willingness to suffer at the hands of the beloved;" line 2, "relying on both
antitheton and the use of parallel syntax in the two half lines," provides "a kind
of backdrop", contrasting past with present, desire for union with that for
separation. The apparent "morphological agreement between the two present-
tense verbs *tanwīna*, 'you want,' and *tahwayna*, 'you desire' ... is deceptive
because ... only *tahwayna* functions as a present, while *tanwīna* forms a
circumstantial clause to a past action. The grammatical sleight of hand by
which the isocolon is achieved reinforces the contrast between present and
remembered past" (Hamori 1974: 102). *Tahwayna* also suggests *hawā*, "passion"
(now in the past), and *tanwīna* another meaning of the verb *nawā*, "to depart",
used often in this sense in the *nasīb*. "The elegant play of parallels and contrasts
becomes, by way of these associations, a linguistic reflection of recalling the
past, and a linguistic insinuation of the immanence in the past of the present"
(ibid.: 102–3).

Line 3 contains the sentential statement (or *gnome*) "everything tends
towards change." This rule

> weights the main statement "time has changed you" with the predictability
> of occurrence that common sense likes to ascribe to the workings of
> a natural law. But the rule takes in more than the change it documents:
> besides "change," it includes "passing away." Consequently we have an
> incomplete proportion in the line, of the following form: "You have
> changed" : "All things change" = x : "All things pass out of existence."
> Mortality is introduced by subterfuge, by a logical gap. (ibid.: 103)

In the final line, "the poet makes use of this parallel between the transience of
man and his emotions: he knocks his head against it." "Everything passes away,"
we may recall, was Umm al-ʿAlāʾ's excuse to the poet-lover in Bashshār's *qaṣīda*
to ʿUqba ibn Salm; Abū Nuwās's reaction to it is, however, quite different: a
conventional statement does not necessarily produce a conventional (or a
desired) response. Eschewing the resignation chosen by Bashshār (who, after all,
had a patron potentially able to compensate his loss), this line, while it

> contains no formal antitheton ... is contrary to the basic statement in line
> one ... and it is paradoxical that it comes right after the theory expressed
> in line three. "May God blind you to the right course" – the line contains
> its own paradox. In these ways, the last line does form a kind of antitheton
> that extends over the entire quatrain.... So the poem leaves us not with
> the poise of resignation or of true hope, but with a self- contradiction.
> Carrying out the proposal of the first line is certainly no longer possible.

We see now that polarity is not an accidental decorative device, a mere *schema lexeos*, but the basic schema for the grasping of emotions in the poem. (ibid.: 103–4; see also Hamori 1969: 6–8)

As we can now see, the poem has been building to this conclusion by playing on the motifs of conventional *ghazal* only to end by rejecting the pose of the suffering lover, as emphasized by the *radd al-ʿajuz* in the final line (*ṣawābu/ ṣawābī*, "right course"). Curiously, this poem has also been attributed to al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf (Hamori 1974: 101–2 n. 1); but nothing could be further from al-ʿAbbās's customary stance, of which this reads like deliberate parody.

Hamori also points out that *muṭābaqa* is an underlying principle of Abū Nuwās's poem beginning *yā sāḥir al-ṭarf* (see Chapter 5 above),

whose form is determined by a palinode … and [whose] parts are held together by the fact that they flow from humorously contrary attitudes. The poem begins with the admission that the admired young man's eyes preclude concealment of love; that he is untouched by the catastrophe the poet suffers on his account ["you are stripped (*ʿuryānu*) of what fate has clothed me with," 2], that he is causing the poet's death, regarding it as a kind of sacrifice made to God. . . . In the second half, though, not God but the devil is served. . . . Then morning comes and a person in ripped clothes (*ʿuryānu* stood upside down) complains that the poet has outraged him. The poet answers: "a lion saw a gazelle and leapt; such are the ups and downs of fate". . . . Always an ironist, Abū Nuwās brings the ethereal and the coarse into relation. It is a comic relation, certainly, but the comedy is one of wit, not of cynicism. . . . It is not at all clear that the *ghazal* part is pure posturing. Only this much is clear: in the poem the highest and the lowest are inextricable, and perhaps feed on one another. (1977: 166–7)

Inextricable, perhaps; juxtaposed, certainly, in the movement from the languorous (gazelle-like) eyes of the beloved to the violated gazelle. But yet another contrast informs this poem, and makes possible the movement from *ghazal* to *mujūn* via the wine passage which forms its central section, in which the primitive life style of the Arabs is contrasted with the ancient civilization of the Persians, juxtaposing *hijāʾ* and *madīḥ*, invective and praise. Here, too, the contrast is ironic: for it is the Persians' contribution to civilization, wine, which leads to the drunken brawl and the seduction scene of the conclusion.

Hamori terms antithesis a "method of thought that in large measure determines the form a poem leaves in the mind," and argues that

the effect of a poem may depend on the relations among the logical molds in which its successive propositions are cast, rather than on the information explicitly conveyed in a sequence of largely conventional lines … information [that is] raw material ordered into that trace left in the mind … by a logical typology rather than by a narrative sequence. (1977: 163)

Such "information" is frequently conveyed by suggestion, and by the mere presence of an antitheton (the two parts of which may often be at some remove), as for example in the *qaṣīda* by al-Mutanabbī discussed in Chapter 6, where the *muṭābaqa* between the opening rhyme *shujʿān*, "courageous", and *jabān*, "coward", which closes the narrative (and is repeated twice), calls attention to other contrasts (often relying on *tajnīs*) implicit in the poem.

As Hamori points out, "Antithetical diction … is perhaps the commonest device known to love poetry around the Mediterranean" (ibid.: 163). We may recall the oscillations between joy and disappointment, hope and despair, which characterize the love poems of al-ʿAbbās, or the contrast between "here" and "there" in Saʿdī's "Shiraz" *ghazal*. *Muṭābaqa* as a mode of thought is an essential component of the relationship between *nasīb* and *madīḥ* in the *qaṣīda*, where the lack represented by the cruel or absent beloved is compensated by the favour of the patron; it is manipulated in, for example, the contrast between spring and autumn flowers in Farrukhī's "Ramaḍān" *qaṣīda* (with its initial contrast between the fasting month and the feast) which highlights the realities of the political situation, by that between winter and spring in Abū Tammām's *qaṣīda* to al-Muʿtaṣim (Chapter 5 above) or in Manūchihrī's New Year *qaṣīda*.

Muṭābaqa is also a natural vehicle for ascetic poetry: we have only to think of al-Muʿtamid's short poem contrasting the tribulations of this life with the repose of the next, or the famous *zuhdiyya* of Abū al-ʿAtāhiya which begins, "Get sons for death, build houses for decay" (1886: 23–4), itself built on a series of antitheses which culminate in the final line (19): "Either to dwell in everlasting bliss/Or suffer torments of the damned for aye" (translation from Nicholson 1987: 35; see further Chapter 8 below). *Muṭābaqa* is also used in mystical poetry to express the antithesis between the spiritual and the worldly, as for example in the "before and after" dialogues in ʿAṭṭār's "conversion" *ghazal* (see Chapter 6), or in this *ghazal* by Rūmī (1963, 1: 58–9, no. 134).

1 Amid the veil of blood love has its rosegardens;
   there lovers are occupied with the beauty of love without qualities.
2 Reason says: The six directions are the limit; beyond them lies no path.
   Love says: There is a path, and I've traversed it many times.
3 Reason saw a marketplace and began its commerce;
   Love saw, far beyond that marketplace, other markets.
4 How many a hidden Manṣūr, supported by the soul of love,
   bade farewell to the pulpits, mounted high on the scaffolds.
5 The dreg-drinking lovers enjoy ecstasies within themselves;
   the black-hearted rationalists have within themselves only denial.
6 Reason says: Set no foot there, for in annihilation there are only
      thorns.
   Love says to Reason: These thorns are only within yourself.
7 Come, be silent! remove the thorn of being from your heart's foot,
   that you may see the rosegardens within yourself.

8   Shams-i Tabrīzī: you are the sun within the cloud of words;
      when your sun shines forth, all discourse is effaced.

This *ghazal*, based on the antithesis between reason and love, takes the form of ring composition with the addition of a final cap which parallels the central exemplum: lines 1 and 7 (rosegardens within the self), 2 and 6 (the dialogue between reason and love) and 3 and 5 (the contrast between the two) frame 4 (the exemplum of Ḥallāj), which in turn is echoed by 8 (that of Shams-i Tabrīzī, the "sun" of Tabriz), also contrasting the "hidden" martyr of love with the sun which "shines forth". Shams-i Tabrīzī, Rūmī's spiritual guide, is thus linked with Manṣūr-i Ḥallāj, the "martyr of love" who is such a powerful figure in mystical poetry (particularly that of ʿAṭṭār and Rūmī), who forsook the "pulpits" (the exoteric, authoritarian aspect of religion) for the scaffold, the ecstasy of annihilation in God.

A series of antitheses is thus established between love and reason, spirituality and worldliness: the "rosegardens of the heart" versus both the "veil of blood" (the body, which veils spiritual perception) and the "thorn of being", the cause of spiritual anguish; the "directionless-ness" of the divine versus the "six directions" of physical space; the "market of love" (a commonplace of love poetry) versus the commercial "marketplace" in which reason bargains and trades; the scaffold (or cross) on which Ḥallāj was crucified versus the pulpit of conventional religion; the ecstasy of the mystical lover versus the denial of the very possibility of that ecstasy by those who espouse reason; loss of self versus concern with self. All these lead, finally, to the "cloud of words" which hides the "sun" of Shams-i Tabrīzī, the manifestation of the divine. This last, however, is not a true antitheton but a paradox, as words are necessary to convey the notions expressed in this poem; once those are grasped, however, the way is open to unmediated perception, and the need for words ceases.

Another *ghazal* by Rūmī posits the antithesis in a slightly different way (ibid., 2: 744, no. 591). The first three lines are devoted to the opposition between the "wise man" (ʿāqil), who is concerned for his own existence, fears drowning, and finds ease only in what is easy, and the lover (ʿāshiq), who is preoccupied with self-lessness (bī-khud), seeks only to be drowned in the "sea" (of divine ecstasy), and scorns what is easy. Lines 4–7 focus on the lover and on love:

7   Love is like a tree, and lovers the tree's shadow:
      though the shadow may not fall far, 'tis there it must return.

Line 8 sums up the antithesis:

8   In the station of reason, the child must grow old;
      in the station of love, you see the old man become young.

The final line expands this while invoking Shams-i Tabrīzī:

9   O Shams-i Tabrīzī, whoever chooses lowness in love for you
      will become like your love in nobility and exaltation.

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The paradox between the necessity for speech and the ineffability of the mystical experience underlies another *ghazal* by Rūmī (ibid., 1: 372, no. 915).

1 Speech that rises from the soul veils the soul;
   language veils both the pearl and the sea's edge.
2 Though the explication of wisdom is a wondrous torch,
   explication veils the sun of true verities.
3 The world is foam; it is God's attributes which are like the sea;
   the purity of the sea is veiled by the foam of this world.
4 Cleave through the foam, that you may reach the water;
   do not look at the sea's foam, for it conceals.
5 Pay no heed to the pictures of earth and sky,
   for the pictures of earth and time do but conceal.
6 To get at the pith of speech, split the shell of words:
   curling locks veil the beauty of idols.
7 Whatever fancy you may think reveals that which is veiled,
   cast it away; for that very thing conceals (it) from you.
8 This transient world is a sign of the miracle of truth;
   but this sign itself conceals the beauty of truth.
9 Though existence is but a fragment of Shams-i Tabrīz,
   it is a fragment that conceals the soul from its source.

Speech, the only means of revealing the soul's experience, conceals the truth of that experience, just as words conceal both the pearl of gnosis and the sea of God's qualities in whose depths it lies, like the foam, the flotsam and jetsam that floats upon the surface of the "real" sea. Similarly, "expression" (*bayān*), though a brilliant and wondrous torch, conceals the sunlight of the true verities. Words and world are here analogous: both words and the "pictures" of earth and sky, the concepts of space and time, are like the shell which conceals the pith, the curls which hide the beautiful beloved's shining face. Words and world are only "signs" (*nishān*), indicators which both point to and obscure the ultimate Sign (*āyat*, which in addition to its sense of "wonder, miracle" also means "sign" and is the term for a Koranic verse). At the apogee of this complex of paradoxes stands Shams-i Tabrīzī, manifestation of divine light, of whom all being is but a mere fragment (*qurāẓa*) – a fragment which interposes itself between the soul and its divine origin, the "source" (literally, the mine, *kān*) from which it has come.

A similar paradox informs a *ghazal* by Ibn Yamīn (d. 769/1368), which is based on a series of antitheses whose import is clear only at the end (1966: 191, no. 28).

1 By the radiance of his face's sun, of which the moon is (but) an
   expression [*'ibārat*];
   by the seductiveness of his languorous eye, which delivers the world to
   pillage;

2 By his soul-increasing breeze, which brings, Messiah-like,
   towards those slain by separation good news of union with the soul:
3 When will the fresh rose bloom from our earth, instead of the thorn?
   When will the loving moon visit our holy tomb?
4 If from his beauty's spring a breeze should reach the meadow,
   it would be strange if it did not regain its freshness in autumn's
   season.
5 May no evil eye injure his writing, his expression;
   for none has seen such script, nor heard such expression.
6 The building of patience has been destroyed by damp tears; perhaps
   no one, in the midst of the flood, shows signs of repairing it.
7 Why does the son of Yamīn turn his head away from his feet,
   when openly he keeps him away, but makes him secret signs?

A whole series of antitheses is built up in this *ghazal*: sun (*mihr*, also "love")/ moon (*mah*), echoed in *māh-i mihrabān*, "loving moon", in 3, with its *tajnīs mazār/ziyārat*, "grave" (of a holy man martyr)/"visit" (also pilgrimage); the Messiah-like breeze/those slain by separation; rose and thorn, dry earth and moisture; spring and autumn; ruin/building; foot/head, open/secret. But the overarching antithesis is that between *ʿibārat/ishārat*, "expression/sign", which frames the poem (*ʿibārat* is picked up again in 5, with a repetition of the rhyme of 1a, and the pun on *khaṭṭ*, "script"/"down"). Once given *ʿibārat*, "(clear) expression", we expect *ishārat*, "sign, (allusive) expression" (the distinction was a fundamental one for the mystics; see Nwyia 1970).

The problem is both set and solved in the *ghazal*'s final line, with its apparent ambivalence caused by the inspecificity of the pronouns: it may be read, "For what reason (*rūy*, literally 'face') does the son of Yamīn (literally 'right hand') turn his head away from his (the beloved's) feet?" i.e., why does he fail to prostrate himself before the beloved – this complicated inventory of body parts also involves the face, the locus of honour (*rū sifīd*, "white face") or of shame (*rū siyāh*, "black face") and the right hand with which the oath is sworn – "when he (the beloved) keeps him (the poet) away in public (*dūr-ash kunad*), while making signs (of affection) to him in secret?" Or, "when he (the poet) openly worships him (the beloved) – *dawr-ash kunad*, "circumambulates him", recalls Farrukhī's "whoever worships idols", *dawr-i butān gardad*, in his "Ramaḍān" *qaṣīda* – while secretly he "makes allusions" which seem to negate this worship. The answers lie less in a mystical reading of the *ghazal* (which might be triggered by the bracketing *ʿibārat/ishārat*) than in the conventions of panegyric *ghazal*: "sun" suggests the prince (of whom the beloved, the "moon", is perhaps only the reflection, the alter ego, so to speak), as does "spring/meadow" (4), recalling the prince's life-giving powers already referred to in 2. The link with Ḥāfiẓ, by the way, seems clear, not least in the "flood" image of 6: Ḥāfiẓ in QG9 will elaborate both the "meadow" and the "flood" topics, which he clearly reads as being implicated in panegyric.

A panegyric *ghazal* by Ḥasan-i Ghaznavi (1949: 278, no. 30) combines *muṭābaqa* with other devices (*tajnīs*; *radd al-aʿjāz*, discussed in the next section; *jamʿ wa-tafrīq*, discussed later in this chapter).

1 Where is the **soul** that is not bound by **loyalty** to you?
  What can the **heart** do that's not content with **cruelty** from you?
2 If your **head** is set on my **ruin**, I deserve it, for
  my eyes place **fortune** there where your **foot** appears.
3 In **love** of you I have become a golden mote; indeed,
  a mote becomes golden there where your **air** is found.
4 If your **pleasure** lies in that I should become as **earth**,
  (I will cast) **earth** upon my head there where your **pleasure** lies.
5 Even the sun lays its face like a **shadow** on the earth
  before the palace in which there is the reflection of your **light**.
6 I will make a **place** for you within my heart, and beg your pardon;
  my idol, a cramped fire-temple is not the **place** for you.
7 You are denied to Ḥasan – why? Because you are a **moon**;
  the king's **heaven-like** feast is a worthy place for you:
8 King Bahrāmshāh, that king to whom the two luck-stars say,
  "Whatever conjunction we may make will be for your sake."

The poet begins with the conventional contrast between the lover's loyalty to the beloved (*vafā-yi tu*) and the beloved's cruelty towards him (*jafā-yi tu*), whose position in the rhyme and *radīf* (the poem rhymes in *-ā-yi tu buvad*, placing the emphasis upon the superior beloved) announces the dominant theme. But the lover's ruin (*idbār*) is, in his eyes, good fortune (*iqbāl*); it ennobles him as the humble mote is ennobled when gilded by the sun's light. Line 3 contains a pun on the repeated *havā-yi tu*, meaning both "love of you" and "your air"; it might equally be translated as "In your air I have become a golden mote; a mote becomes golden wherever your love is," thus suggesting reciprocity. "Air" and "mote" lead to "earth" (or dust, *khāk*) in line 4: earth is both antithetical to "sky" (another meaning of *havā*) and, as dust, the source of the mote. Thus it is appropriate that the lover cast dust upon his head in self-humiliation in order to gain his beloved's favour; for even the sun bows, like a shadow, to the earth before the palace in which the beloved's light is reflected.

With "palace" (*qaṣr*) the *ghazal*'s panegyric intent is intimated; moreover, the antithesis between earth and sky (in which the poet-lover is definitely earth, the "beloved" definitely sky) anticipates the conclusion of the poem. First, however, we have a brief digression, and a further antithesis, between the presumably spacious "palace" and the cramped confines of the poet's heart, in which he will make a place (literally, "make room") for the beloved – with due apology, since that lovely "idol" is worthy of a better place than this cramped fire-temple, in which the flames of love burn fiercely. But possession of that "moon" is denied the earth-bound lover: the "moon's" place is at the "sky-like" feast (*majlis-i chun falak*) of the ruler, Bahrāmshāh. Bahrāmshāh's exalted position in both the

courtly and cosmic hierarchies is stressed by the triple repetition of "king" (*shāh-i Bahrāmshāh ān-shāh ki . . .*) with which the last line begins, and by the promise to him of the "two luck-stars", the Saʿdayn, Jupiter and Venus, the monarch of the heavens and his consort, whose felicitous conjunction is said to presage the firm establishment of a royal house. They speak, however, in the singular (Persian, unlike Arabic, has no dual form, but the plural would have been grammatically more appropriate): "Whatever conjunction *I* make will be for your sake." By this grammatical trick the poet alludes back to the poetic technique which underlies his poem; for *qirān* also means drawing parallels, comparing or joining things which may be similar or different (two related technical terms are *muqārana*, "comparison", and *qarīna*, the semantic context of a comparison; see e.g. Shams-i Qays 1909: 336). "All these comparisons," says the poet, "I make for your sake," as he proffers his poem to his prince, and calls attention to the skills that went into its composition. The final conjunction is thus between poet and ruler, linked together, like earth and sky, by the poem.

In 547/1152 the Khwārazmshāh Atsiz (521 or 2–551/1127 or 8–1156) retook the city of Jand from the Qarakhanid prince Kamāl al-Dīn Arslānshāh, who had temporarily occupied it, in a bloodless victory; he then cast Arslānshāh into prison, despite the latter's former friendship with both Atsiz and his vizier, Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāṭ, who composed an ornate *qaṣīda* of 89 lines to celebrate the victory (1960: 217–21). The *qaṣīda* is based on the antithesis between the two kingly activities of *razm u bazm*, warfare and feasting, announced in its opening lines:

1 O Turk with jasmine limbs and silvery face: put down your sword, take
    up the cup of wine.
2 The time for wine has come – put off your arms; it is a day for love –
    put hate away.
3 Take all the implements of war away; and bring, instead, the
    implements of feasting.
4 May wine (poured) by your hand be fortunate – more so (when drunk)
    to the victory of the fortunate king.

The antitheses between sword and cup, weapons and wine (with the *tajnīs bāra* "arms"/*bāda* "wine"), hate and love (*mihr*; the phrase *rūz-i mihr ast* means literally, "This is the day of Mihr," i.e., the sixteenth day of the month), war and feasting, establish the tone; while verbs of putting off/taking up, taking away/ bringing, etc., make clear the preference for *bazm* over *razm*. Another marked feature is the use throughout the poem of *muwāzana*, "balancing" (parallelism of members; Shams-i Qays [1909: 308–9] gives two lines from this *qaṣīda* as an example of this figure), e.g. in line 3 –

ʿUddat-i razm-rā   ba-jumla bi-bar
v-ālat-i bazm-ra   ba-jumla bi-yār –

which might be considered the poem's "keynote" line.

The "warrior king" (*shāh-i ghāzī*, 5) is praised for his good government (or discipline: *siyāsat*, 6) and his generosity (*sakhāvat*, 7), which have made all regions holy and inviolate as the sacred shrine (*ḥaram*) of Mecca and beautiful as legendary Iram. Then the poet moves to what I take to be his underlying purpose, or *gharaḍ*:

10 His justice is the architect of his rule; who, for the realm, a better
      builder than his justice?...
12 (Even) rebels confess their faith in his kingship; (while) kings
      acknowledge their servitude to him....
14 His portico is the place of reliance of noble men; his court is the tented
      place of the freeborn....
18 Through him the forearm of justice has grown strong; through him the
      frame of oppression has grown wasted.

Next, the poet moves to the topic of the campaign:

21 O king, you chose to go on holy war for the sake of the most praised,
      the chosen Prophet.

He compares the ruler's army to the Prophet's supporters, the Muhājirūn and Anṣār (23); with such bold and undefeated troops, his sword has brought order to the Law's affairs, and has effaced all traces of unbelief (30). "You brought an army [*jund*] towards Jand," he continues, "to bring ruin upon the rebels" (32):

33 You sought, from those who consented, investiture; you made, with
      those who opposed, war.

The ruler's victory was unparalleled: "Such has never been read in history: not among the Persians of Rustam, not among the Arabs of Ḥaydar ('Alī)" (41–42). More martial imagery leads to a transition:

52 Behold the good fortune of the felicitous star; behold the support of the
      just God. –
53 O prince! The hand of time has unfurled, in the world's expanse, the
      banner of spring.

Livā "banner", which introduced the martial narrative (22–23), links the theme of *razm* (21–52) with that of *bazm*, to which the poet now moves with a description of spring extending to line 62. He then exhorts,

63 In this season, when the horizons are clad in both under- and outer-
      garments of the marvels of Paradise,
64 Turn back from war the army of Truth; appoint over your heart an army
      of pleasure.

The description of the feast, the wine and the *sāqī* (65–74) balances that of the garden, and moves almost imperceptibly to what at first appears to be the

duʿā, but is in fact the beginning of a longer segment (75–85) which clarifies the poem's purpose.

75 With such wine, with such a *sāqī*, discharge well your obligation to
       your precious life.
76 Sovereignty you possess, and youth, and health: then count as gain
       such a day as this.

"Count as gain" (*ghanīmat dār*) is a well-established *topos* of homiletic poetry going back at least to Abū al-ʿAtāhiya; and while it is also employed (especially by Ḥāfiẓ) in the sense of *carpe diem* (recalling the Horation *lucro adpone*), here the homiletic tone dominates, carrying over into the ensuing references to "sowing and reaping" and to the treachery of time.

78 If you would reap nothing but praise, sow nothing but the seeds of
       nobility.
79 Do not give your heart to the star of Ahriman [or: the treacherous star];
       do not give your body to treacherous Time.

Makramat "nobility" (78) echoes the reference to the ruler's good deeds (*makramāt*) in 15; here, however, the implication is that nobility (like good deeds) implies pious conduct as well as the virtues of courage and generosity. The gradual intrusion of homiletic topics – in a manner which, fascinatingly, anticipates Ḥāfiẓ – announces this passage as an admonition: not the usual stuff of panegyric, yet not (as we saw in Farrukhī's New Year *qaṣīda* to Maḥmūd, echoes of which resonate in this *qaṣīda*'s "martial" passages) entirely unprecedented. The admonitory tone becomes even clearer as the poet exhorts (83), "Seek good repute," for "the treasure of praise" is better than any other.

84 One word of praise is better than a hundred heaps of silver; one prayer
       (on your behalf) is better than a hundred ass-loads of riches.
85 The true man among men is he who, after he is gone, is well spoken of
       by pious men.

The ensuing *duʿā* (86–89) concludes:

89 May he who wishes you well dwell ever in Paradise, and he who wishes
       you ill, forever in the Fire.

It is difficult to believe that this admonitory passage – so apparently out of place in a poem which otherwise strikes such a positive note in celebrating the Khwārazmshāh's triumph (which, historically at least, was somewhat of a non-event) – functions otherwise than as an intercession on behalf of the imprisoned Qarakhanid prince. That notion is supported by the *muṭābaqa* between *razm* and *bazm* (and by the decided preference for the latter); by the *muwāzana* (parallelism of members) seen throughout the poem, which, though a favourite technique of Rashīd's, here functions to suggest balance, even-handedness, justice, the latter specifically singled out for praise in the panegyric; and by the

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fact that the martial sections (21–52) are framed by the feast-motifs of the *nasīb*, the spring/garden passages (53–75), and the admonition (76–85), which overwhelm the motif of military glory to emphasize what is truly lasting, and valued, in this world and the next.

Radd aʿjāz al-kalām ʿalā mā taqaddamahā. "Returning the end of a statement to what preceded it" (also termed *radd al-ʿajuz ʿalā al-ṣadr*, *taṣdīr*; see e.g. Ibn Rashīq 1972, 2: 3–5) is Ibn al-Muʿtazz's fourth type of *badīʿ* (1935: 47); it corresponds to the classical *kyklos*, *epanadiplosis*, *inclusio* (see al-Bāqillānī 1950: 32 n. 247). S. Stetkevych feels that this figure "does not logically qualify . . . as one of the five major bases of *badīʿ* since it lacks the semantic value of the other devices. It should rather be classified as a sub-category of *tajnīs*" (1981: 25–6). But as von Grunebaum points out, Ibn al-Muʿtazz's concept of the figure "included referring the end of the discourse back beyond the beginning of the particular verse or colon," as is shown by several of his Koranic examples (al-Bāqillānī loc. cit.; Ibn al-Muʿtazz 1935: 48). As Ibn Rashīq states, the result of this technique is that "(one) part (of the line) points to another; it is easy to deduce the rhymes of the poem if this is the case. It is required by art [ṣanʿa], and the line in which it occurs gains splendour, is clothed with brilliance and adornment, and increases in lustre and beauty" (1972, 2: 3). As David Semah has noted, the device has important structural implications.

> The nature of the clues that the poet directs at his audience at the beginning of the line determines, to some extent, the nature of its expectations and the chance of their being met. When the poet uses the form called [*taṣdīr*, or *radd al-aʿjāz*], in which a word appears in the first part of the line and is repeated at the end of the line and constitutes a rhyme word, the clue supplied to the listener is rather substantial. . . . However, even in the absence of such a clue, which should be considered a matter of structural technique rather than ornamentation as it is sometimes described, the expert listener succeeds in anticipating the poet's rhythm of recitation and guessing the rest of the line, because the final words of each line are constructed according to patterns with which he is familiar. (1991: 94–5)

Radd al-aʿjāz (which is often combined with *tajnīs* and *muṭābaqa*) differs from other types of homophony by its association with the rhyme, a natural point of emphasis in the line which often provides a semantic turning-point or twist with respect to what has gone before; thus it is more than simply an elegant embellishment. It was much sought after both by the Moderns (cf. Ibn Rashīq 1972, 2: 4–5) and by later Persian poets. It is seen for example in lines 3, 4 and 6 of Ḥasan's *ghazal* quoted above, in which, as often, it is intimately linked with both *tajnīs* and *muṭābaqa*:

3   *Dar **havā-yi** tu shudam zarra-yi zarrīn ārī*
    *zarra zarrīn buvad ānjā ki **havā-yi** tu buvad*

4 *Gar **riẓā-yi** tu dar ān-ast ki man khāk shavam*
   *khāk bar tāruk-am ānjā ki **riẓā-yi** tu buvad. . . .*
6 ***Jāy** mī-sāzam-at andar dil u mikhāham ʿuzr*
   *k-āy but ātishkada-i tang na **jā-yi** tu buvad*

Shams-i Qays cites an interesting example (the poet is not identified) in which the figure is used progressively to provide both semantic and structural links between lines (1909: 311–12).

***Qivām**-i dawlat u dīn rūzgār-i faẓl u hunar*
*zi faẓl-i vāfir-i tu yāft zīb u farr u **niẓām***
***Niẓām**-i millat u mulkī ʿajab nabāshad agar*
*ba-rawnaq ast dar-īn rūzgār kilk u **ḥisām***
***Ḥisām** u kilk-i tu kardand kām-i aʿdā kam*
*ruvā u rāy-i tu burdand az zamāna **ẓulām***
***Ẓulām** bād shab u rūz dushman-i jāhat*
*ba-kām bād hama kār-i dūstān-at **mudām***
***Mudām** tā kay buvad gardish-i falak bar jāy*
muṭiʿ bād tu-rā dawlat u sipihr ghulām

Maintainer of state and religion, the age of merit and virtue has found through your abundant virtue ornament, *farr* and **order**.

Orderer of people and realm are you; it is no marvel if in this age brilliance attaches to pen and **sword**.

Your **sword** and pen have made your enemies' pleasure less; your judgement has borne off from the age all **darkness**.

Dark be, by night and day, the enemy of your state; may the affairs of your well-wishers be successful **forever**.

Forever, long as the sphere still turns, may fortune obey you, and the heavens be your slave.

We will consider more examples of this device later, when we look at how figures work in combination.

Al-Madhhab al-kalāmī. This is Ibn al-Muʿtazz's fifth "figure" and, according to S. Stetkevych, the true basis of the *badīʿ* style. "This is a category I am not aware of having found anything of in the Koran," he states; "it is associated with artificiality [*takalluf*], and God is far above that sort of thing" (1935: 53). Stetkevych asserts that this chapter is both "the least clear" and "the most revealing of the author's inability to grasp the essence of, or to formulate a definition for, the new poetry" (1991: 35; 1981: 27), and further (citing Muḥammad Mandūr) that *al-madhhab al-kalāmī* "is not … a rhetorical device" but rather "an intellectual or rational manner" (*madhhab ʿaqlī*; 1991: 36).[11]

It is true that Ibn al-Muʿtazz fails to define the figure, whose nomenclature he attributes to al-Jāḥiẓ;[12] nor are his examples particularly revealing (see 1935: 54–6). A single Ancient example is by al-Farazdaq (1935: 54; translated by S. Stetkevych 1991: 35):

Every man has two souls: a magnanimous soul,
And another that a young man both defies and obeys.
But you intercede for generosity with both your souls,
When intercessors among noble souls are few.

The Moderns cited include Abū Nuwās (translated by S. Stetkevych 1981: 28) –

That man thinks – and what the fool thinks does not count–
That I consider him a man.
That is what he thinks, but to me he is like some one who
Never existed, even if he had existed –

Abu Tammām (S. Stetkevych 1991: 37) –

Glory is not pleased that you are pleased
With your supplicant's pleasure,
But only with God's pleasure –

and his own lines:

I concealed my love for you to such a degree that I concealed my
concealment;
thus there was nothing I could do but mention it with my tongue.
(translated by W. Heinrichs, in Meisami and Starkey 1998, art.
"*al-Madhhab al-kalāmī*")

Stetkevych concludes,

Ibn al-Muʿtazz failed to see that *al-madhhab al-kalāmī* was not a rhetorical
device at all, nor was *badīʿ* poetry the result of a mere proliferation of the
rhetorical devices of the Ancients. Rather ... *al-madhhab al-kalāmī* should
be taken to mean the conceptualizing mentality of the *mutakallimūn* and
to be the true source of all that we would call *badīʿ*. ... In short the
difference is not merely quantitative but qualitative. *Al-madhhab al-kalāmī*
then is precisely that mode of thought – abstract, dialectical,
metaphorical – which ... distinguishes ʿAbbasid courtly culture from
Jāhiliyyah tribal society and which, in the realm of literature, created the
new *badīʿ* style distinct from the poetry of the Ancients. (1991: 37)

That the New Style was "abstract, dialectical, metaphorical", to a degree
which the style of the Ancients was not, is true; but did Ibn al-Muʿtazz indeed
fail to understand this? And did he "[attempt] to reduce the effect of *kalām* ... to
a mechanically reproducible embellishment" (Stetkevych 1981: 29)? Let us look
briefly at some of the examples with which he finds fault, to see what, if
anything, they may have in common. The first is a lengthy passage from a letter
written to Ibn al-Muʿtazz, composed in rhyming prose (*sajʿ*) in the florid and
highly metaphorical secretarial style, and containing such expressions as "May
God lengthen your survival, creating for you a wind of greatness that will never

cease to blow for you, and making shine for your comfort a sun of a support which is safe from setting;" "Since I saw that your reputation was a perfume and a protection to him who hoped in you, I came to you thirsting, seeking a draught from the water of your blessings." Ibn al-Mu'tazz comments, "Here there is both metaphor and complexity, despite its repugnance, as you can see" (1935: 56); what he evidently means is that the style is excessively mannered and artificial.

Further examples include the following curious exchange: "I asked Sulaymān the physician, 'How many dates should I eat?' He replied, 'Two sevens,' that is, fourteen dates;" a line by al-'Alawī al-Kūfī ("who did poorly in this category") –

> I complain to God of a heart which, if you anointed your eyes with it,
>   would with its heat smear the eyes with blood –

and another, anonymous verse:

> A Yes from you is like a No when I tested it; thus I see no superiority of
>   Yes over No. (ibid.: 57)

These examples include "old" metaphors (see Chapter 8 below) that liken abstract to concrete ("the wind of greatness"), specious argumentation ("Your Yes is like a No"), allusions to technical terms and concepts, or a combination of these – features which were indeed seen as characteristic of both *kalām* and the new style, noted by Ibn al-Mu'tazz's younger contemporary, the historian al-Mas'ūdī (d. 345/956), who quotes similar examples by Ibn al-Rūmī (1971: §§3377–78), in one of which –

> It is because the world announces its decay to him that the infant
>   weeps the moment he is born.
> Otherwise, what would make him weep for it, as it is broader and more
>   spacious than where he was? –

he "follows the topics [*ma'ānī*] of the Greek philosophers and the most skilled of the Ancients;" while in another, "he followed a subtle argumentative topic in accordance with the method of those who engage in disputation and the manner of the clever dialecticians:"

> The obscurity of a thing, when you defend yourself against it, weakens
>   the perception of the inquiring opponent;
> The wits of those who listen to him are straitened, and the decision is
>   for the exalted over the careful investigator.

These examples show that, for Ibn al-Mu'tazz and his contemporaries, *al-madhhab al-kalāmī* referred to the "theological" or "dialectical" style favoured by the *mutakallimūn*, replete with tendentious arguments and technical jargon, and parodied (here, I think, is the important point) by the poets (cf. W. Heinrichs, in Meisami and Starkey 1998, s.v.). Thus rather than being the "essence" of *badī'*, as Stetkevych argues, it is, at least at this point in time, an "ornament"

which incorporates various elements, some of which later became subsumed under other figures (e.g. *ḥusn al-taʿlīl* "fantastic aetiology", represented by Ibn al-Rūmī's first example, *tafsīr* "explication", represented by the lines by Abū Nuwās, or metaphor). With the later development of scholastic rhetoric, the term did indeed come to mean "theological" (as opposed to philosophical) argumentation: al-ʿAbbāsī, for example, quotes five lines from a *qaṣīda* by al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī addressed to al-Nuʿmān ibn Mundhir as exemplifying *al-madhhab al-kalāmī*, defined as

> presenting a proof of what is claimed according to the method of the dialecticians; namely, that the premises, after they have been admitted, make necessary what is claimed. Here, he says, "Do not blame or reproach me for having praised the Jafnids because they treated me well, just as you would not blame people who praised you because you treated them well; for just as their praise of you is not considered a fault, neither is my praise of those who treated me well." This proof takes the form of an example [*tamthīl*], which the jurists term an analogy [*qiyās*]. (1947, 3: 48–9)

On these lines by Mālik ibn al-Muraḥḥil al-Andalusī –

> If love were entirely union, its end would be nothing but boredom;
> Or, if love were entirely absence, its end would be nothing but weariness.
> Union is like water: water is not found pleasing except for specific causes –

al-ʿAbbāsi comments: "The first two lines are conditional analogies [*sharṭ qiyāsī*], while the third is a juridical analogy [*qiyās fiqhī*]: for he compared union to water; and just as water is not found pleasing except after thirst, union is not found pleasing except after the heat of absence" (ibid., 3: 50). While this sort of analogical reasoning is present in some of Ibn al-Muʿtazz's examples (which al-ʿAbbāsi quotes without comment), suggesting that it was indeed one aspect of the technique, it was not the only one; and we must grant the "conservative" critic credit for an awareness of contemporary issues which we ourselves are perhaps denied.

Looking back at Ibn al-Muʿtazz's five categories, we can see that there is a certain logic to both his choice and his arrangement: metaphor and *al-madhhab al-kalāmī*, which are to some extent linked as specific phenomena of the *badīʿ* style, and which are later dropped from the lists of rhetorical figures *per se* because they are perceived as anomalous with respect to the others, frame the three closely related figures of *tajnīs*, *muṭābaqa* and *radd al-aʿjāz*, which involve both verbal and semantic relationships. While others, Ibn al-Muʿtazz concludes, may dispute the number of categories of *badīʿ*, considering them fewer than, or different from, the five he has presented, "Few, however, are entitled to an opinion on such matters, because *badīʿ* is a term adopted for certain devices in poetry (*funūn min al-shiʿr*) discussed by poets and the educated critics among the

poets; philologists and scholars … do not know this term and what it stands for," and Ibn al-Muʿtazz is the first to compile a list of these methods (1935: 57–8; translated by Bonebakker 1990a: 34). He then proceeds to list some of the "beauties [ornaments] of discourse and poetry" (*maḥāsin al-kalām wa-al-shiʿr*), "which are many, so that the scholar cannot claim to be comprehensive;" moreover, "One can follow him … and limit *badīʿ* to five devices; or one can adopt a different viewpoint and count some of the *maḥāsin*, even *maḥāsin* which he … does not mention, among the *badīʿ* [devices]" (Ibn al-Muʿtazz 1935: 58; Bonebakker 1990a: 395).

Ornament and structure: The *maḥāsin al-kalām*

Iltifāt, the first of Ibn al-Muʿtazz's twelve *maḥāsin*, is "when the speaker leaves address [*mukhāṭaba*] for statement [*ikhbār*] or statement for address and the like," and includes "leaving the topic [*maʿnā*] he was in for another" (1935: 58). In other words, it involves a shift in focus,[13] as in Jarīr's lines:

1 When were the tents (pitched) in D̲û Ṭulûḫ – may you … be given water by abundant rain, O ye tents!
12 Do you forget (how it was) when Sulaimà bade us farewell at the balsam branch? May the balsam be abundantly watered! (ibid.: 59; translation by G. E. von Grunebaum, in al-Bāqillānī 1950: 40; Jarīr 1964: 416–17)[14]

Ibn al-Muʿtazz does not comment on these lines; al-Bāqillānī quotes them in reverse order, along with al-Aṣmaʿī's remarks on *iltifāt*:

It is characteristic of *iltifât* that (the poet) suddenly introduces into the middle of his discourse … the phrase *suqîti 'l-ġaiṯ* (may you be given water by abundant rain). If he had not done so there would not have been an *iltifât*. The discourse, however, would have been in perfect order … as he would simply have said: When were the tents (pitched in) D̲û Ṭulûḫ, Oh ye tents? So when (a poet) abandons his primary sequence of ideas (*kalâm*) and then returns to it in a pleasing manner, that is *iltifât*. (1950: 40–1)

Thus *iltifāt* is not merely apostrophe, or even a change from statement to address, but also a change of expressive mode (here, from reminiscence to prayer), of referent and, importantly, of time: the prayer brings us from the remembered past to (temporarily) the present moment. Moreover, the two lines from Jarīr's *qaṣīda* are structurally and semantically parallel, suggesting that the second (12) functions as a transitional marker.

Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī discusses two types of *iltifāt*: one, "when the speaker is finished with a topic and, when you think that he wishes to go beyond it, he turns to it and mentions it, without any mention of it having preceded," as in the second line by Jarīr; the other, "when the poet is engaged in the topic and, as if doubting or suspecting that someone might refute his statement or ask the

reason for it, returns to what preceded either to emphasize it, to mention its cause, or to dispel doubt about it," as in Ṭarafa's lines,

> The evil designs of your sullen foe are turned away by the deep-cutting
> blow
> Of your sword's blade or your tongue; for firm speech is like the most
> loathsome wound.

Here, says al-ʿAskarī, "it is as if he thought some objector might ask, 'How can the action of tongue and blade be one?' and he answered, '"Sound speech is like the most loathsome wound'" (1986: 392–3).

Al-ʿAbbāsī comments on these lines by ʿAlqama:

1   You have been carried away by a heart impassioned by lovely women, long after youth, when old age's eve drew near.
2   My heart is troubled by Laylā, now her nearness has grown far, and reverses and misadventures have intervened between us.

> The example in this is the *iltifāt* from address, in "you have been overwhelmed by," to statement, in "I am distressed by," whose subject is the noun "heart", and "Laylā" the (indirect) object of the second (verb) … that is, "I am distressed by the pains of separation from her;" or perhaps it is an address to the heart, in which case there is another *iltifāt*, from reference to address. (1947, 1: 173–4)

Here *iltifāt* is clearly a grammatical category, as it is for Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Jurjānī, who identifies six types: (1) from statement (*takallum*) to address; (2) from statement to reference (*ghayba*, i.e., reference to a third person); (3) from address to statement (as in ʿAlqama's lines); (4) from address to reference; (5) from reference to statement; (6) from reference to address (1982: 56; statement = first person; address = second person; reference = third person). Such shifts in person frequently mark transitional statements – e.g., in panegyric, the move from general praise ("he is") to direct address ("you").

I'tirāḍ ("interjection"; often subsumed under *iltifāt*), the second of the *maḥāsin*, consists in "inserting a statement into another whose sense is not completed, then going back to (the first) and completing it in a single verse," as in Kuthayyir's

> If the avaricious – and you are one of them – were to see you, they
> would learn procrastination from you. (Ibn al-Muʿtazz 1935: 59–60)

I'tirāḍ does not involve a change in topic, but is used for emphasis, by inserting an "extraneous" statement into the verse (cf. Shams-i Qays 1909: 349).[15] ***Rujūʿ***, "when (the poet) says something and then goes against it," is seen in Abū Nuwās's

> O best of all who have been and all who will be – except for the pure
> and upright Prophet –

> Imām of justice, without peer (may God forgive me); yes! Hārūn! (Ibn
>   al-Muʿtazz 1935: 60)

Like *iʿtirāḍ*, *rujūʿ* is also a type of interpolation, inserted within the line for
purposes of qualification. **Ḥusn al-khurūj** has been discussed in the section on
transitions; Ibn al-Muʿtazz seems to include *istiṭrād* in this category: "the term . . .
coined by Abū Tammām, had apparently not yet found currency in the time
of Ibn al-Muʿtazz" (van Gelder 1982a: 50; see Chapter 3 above). Again, the
defining feature is the shift of focus, which the examples illustrate.

The next several figures, illustrated by single lines, have clear potentials for
amplification. **Taʾkid al-madḥ bi-mā yushbihu al-dhamm**, "emphasizing praise
with what resembles blame" (also termed *istithnāʾ*, "exception"; see e.g. Ibn
Rashīq 1972, 2: 48), is seen in al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī's line,

> They have no blemish, save that their swords are notched from coming
>   to blows with armies. (Ibn al-Muʿtazz 1935: 62)

Tajāhul al-ʿārif, "pretending he who knows is ignorant" (i.e., a rhetorical
question), is found in these obscene lines by an unnamed poet:

> If the milk of wet-nurses has not altered him from the practice of his
>   forebears, (who were) bold and fortunate,
> Perhaps the husband was absent from his (lawful) wife, and she was
>   fucked by one of the work-horses' grooms. (ibid.: 63)

Hazl yurādu bihi al-jidd, "humour which is meant seriously", is represented by
Abū Nuwās's

> If a Tamīmī comes to you boasting, tell him, "Leave off that! What
>   about your eating lizards?"

Al-ʿAbbāsī comments, "Questioning the Tamīmī about his eating lizards is
meant as ridicule; but if you think about it literally [*fī al-ḥaqīqa*], it is serious,
because among Tamīm there are many who eat lizards and who are reproached
for it" (1947, 3: 157). The potentials of this device for *hijāʾ* and *mujūn* (what
about Bashshār's "gnat with claws"?) are endless, and are clearly sustainable
through long segments of poems and indeed entire poems, as in some of those
seen earlier, by e.g. Abū Nuwās, Ibn al-Ḥajjāj, or Sūzanī, where the comic effect
is intended to make a serious point.

Ḥusn al-taḍmīn involves the skillful use of a quotation, as in these verses
which adapt the first hemistich of Imruʾ al-Qays's *Muʿallaqa* (Ibn al-Muʿtazz
1935: 64; line 2 is from al-ʿAbbāsī 1947, 4: 157, who identifies the poet as Ibn
al-Muʿtazz himself, and gives *minnī* "from me" for *bukhlan* "out of avarice" in
line 1):

> 1 He sought to protect – when I spent the night as his guest – his disks of
>   bread, out of avarice, by (invoking) Yā Sīn,

[2   And protected his water with spearpoints, serpents and vipers;]
3   So I spent the night with the earth my bed, my guts having sung,
      "Stop! let us weep!"

We have already seen *taḍmīn* used to conclude poems, and in parody, of which
this provides a further example; the critics were well aware of its use in such
contexts. Ibn Rashīq defines *taḍmīn* as "when you have in mind a verse or part
(of a verse) of poetry, and you bring it at the end of your poem, or in the middle,
as a quotation [*mutamaththal*]," citing these lines by Kushājim (1972, 2: 84):

> O you who dye your grey hair, which the days make plain: by God's life,
>   this is a feigned youth!
> You remind me of what a wise and experienced man said of a case like
>   yours, admonishing and reproving:
> "If the new is added to worn garments, people perceive that the clothes
>   are patched."

He comments that, while this is an excellent example, it would have been
better without the middle verse, because it suggests that the quotation is not
well known, whereas the opposite is the case; further, he prefers quotations
which are transferred from their original context to another (ibid.: 84–5). Ibn
Munqidh quotes a brief *qiṭʿa* by al-Ṣūlī based on *taḍmīn* (1960: 250):

1   I stood at the vizier's door, as if I (were saying), "Stop! let us weep at
      the memory of a beloved and an abode."
2   When I asked (their help) because of suffering and poverty, they would
      answer, "Do not die of grief; act manfully!"
3   "The tears of my eyes overflowed" at their evil answer, "over my throat,
      until my saddle was soaked with tears;"
4   My frequentation of their door has lasted long; "but is there any
      reliance in an effaced quarter?"

The lines are, again, from Imruʾ al-Qays's *Muʿallaqa* (perhaps the most widely
quoted poem in Arabic); the poet has adapted them to his own circumstances,
as a suppliant, a generic shift in which the patron takes the place of the beloved,
and his dwelling that of the deserted abode over which the poet weeps: its
failure to answer testifies to the vizier's lack of generosity. (For other examples of
borrowings from the *Muʿallaqa* see Ibn Munqidh 1960: 252–7; al-ʿAbbāsī 1947,
4: 157–60; and the poem by Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī discussed briefly below.)
     There is, of course, a fine line between *taḍmīn* and outright plagiarism (*sariqa*),
as the critics were aware (on *sariqa* see von Grunebaum 1944). *Taḍmīn*, explicit
quotation, lies at one end of a continuum (with *sariqa* at the other) of intertextual
relationships which reflect what Kilito refers to as the "inconceivability" of the
closed text: "Thanks to citation, the speaker relates the unknown to the known,
places his text in the continuum (*prolongement*) of other texts, and thus connects
himself with the past.... This leads to imitation, to repetition: nothing can take

place which does not have its cultural model" (1978: 45). One might argue, however, that this "cultural model" exists to be resisted, manipulated, parodied, as for example in the *taḍmīn* which concludes Abū Nuwās's *khamriyya* discussed in the section on Endings (Chapter 3), or that poet's use of formulae such as *li-man ṭalalun*, "whose are the deserted abodes?"

Taḍmīn is thus a poetic response to other texts, a response which involves the repetition of elements in those texts in a constant play of allusivity. "Recognizing, remembering, realizing, connecting: these are the effects of a successfully performed allusion for its audience" (Perri 1978: 301).[16] As Losensky points out, in Arabic and Persian poetry "the repetitions between literary texts are not all of a kind" (1994: 227), and an extensive terminology was developed to account for the wide range and varied nature of *imitatio*.[17] One of the most important of these is **mu'āraḍa**, the "matching" of another poem employing the same meter and rhyme, usually with the purpose of outdoing or refuting it (von Grunebaum 1944: 242), and often composed on demand.[18] While the practice received little explicit attention from the critics, except as discussed in passing under the more general topic of *sariqa*, it was widespread, and has both structural and semantic implications.

Sperl has pointed to instances of *mu'āraḍa* in a panegyric *qaṣīda* by al-Buḥturī addressed to the caliph al-Mutawakkil (Sperl 1989: 38–47, 167–71; al-Buḥturī 1963, 4: 2414–21), in which the poet both reworks portions of an earlier poem of his own and, more broadly, takes as his model a panegyric by Muslim ibn al-Walīd. The poems are identical in length (40 lines); Sperl divides Muslim's into *nasīb* (4 lines), *khamriyya* (10 lines), *madīḥ*/general praise (18 lines), *madīḥ*/martial conclusion (8 lines) (1989: 169).

> The antistrophe [*madīḥ*] is nearly double the length of the strophe [*nasīb/khamriyya*], 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.
>
> 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. (ibid.: 169–70)

Al-Buḥturī retains the divisions *nasīb/aṭlāl/khamriyya*, but inverts them with respect to length; between them, he inserts a description of the lake and garden built by al-Mutawakkil at Samarra, thus modifying the divisions of Muslim's poem: *aṭlāl* (1–4), *nasīb* (5–6), *khamriyya* (7–10), *waṣf* (11–31), *madīḥ* (32–40). By virtue of this insertion, which forms the central portion of the *qaṣīda* and is

itself divided into segments with, at its central line (21), the image of the lake reflecting the cosmos – "When the stars gaze at themselves in its sides at night you would think a firmament had been built into it" (Sperl 1989: 197) – the proportions of the model are altered significantly, so that "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." Thus, the diametrical opposition between the two beginnings cannot go unnoticed (ibid.: 170; Sperl's transcription and translation):

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*
  naʿm wa-nasʾaluhā ʿan baʿḍi ahlīhā
  Turn to Layla's abode and salute it;
       yes, and question it on some of its people.

Distraction from the abode . . . is described in one case, turning towards the abode . . . 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* [*sic*], 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.

Al-Āmidī considered al-Buḥturī's opening line inferior (*radiyy*) because of his use of *naʿam*, "yes", "for which the meaning had no real need, and is therefore padding [*ḥashw*]" (1954: 366, and see also 367). As Sperl points out, however, in the context of al-Buḥturī's poem as *muʿāraḍa*

the emphasis added by *naʿam* becomes meaningful . . . 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 . . . and need not, in the vein of Abū Nuwās, or with the impatience of Muslim, be discarded. (ibid.: 170–1)

Examples of *muʿāraḍāt* are many; they often have a satiric or parodic intent (e.g., ʿAlī ibn al-Jahm's parody of Imruʾ al-Qays's *Muʿallaqa*; Sūzanī's many obscene *javābāt*, "responses", to the *ghazals* of Sanāʾī). They may also have a more serious purpose. Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī composed a lengthy *qaṣīda* in praise of the Prophet in which the second *miṣrāʿ* of each line is taken from Imruʾ al-Qays's *Muʿallaqa* (al-Qarṭājannī 1964: 89–96; for a full analysis see Meisami

1997). It begins (the translation of the *Muʿallaqa*, indicated in italics, is based on Arberry 1957, emended as necessary):

1   Say to your eyes twain, should you visit the noblest of prophets, *"Halt, friends both! Let us weep, recalling a love and a lodging."*

Lines 4 and 5 provide a good example of the way in which Ḥāzim transforms the erotic motifs of the *Muʿallaqa*:

4   Put off your garments; don pilgrim's garb, confirming the truth (of the faith), *beside the tent flap, all but a single flimsy slip,*
5   Beside a Kaʿba at whose remoteness my tears *streamed down upon my throat, till my tears drenched even my sword's harness.*

Whereas in Imruʾ al-Qays the *sitr* (4) is the "tent-flap", for Ḥāzim it is (implicitly) the covering of the Kaʿba; while the "flimsy slip" (*libsat al-mutafaḍḍili*), a light garment worn as a housedress, becomes the "garment of the virtuous" and, more specifically, the *iḥrām*. Imruʾ al-Qays's eroticism is transformed into desire for the pilgrimage; similarly, his *raḥīl* motifs become transmuted into an account of the spread of Islam and its struggle against unbelief, in which are intertwined praise of the Prophet and of the Muslim armies through whose efforts Islam reached the farthest Maghreb. The poem ends with an admonition to heed this praise and abandon worldly passions and desires for the sake of self-purification. The total effect is to change a formerly "pagan" poem into an Islamic one.

The Ghaznavid panegyrist ʿUnṣurī (d. after 422/1031–2) addressed a lengthy *muʿāraḍa* to a rival poet, Ghaẓāʾirī Rāzī, who had presented Sultan Maḥmūd with a long *qaṣīda* filled with extravagant boasts and unseemly demands for money (ʿUnṣurī 1944: 91–5; for Ghaẓāʾirī's poem see 168–74). Ghaẓāʾirī begins his poem thus:

1   If perfection lies in grandeur and in wealth [*jāh u māl*], regard me, and you will see perfection in perfection [*kamāl andar kamāl*].
2   I am that one of whom, till Judgement day, all will boast who write above a line of verse, "He said" [*qāl*].

Boasting of his unrivalled talent and everlasting fame, and of the riches Sultan Maḥmūd has heaped upon him (so much, he says, that he has grown tired of wealth, a point to which ʿUnṣurī will respond), he mingles praise of Maḥmūd with reminders of his previous generosity and of that yet to come. This introduces a sour note:

51   Your generosity has not yet given your slave a gift; nor has your slave yet asked for it.

Kingship, he says, has two servants, the sword and generosity. Poets immortalize princes, and are in turn appropriately rewarded; thus he hopes for the princely sum of one hundred thousand dīnārs for this poem. The concluding *duʿā* includes more references to the expected reward.

How does ʿUnṣurī respond to this over-inflated piece of self-salesmanship? In effect, by standing it on its head. He begins with *madḥ*, rather than *fakhr*, incorporating (in reverse order) Ghaẓāʾirī's opening rhymes (*jāh u māl*, *kamāl*).

1 The lord of Khurasan, that son of perfection [*kamāl*], to whom the Creator has granted might and majesty. . . .
4 From his generosity a tree has sprung to heaven whose leaves are all grandeur [*jāh*], whose fruits are all wealth [*māl*].

Ghaẓāʾirī had boasted both of his own talents and of the great wealth heaped on him in a lengthy catalogue of sixteen lines (7–22), linked by the anaphoric repetition of *bas ay malik*, "Enough, O king!"

4 I am that person whose cry rises to the heavens at the generosity of that king who has made me tired [*malāl*] of wealth. . . .
6 Hereafter when I send sugar-sweet poems to the king, see what I will say out of pride, so lovingly spoiled:
7 Enough, O king! I have not sold pearls to a trader! Enough, O king! I have not sold gems to the dealer!

ʿUnṣurī deflates this lengthy piece of hyperbole neatly, in two lines:

24 "Enough, O king!" How should those dazzled by your gifts say (this)? "Enough" is a sign of weariness [*malālat*], (said) out of pride and coquetry.
25 Is it not enough that you are for men a mercy from God? In the place of mercy, it is a sin (to utter) the word "tired" [*malāl*].

In the course of his lengthy boast Ghaẓāʾirī had said of Maḥmūd,

14 Enough, O king! For I continually hear said of you what I have heard the ignorant masses say of the Messiah.

And, concluding it, he had stated:

23 I fear I may grow tired [*malāl*] of the poet's profession; but to tire of praising you is unbelief and eternal error.

ʿUnṣurī both attacks Ghaẓāʾirī's intended praise of the king's life-giving powers (the implication is that only the ignorant would say this of the Messiah; Maḥmūd is the example) and turns his reference to "error" against him in a passage which not only uses his rhymes but quotes him:

35 He says, "I hear said of you what I have heard the ignorant masses say of the Messiah."
36 Whatever tales I have heard of the Messiah's miracles, I see its fact [*ʿayān-ash*] in you, O king of heroes!
37 If, by his claim, God brought the dead to life, by your proof, reason escaped the bonds of error.

Ghaẕā'irī had had the temerity (again, speaking hyperbolically) to advise Maḥmūd on how to distribute his largesse:

19 Enough, O king! For you will surely live a hundred thousand years! Take account of this, and bestow riches by the year.

'Unṣurī rebukes him:

32 He advised you, that in your sufficiency and generosity you turn away, and bestow riches by the year.
33 Your revenues have not ceased, so that you have nothing left; your sole activity is conquering kingdoms.
34 What year is there in which you do not take a region whose gold and wealth is more numerous than the sands?

'Unṣurī's lengthy *refutatio*, in which praise of Maḥmūd is mingled with invective against Ghaẕā'irī, concludes with a brief *du'ā* (60–62). But the poet is not yet finished; for now he launches a direct attack which turns Ghaẕā'irī's boasts, and his rhymes, against him. Ghaẕā'irī had asked for money on the pretext of a lover's need:

71 That very idol who would not look at me out of pride, whose absence gave me no hope of union [*viṣāl*]:
72 I now hear that, by the glory of the king's fortune, I can make the sun her crown, the crescent moon her bangles.

'Unṣurī's response is that true union is the ruler's favour:

61 May fortune ever be loving and loyal to you; may the stability of the people be nearness to you, and union [*viṣāl*].

He rebukes Ghaẕā'irī for thinking that all but he are "lacking and deficient", and reminds him, "Maintain propriety in your service of kings; don't waste your wits in jests" (62–63).

73 You send crude poetry, inscribed over its verses, instead of a crown, all foolish words and bangles.
74 Such address from poets is not fitting; such address is that of equal to equal.

(Ghaẕā'irī had said of Maḥmūd [37], "He did right, the One God, that he did not produce in the two worlds (such) a just ruler, unparalleled and without equal.")

75 He sent you (once) three thousand dirhams, cash; how then can you cast off the yoke of servitude to him?

With this sharp rebuke 'Unṣurī ends what is not only a *mu'āraḍa* but a piece of literary (and moral) criticism: Ghaẕā'irī's words are as false as his claims, his praise hollow and his poem unsound.

Before leaving *taḍmīn* and related matters we may look briefly at the prosodic meaning of the term, referring to a defect of the rhyme (usually the syntactic interdependency of the verses). It is, however, occasionally used for rhetorical effect. Shams-i Qays states that *taḍmīn* is of two types: "The first is when the entire sense of the first *bayt* is dependent on the second and stops there;" the second is the allusive type discussed above.

> Because the experts in this craft have said that poetry must be such that each *bayt* must be independent in itself, and (the *bayt*s) must not require one another except with respect to the ordering of topics and the flow of discourse, they therefore considered *taḍmīn* a defect. This can occur more in the poetry of the Arabs, because in Arabic poetry it may happen that from one word part of the rhyme [*qāfiyat*] is in the first *miṣrāʿ* and part in the beginning of the second; for example,
>
> > *Lam abki lil-azʿāni wallat am li-ras-*
> > *min muqfirin awḥasha minhum wa-daras*[19]
>
> But since in Persian poetry this type of division does not occur, except in poetry composed by way of jesting and preciosity ... the dependence of the meanings of the *bayt*s on one another is not so repugnant as to be classed as one of the defects of poetry. (1909: 260–2)

Shams-i Qays cites two examples by Sūzanī (whom he does not identify as their author; the second is found in his *Dīvān* [1959: 329], the first is not). One is in praise of a certain "Ḥamīd al-Dīn Jawharī the Mustawfī", the other a panegyric which refers back to the first. The first poem (Shams-i Qays 1909: 260–1) begins,

1   *Shādmān bād majlis-i mustaw-*
    fī-yi mashriq Ḥamīd-i Dīna l-Jaw-
2   *harī ān ṣadr k-az javāhir-i al-*
    fāẓ-i ū ahl-i dīn u dānish u daw-
3   *lat tafākhur kunand.* . . .
1   Joyous be the gathering of the Mustaw-
    fī of the East, Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Jaw-
2   harī, that eminence from the gems of whose
    words men of religion and for-
3   tune boast. . . .

and concludes:

9   . . . *Zahī khaṭṭ u khāma-yi tu musal-*
    s al u mishkīn chu zulf-i luʿbat-i naw-
10 *shād u naw-shād shud ba-khaṭṭ-i tu dī-*
    vān-i shāh-i naw īn-at shādi-yī naw
9   . . . Praises upon your script and your pen, flow-
    ing and musky as the locks of an idol of Naw-

10 shād; and newly joyful [*naw-shād*] has become, by your pen, the *dī-vān* of the new sovereign: behold a new joy!

The second poem (ibid.: 261–2), an obvious *muʿāraḍa* of the first, praises Sūzanī's (unidentified) patron "Saʿd al-Dīn" for his appreciation of the first effort.

1 *Saʿd ad-Dīn: madḥ-i khvāja-i mustaw-*
   fī shanīdī-ī u dar dil āmad saw-
2 *dā-yi ān naw ṭarīq u kardī taḥ-*
   sīn bar ān vazn-i shiʿr u qāfiya-yi maw-
3 *qūf tā kard baḥr-i zikr-i tu khā-*
   ṭir-i man z-ān nasq madīḥ-i tu maw-
4 *zūn....*
1 Saʿd al-Dīn: (my) praise of the Khvāja Mustaw-fī you heard, and in your heart there arose a long-
2 ing for that new style, and you ap-proved that metre, and that rhyme over-
3 lapping; so that, to speak of you, my mind put into that style your praise, ver-
4 sified....[20]

He concludes, "And in lauding you, thought has become one with a delightful [*zawqī*] prosody, so that when [others] sing your praises, in this style or in another, they may know that in this field I sow prose and reap verse."

Clearly Sūzanī's "new style" is designed not only as a jest, but as a *tour de force* by means of which to display his skill. Shams-i Qays, commenting that not only are such efforts not to be considered defects but that "this type of thing often occurs; it is very novel (*badīʿ*) and rare," cites other examples, by Masʿūd-i Saʿd-i Salmān, Maʿrūfī and others, none of which are however sustained throughout an entire poem or constitute as deliberate and self-conscious an effort as Sūzanī's.

Arabic poets also used prosodic *taḍmīn* intentionally, though not always frivolously. In a *zuhdiyya* by Ibn al-Muʿtazz which takes the form of an address to the soul, the lines are linked syntactically throughout (1977, 2: 419).

1 *Yā nafsu wayḥaki ṭāla mā   abṣarti mawʿizatan wa-mā*
2 *nafaʿatki fa-khshay wa-ntahī   wa-ʿalayki bit-taqwā kamā*
3 *faʿala l-unāsu ṣ-ṣāliḥū   na wa-bādirī fa-la-rubbamā*
4 *salima l-mubādiru wa-ḥdharī   yā nafsu min sawfin fa-mā*
5 *khudiʿa sh-shaqiyyu bi-mithlihā   iyyāki minhā kullamā*
6 *nājat makāyiduhā ḍamīra   ki innamā hiya innamā*
7 *khaṭarun wa-kam qatalat wa-ah   lakati n-nufūsa wa-qallamā*
8 *tughnī amānīhā idhā   ḥaḍara r-radā wa-ka-annamā*
9 *lam yuḥya man lāqā maniyya   tahu fa-yā ʿajaban ammā*

10 *fī dhāka muʿtabirun wa-lā   shāfin yuqaṣṣiru min ʿamā*
11 *yā dhā l-munā yā dhā l-munā   ʿish mā badā laka thumma mā*
 1 Soul, woe upon you! Long have you seen admonitions, but
 2 they have not profited you. Be fearful then, and renounce (this); fear
    God, as
 3 have the pious. Hasten, for perhaps
 4 the hastener will be saved. Beware, Soul, of "There shall be"; how
 5 wretches have been duped by her like. Beware her: whenever
 6 her wiles summon your heart, she is verily indeed
 7 a danger. How many souls has she slain and destroyed. Few
 8 are satisfied by her promises when death approaches. It's as if
 9 he who meets his death had never lived – how wondrous! Is there not,
10 with all that, one who heeds, no healer to diminish blindness?
11 O you who hope! O you who hope! live as you will: then what?

The effect of the *taḍmīn* is to dramatize the address to the soul, to give the impression of haste and urgency: time is growing short; hasten to lay up salvation in the next world by pious conduct and fear of God; do not put things off, for death ever deceives with false promises which bring no profit. Line 10 comes to a full stop, with *min ʿamā*, "from blindness" (also used in the sense of error, spiritual blindness); the motif of sight/blindness frames the poem, for the soul "has long observed admonitions" (1), but has not profited from them. The final line stands as a general exhortation to all who hope that this life will fulfill their wishes: "live as life shows itself to you," says the poet – but then, what? Or perhaps: Nevermore.

Taʿrīḍ, "intimation, allusion", and **kināya**, "metonymy" or "periphrastic expression" (i.e., intended neither literally nor figuratively, e.g. "his cooking-pot has many ashes", indicating hospitality; see al-Jurjānī 1954: 52, and see also 57–8) are forms of indirect expression, which Ibn al-Muʿtazz treats as types of euphemism. He gives as an example (1935: 65) Abū Nuwās's lines on masturbation:

> If you would join a noble woman with her equal, then marry Ḥubaysh
>   to the palm of Sāʿid's daughter,
> And say, "Enjoy your union with a free woman whose palm is
>   surrounded by five children!"[21]

There is much critical discussion of both terms, which al-ʿAskarī defines as "when something is referred to metonymically [*yuknā*] or alluded to but not expressed directly" (1986: 368; al-ʿAskarī considers Abū Nuwās's lines disgraceful [ibid.: 370]). Ibn Rashīq treats both types under the general heading of allusion (*ishāra*); *taʿrīḍ* involves an indirect allusion to a person, *kināya* to an event or a quality (1972, 2: 303–5).

Al-ifrāṭ fī al-ṣifa, "exaggerated description", can be used for both serious and comic effect (see Ibn al-Muʿtazz 1935: 65–8), and may be considered a

technique of amplification; **ḥusn al-tashbīh**, "excellent simile", is similarly concerned with description (ibid.: 68–74), and similarly capable of extension (see for example the garden poem by Ibn al-Muʿtazz discussed in Chapter 8). **Iʿnāt** (ibid.: 74) is a device relating to rhyme which later becomes largely subsumed under *luzūm mā lā yalzam* (see e.g. Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāṭ 1960: 646–7), and will be discussed later in connection with the poetry of Abū al-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarrī, where it is used in conjunction with other figures such as *tajnīs* and *muṭābaqa* and acquires a semantic as well as a prosodic dimension.

Ḥusn al-ibtidāʾāt, "beautiful beginnings," Ibn al-Muʿtazz's final category (ibid.: 75–7), has already been discussed in Chapter 3, but we may cite an example of its use in a *ghazal* by Kamāl Khujandī (d. 803/1400–1) (1958: 95) which begins,

1 *Maṭlaʿ-i ḥusn u jamāl-ast aftāb-i rū-yi dūst*
   ḥusn-i maṭlaʿ bīn ki dar maṭlaʿ ḥadīs-i rū-yi ūst
   The dawning-place of beauty and grace is the sun of the beloved's face;
   see what a beautiful beginning/dawning in which there is mention of
      his face.

The *ghazal* is built on a series of puns involving the beloved's face, speech (given a quasi-sacred dimension), daybreak, night (and grief), and allusions to the rhetorical figures employed.

2 (God's) mercy made his face a miracle [*āyat*] with respect to his curls;
   the explication [*tafsīr*] of that verse [*āyat*] by the heart-bereft is
      beautiful.

The next verse contains a *tafsīr* (explication) of the "verse" (or "sign", "miracle") of the beloved's radiant face and curling black locks:

3 That face is the litany of dawn, that hair the evening prayer – no more;
   what an auspicious dawn and dusk, what beautiful face and curls!

Mention of the beloved's face and curls gives way to the commonplace image of polo-ball and curving mallet, which links beloved and lover at the *ghazal*'s central line:

4 The heart which, like a polo-ball [*gūʾī*], is agitated in grief's arena,
   if it compares his curl to a polo-mallet, it speaks nonsense [*bīhūda-gū-st*].

The pun is extended in the next line:

5 If the cup is filled to the brim [*labālab*] without your lips [*lab-at*], the
      belly allows it:
   the first thing that departs because of wine is honour.

Āb-rū, "honour", means literally "the water (or lustre) of the face": wine both consoles the lover (quelling his tears) and leads to his disgrace. Kamāl concludes:

6 See what nobility the market of *rindī*'s fortune has brought me:
   the shoulder that yesterday bore a prayer-carpet now carries a pitcher.
7 All the comrades are drunk with wine, Kamāl from the *sāqī*'s lips;
   the gathering's all drunk with wine, and he with the beloved.

The closing lines hark back both to ʿAṭṭār's "conversion" *ghazal* (Chapter 6 above) and, even further, to Abū Nuwās's "two drunkennesses" (see also Chapter 6); but whereas Abū Nuwās enjoyed both wine and cupbearer, Kamāl has a definite preference for the latter: without the presence of the *sāqī*, the wine itself is meaningless. The circularity of the closing and opening rhymes (*dūst*, "friend, beloved") brings us back to the *ghazal*'s beginning, to the beloved's radiant epiphany.

Ornament and structure: Other figures

Later critics added new figures and redefined old ones, incorporated them under others, or dropped them altogether. A discussion of the vagaries of critical terminology is beyond the scope of this study; however, it is useful to mention a few important figures not found in Ibn al-Muʿtazz (plus several found in practice but not discussed by the critics), which function both structurally and semantically, before preceding to an analysis of the use of ornament in organizing poems.

Jamʿ wa-tafrīq, "joining and separating", a figure of the meaning, is a sub-category of a group of devices known collectively as *taqsīm*, "division" (cf. the classical/medieval *divisio*), and is most often discussed under this more general heading (see e.g. Qudāma 1956: 70–2). Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāṭ provides a convenient list of the six categories of *taqsīm*: "joining alone; separating alone; division alone; joining with separating; joining with division; joining with separation and division" (1960: 694). "Joining alone" (*jamʿ*) is illustrated by the Arabic verse,

> My state, your locks, and the nights are darkness within darkness
>   within darkness,

in which "the poet's state, the beloved's tresses, and the night are joined (*majmūʿ*) by the attribute of darkness, and darkness is the unifying factor (*jāmiʿ*)" (ibid.: 695). "Separation alone" (*tafrīq*) is illustrated by Rashīd al-Dīn's own Arabic lines,

> The cloud's gift in the time of spring is not like the prince's gift on the
>   day of (his) generosity:
> The prince's gift is a purse of gold coins; the cloud's gift is a drop of water.

Here, says the poet, "already, at the beginning of the line, I established a separation between the cloud's gift and that of the *mamdūḥ*; and I also explained that separation" (ibid.: 695–6).

"Division alone" (*taqsīm*), defined as "when the poet distributes two or more things over the line and maintains the order of their distribution according to one (specific) principle [*qāʿida*]," is illustrated by these Persian verses:

> The cheeks, face, and hair of that ravishing idol: one rose, the second lily, the third amber.

Rashīd al-Dīn comments, "This *qaṣīda* follows this pattern to the end; and Persian poets employ *taqsīm* in this manner, so that [it] is maintained to the end of the *qaṣīda*" (ibid.: 696). "Joining with separation" (*jamʿ bā tafrīq*) is "when the poet combines two things in comparison with one as well as establishing a separation between them by means of two different qualities," as in his own Arabic verse,

> Your face is like fire in its light, and my heart is like fire in its heat. (ibid.)

"Combining with division" (*jamʿ bā taqsīm*), "when the poet combines two things in one sense [*maʿnā*] in the first verse and then divides them," is seen in al-Mutanabbī's lines,

13 Until he stood before the walls of Kharshana to bring woe to the Byzantines, the crosses and the churches:
13a What they wed was for captivity, what they gave birth to was for slaughter, what they accumulated was for plunder, what they sowed was for the fire.

"In the first line he combined the enemy's land and whatever was in it in general under the topic of distress; in the second he divided everything (to show) the nature of the distress to each thing from that totality" (ibid.: 697; 13a appears only in the recension of al-ʿUkbarī [al-Mutanabbī 1936, 2: 224]).

"Combining with separating and division" (*jamʿ bā tafrīq va-taqsīm*) is, Rashīd al-Dīn admits, a difficult procedure.

> I have seen no poetry in which all these conditions were combined except in the poetry of one of the Persian *du bayt* poets:
>
> 1 That which bound [*band kard*] you and your slave [*banda-at*] as well has made a binding [*bandī*] both evident and hidden:
> 2 Your bond is of iron, my bond is of grief; your bond is upon your legs, your slave's upon his heart.
>
> In this *du bayt* the poet first joined his beloved and himself by (the topic of) their being bound; then he separated that binding as being both manifest and hidden; then, in the second verse, he divided each bond according to its location and its nature. (ibid.)[22]

The basis for the figure in line 2 is established by the *tajnīs band kard/banda/bandī* in line 1, combined with the *muṭābaqa* "evident/hidden", which is antithesis as well as separation.

In al-ʿAbbāsī's lengthy discussion of *jamʿ wa-tafrīq* Rashīd al-Dīn's example of *tafrīq* provides the point of departure for an excursus on the use of the same topic (the distinction between the gifts of the cloud and of the prince) by a variety of poets, including al-Waʾwāʾ al-Dimashqī (d. c. 390/1000) –

> He who compares your generosity to the cloud was not just in judging between the two forms:
> You, when you are generous, are ever smiling; but it, when it is generous, weeps –

and Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī (d. 398/1008) –

> The outpouring of the cloud would almost imitate you when it pours forth – if the sky's countenance rained gold,
> If time did not betray, if the sun were to speak, if the lion were not hunted, if the sea became sweet. (1947, 2: 301–2)

Rashīd al-Dīn's example of *jamʿ wa-tafrīq* provokes a similar, though briefer, discussion in which al-ʿAbbāsī notes the use of the same conceit by an unnamed Arabic poet:

> Like fire in its light and like fire in its heat are the face of my beloved and the burning of my mind:
> The one takes pride in his radiance, the other is distraught from his burning. (ibid., 3: 4)

Ibn Ḥijja al-Ḥamawī (d. 837/1434) "excelled . . . in naming the device when he said,

> 'His right hand is like the lightning when they bring light to the darkness of battle, and his resolution is like lightning in separating their gathered mass [*fī tafrīqi jamʿihim*]'." (ibid., 3: 5)

As an example of *jamʿ wa-taqsīm* al-ʿAbbāsī cites al-Mutanabbī's lines on Kharshana quoted by Rashīd al-Dīn, and comments on the second: "He did not say 'Whom they married' or 'To whom they gave birth,' (both) so that this would agree with 'what they accumulated was for plunder, what they sowed was for the fire,' and as an indication of contempt and lack of concern for them, as if they were not an intelligent species" (ibid., 3: 6). He also cites the lines which precede the example (from the beginning of the poem to 13–14), many of which show that various types of *taqsīm* underlie the poem as a whole.

As Sperl has shown, *jamʿ wa-tafrīq* is an informing feature of al-Buḥturī's *qaṣīda* to Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Thaghrī, announced explicitly in the poem's wording and used together with *muṭābaqa*. Where time has scattered (*farraqat*) the beloved's tribe (3), the patron both "divides what his hands possess" (*li-mā malakat yadāhu mufarriqun*) and unites in himself "all implements of glory" (*jumiʿat . . . fīhi jamīʿā*) (10) – a contrast reinforced, as noted earlier, by the *tajnīs majmūʿā/jamīʿā* in the respective rhymes.

The meaning of the concepts is revealed by the thematic relationship between the lines. Line 3 depicts the rule of Fate … 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 among them. Simultaneously, 'dividedness' as such is overcome in his person: all the resources of glory are unified in him. (1989: 29–30)

The figure, and the contrast, are sustained throughout the poem, in which "the ruler's action with respect to his subjects and his enemies is described in terms of integration and division," both used "for the good of his people and to the detriment of his enemies" (ibid.: 30). In lines 26–27, for example, the ruler's "densely gathered" army (*jayshan … kathāfatan wa-jumūʿā*) divides the enemy troops "between the points (of lances) and the blades (of swords)," "until you annihilated their gathering through division" (*wazzaʿtahum … ḥattā abadta jumūʿahum tawzīʿā*). In 21–22, his awakening of his tribe's glory ensures that "they will not be disjoined as root and branch of that eminence" (*la-mā nfakkū uṣūlan lil-ʿulā wa-furūʿā*). The ruler brings death and destruction to his enemies by division, life and glory to his people and his tribe through integration.

Takrār, "repetition", is another device which often plays an important structural role. The critics generally discuss this device in terms of single words; one exception is al-Iskāfī (d. 420/1026), who, as Hamori has shown, analyses the use of repetition in the Koranic Sūra 77 to show how it structures the argument of the Sūra as a whole (Hamori 1984a: 40–2). Ibn Rashīq's discussion of *takrār* is also illuminating.

> *Takrār* is excellent in certain places and ugly in others. It most frequently occurs in wording without respect to meaning, less frequently in meanings without respect to wording; but if words and meaning are repeated in combination, this is truly disappointing. The poet should not repeat a name except for the purpose of (evoking) longing or pleasure, when this is in *taghazzul* or *nasīb*; as in Imruʾ al-Qays's verses – and no one has delivered himself (from its pitfalls) as he has … or escaped (its dangers) as he did.

[4] Abodes belonging to Salmā, effaced, in Dhū al-Khāl, upon which
    every black raincloud has poured down.

[6] You would think that Salmā is still, as when we were together, in
    Wādī al-Khuzāmā or at the well-head of Awʿāl.

[5] You would think that Salmā is still watching over a gazelle fawn, or
    eggs, settled in the soft sands.

[7] Nights with Salmā, when she would show you well-ordered teeth
and a neck like that of the white antelope, unadorned. (1972, 2: 73–4)[23]

Repetition is also acceptable in panegyric "by way of encomium or suggesting the same," as in these lines by one Abū al-Asad:

A blaming woman reproached you, O Fayḍ, for your generosity, and
I said to her, "Does reproach diminish the sea?"
She wished to divert al-Fayḍ from his habit of generosity; but who can
prevent the cloud from pouring forth?
(It is) as if al-Fayḍ's deputations, on the day they were borne to al-Fayḍ,
found in him the Night of Power.
Al-Fayḍ's generosity falls on every region like the cloud's water falls on
parched land.

"Here," says Ibn Rashīq, "the repetition of the *mamdūḥ*'s name is praise of him and points to his reputation, increasing respect for him in hearts and hearing" (ibid., 2: 74); it is also based on a happy *tajnīs*: *fayḍ* ("flood, copiousness, stream") lends itself with particular aptness to the customary likening of the patron's generosity to the sea or the raincloud. (The Night of Power, Laylat al-Qadr, was the night the Koran was revealed; prayers offered on this night are said to be answered.)

Repetition is also appropriate for forcing an acknowledgement (*taqrīr*) or for rebuke, as in Muḥammad ibn Munādhir's (d. c. 199/814)

Kam wa-kam kam kam wa-kam kam kam wa-kam qāla lī anjaza ḥurrun mā wa'ad
How many times, how many, how many, how many, has he said to me,
"The noble man fulfills his promises,"

in which, says Ibn Rashīq, "he exceeded what was necessary, and went over the top" (ibid., 2: 75). According to some transmissions, Abū Kabīr al-Hudhalī is said to have repeated this line –

That is but a memory – and when something is past it is as if it were
never done –

in seven places in his *qaṣīda* which begins,

Zuhayr, is there any turning away from old age? or is there no way back
to one's first youth? –

"each time he described a segment (*faṣl*) and completed it" (ibid., 2: 75).[24] Repetition is also used for emphasis, for "admonition and reproach", to express grief in a threnody (where it is most appropriate), to appeal for help (*istighātha*) in panegyric, for defaming and humiliating the victim in *hijā'*, or for ridicule and mockery (ibid., 2: 75–6).[25]

Although Ibn Rashīq is chiefly concerned with the repetition of individual words, his comments, as well as his examples, are instructive. Firstly, he makes a connection with the expressive functions of repetition and its frequency and appropriateness to certain genres, especially *rithāʾ*, *hijāʾ*, and admonition; and indeed, this is where we find the most abundant examples of sustained repetition. Moreover, he not only recognizes but comments on the unifying structural role of repetition in the Hudhalī poet's *qaṣīda* (regardless of its authenticity; this is, as Ibn Rashīq notes, one form in which the poem was transmitted). This unifying function is also evident (though not explicitly noted) in the lines by Imruʾ al-Qays, which reveal an important aspect of repetition to be structural parallelism:

4 **Wa-taḥsibu Salmā lā tazālu** *tarā ṭalan   mina l-waḥshi aw bayḍan bi maythāʾa miḥlālī.*

5 **Wa-taḥsibu Salmā lā tazālu** *ka-ʿahdinā   bi-Wādī l-Khuzāmā aw ʿalā rassi Awʿalī*

Both lines exhibit parallel structure along with the repetition of the identical opening phrases. This is true as well of Abū al-Asad's lines involving the pun on the name of the *mamdūḥ*:

*Wa-lāʾimatin lāmatka yā l-Fayḍu **fī n-nadā** . . . .*
*Arādat la-tathniya l-Fayḍa ʿan ʿādati **n-nadā** . . . .*
*Kaʾanna **wufūda l-Fayḍi** . . .*
*Mawāqiʿu **jūdi l-Fayḍi** . . .*

It is clear that there are three different techniques subsubmed under Ibn Rashīq's category of *takrār*: (1) the repetition of single words, or names, for emphasis or for various expressive ends; (2) the use of repeated phrases as a sort of refrain marking the conclusion of a segment (the Hudhalī poet's example recalls Villon's "Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?"); and (3) repetition of parallel words or phrases at the beginning of a line, that is, anaphora, of particular interest here for both its structural and its semantic implications.

We have already seen examples of anaphora in a variety of contexts. In love poetry, for instance, it unifies the beloved's portion of the dialogue *nasīb* in Farrukhī's *qaṣīda* to Amīr Muḥammad discussed in the preceding chapter: his queries are introduced by *magar*, "perhaps", repeated eleven times over seven lines:

3 *Chu sarv-i sīmīn būdī chu nāl-i zard shudī; **magar** zi ranj bi-nālīda-ī ba-rāh andar*

4 ***Magar** dil-i tu bā jā-yi dīgar farīfta shud; **magar** zi ʿishq-i kasī pur khumār dārī sar*

3 You were like the silvery cypress; now you're a yellowed reed: **perhaps** you've suffered some illness on the way?

4 **Perhaps** your heart was enticed elsewhere; **perhaps** you're dazed with love for another?

and so on, until the transition to the *madīḥ*. While the repetition of such phrases as *qultu/qāla*, *guftam/guftā*, "I said/he said", the conventional way of indicating dialogue, do not constitute true anaphora (or even true *takrār*), they appear to contribute a repeated rhythmical effect, as for example in the *ghazal* by Ḥāfiẓ quoted in Chapter 6.

Muslim ibn al-Walīd uses anaphora to unify a segment of a lengthy (75-line) love poem (1957: 196–7):

35	Ṣāra l-hawā bi-qalbī	yubdī kamā yuʿīdū
36	**Wayḥī anā** ṭ-ṭarīdu	**wayḥī anā** sh-sharīdū
37	**Wayḥī anā** l-muʿannā	**wayḥī anā** l-farīdū
38	**Wayḥī anā** l-mumannā	**wayḥī anā** l-waḥīdū
39	**Wayḥī anā** l-muballā	**wayḥī anā** l-faqīdū
40	Abādanī hawākum	wal-ḥubbu lā yabīdū
41	**Wal-ḥubbu** yā munāya	ahwanuhu shadīdū
42	**Wal-ḥubbu lī** nadīmun	**wal-ḥubbu lī** qaʿīdū
43	**Wal-ḥubbu lī** ṭarīfun	**wal-ḥubbu lī** talīdū
44	**Wal-ḥubbu lī** idhā mā	akhlaqtuhu jadīdū
45	Ashhadu anna qalbī	ʿalā l-hawā jalīdū
35	The passion within my heart surges relentlessly.	
36	Woe is me! I am an outcast! Woe is me! I am in flight!	
37	Woe is me! I am tormented! Woe is me! I am alone!	
38	Woe is me! I am afflicted! Woe is me! I'm solitary!	
39	Woe is me! I'm sorely tried! Woe is me! I'm wholly lost!	
40	Desire for you has destroyed me, but love does not perish:	
41	Love – O my hope! – its least bit is difficult!	
42	And love is my companion; and love's a mate to me;	
43	And love is all I'm heir to, and love is all I've earned;	
44	And love is to me, when I've worn it out, yet something new:	
45	I bear witness that my heart is steadfast in passion.	

This carefully balanced passage, which follows the poem's central segment (30–34; a plea to the beloved Siḥr to show favour), depicts, through its successive anaphoras, the shift in feeling which marks the poem as a whole: from suffering in love, encapsulated in the *wayḥī*, "Woe is me," of 36–39, to the celebration of love and of pleasure, announced by the repeated *wal-ḥubbu*, "and love (is)" of 40b–44, in the second part, which moves to a lengthy description of wine, the drinking party, the companions, musicians and so on, and concludes:

75 This would be for me eternal life, should such remain for me.

We see here also the tendency towards internal rhyme (*tarṣīʿ*) which often accompanies anaphora, parallelism of members (e.g. *muʿannā/mumannā/muballā* in 37–39), as well as *taṣrīʿ* (e.g. *ṭarīdū/sharīdū*, 36), which occurs at various points throughout the poem – often in conjunction with *muṭābaqa* (e.g. 11: *hijrānuhā*

qarībun/wa-waṣluhā baʿīdū, "separation from her is near, union with her distant"). (Internal rhyme will be discussed further below.)

Anaphora seems particularly in favour in the love-plaint, where it facilitates heaping reproach on the beloved. Abū Nuwās employs sustained anaphora in over eleven lines of a fifteen-line poem (1962: 214).

1 **O you** who have broken your promise, and turned away from your oath;
2 **Who** are excessive in absence, rejection and turning away.
3 **O you** Qārūn in pride; **O you** ʿUrqūb in false promises!
4 **O you** whom I will not name, and whose secrets not reveal.
5 **O you** more fragrant than musk, more smooth than cream.
6 **O you** who are sweeter than sugar and honey and *qand*.
7 **O you** whose heart is harder towards us than a lifeless stone.
8 **O you** who are like the Pleiades, nay, even more remote.
9 **You who**, were you a in drink, would make beer (taste) like honey,
10 **And who**, were you in a perfume, it would be of Indian amber.
11 **And who**, were you in a sweet-smelling plant, could be only the rose.
12 No! By the wine and sweet herbs, by chess and by *nard*,
13 Jamīl did not know a tenth of what I've suffered from my passion!
14 Nor did Qays the lover of Lubnā, nor ʿAmr the lover of Daʿd:
15 Shall I ever in my life master your perilous skiff?

There is a strong sense of movement in this poem, from initial outrage and despair (1–3) to refusal to name the beloved (4), which sparks off reminiscences of his attractions, contrasted with his distance and his cruelty (5–8). (Note, further, the placement of the heart/stone doublet, followed by the Pleiades, at the poem's center – round, shining, valuable objects, here exemplifying the beloved's implacability and remoteness.) The poet appears to run out of steam (or breath) as he switches from the emphatic "And, O you who..." (*wa-yā man*) to the briefer "and who, if" (*wa-man law*) of 9–11; the more resounding oath-complaint of 12–14 subsides as the poet admits his defeat: he just can't help himself.

The effect (if not the poem itself) is parodied by Ibn al-Ḥajjāj, who moves from the same opening motif (broken promises, avoidance) to a series of violent (and vile) abuses introduced by anaphora (al-Thaʿālibī 1934, 3: 30–2).

> I was used to your desiring my nearness, and demanding my presence;
> But now I see cruelty after loyalty, like the stench of a fart after frankincense.
> O turd of whole uncooked lentils and unleavened bread....
> O noiseless fart which follows a supper of eggs with much milk....
> O breaking wind of the venerable sheikh among the enviers present....

As the abuse escalates to a veritable catalogue of obscenities, which move from the digestive to the excretory to the moral to the general – "O everything that is

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tiresome, complicated, difficult and harsh" – the anaphora becomes more insistent. This is clearly a *hijāʾ* which parodies the reproachful love-plaint, inverting imagery of the type used by Abū Nuwās (whose beloved was "more fragrant than musk, more smooth than cream, sweeter than sugar and honey and *qand*") to depict an "ideal" of repugnancy and coarseness.

Al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf employs anaphora in his "concealment of love" poem (see Chapter 2 above):

4 *Wa-kam bāsiṭīna ilā qaṣdihi akuffahumu....*
   How many who stretched out their hands towards union ....
5 **Fa-yā man** *raḍayta .../*(With) some, I was satisfied....
6 **Wa-yā man** *daʿānī ilayhi l-hawā . . . /*and some to whom passion called me....
7 **Wa-yā man** *taʿallaqtuhu nāshiyan . . . /*and some I was fond of in youth....

Fa-kam, "how many," introduces the *taqsīm* of 5–7 which catalogues the poet's former loves; this type of *taqsīm* combined with anaphora is also evocative of the *zuhdiyya* (with its similar emphasis on the past), particularly in connection with the *ubi sunt topos*, as we have seen for example in Abū al-ʿAtāhiya. It is this association which gives Farrukhī's use of anaphora in the catalogues of his New Year *qaṣīda* to Maḥmūd its admonitory note. As Ibn Rashīq observed, repetition (i.e., anaphora) is especially common in homiletic poetry, and as a stylistic device is linked with the admonitory sermon. In a long *zuhdiyya* Abū al-ʿAtāhiya, after a brief introduction stating that he has cut all ties with this world, continues (1886: 194–7):

5 **Now**, O world, I know you; so go away, abode of all scattering and decay.
6 **Now** Time has become my tutor and comes and goes, bringing me examples [*amthālī*].
7 **Now** I have perceived the way to right guidance, and my concerns have become relieved of anxiety.

From repetition of the adverbial phrase *fal-āna/wal-āna*, "now", in 5–7 the poet shifts to that of the past emphatic marker *la-qad* in 8–11, followed in 9–11 by the verb *raʾaytu*, "I saw," and concluding with yet another shift:

11 **And I have seen** [*wa-la-qad raʾaytu*] signs of mortality in the repugnant changes of my state.
12 **And when I considered** [*wa-idhā ʿtabartu*], I saw time's mishaps bringing both sustenance and death.

Lines 12–15, linked by the repetition of *wa-idhā* "and when", conclude with a sentential statement:

15 **And when** a man fears [*ittaqā*] God and obeys Him, his hands are between noble deeds and high places.

16   For upon the pious man [*at-taqiyy*], if he is firmly fixed in piety [*at-tuqā*],
        there are two crowns: those of (God's) peace and (His) might.

A brief meditation on the vicissitudes of time (17–18) gives way to a series of
admonitions followed by a warning of the judgement to come:

24   O merchant of sin and of harmful guidance: how long will you set such
        a high price on error?
25   Praise be to God the Praised for His favour; the hands of the idle have
        made a loss, not a profit.
26   To God belongs **a day** [*lil-lāhi **yawmun***] when their skins will shake
        with fright, and which will make the forelocks of infants turn white:
27   **A day** of calamities and earthquakes, when pregnant women will
        miscarry what they bear;
28   **A day** of gathering and disparity and struggle, when matters are
        momentous and full of dread;
29   **A day** on which every false guide will be summoned to the lacerating
        (torments) of fire and chains.

The repetition of *yawm*, "day", evokes Koranic passages which describe the Last
Day in similar language (indeed, much of Abū al-ʿAtāhiya's phraseology is
Koranic – *yawm al-taghābun*, "the day of gathering" [28], is a term for the Day of
Judgement, and there is a Koranic Sūra of that title [64]; among the signs of the
Last Day are earthquakes and other calamities [cf. Sūras 64, 39: 23]), and the use
of both *sajʿ* and anaphora are characteristic of Koranic style. This passage, which
opens the second half of the poem, is its high point, its emotional and spiritual
climax; from here, the poem subsides into meditation and admonition, to
conclude with a final section of anaphora which recapitulates the *wa-idhā* of
12–15, here meaning, "and if":

42   **And if** a man clothes his doubts with resolution he will travel the path
        despite the knots of error;
43   **And if** deceitful events make remorseless demands, the ruin of brave
        men bears witness for them;
44   **And if** you are tried by losing honour as a petitioner, surrender it to the
        generous and virtuous;
45   **And if** you fear an intractable difficulty in some land, fix your resolve
        by a swift departure.
46   Stand fast against the changes of time, for relief from troubles is like
        the loosing of bonds.[26]

   A more personal emotional effect is achieved by Ibn al-Rūmī as he employs
repetition to convey a mood of sorrow and dejection in the first segment of a
lengthy lament for the loss of youth (1973, 3: 897).

  1 *Lā bidʿa in ḍaḥika l-qaṭīrū*   *fa-bakā li-ḍaḥkatihi l-kabīrū*

2 *ʿĀṣā l-ʿazāʾu ʿani sh-shabābi*   *fa-ṭāwaʿa d-damʿu l-ghazīrū*
3 *Kayfa l-ʿazāʾxu ʿani sh-shabā*   *bi wa-ghuṣnuhu l-ghuṣnu n-naḍīrū*
4 *Kayfa l-ʿazāʾu ʿani sh-shabā*   *bi wa-ʿayshuhu l-ʿayshu l-gharīrū*
5 *Bāna sh-shabābu wa-kāna lī*   *niʿmu l-mujāwiri wal-ʿashīrū*
6 *Bāna sh-shabābu wa-lā yadun*   *naḥwī wa-lā ʿaynun tushīrū*
7 *Wa-la-qad asartu bihi l-qulūba*   *fa-qalbiya l-yawma l-asīrū*

1 It is no wonder, when old age laughs, that the old man weeps at its laughter.
2 **Consolation** has rebelled against **youth**, and copious tears have obeyed.
3 **What consolation for youth** and its deceptive pleasures?
4 **What consolation for youth** and its fresh, green branches?
5 **Vanished is youth** which was to me the best of neighbours and comrades;
6 **Vanished is youth**, and no hand nor eye beckons me:
7 I used to capture hearts with it, but my heart is, today, the prisoner.

The repetitions of *kayfa l-ʿazāʾu ʿani sh-shabābi*, "What consolation for youth?" and *bāna sh-shabābu*, "Vanished is youth" (a formula familiar in the pre-Islamic *nasīb*; see Bauer 1993: 65) impart an elegiac tone to the segment which is enhanced by the parallel constructions, the repetition of long vowels – in 2–4 heightened by the drawing out of *shabāb* over the caesura – and the prevalence of *ʿayn* and *qāf*, evocative of the sounds of weeping and a constricted throat, and culminating in the drawn-out *qulūb*, "hearts", of 7, which also extends across the caesura. (The effect seems to be a recurrent feature of threnody; see for example al-Mutanabbī's elegy on Abū Shujāʿ Fātik, discussed in Latham 1991: 97–8.)

A somewhat different use of repetition, in which it constitutes a sort of refrain, is seen in this *ghazal* by Kamāl Khujandī (1958: 296).

1 I've received **news** of the Friend – don't ask me about it,
 lest you should bring to me **news of gallows and rope**.
2 **News of gallows and rope** is a banner of victory;
 news of the banner of victory is heart-breaking.
3 I've received **news** of the rose, of the spring breeze;
 convey my **news to the birds of the meadow**.
4 **News to the birds of the meadow** is garden and rosegarden.
 What does **news** of garden and rosegarden do? it repels grief.
5 I've received **news of the scent of the Beloved's shirt**.
 Why do you run to Cathay in search of the gazelle of Khotan?
6 What is **news of the Beloved's scent**? **Good tidings to the soul**.
 What is **good tidings to the soul**? The company of mind, heart, and body.
7 O jeweller, I've received **news of a ruby-mine**;
 why do you go to Yemen for the sake of a carnelian?

8 **News of the ruby-mine** is that (of those) sweetest of lips:
   sweet lips take from the mouth the bitterness of sorrow.
9 I've received **news of the fortune of filial union**:
   why do you go to Qaran seeking an Uvays?
10 **News of union** is the good tidings of that Friend, Kamāl:
   the story of that rhyme is finished in the best manner.

The *ghazal* is built around the repetition of *khabar*, "news, information" (also used in the sense of *ḥadīs*, "talk, account", and more specifically an account about or saying of the Prophet, a sense which comes to the fore towards the end of the poem). Each line begins with *khabar*; the statement *khabarī yāftam* "I've received (some) news", repeated, with slight variation, in 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9, alternates with the *iẓāfa* construction *khabar-i* "news (of, etc.)", in 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10. Information demands interpretation; thus the poet provides, in the second line of each two-line unit, a gloss (*tafsīr*) on the "information" received (cf. Kamāl's *ghazal* quoted above, which also employs the figure of *tafsīr*). The *ghazal* is framed by references to the "friend" or "beloved" (*yār, dūst*) in the first and final lines; it is to the identification of that "beloved" that the poem is dedicated.

The poet begins by noting the forbidden or dangerous aspect of "news of the friend": don't ask me details, he warns his imagined interlocutor, lest the result be "gallows and rope". But "news of gallows and rope" is like the appearance of a banner of victory (*rāyat-i manṣūr*); the pun on *manṣūr*, "victorious", which also alludes to the mystical "martyr of love", Manṣūr-i Ḥallāj (executed 309/922), suggests that in such martyrdom lies spiritual victory, which is not only "heart-breaking" (*qalb-shikan*) but vanquishes the "enemy" (*qalb* means also the center of an army), and brings spiritual life as well (if we read a further pun in *qalb-i shikan*, "metathesis/inversion of *shikan*," we get *na-kush*, "do not slay!").

The second segment revolves around the garden. News of the coming of spring is a conventional figure for tidings of the beloved's arrival (see further Chapter 8 below); the poet bids his interlocutor convey news of this event to the "birds of the meadow" (*murghān-i chaman*, in what seems a direct allusion to Ḥāfiẓ's QG486, discussed in Chapter 6), the nightingales of the garden, figuratively, the poets, who themselves give "news" of garden and rose-plot (i.e., write poems about them). The "news" of the third segment (5–6), that of the scent of the beloved's shirt, alludes to the Koranic story of Joseph, who, when he sent his brothers home from Egypt, sent with them his shirt, whose fragrance was recognized by his grieving father Jacob (cf. Koran 12: 95–97). The poet accuses his audience of seeking the "beloved", the "gazelle of Khotan", in the wrong place (*ba-khaṭā*, "to Cathay", also means "in error, mistakenly"). News of the beloved's fragrance is good tidings for the soul, he says, punning on *jānān/jān* "beloved/soul, life"; such news makes the soul whole through uniting mind, heart, and body.

He then addresses the "jeweller" (*jawharī*, also "materialist", one who attributes materiality to God; *jawhar* means "essence", as well as "pearl, jewel", so the *jawharī* may also be a seeker or knower of essences, i.e. of wisdom): he has

found the ruby-mine; why then search in Yemen for stones of lesser worth? News of the ruby-mine is brought by sweet lips (*lab-i shīrīn*; *shīrīn*, "sweet", is also the name of the beloved of prince Khusraw in Niẓāmī Ganjavī's romance *Khusraw and Shīrīn*), which take away the bitterness of sorrow (again, one hears an echo of Ḥāfiẓ, this time of the "Shiraz Turk"). The final segment (9–10) brings out the spiritual nature of the beloved: news of "filial reunion" refers to that of Joseph with Jacob, who is a better spiritual father (presumably because of having undergone the suffering of love) than Qaran, the father of the mystic Uvays-i Qaranī who is known for having been taught by no spiritual guide. "News of the Friend brings tidings of union," he concludes, ending his poem ("the story of that rhyme") in "the best way" (*ba-vajh-i aḥsan*). The "rhyme" (*ravī* – which might also be read *rūy* "face", punning with *vajh*) is *nūn* (-*an*), which leads us back to the Koranic verse which begins, "By *nūn* and the pen, and what they write: thou art not, by the grace of thy Lord, possessed [*majnūn*]; for you there is reward without obligation; indeed, you possess mighty virtue. You will see, and they will see, which of you is mad [*maftūn*]" (68: 2–7). *Majnūn* and *maftūn* both have the specific sense of "love-madness"; the letter *nūn* has, moreover, symbolic value not only for esoterics like Nāṣir-i Khusraw (see Chapter 6) but for mystics, who found in this Sūra justification for the apparent madness of divine love. Thus does the poet refute the critics of his love.

Tarṣīʿ and ***tashṭīr*** (sometimes used interchangeably), internal rhyme, are related to repetition but involve metre and rhyme as well. Qudāma defines *tarṣīʿ* (which he considers one of the characteristics of metre) as "when the ends of the metrical units [*ajzāʾ*] in the verse systematically follow a rhyme [*sajʿ*] or something similar, or are of a single type of inflection [*taṣrīf*: inflection, conjugation, morphological form]" (1956: 14). He cites as an example Imruʾ al-Qays's

> Mikhashshin mijashshin muqbilin mudbirin maʿan ka-taysi ẓibāʾi l-ḥullabi l-ʿadawānī
>
> Turning and wheeling, advancing, retreating at once, like an antelope stag running in frenzy,[27]

"where he made the first two words rhymed and of the same inflection, and the two following ones similar to the first two in inflection," and the same poet's

> Wa-awtāduhu mādhiyyatun wa-ʿimāduhu rudayniyyatun fīhā asinnatu qaʿḍabī
>
> His tent-poles are white mail, his supports Rudaynī spears, among which are Qaʿḍabī lances,

"where the words rhyme with the same letter, two by two" (ibid.).

> Most of the successful poets, both Ancients and Moderns, attempted this goal and shot at this target. It is approved when it occurs in the verse in an appropriate place; but it is not pleasing in every place and not suitable

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to every situation. Nor is it always praiseworthy when it is stretched out and continued through all the verses, when it shows strenuous effort and manifests artificiality [*takalluf*]. But there are poets, both Ancient and Modern, who have composed whole poems (thus) or who have followed (this method) in many verses. One was Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī, who did it in such a manner that, because of its excellence, it can scarcely be called artificial. (ibid.: 17)

There follows a passage of eight verses by Abū Ṣakhr and another by the Hudhalī Abū al-Muthallam of six, the central four of which feature internal rhyme.

Abū al-Hilāl al-ʿAskarī considers extended *tarṣīʿ* a fault and a sign of *takalluf* (1986: 378–9, quoting the same verses by Abū al-Muthallam cited by Qudāma). He distinguishes between *tarṣīʿ* and *tashṭīr*, in which "the two hemistichs are balanced and the segments of each are in equilibrium, while each is independent in itself and not dependent on its mate," citing as an example Abū Tammām's line,

> Bi-musaʿʿadin min ḥusnihi wa-muṣawwabin   wa-mujammaʿin min naʿtihi
> wa-mufarraqī
> Exhaling (sighs) because of her beauty, and pouring forth (tears); gathering together description of her, and scattering it. (ibid.: 411)

He also coins the term **taṭrīz** for "when words that are metrically equivalent occur in successive verses of the *qaṣīda*, which are to the verses what embroidery (*ṭirāz*) is to a garment; this type is rare in poetry." He cites in illustration three lines from Abū Tammām's *qaṣīda* to al-Maʾmūn (ibid.: 425; discussed in Chapter 6 above):

8 Aʿwāma waṣlin kāda yunsī ṭūlahā   **dhikhru n-nawā fa-ka-annahā
    ayyāmū**
9 **Thumma nbarat** ayyāmu hajrin ardafat   **najwā asan fa-ka-annahā
    aʿwāmū**
10 **Thumma nqaḍat** tilka s-sunūnu wa-ahluhā   **fa-ka-annahum wa-ka-
    annahā aḥlamū**
8 Years of union whose length was all but made forgotten by the memory of distance, and which (therefore) seemed like days:
9 Then came days of separation followed by colloquies of grief, and which (therefore) seemed like years:
10 Then those years, and their people, came to an end, as if both that time and those people were but dreams.

In contrast to al-ʿAskarī, Usāma ibn Munqidh, while following the former's definition of *taṭrīz*, cites with apparent approbation a number of lengthy examples of its use (see 1960: 64–72). Ibn al-Athīr considers *tarṣīʿ* part of ʿ*ilm al-bayān*, the "science of expression", and a difficult method. The term, he says, is derived from *tarṣīʿ al-ʿiqd*, the setting of gems in a necklace "so that the

pearls and jewels on one side are the same as on the other." There are two types of *tarṣīʿ*: when the words in each segment are completely equivalent in metre and rhyme, and when one word in the first member differs from the corresponding one in the second. The first type, he says, occurs frequently in sermons (*khuṭab*; hence its affective power in ascetic poetry such as that of Abū al-ʿAtāhiya, or the poem by Muslim discussed above); a poetic example is Dhū al-Rumma's

> *Kaḥlāʾu fī barajin ṣafrāʾu fī daʿajin*
> *ka-annahā fiḍḍatun qad shābahā dhahabū*
> Kohl amid whiteness, blonde amid blackness,
> as if it were silver made hoary by gold.

The second type is when the corresponding words agree in meter but differ in rhyme, as in Taʾabbaṭa Sharran's

> *Ḥammālu alwiyatin   shahhādu andiyatin*
> *qawwālu muḥkamatin   jawwābu afāqī*
> Bearers of banners, attenders of councils, decisive speakers who
>   answered all regions.

The first type, says Ibn al-Athīr, is rare, the second frequent (1956: 263–5). That the examples he cites are largely pre-Islamic suggests – as does the later use of the device in *maqāmāt* and in sermons – both its function as a mnemonic technique and its association with *sajʿ*.

Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāṭ describes *tarṣīʿ* as "when a secretary or a poet makes the parts of his discourse in segments [*khāna khāna*], and puts each word next to another which agrees in its letters and rhyme [*ravī*]" (1960: 623). He calls attention to a *qaṣīda* of his own which is composed entirely in this fashion (ibid.: 624–5; see also Shams-i Qays 1909: 308), which begins,

> 1 *Ay munavvar   ba-tu   nujūm-i jalāl*
>   *v-ay muqarrar   ba-tu   rusūm-i kamāl*
> 2 *Bustānī-st   ṣadr-i tu   zi naʿīm*
>   *v-asmānī-st   qadr-i tu   zi jalāl*
> 1 O you by whom   might's stars   are given light,
>   O you by whom   perfection's way's   made right:
> 2 A garden   brought from Paradise your court;
>   a heaven   is your power   from your might.

Rashīd al-Dīn also notes instances of *tarṣīʿ* accompanied by *tajnīs*, which elevates even more this already lofty art, as in his own Arabic verses (ibid.: 625):

> *Jalāluka yā khayra l-mulūki masāʿiyan*
> *ʿalā minbari l-majdi l-muʾaththali khāṭibū*
> *Fa-lil-khuṭṭati   n-nakrāʾi   saybuka   dāfiʿun*
> *wa-lil-khiṭṭati   l-ʿadhrāʾi   sayfuka   khāṭibū*

Your might, O best of kings, climbs
the ennobled pulpit of glory as an orator.
Your flood   repels   the schemes   of the ignoble;
Your sword   sues   for lands   that are virgin.

Al-'Abbāsī defines this technique of parallel rhymes in each hemistich as *tasjī'* (1947, 3: 289–91), whereas for him *tashṭīr* involves "making each hemistich [*shaṭr*] of the verse rhyme differently from the other" (ibid., 3: 292), as in this line from Abū Tammām's Amorium *qaṣīda* (ibid., 3: 291; translation from Arberry 1965: 56):

37 *Tadbīru Mu'taṣimin*   *bil-lāhi muntaqimin*
     lil-lāhi murtaqibin   *fil-lāhi murtaghibī*
    The contriving of one who clung to God, who took revenge for God,
       whose whole desire was for God, who waited (on God)

It is apparent that internal rhyme, of whatever form, was a popular device with poets of all periods. It is used in both short and long poems of all types and genres; its potential for enhancing both the musicality of the poem and its affective impact on the audience is self-evident. Ibn al-Rūmī, who was fond of the device, uses it to effect in the opening of a complaint poem intended as *hijā'* (1973, 1: 264–6):

1 *Salīmu **z-zamāni**   **ka-mankūbihī***
   wa-mawfūruhu mith   *lu mahrūbihī*
2 *Wa-mamnūḥuhu mith*   *lu mamnū'ihī*
   wa-maksūwwuhu mith   *lu maslūbihī*
3 *Wa-maḥbūbuhu rah*   *nu makrūhihī*
   wa-makrūhuhu rah   *nu maḥbūbihī*
4 *Wa-ma'mūnuhu taḥ*   *ta maḥdhūrihī*
   wa-marjūwwuhu taḥ   *ta marhūbihī*
5 *Wa-raybu z-zamāni*   *ghadan kā'inun*
   wa-ghālibuhu mith   *lu maghlūbihī*
6 *Fa-lā tahrubanna*   *ilā dhillatin*
   *dhalīlu **z-zamāni**   **ka-mankūbihī***
1 He who is safe from time is like its victim;
   its wealthy like that it despoils.
2 Its favoured is like its forbidden;
   its clothed is like its stripped.
3 Its beloved is pledge to its despised;
   its despised is pledge to its beloved.
4 Its trusted is beneath its untrusted;
   its desired is beneath its feared.
5 Fear of time will come into being tomorrow,
   its conqueror like its conquered.

6 Do not flee to a low place,
for the lowly of time is like its victim.

The neat reversal of the opening hemistich in line 6, which emphasizes that all
men are the same with respect to time, leads to a long passage on the perfidy of
the times and on base men. The device is returned to in the two lines which
precede the concluding dedication (so to speak) of the *hijāʾ*:

24 *Wa-lammā ghadākul   lu hādhā l-warā*
   wa-mamdūḥuhu mith   lu mandūbihī
25 *Madaḥtu ilāhan   jamīla th-thanā-*
   ʾi maṣdūquhu ghay   ru makdhūbihī

24 And since all mankind have become (the same),
their praised like their regretted,
25 I praised a God with beautiful praise
Whose truth is not to be confused with falsehood.

Internal rhyme occurs both in lengthy *qaṣīdas* and in brief lyrics, and suggests a
performance context for both, as it is effective in both declaimed and sung poetry;
and it appears in all genres, from panegyric to *zuhdiyya*. It is a favorite device of
Rūmī, many of whose *ghazals* were composed to be sung in the Sufi *samāʿ*. Ḥāfiẓ
uses it as both a rhythmical and expressive device in this *ghazal* (QG191):

1 *Ān kī-st k-az rū-yi karam   bā mā vafādārī kunad*
  bar jā-yi bad-kārī chu man   yikdam nikū-kārī kunad
2 *Avval ba-bāng-i nāy u nayy   ārad ba-dil payghām-i vay*
  v-āngah ba-yik paymāna mayy   bā man vafādārī kunad
3 *Dilbar kih jān farsūd az-ū   kām-i dilam naghshūd az-ū*
  nawmīd natvān buvad az-ū   bāshad kih dildārī kunad
4 *Guftam girih nagshūda-am   z-ān ṭarra tā man būda-am*
  guftā man-ash farmūda-am   tā bā tu ṭarrārī kunad
5 *Pashmīna-pūsh-i tund khū   k-az ʿishq nashnīd-ast bū*
  az mastī-ash ramzī bi-gū   tā tark-i hushyārī kunad
6 *Chun man gadā-yi bī nishān   mushkil buvad yārī chunān*
  sulṭān kujā ʿaysh-i nihān   bā rind-i bāzārī kunad
7 *Z-ān ṭurra-yi pur pīch u kham   sahl-ast agar bīnam sitam*
  az band u zanjīr-ash chi gham   har kis ki ʿayyārī kunad
8 *Shud lashgar-i gham bī-ʿadad   az bakht mīkhāham madad*
  tā Fakhr al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ṣamad   bāshad ki ghamkhārī kunad
9 *Bā chashm-i pur nayrang-i ū   Ḥāfiẓ makun āhang-i ū*
  k-ān ṭurra-yi shabrang-i ū   bisyār ṭarrārī kunad

1 Who is it, from nobility, will practise loyalty with me,
and with a reprobate like me one moment will act lovingly?
2 Will first, to sound of flute and reed, to my poor heart his message send,
and then, with just one cup of wine, will practice loyalty to me?

3   My love, by whom my soul's worn thin: my heart will not abandon him;
    I cannot lose my hope for him; perhaps he will act lovingly.
4   Said I, "I have not loosed a knot, since I have lived, of those dark
        locks."
    Said he, "'Tis I who gave the word that it act the cut-purse with you."
5   The woolen-garbed, of nature sharp, of knowing love has not a hope;
    tell him the tale of drunkenness that he may soberness forsake.
6   For me, a lowly beggar, love of such a friend is difficult.
    Where is the sultan who'll carouse in secret with the market's *rind*?
7   From those locks full of twists and curls cruelty is not hard to bear;
    what shame in bonds and chains is there for he who commits thievery?
8   Grief's countless armies are arrayed; from fortune I importune aid,
    that Fakhr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ṣamad may soon allay my grief for me.
9   With his ensorcelling eyes, Ḥāfiẓ, do not approach too close to him;
    those curling locks of night's dark hue indeed will do much trickery.

That this is a suit in the form of a love poem is evident from the address in the penultimate line: the poet implores the patron to reunite him with his love (presumably the prince, a frequent motif with Ḥāfiẓ), from whom he has become estranged. The repeated emphasis on the beloved's dark curls stresses the motif of separation. (On "Fakhr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ṣamad", who has not so far been identified, see Āhūr 1984, 2: 627.)

   This *ghazal* features a type of repetition that is not discussed by the critics as a figure, but which becomes increasingly popular in both Arabic and Persian: the repetition of the rhyme-word of the opening hemistich (here, *bā man vafādārī kunad* in 1a and 2b; on this device in Ḥāfiẓ see Thiesen 1994). We have seen an instance of this practice in Farrukhī's Somnath *qaṣīda*, where repetition of the rhyme-word "Iskandar" (10) closes the first segment. An early example is Bashshār's

1   *Da' dhikra 'Abdata innahu* **fanadū**   *wa-ta'azza tarfidu minka mā rafadū*
2   *Mā nawwalatka bi-mā tuṭālibuhā*   *illā mawā'ida kulluhā* **fanadū**
1   Leave off mention of 'Abda, for that is weakness of mind; be consoled,
        giving of yourself (only) that which (others) give.
2   She did not grant what you asked of her, except for promises which
        were all lies. (1950, 3: 62; the second half-line of 1 is problematic)

Bashshār's editor notes disapprovingly, "He repeated the word *fanad* before seven lines had elapsed; this is the defect of *īṭā'*, but perhaps he attached no importance to it because it occurred in the *taṣrī'* and not in the rhyme proper" (ibid., n. 4). *Īṭā'* is a defect of the rhyme consisting of repeating the same rhyme-word in close proximity in a single poem, although the use of homonyms with different meanings (as, in fact, is the case here) was permitted (cf. Ibn Rashīq 1972, 1: 169–71; on *īṭā'* in general see Sanni 1990). Sanni summarizes Ibn Rashīq's treatment of *īṭā'*:

The farther the *īṭāʾ*, he says, the less objectionable; even when it occurs in relatively close succession it will not be regarded as a fault if it occurs within another theme in the same composition: as when a rhyme word which is first used in *madḥ* (eulogy) is reused in *dhamm* (reproach) in the same poem. The worst form of *īṭāʾ*, he argues, is that where a rhyme word together with a substantial part of the hemistich in which it occurs are repeated in another line of the same composition. (1990: 160)

Presumably Ibn Rashīq would not have approved of Ḥāfiẓ's example, in which an entire phrase (a "block" of internal rhyme) is repeated; but he considered a repetition of the *taṣrīʿ* in the second verse (as in the example by Bashshār) acceptable (1972, 1: 171). According to al-Khaṭīb al-Tibrīzī (who quotes various earlier authorities), the repetition of, for example, the word *rajul* – as in al-Aʿshā's lines (translated by Sanni 1990: 159),

1 *Waddiʿ Hurayrata inna r-rakba murtaḥilū   wa-hal tuṭīqu wadāʿan ayyuhā*
   r-rajulū
21 *Qālat Hurayratu lammā jiʾtu zāʾirahā   waylī ʿalayka wa-waylī minka yā*
   rajulu
1 Bid farewell to Hurayra, for the caravan is departing, or are you unable
   to say farewell, O man?
21 Hurayra said when I came to her on a visit: "O man, damn you for
   having damned me" –

would be acceptable since they involve two different meanings, one specifying the nature of the addressee and the other denigrating him (al-Tibrīzī 1979: 242–3).[28] Shams-i Qays considered *īṭāʾ* acceptable in long poems (especially if it was "concealed", *khafī*, e.g. by a *tajnīs murakkab*; cf. 1909: 256–67), but exempted repetition of the *maṭāliʿ* (i.e., the *ʿarūẓ* of the first line) from this classification altogether.

Such repetition is not merely ornamental; it often serves a structural function, and may be used to conclude a segment; to begin a new segment; to conclude a poem (especially in ring composition); to mark a point of emphasis; or as the end-rhyme of the second line (also for emphasis), as in the example by Ḥāfiẓ. An example of the first type is in a brief poem by Abū Nuwās (1962: 57) which consists of three segments; the first is as follows:

1 *Rubba laylin qaṭaʿtuhu **bi-ntiḥābī**   rubba damʿin haraqtuhu fī t-turābī*
2 *Rubba thawbin nazaʿtuhu bi-ʿaṣīri d-   damʿi baddaltu ghayrahu min thiyābī*
3 *Lam yajiffi l-manzūʿu ʿannī ḥattā   ballati l-ʿaynu dhā li-ṭūli **ntiḥābī***
1 Many a night have I spent in **weeping**; many a tear have I shed upon
   the ground.
2 Many a garment have I stripped off, wringing out the tears, and
   exchanged for another,

3 And that which was stripped from me had not yet dried before the
other was soaked by my long **weeping**.

The poem is built upon repetition, anaphora and internal rhyme; the second
segment begins with a further repetition of *rubba ... rubba* which characterized
the first:

4 **Many** a peace have you caused to become war for me; **many** a soul
have you charged with reproaching me.
5 He truly knows love's passion who remains (the night) separated from
those he loves.
6 May God banish, O Sulaymān! my heart, for it too loves without
reckoning.

Ṣabāba, "love's passion", announced in the central line (5), becomes, through
the use of *tajnīs*, the dominant theme of the third and final segment, a message
to the beloved:

7 Tell him: Taste; and if you knew of my state you would not have
exchanged estrangement for love [*lam tubaddil qaṭīʿatan bi-taṣābī*].
8 Love was worn out by the cutting off of passion [*li-nqiṭāʿi t-taṣābī*], and
bribes were slipped to the secretaries:
9 When the contract of enslavement to you reached them, they sealed it
with the seal of suffering [*awṣābī*].

Khāqānī achieves interesting effects of end-rhyme, internal rhyme and *tajnīs*
in this brief *ghazal* (1959: 441).

1 *Dil-am dar baḥr-i sawdā-yi tu **gharq-ast***
*nikū bi-shnaw ki īn maʿnā na **zarq-ast***
2 ***Firāq-at** rīkht   khūn-am   īn chi tīgh-ast*
nifāq-at** sūkht   jān-am   īn chi **barq-ast
3 ***Jihān** bi-stad zi mā ṭūfān-i ʿishq-at*
fighān** ay jān ki mā-rā bīm-i **gharq-ast
4 *Tu ham hastī dar īn ṭūfān va-līkan*
*tu-rā tā kaʿb u mā-rā tā ba-**farq-ast***
5 *Agar chi dīgarī bar mā guzīdī*
*na-dānistī k-az ū tā mā chi **farq-ast***
1 In the sea of grief for you my heart is **drowning**;
oh listen well! in this there's no **dissembling**.
2 Your **parting** shed my blood – what blade is this?
your **falseness** burnt my soul – what **lightning** this?
3 The tempest of your love has seized my **world**;
alas, my soul! for I'm in fear of **drowning**.
4 You too are caught up by this tempest; but
you're in up to your heels – I'm over my **head**.

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5   Although you chose another over me,
    you know not that between us – what a **difference**!

The overarching metaphor of the "sea of love" unifies this *ghazal*, which exhibits a marked economy of rhyme, as if the poet were trying to see how few rhymes he could get away with (or as if distress prevented him from thinking of any more). Of the six rhymes, two are repeated twice, *gharq* and *farq*, the first with the same meaning, the second in two different senses (*farq* in 4 means literally "the parting of the hair", i.e., the top of the head). *Farq* is, moreover, anticipated by *firāq*, "separation" (2), which forms an extended *tajnīs* with 4 and 5 and provides the basis for the semi-*tarṣī'* of the "digression" of 2, which amplifies the topic of the poet's suffering. The drawn-out long *ā*'s – *sawdā*, *firāq/nifāq*, *jān*, coming to a peak in 3 – *jihān*, *zi mā*, *ṭūfān*, *fighān*, *mā-rā* – combine with the throat-catching *qāf* sounds to evoke the sound of the lover's sighs and weeping. There is a neat pun in 1, on *bi-shnaw* "listen", which could also be read "swim (well)", linking this line with 4, in which the beloved is said to be caught himself in love's tempest, but only up to his heels – just wading, not drowning.

In the following *ghazal* Sa'dī uses repetition of the *maṭla'* (although with a different meaning) to announce the turn from general to specific, and repetition of the *qāfiya* to conclude the poem, which begins with a catalogue of *exempla* and goes on to describe the poet's state (1976: 210–11):

1   *Farhād-rā chu bar rukh-i Shīrīn* **nazar futād**
    dūd-ash ba sar bar āmad v-az pāy **dar futād**
2   *Majnūn zi jām-i ṭal'at-i Laylī chu mast shud*
    fārigh zi mādar u pidar u sīm u **zar futād**. . . .
7   *Rūzī ba-dilbarī naẓarī kard sū-yi man*
    z-ān yik naẓar ma-rā du jahān az **nazar futād**. . . .
10 *Sa'dī zi khalq chand nihān rāz-i dil kunī*
    chun mājarā-yi 'ishq-i tu yik yik **ba-dar futād**

1   When Farhād's gaze fell upon Shīrīn's face,
    the smoke (of his sighs) rose and he collapsed.
2   When Majnūn grew drunk from the cup of Laylī's face
    he forgot mother and father, gold and silver. . . .
7   One day a heart-ravisher cast a glance at me;
    from that one glance I forgot both worlds. . . .
10 Sa'dī, how long hide your heart's secret from men,
    when the story of your love has been revealed in all its details?

Sight is commonly said to be the cause of love; and here Sa'dī plays on the paradox that a glance at, or from, the beloved causes the lover to become blind to all else. He supports this premise with examples – the famous lovers Farhād and Majnūn, followed in lines 3 and 4 with Rāmīn and Vāmiq, the lovers of Vīs and 'Azrā respectively. Lines 5 and 6 provide a summary (the same has

happened to many); the repetition of the rhyme in 7 marks the move from the general to the individual (further emphasized by the repetition of *naẓar* three times in the line). The penultimate line (9) links the two levels – "Don't blame me, this fate has befallen many"; line 10 implies that Sa'dī's story has become as famous as those of the lovers in the opening catalogue.

'Aṭṭār uses *īṭā'* (and its simile, Ibn Rashīq's *muḍāra'a*) both to mark off and to link the segments of this *ghazal* (1960: 264).

1   *Chi sāzī **sarāy** u chi gū'ī **surūd***
     *furū shu ba-dīn khāk-i tīra **furūd***

2   *Yaqīn dān ki hamchūn tu bisyār kas*
     *fikand-ast dar **charkh charkh**-i kabūd*

3   *Chi bar **khīzad** az **khūd** u **āhan** tu-rā*
     *chu sar **āhanīn** nīst dar zīr-i **khūd***

4   *Agar jāma-i 'umr-i tu z-**āhan**-ast*
     ajal bi-gsilad az ham-ash tār u pūd

5   *Agar **sar kishī** z-īn pul-i haft ṭāq*
     sar** u sang mānanda-i āb-i **rūd

6   *Zi **sar-gashtagī** zīr-i **chawgān-i charkh***
     *chu gū'ī nadānī **farāz** az **furūd***

7   *Chu dawr-i sipihr-at nakhāhad guzāsht*
     *zi dawr-i sipihr-at chi nālī chu **rūd***

8   *Rafīqān-i ham-rāz-rā kun vidā'*
     *'azīzān-i ham-dard-rā kun **durūd***

9   *Dirakht-i **bat-tar būdan** az bun bi-kan*
     *zi shākh-i bihī kun kulūkh **āmrūd***

10 *Makun hamchu 'Aṭṭār 'umr-i 'azīz*
     *hama żāyi' andar **sarāy u surūd***

1   Why should you build palaces? why sing songs?
     Go down; descend beneath this dark earth.

2   Know well that, like you, many a one
     has been set spinning by the azure sphere.

3   What will profit you of helmet and of iron,
     when you've not an iron head beneath that helmet?

4   Even if your life's gown be of iron,
     death will unravel both its warp and weft.

5   If you raise your head to rebel, this seven-arched bridge
     will make both heads and stones like the river's water.

6   From straying 'neath the sphere's polo-mallet
     you're like a ball: you don't know up from down.

7   Since the sphere's turning will not spare you,
     why moan, like lute-strings, of the sphere's turning?

8   Bid farewell to all your trusted friends;
     say goodbye to your dear fellow-sufferers.

9 Tear from its root the tree of "being worse";
     make hard pears from the branch of "goodness".

10 Don't, like ʿAṭṭār, cause your precious life
     to go to waste in palaces and songs.

The rhyme of the *maṭlaʿ*, *surūd* "song", prepares us for the mournful echo of rhymes in -*(r)ūd* which mark this *zuhdiyya*: *furūd* "down", anticipated by *furū shu*, "go down", and repeated in 6; *farāz az furūd* "up from down", which marks the poem's "turn"; *kabūd* "azure", *khūd* "helmet", *pūd* "weft" are intervening rhymes which delay the return to the essential rhyme with *rūd* "river", in 5, after which the lament intensifies. *Rūd* is itself repeated (7) with the meaning "lute-strings"; *durūd* "goodbye", and *āmrūd* "pear", build to the climactic repetition of the initial rhyme, *surūd*, given an ironic twist by the additional repetition of *sarāy*, here used as a pun on its two meanings, "palace" and "singing". While some build palaces, others – like ʿAṭṭār – build poems.

    This discussion has obviously not exhausted the categories of ornament; but it has dealt with some of the most important, and we may now begin to consider how they operate in the organization of poems. The Arabic poet Abū al-Fatḥ al-Bustī (d. 400/1009) was famed for his use of *tajnīs*; he is credited with having initiated a poetic trend which continued long after his lifetime, and examples by him are often cited by the critics. His poems are generally brief and epigrammatic, as for example this famous one-liner (1989: 45):

> *Idhā malikun lam yakun* **dhā hiba**   *fa-daʿhu fa-dawlatuhu* **dhāhiba**
> If a king is not **generous**, forget him, for his fortune will **vanish**.

Al-Bustī does however have a number of longer poems in which *tajnīs*, usually allied with other devices, becomes an organizing feature, as in this elegy on the death in 387/997 of the Ghaznavid ruler Nāṣir al-Dīn Sabuktigīn (ibid.: 144–5; following the order in ʿUtbī 1869, 1: 260–1; the concluding line in the *Dīwān* is 9).

  1 **Tawakkul** *ʿalā llāhi fī kulli mā*   *tuḥāwiluhu wa-ttakhidhhu* **wakīlā**
  2 *Wa-lā* **yakhdaʿannaka** *shirbun ṣafā*   *fa-aẓmā* **qalīlan** *wa-arwā* **ghalīlā**
  3 *Fa-inna z-zamāna* **yudhillu l-ʿazīz**   *a wa-yajʿalu kulla jalīlin ḍaʿīlā*
  4 *A-lam tara Nāṣira dīni l-ilāhi*   *wa-kāna l-mahība l-ʿaẓīma* **l-jalīlā**
  5 *Aʿadda* **l-fuyūla** *wa-qāda* **l-khuyūla**   *wa-ṣayyara kulla* **ʿazīzin dhalīlā**
  6 **Wa-ḥaffa** *l-mulūku bihi* **khāḍiʿīna**   **wa-zuffu** *ilayhi raʿīlan raʿīlā*
  7 *Fa-lammā tamakkana min amrihi*   *wa-kāna lahu sh-sharqu illā* **qalīlā**
  8 *Wa-awhamahu* **l-ʿizzu** *anna z-zamāna*   *idhā rāmahu nadda ʿanhu* **kalīlā**
  9 *Atathu l-maniyyatu mughtālatan*   *wa-sallat ʿalayhi ḥusāman ṣaqīlā*
10 *Fa-lam yughni ʿanhu kumātu r-rijāli*   *wa-lam yujdi* **fīlun** *ʿalayhi* **fatīlā**
11 *Kādhālika yafʿalu bish-shāmitīna*   *wa-yufnīhimu d-dahru jīlan fa-jīlā*

  1 **Put your trust** in God in all that you attempt, and take Him as your
       trustee;

2 Be not deceived by a draught that wakens a desire to drink; thirst a **little**, and then drink with **desire**.

3 For time **humbles the mighty**, and makes every **powerful** one **weak**.

4 Have you not seen the Supporter of God's Faith, who was feared, mighty and **powerful**?

5 He deployed **elephants** and led **cavalry**, and made every **mighty one base**;

6 And all the kings **surrounded him**, **submissive**, and **were conducted to** him, troop by troop.

7 And when he was sure of things, and all the East was his, except **a little**,

8 And **might** had made him believe that time, if it struck him, would flee from him, **exhausted**,

9 Death came on him unawares to destroy him, and drew against him a sharp, polished blade

10 Against which the bravest armed men could not prevail, and no **elephant** was of any avail.

11 Even so does time do for to those who rejoice at their enemies' affliction: it destroys them, generation after generation.

Al-Bustī combines *tajnīs* with repetition and internal rhyme to structure his poem, beginning with the rhyme *-īlā* which provides the basis for much of both, the long *-ī* echoed, moreover, in such words as *ʿazīz, mahīb, ʿazīm*, all connected with the topics of might and power. The *muṭābaqa ʿazīz/dhalīl*, "mighty/humble", runs throughout the poem like a leitmotif; while the reference to elephants (for the use of which in warfare the Ghaznavids were famous) recalls the Koranic *aṣḥāb al-fīl*, the "people of the elephant" (Sūra 105), that is, the Ethiopians, led by the king Abraha, who attacked Mecca before the days of Islam and were destroyed by God. The use of narrative progression (*aʿadda l-fuyūla . . . fa-lammā tamakkana min amrihi . . . atathu l-maniyyatu*, "He deployed elephants . . . and when he was sure of things . . . death came to him") adds further irony to this *rithāʾ*, which becomes transformed into a *zuhdiyya* announcing the mortality of all, and especially of kings, generation after generation.

One of the lines quoted by Ibn Rashīq in his discussion of *tajnīs* comes from a *qaṣīda* by al-Buḥturī in praise of Mālik ibn Ṭawq (Ibn Rashīq 1972, 1: 324; al-Buḥturī 1963, 1: 78–82):

3 *Ṣadaqa l-ghurābu la-qad raʾaytu shumūsahum   bil-amsi taghrubu fī jawānibi Ghurrabī*
   The raven spoke truly: I saw their suns setting (or: moving westward) last night behind the sides of Mount Ghurrab.

The *qaṣīda* begins with a description of the departing tribe:

1 They departed; and what tears would not be shed in grief, what firm resolve not be overpowered [*lam tughlabī*]?

The poem is organized around a series of repeated *tajnīsāt* (combined with *takrār*, *radd al-aʿjāz* and *muṭābaqa*) on closely related roots, primarily *gh-l-b*, with which it opens and closes (the addressee was descended from the tribe of Taghlib; the choice of the opening rhyme, with its built-in potential for *tajnīs*, is clearly premeditated), and *gh-r-b*, repeated three times in line 3. Once again *omen est nomen*: Ghurrab (a mountain in lower Syria; see al-Buḥturī 1963, 1: 78 n.3), in whose direction the "suns", i.e., the ladies of the tribe (the related *shamūs* also means "a headstrong horse") are moving, seems a logical destination in view of the omen of the *ghurāb* (sc. *ghurāb al-bayn*, the "raven of separation"; line 2 features a *tajnīs* on *b-y-n* (*qad bayyana l-baynu l-mufarriqu baynanā*), "separating distance between us showed itself"). Other clusters involve words derived from roots ending in *-r-q* – *sh-r-q*, *f-r-q*, *w-r-q* – and with similar sounds – *ṣ-d-q*, *q-l-b*, *r-q-b*; from *ʿ-r-b/ʿ-b-r*; and a wide variety of others.

These *tajnīsāt* link the topics of the *qaṣīda* and underscore its movement from lack to deprivation. Heavily used in the *nasīb* (1–14) and the *raḥīl* (15–18), they die down to a series of echoes in the *madīḥ*. Take, for example, the cluster based on *gh-r-b*, which has its antithesis in *sh-r-q*, *sharaqa* meaning "to rise" (as the sun), *sharraqa* "to go eastwards", and so on. The disappearance of the "setting suns" of the tribe in the direction of Mount Ghurrab (3) finds a faint echo (in the verb *shariqa*) in the beloved's complaint:

7   She complains of separation [*firāq*] to one who is saturated in tears [*shariqi l-madāmiʿi*], tormented by separation [*bil-firāqi muʿadhdhabī*].

The two roots are joined as the poet elaborates on the reversals of his condition at the hands of time:

13   *Fa-akūnu ṭawran mashriqan lil-mashriqi   l-aqṣā wa-ṭawran maghriban lil-maghribī*
14   *Wa-idhā z-zamānu kasāka ḥullata muʿdamin   fa-lbas lahu ḥulala n-nawā wa-tagharrabī*
13   At times I will be in a place where the sun rises in farthest east, at others, where it sets in the (farthest) west.
14   If time has dressed you in the garment [*ḥulla*] of one deprived, then dress for its sake in robes [*ḥulal*] of distance [*nawā*] and move westwards [*tagharrabī*; also, "go into exile"].

The night through which the poet travels is the colour of the raven (*ghurāb*), "as if it were clad in his gloom" (*ḥulūkatihi*, 16, echoing both *kasā* and *ḥulla/ḥulal* in 14); the gloom is dispelled by his arrival at the patron's tribe at dawn (19), at the *qaṣīda*'s central line. This arrival puts the cluster in a new light; for the patron's camp is

22   The kneeling-place of (the camels) of embassies (sent out) towards Najd or Tihāma (i.e. south and north) or arriving from east or west [*min mashriqin aw maghribī*].

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This change in focus signals the anticipated change in the poet's fortunes. In the *qaṣīda*'s opening line he declared that the grief of separation would overcome even the strongest resolve (*ʿazm*); this root is repeated twice, each time at a crucial turning point in the poem: at the transition to the *raḥīl* –

15 *Wa-la-qad abītu maʿa l-kawākibi rākiban   aʿjāzahā bi-ʿazīmatin kal-kawkabī*
    I will surely pass the night with the stars, riding its flanks with firm
        determination, like a star –

and at the beginning of the praise of Mālik:

24 A king [*malikun*] who on any day of adversity shows the recklessness of
        the heedless and the resolve [*iʿtizām*] of the experienced.

In the opening line the poet also asked what tears (*ʿabra*) would not pour forth in grief at parting; *ʿabra* forms part of another cluster of *tajnīsāt* based on the roots *ʿ-b-r/ʿ-r-b* (the latter differing from *gh-r-b* only in its initial consonant, alphabetically contiguous and orthographically identical except for being unpointed). The two are combined in the description of the beloved:

 6 *Fa-talajlajat ʿabarātuhā thumma nbarat   taṣifu l-hawā bi-lisāni damʿin
        muʿribī*
    At first her tears stammered; then they burst out describing (her)
        passion in the expressive tongue of tears.

Lisān muʿrib means not only "an expressive tongue" but one which expresses itself in fluent Arabic (as does the poet), a sense which lays the foundation for the subsequent repetition of the root *ʿ-r-b* in the *madīḥ*:

20 And the remainder of the Arab nation [*al-ʿurb*] whose glorious (deeds)
        were witnessed by the sons of Udd and of Yaʿrub (ancestors of the
        Arabs).

The language of grief has been replaced by the language of praise.

It is for this language that the *tajnīs* on *gh-l-b* announced in the opening line (*lam tughlabī*, "would not be overcome") is reserved, to be repeated twice in the *madīḥ*:

32 *Wa-matā tughālib fī-l-makārimi wan-   nadā bit-Taghlibiyyīna l-akārimi
        taghlibī*
    When you contest the noble Taghlibids in great deeds and generosity
        you triumph.
38 *Ḥattā law anna l-jūda khuyyira fī l-warā   nasaban la-aṣbaḥa yantamī fī
        Taghlibī*
    Until, were generosity to choose for itself a lineage from among
        mankind, it would have traced its descent from Taghlib.

The poem has come full circle; the loss and alienation which overwhelmed the poet at the outset and which led to his nocturnal wanderings in the *raḥīl* have

been overcome in turn by the generosity of the patron, whose "moon" has replaced both the "suns" of the *nasīb* and the stars which (like the poet's newly-found resolve) illuminated the night journey:

25   Were you to see him on the day of battle you would think him a moon rushing against the foe with a mail-clad army, like a bright constellation [*bi-kawkabī*].

The brightness of the patron's generosity and virtue has dispelled the darkness of separation presaged by the black raven and experienced in the dark night; all is light in the presence of this "sun of Taghlib".

The use of paired *tajnīsāt* in the rhyme-word characterizes the development of specific motifs in al-Buḥturī's *qaṣīda* to al-Thaghrī discussed in Chapter 4. All these pairs involve plays on the rhyme-words of the opening lines of the *nasīb*, later echoed (in different contexts) in the *madīḥ*; the first (and perhaps most important) contrasts the desolate abodes lamented by the poet with the "spring" of Abū Saʿīd's generosity (translated by Sperl 1989: 194–6):

1   *Fīma btidārukumu l-malāma walūʿā?*   *a-bakaytu illā dimnatan wa-rubūʿā?*
    Why do you hasten to blame [an] ardent love? Did I bemoan anything
        other than campsite remnants and spring abodes?
12   *Mutayyaqiẓu 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.

The deserted camps where the tribes gathered in spring are replaced by the true spring of the patron's generosity; a second contrast is implied in the following line, in which Abū Saʿīd "defies the reprovers through his noble deeds" (13).

An echo of *walūʿā* (1a) is also found in 34: to the "ardent lover" who laments the abodes is contrasted the war which Abū Saʿīd has "kindled with the firesticks of lances" and which is "ardently desirous for the destruction of valorous men" (*ḥarban bi-itlāfi l-kumāti walūʿā*). As in Abū Tammām's *qaṣīda* discussed in Chapter 5, action and resolution are preferable to futile love and complaint: the true hero is the warrior, not the lover. This contrast between futility and resolution is borne out by the *tajnīs* between lines 2 and 17: while the "blamers" find no listener in the afflicted lover, who is impervious to their criticisms (and who himself receives no answer from the ruins), Abū Saʿīd (who "defies the reprovers" by his deeds) answers the "well-heard voice" of the crier to battle (cf. Sperl 1989: 37):

2   *ʿAdhalū fa-mā ʿadalū bi-qalbī ʿan hawan*   *wa-daʿaw fa-mā wajadū sh-
    shajiyya* **samīʿā**
    They reproved but did not restrain my heart from love; they called but
        found no listener in the afflicted one.
17   *Mutanaṣṣitan li-ṣadā ṣ-ṣarīkhi ilā l-waghā*   *li-yujība ṣawta ṣ-ṣārikhi
    l-masmūʿā**

He hearkens to the echo of the cry to battle to answer the crier's well-heard voice.

A final instance is the contrast between the "gathered folk" who have been dispersed by time, and Abū Saʿīd, who "unites" in himself all the implements of glory –

3 *Yā dāru ghayyarahā z-zamānu wa-farraqat   ʿanhā l-ḥawādithu shamlahā* **l-majmūʿā**

    O abode which Time has altered and whose gathered folk the Fates have separated from it. . . .

10 *Malikun limā malakat yadāhu mufarriqun*   **jumiʿat** *ādātu l-majdi fīhi* **jamīʿā**

    A King who divides what his hands possess while in him all implements of glory are united –

which finds a last echo in the description of Abū Saʿīd's destruction of Bābak's massed armies:

26 *Lammā atāka yaqūdu jayshan arʿanan   yumshā ʿalayhi kathāfatan* **wa-jumūʿā**

27 *Wazzaʿtahum bayna l-asinnati waẓ-ẓubā   ḥattā abadta* **jumūʿahum tawzīʿā**

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.

Linked *muṭābaqa* and *tajnīs* inform a short *qaṣīda* by Abū Tammām described by Hamori as a *memento mori* (1977: 164, 170–1; Abū Tammām 1951, 4: 594–6; translation based on Hamori). It begins,

1 Do you then exert yourself in this world, and build for life [*lil-ʿumri . . . taʿmurū*] when tomorrow you will die and be buried in it [*tuqbarū*]?

2 You are pregnant with hopes and hope [*tarjū*] for their outcome; but your life [*ʿumruka*] is shorter than you would wish for [*turajjīhī*].

Antithetical constructions characterize the poem as a whole: both morning and night announce impending death (*yanʿāka/tanʿāka*, 3) as man comes and goes (*tuqbilu, tudbirū*) in the vain effort to achieve his desires (4). Man's appointed lot (*rizq*) will come to him sooner or later (*muʿajjalun, muʾakhkharū*, 5), as he "is driven on by no fate save that of Him who arranges destinies" (6b: *wa-lā qadarun yuzjīhi illā l-muqaddirū*), He Who has ordered man's worldly lot:

7 *La-qad qaddara l-arzāqa man laysa ʿādilan   ʿani l-ʿadli bayna n-nāsi fī-mā yuqaddirū*

    Men's portions have been appointed by One who does not deviate from justice in what He apportions among them.

In this verse "a statement is made that is ostensibly complete at the hemistich break, only to be shown as fragmentary and indeed false" (Hamori 1977: 165): *man laysa ʿādilan* might indeed be read as "one who is not just", but this near-heretical notion is at once contradicted by the following phrase (with its accompanying *tajnīs*), *ʿani l-ʿadli*, "from justice", so that *ʿādil* must be read as the participle of *ʿadala* in the sense of "deviating, turning aside, abstaining (from)". What Hamori does not note, however, is that this verse, which sums up the first segment (1–7), paves the way for the admonition of the central segment (8–10), which recapitulates the "coming and going" motif of line 4, as it "uses the same pair of verbs … but now views them against a backcloth that heightens rather than cancels their opposition" (ibid.: 164).

8 Do not trust in this world when it seems to be coming your way [*aqbalat*]; it is a cheat and will turn away from you [*tudbirū*].
9 In it (this world) its inhabitants' happiness is never complete, and there is no friendship that does not change at some time.
10 No star appears, no, nor does any sunrise shine forth on mankind without the thread of your life becoming shorter.

Illā ḥablu ʿumrika yaqṣurū, "without the thread of your life becoming shorter," echoes the motif of line 2, "and your life is shorter than you would wish." (The editor, moreover, suggests *rizq*, "sustenance", instead of *rifq*, "friendship", in 9, which would link it more closely with what has preceded.)

This central segment marks a turn from what man does in the present (stated in present tense verbs) to what he ought to do in the future (stated in imperatives), as the third and final segment (11–17), in the form of an exhortation, contrasts not only past and future, but this world and the next, taking up many of the motifs of the first segment as well as introducing new ones.

11 Purify yourself [*taṭahhar*], and meet your sins today with repentance; perhaps if you refrain from sins [*taṭahharta*) you will become remote from them [*taṭharū*].

"Meet your sin" (*alḥiq dhanbaka*) is a partial *tajnīs* with "you engender hopes" (*tulaqqiḥu āmālan*) of line 2: man's efforts should not be spent on vain and selfish desires but on self-purification; he must get to work (*shammir*) on practising piety in the face of death, for only he who is so busied (*mushammir*) will be saved (12). Days and nights announce impending doom and decay (13, paralleling 3) and the day when "all that you conceal" (*tukhfī*) will be revealed (*sa-yaẓharū*, 14);

15 For man may conceal [*yasturu*] his deeds with words, but his glances will reveal [*yuẓhiru*] what he has hidden [*mā kāna yasturū*].

The motif of concealing/revealing is repeated, in an antithetical context to that of earthly exposure, in the poem's final line, after the exhortation to "remember" (we may recall al-Muʿtamid's use of *dhikrā*):

16 Remember [*tadhakkur*]; and think [*fakkir*] on Him to Whom you are journeying [*ṣāʾirun*] on the morrow, if you are one who thinks [*in kunta mimman yufakkirū*]:

17 For there is no doubt that one day you will journey [*taṣīra*] to a grave in which you will be enfolded [*tuṭwā*] until the day you are brought forth resurrected [*tunsharū*].

Hamori comments:

The poem is written so that its first and last rhyme words (*tuqbaru*, *tunsharu*, "you will be buried," "you will be raised") should state the ultimately valid antithesis. The semantic range of *tunsharu* is essential to the meaning: in this life, uncertain states of mind and fugitive states of being are negated, turned into certainty by death; in the next life, nothing is uncertain, nothing is hidden, and death is refuted by life. The degree of interchangeability among lines is fairly high within segments of the poem, but the poem is a whole because the thought enters into clearly identifiable relations. (1977: 165)

The final *muṭābaqa* between *tuṭwā* (from *ṭawā*, "to be folded, contained, concealed, rolled up") and *tunsharū* (from *nashara*, "to be unrolled, published, resurrected") combines all the aspects of the antithesis between life and death, moreover, through an allusive gesture to the scroll of deeds, rolled up in this life, unrolled and published in the final accounting in the next. An added dimension is thus acquired by the poem, which may be seen not merely as a fairly routine example of the homiletic genre ("One must admit that this poem, while interesting in its composition, is no model of vigorous diction or thought" [ibid: 171]), in which "the contrast between death and the resurrection refutes the finality of the contrast between life and death" (ibid.: 165), but more than that: judgement at resurrection, when all will be revealed, will overtake those who attempt to conceal their evil deeds with fine words in this world.

As Sperl has observed, *radd al-ʿajuz ʿalā al-ṣadr* is a typical feature of the poetry of Abū al-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarrī (d. 449/1058; see Sperl 1989: 97–154). Its use in combination with other figures is seen to advantage in this *zuhdiyya* from the *Luzūmiyyāt*, which begins, unusually, with a *nasīb* (text, ibid: 190–3; translation, ibid.: 211–13; phrases in square brackets are Sperl's; transcriptions are added).

1 Can Nawār be considered part of the brightness of lights (*sanā l-anwāri*), when gazelles whose sight emaciates [you] (*ʿaraḍna bawārī*) are part of death (*mina l-bawāri*)?

2 They are white and prey on hearts (*dawārin lil-qulūbi*) as though they were wide-eyed ones on curving sands (*ʿīnun bi-duwwārin*) and Duwār's holy site (*ʿayni Duwārī*).

3 The dwelling's pegs and ropes (*uwāriyyu l-manāzili*) do not sense (*mā darat*) that in my entrails I conceal my ardent love (*uwārī . . . uwārī*).

4 Those who forge lies about you (*fawārī l-mayni*) found a hearing while your passion flares (*fawārī*) within you [unrequited].

5 Rise early if the white-skinned maidens (*ḥawāriyyātu*) chase you; like she-camels trailing their new-born calf (*ḥuwāriyyāti ithra ḥuwārī*),

6 They give the young male camel tender care at nightfall (*fī r-rawāḥi*), yet all you gain is dazzling eyes (*ḥawarin*) and talk of niceties (*ḥusni ḥiwārī*).

7 They dally with their visitors (*zuwwāri*) like gamblers at play; and once they find their pleasure they are gone (*dhawārī*).

8 Like flocks of deer (*ṣiwāri*) when you detect their musky scent (*ṣuwārahā*). Your heart's desires thus collect (*ṣawārī*) but lasting pain.

9 So let a maiden's twin bracelets (*siwāray ghādatin*) and anklets (*burāhumā*) be like nose-rings of camels journeying in caravan through morning and through night (*burā ghawādin . . . sawārī*).

Al-Maʿarrī's *Luzūmiyyāt* are so called because they observe certain constraints with regard to rhyme (termed *luzūm mā lā yalzam*, "the necessity of the unnecessary"; see Meisami and Starkey 1998, s.v. [W. Stoetzer]) which determine the form of the collection as a whole: it consists of 29 sections, one for each letter of the alphabet (28 plus *hamza*), in each of which "every rhyme letter is to appear with the four vocalizations possible in Arabic" – *fatḥa* (*a*), *kasra* (*i*), *ḍamma* (*u*), and *sukūn*, unvocalized (except for *alif*, which can only take "*a*") – and "requiring each *rawiyy* [rhyme consonant] to be supplemented by an additional letter" (Sperl 1989: 101). In this particular poem, moreover, the poet, "due to an alliterative style, restricts his freedom of choice still further" (ibid.: 102); it illustrates his somewhat *recherché* use of *tajnīs* (in all its forms) and *radd al-ʿajuz*, especially in conjunction with rhyme, both internal and final.

One function of *tajnīs* is, of course, the "subtle investigation of meaning and creation of morphological and semantic variety" through "the combination of words of different roots;" for example, line 1b of this poem

> joins two words of different root: *bawār* ('perdition['], from *b-w-r*), and *bawārī* ('emaciating' from *b-r-y*). 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'. (ibid.: 107)

We should also note that there is partial *tajnīs* between *bawār* and Nawār (the name of the beloved, itself combined in *tajnīs* with *anwār*, "lights"), orthographically identical except for their pointing, and that the *tajnīs* of line 1 is extended to perform a structural function in line 9 – the transitional line which opens the poem's central segment (9–16) – with the repeated *burā* ("anklets", "nose-rings").

Sperl also notes the function of place-names in connection with *tajnīs* (reflecting the concept of "right naming"), seen in line 2 with its play on *dawār*, "preying", *duwwār*, "curving sands", and Duwār, a pre-Islamic shrine, with, again, an additional *tajnīs* between *ʿīn*, "wide-eyed", and *ʿayn*, "spring" (such shrines were often located near springs believed to be sacred, and worship involved circumambulation of the shrine [*dāra, dawwāra, dawāra*; participial form *dawwār*] while naked). Mention of the shrine incorporates an allusion to pre-Islamic poems such as the *Muʿallaqa* of Imruʾ al-Qays:

> A flock presented themselves to us, the cows among them like Duwār
> virgins mantled in their long-trailing draperies. (ibid.: 108–9)

"Nawār" itself is full of resonances, being a name which features in many a pre-Islamic and Islamic *nasīb*.[29] The *tajnīs* is echoed again in *mā darat*, "(they) do not sense", in 3 (a partial *tajnīs*, derived from *d-r-y*), and in yet another partial *tajnīs*, *dhawārī*, "they are gone", the rhyme-word of 7, itself in partial *tajnīs* (and *muṭābaqa*) with *zuwwār*, "visitors".

Radd al-ʿajuz and *tajnīs* are concentrated most heavily in the *nasīb* of al-Maʿarrī's poem, each of whose eight lines features both, often in combination, thus providing a sounding-board, so to speak, against which the remainder of the poem can be read. In addition, there is a particularly significant cluster of both figures in the lines which form the transition to the second segment, which moves from the suggestion of a *raḥīl* (9–12) to the motif of transience (13–16). The cluster *siwāri/ṣuwārahā/ṣawārī* (8) gives way to *siwāray/sawārī* (9; accompanied by *ghādatin/ghawādin* and *burāhumā/li-burā*); the repetitive sibilants are augmented in the two lines which follow:

10 They hasten with saddle utensils (*shiwāri*) tattered (*khalaq*) and upon
   them are men (*akhlāq*) disposed to evil trades (*shawārī*).
11 Do not lament (*lā tashkuwanna*), for lamentation (*shikāya*) is but
   lowliness! Truly, the steeds shall show their worth on the
   showground (*bil-mishwārī*).

La-tuʿraḍanna, "shall show their worth" echoes *ʿaraḍna*, "they [the gazelles] displayed themselves" of line 1, suggesting that life itself is the testing-ground. The sibilants find a fading echo in the next lines –

12 I swear, their lowing (*al-khuwāru*) shall not protect the wild herds at
   Shāba's stony mount and the soft sands (*wan-naqā l-khawwārī*).
13 White hair (*mashīb*) alarms the man of understanding (*labīb*) since it
   will ever herald change of neighbourhood (*jiwārī*) –

which mark the transition to the motif of transience which occupies the centre of the poem. The rhyme of the next line –

14 How wretched are animal creatures; no plant feels grief at the sight of
   white blossoms (*nuwwārī*) –

echoes the *tajnīs Nawār/anwār* of 1a; its central position brings home the point that worldly delights – indeed, life itself – are, like love, transient, and bring only sorrow and regret.

The next cluster occurs in the concluding line of this segment –

16   Those eagles (*nusūr*) fly up (*ṭawāʾirun*) from their nests (*wukūri*) while fates swoop down upon them suddenly (*ṭawārī*) –

where it anticipates the opening of the third segment (17–24), which announces that all life's adornments (sc. *sawāray*) are borrowed goods which must be returned:

17   Borrowed items (*ʿawārī*) must all be returned; hand and body shall be naked of them (*minhā … ʿawārī*).

Men are phantoms in time who appear and disappear like bubbles (18–19);

20   Fate's assault (*sawāru d-dahri*) lames all attackers (*kulla musāwirin*); it struck down Abraham with marksman's arrows (*bi-ashumi l-uswārī*).
21   So beware – even as you foray far against the enemy – of a destiny that pillaged (*aghāra*) Abū l-Mighwār.

The *exempla* of Abraham and Abū al-Mighwār (the *kunya* of the poet and chieftain Mālik ibn Nuwayra [d. 632; see Sperl 1989: 213n.], whose name contains a hidden and allusive pun on Nawār, as does Abraham [Ibrāhīm] on *bawārī/burā* etc.), both struck down by fate, occupy the centre of this segment; the *tajnīs aghāra/Abī l-Mighwārī*, moreover, echoes *bi-ghayrihinna/ghayru* in 19. This segment concludes with a partial *tajnīs* on *wukūr* in 16 (23: *al-akwāri/ al-akwārī*, "passing eons"/"saddles") and a recapitulation of its opening rhyme:

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 (*kal-ʿuwwārī*).

All men are equal in death; the concluding lines of the poem provide a sentential cap which verifies this truth.

25   It is said that the length of Time can turn a sturdy mountain into surging and tumultuous [seas].
26   [Death]-sentences (*qaḍāyā*) are passed upon mankind and executed justly, or without defence (*ṣuduqan bi-aswārin wa-lā aswārī*).

Sperl notes,

> *Sūr, aswār* denotes a (defensive) wall. According to the notes of the edition, *sūr* may also be a technical term qualifying logical propositions (*qaḍāyā*).… The line would then read 'logical propositions circulate among mankind and are 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. (1989: 213n.)

But this final *tajnīs* contains other implications as well: that, for example, neither worldly possessions or ornaments (*suwāray*, 9) nor bold warriors (*musāwir*, 20) can fend off the assaults of time (*sawāru d-dahri*) nor its unerring arrows (*ashumi l-uswārī*, 20).

Al-Maʿarrī's language in this poem belongs to what Sperl terms the "mannered" style, in which language itself is the focus, and which "aims … at actual discord between signifier and signified" (ibid.: 163). But this poem is more than pure mannerism (as is seen for example in the poetry of Mihyār al-Daylamī): it rests on an assumption about language (and, ultimately, about the poetry which uses that language) which sees conventional usage (and conventional poetry) as deceptive. The shifting meanings conveyed through *tajnīs* and emphasized through *radd al-ʿajuz* point to this potential duplicity; they also point to the conclusion that all words (and the actions, emotions, objects they represent) lead, in the end, to death. Nor is there for al-Maʿarrī, as there was for Abū al-ʿAtāhiya, a consolation in the anticipation of God's forgiveness, to the pious man, in the next world; it is as though that world did not exist, while this one is a mirage of words which do not mean what they seem to mean.

As in the *zuhdiyya*,

> in the *Luzūmiyyāt*, too, death and transience invalidate every human attempt at leaving an imprint on the world … 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 … culminate in the assertion that not only death but with it a senseless cruelty are engrained in the fabric of the world. (ibid.: 98)

In the face of this senselessness, al-Maʿarrī enjoins not blind piety, but the "ethical self-examination" which is, at its origin, not "a form of conduct dictated by unquestioned [religious] precepts but an integrity of conduct due to the ethical perception of reason" (ibid.). It is this emphasis on reason that characterizes what Sperl calls the poet's "redefinition" of the linguistic and literary heritage. Poetry must be true; thus al-Maʿarrī criticizes traditional poets "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" (ibid.: 100). All these subjects (except wine) come in for scrutiny in the present poem, which reworks traditional images in traditional language pushed, however, to the extreme – an extremism which reveals the falsity which underlies such poetry, the fact that it is only language.

Persian poets, because of the different nature of the language in which they are working, rely less heavily on such devices as extended *tajnīs* or *radd al-aʿjāz*, as these figures are difficult to sustain throughout a poem, and the effect, when

used, is highly – often deliberately – artificial, and highly Arabized. An example is Khāqānī's brief *qaṣīda* discussed above under *tajnīs*, in which much of the wordplay relies on Arabic vocabulary; for example, in line 9 –

9 *Sang ba-qarrāba-i khishān fikan*
   khīsh u qarābāt-i digar-sān ṭalab
   Into the flask of kinsmen throw a stone;
   a different sort of kinsmen, near ones, seek –

the pun on *qarrāba/qarābat* "flask"/"closeness" (the second the Persian form of the word); or the parallels between *markaz/mashrab/maqṣad*, all Arabic nouns of place. Some poets deliberately cultivated the *qaṣīda maṣnūʿa*, which employs a particular figure or group of figures throughout; especially noted in this regard was Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāṭ, whose poems of this type often seem like rhetorical exercises. In one *qaṣīda*, for example (1960: 29–30), he employs *tajnīs* to link the rhyme-words of each pair of verses, as well as resorting to other devices; the first several lines of the opening provide an example of the effect.

1 *Zahī dushman-at az ṭarab **bī-navā***
   *zada charkh dar midḥat-i tu **navā***
2 *Hudā yāfta az jalāl-at jamāl*
   *jahān sākhta az navāl-at **navā***
3 *Maʿānī ba-lafẓ-i tu yābad sharaf*
   *maʿānī zi jāh-i tu gīrad **bahā***
4 *Ba-vaqt-i sakhā gawhar-i ābdār*
   *chu khāk-ast nazdīk-i tu **bī-bahā***
5 *Valī-rā vafāq-at ṣavābī ṣavāb*
   *ʿudū-rā khilāf-at khaṭā-ī **khaṭā***
6 *Na chun rāy-i tu akhtarān-i falak*
   *na chun **khaṭṭ-i** tu luʿbatān-i **khatā***

1 Bravo! you whose enemies are **destitute** of pleasure;
   the sphere has given **voice** to your praise.
2 Beauty has found right guidance through your might;
   the world has made **provision** from your **bounty**.
3 Meanings from your words derive honour;
   meanings from your magnificence gain **brilliance**.
4 At the time of your largesse the lustrous pearl
   is to as you **worthless** as dirt.
5 To your friend agreement with you is true rightness;
   to your foe opposition to you is true **error**.
6 The stars in the heavens are not as (brilliant) as your judgement;
   the beauties of **Cathay** are not (lovely) as your **script**.

Each set of verses is paired both by the *tajnīs* in the rhymes and by statements which are either parallel ("meanings gain honour/meanings gain brilliance [or worth]") or antithetical ("your friend/your enemy"). There is also a high level of

tajnīs within the verses themselves, perhaps the most conspicuous being, in the opening pair, between *navā*, "voice" (1b), "provision" (2b), *bī-navā*, "destitute" (1a), and *navāl*, "bounty" (2b), and between *navāl/jalāl/jamāl* "bounty/might/beauty", which also rhyme (note also the high frequency of *tarṣīʿ*), and in 5–6 between *khaṭā-i khaṭā/khaṭṭ/khatā*, "pure error/script/Cathay" (spelled here with *t* rather than the more usual *ṭ*, to point out, orthographically, the dissimilarity posited), with echoes in *khilāf-at* "opposition to you" and *akhtarān* "stars". Moreover, while the *tajnīsāt* in the first part of the *qaṣīda* involve both Persian and Arabic vocabulary (e.g., *navā* in all its senses is Persian; *navāl* is Arabic), as the poem progresses the poet resorts increasingly to the Arabic, and internal *tajnīsāt* decrease in frequency.

Another *qaṣīda* by Rashīd al-Dīn features *tarṣīʿ* throughout (1960: 314–16). We have already quoted the opening lines of this poem in the section on *tarṣīʿ* above, as it is one of Rashīd al-Dīn's illustrative examples; but we may take another look at the poem to note how other figures operate in combination with this device.

1	*Ay munavvar*	*ba-tu*	*nujūm-i*	*jalāl*
	v-ay muqarrar	*ba-tu*	*rusūm-i*	*kamāl*
2	*Būstānī-st*	*ṣadr-i tu*		*zi naʿīm*
	v-āsmānī-st	*qadr-i tu*		*zi jalāl*
3	*Khidmat-i tu*	*muʿavvil-i*		*dawlat*
	ḥaẓrat-i tu	*muqabbil-i*		*iqbāl*
4	*Tīra*	*pīsh-i*	*faẓāʾil-i tu*	*nujūm*
	khīra	*pīsh-i*	*shamāʾil-i tu*	*shimāl*
1	O you by whom	might's stars		are given light,
	O you by whom	perfection's way's		made right:
2	A garden	brought from Paradise		your court;
	a heaven	is your power		from your might.
3	Your service	the supporter		of dominion,
	your court	the bringer of		prosperity;
4	Darkened	before your virtues		are the stars;
	bewildered	before your qualities		is virtue.

Internal rhyme and balanced phrasing are the essential features here, and there are few other figures apart from the occasional *tajnīsāt*, e.g. *ṣadr/qadr* (2), *tīra/khīra* (4); *muqabbil-i iqbāl* (3), *shamāʾil/shimāl* (4), the latter a pun meaning both "virtue" (parallel to "qualities") and "north", i.e. the region of the ruler's domains. Each line, moreover, consists of a pair of parallel or antithetical statements: "a garden/a heaven", "dark/bewildered", and so on. This pattern is preserved basically unchanged throughout the *qaṣīda*, except for places where the *bazm/razm*, "feasting and warfare" antithesis is introduced:

9	*Bazm-gāh-i tu*	*manbaʿ-i*	*lazzāt*
	razm-gāh-i tu	*majmaʿ-i*	*ahvāl*

10	*Na malik-rā*	*zi-ṭāʿat-i tu*	*malām*
	na falak-rā	*zi-khidmat-i tu*	*malāl*
9	Your feasting-place	is a source	of pleasures;
	your battle-ground	is a gathering	of horrors.
10	No ruler	in obeying you	accrues blame;
	nor does the sphere	from serving you	grow tired.
27	*ʿUnf-i tu*	*vaqt-i qahr*	*tāb-i saʿīr*
	luṭf-i tu	*vaqt-i mihr*	*āb-i zulāl*
28	*Ahl-i dīn-rā*	*ba-tu-st*	*istiẓhār*
	ahl-i kīn-rā	*ba-tu-st*	*istīṣāl*
27	Your harshness	in times of anger	is hell's heat;
	your gentleness	in times of kindness	is clear water.
28	Men of religion	through you	find support;
	men of rancour	by you	are destroyed.

The overall effect is carried into the *duʿā*:

35	*Tā nabāshad*	*ṣalāḥ*		*hamchu fasād*	
	tā nabāshad	*rashād*		*hamchu ẕalāl*	
36	*Bād*	*ʿaṣr u dūd-i tu*		*aʿyād*	
	bād	*qaṣr-i ḥasūd-i tu*		*aṭlāl....*	
40	*Qaṣr-i*	*maḥrūs-i tu*	*maqarr-i*	*kirām*
	ṣadr-i	*maʾnūs-i tu*	*mafarr-i*	*rijāl*
35	As long as	righteousness		is not like	corruption;
	as long as	right guidance		is not like	error:
36	May	your age and your kin		remain prosperous;	
	may	your envier's palace		become ruined traces....	
40	Your well-guarded	palace	the home of	noble men;
	your gladdening	court	the refuge of	the great.

As in Rashīd al-Dīn's *qaṣīda* discussed in Chapter 5, stylistic devices – above all, that of an overall harmony of composition – both serve as organizing features and carry thematic weight. While in that *qaṣīda* they served to support a conciliatory theme (through the addition of the admonitory passage), here however they contribute to a similar effect of balance thematically linked to the motif of the ruler's justice, without there being (apparently at least) a sub-text. Moreover, these particular features are characteristic of Rashīd al-Dīn's style in general, and seem, for whatever reason, to be favored by him more than by other poets of his time.

We have begun to discern differences in the use of ornament between Arabic and Persian poetry, and in particular a more widespread reliance in the former on "figures of wording" (always, however, linked to semantic content) as organizing features. Persian tends to rely more heavily (though this is a broad generalization, and individual poets differ) on imagery as an organizing principle; and it is to the discussion of poetic imagery that we shall turn in the following chapter.

ORNAMENT:
METAPHOR AND IMAGERY

> What a felicitous alchemy is poetry!
> Nāṣir-i Khusraw

Problems of metaphor

> This is a subject which has given rise to interminable disputes among the teachers of [literature], who have quarreled no less violently with the philosophers than among themselves over the problem of the genera and species into which tropes may be divided, their number and their correct classification. (Quintilian; quoted in Preminger 1993: 760)

The nature of metaphor, and of figurative language in general, is no less a subject of dispute today than it was even before Quintilian's time. (For some summaries of recent positions see the essays in Sacks 1979.) Metaphors have been analyzed and classified; distinctions have been made between metaphor and simile, metonymy, synecdoche, analogy, and so on; definitions encompass concepts of borrowing, transference, substitution, resemblance, interaction, and a host of others (see the bibliography in ibid.: 766; see also Preminger 1993, art. "Metaphor"). There seems no end in sight to this debate; thus, rather than entering into it here, I will limit myself to a consideration of some medieval Arab and Persian critical views on metaphor – or more generally comparison or "likening" – and, more importantly, of how, and why, poets employed it.

In Aristotle's *Poetics* metaphor is said to function "to lend dignity to style, by creating an enigma that reveals a likeness, or by giving a name to something that had been nameless;" in the *Rhetoric*, it "appears as a technique of persuasion, used to make a case better or worse than it is in fact" (Sacks 1979: 760). Aristotle posited two types of metaphor, one based on substitution by similarity, the other on substitution by analogy or contiguity (see e.g. Williams 1980: 23). The resulting theoretical bifurcation was inherited by the Arab critics, who discussed metaphor (*istiʿāra*, literally "borrowing") both with respect to figurative expressions in the Koran[1] and in the criticism of poetry. Their complex and often contradictory arguments will not be repeated here;[2] but we

may summarize briefly some of the observations made by W. Heinrichs in his studies of the subject.

W. Heinrichs argues that *badīʿ* was at first "used synonymously with *istiʿāra*" (1986: 3), and that it was originally limited to "analogy-based imaginary metaphors" ("old" metaphors), linked to "the common denominator of the five *badīʿ* types," namely, various types of verbal repetition (1984a: 190–1). The "ancient authorities" considered "old" metaphors, like Abū Dhuʾayb's "When Death sinks its claws in, you will find all amulets of no avail," as "borrowing" (*istiʿāra*), in that "the 'claws' were borrowed from a beast of prey to be given to Death on loan, as it were;" whereas in reality, "the *istiʿāra* is based on a *tamthīl*, an analogy between the inevitable assault of death and the relentless attack of a predatory beast, and . . . in the process of projecting the analogue onto the topic to create the image one element of the analogue ['claws'] was carried over into the image."[3] This type of "old" metaphor "results in an imaginary ascription (namely, of claws to death);" in other cases, however, "the element carried over from the analogue does have a counterpart in the topic" (1986: 3–4).[4]

Heinrichs distinguishes between such "old" or "imaginary" metaphors and "non-imaginary" ones, as in the adage "'Thought is the marrow of action' (*al-fikru mukhkhu l-ʿamal*) . . . adduced by Ibn al-Muʿtazz as an example of *istiʿāra*," the difference being, first, that "whereas the 'claws' have no substratum in reality, the 'marrow' . . . does, since it is explicitly equated with 'thought,' and, second, that the 'claws' are accompanied by a suitable verb metaphor ('sinks in') . . . whereas there is no such additional metaphor in the case of the 'marrow of action.' In poetry, however, the concomitant verb metaphor is the usual" (ibid.: 4). He further distinguishes between "identifying genitive metaphor[s]" – e.g. "the young she-camel of praise", which is "not based on a simile, as such genitive metaphors often are," but is "part of an analogy,"[5] and "attributive genitive metaphors" such as the "claws of death" and the "marrow of action" (ibid.: 4–5).[6]

The "new" metaphors of the *Muḥdathūn*, which sparked a critical debate, differ from "old" metaphors in three major ways. The first is

> the generating mechanism of the *istiʿāra*: while the ancient poet would start from an analogy and project the analogue onto the topic, thus creating an image which, although possibly containing an imaginary element, would seem natural, the *muḥdath* poet would often construct an imaginary element by taking an already existing metaphor (mostly a verb metaphor) and proceeding on the level of the analogue to an adjacent element with no counterpart in the topic.

An example is Abū Nuwās's

> *Wa-idhā bādā qtādat maḥāsinuhū   qasran ilayhi aʿinnata l-ḥadaqī*
> And when he appears, his beauties lead the reins of the pupils towards
>   him by force,

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in which "the total image of which the [imaginary] 'reins' form a part" was generated, not "by having recourse to an underlying analogy of horses being led by their reins", but by way of the "relatively weak verb metaphor *iqtādat* ('leading, esp. an animal'), the 'reins' being the most prominent adjacent element on the level of the analogue." The resulting "imaginary" metaphor "reins [of pupils]" is not only "semantically superfluous" – "it would be perfectly possible to turn *al-ḥadaq* ('the pupils of the eyes') into a direct object of the verb *iqtādat*" – but "slightly illogical (you lead the animal, not the reins);" thus it is "an 'artificial' construct and insert" with its basis, first and foremost, in language (ibid.: 5–6).[7]

A second example is Abū Tammām's famous and much-disputed line,

> *Lā tasqinī māʾa l-malāmi fa-innanī   ṣabbun qad-i staʿdhabtu māʾa bukāʾī*
> Do not pour me the water of blame, for I am a man in love, and have
>   come to find the water of my weeping sweet.

Heinrichs cites al-Āmidī's defense of "this bold metaphor": "since it is common idiomatic usage in cases of criticism and blame to use verb metaphors like 'making s.o. drink it' or (as in English) 'making s.o. swallow it,' Abū Tammām could easily attribute to 'blame' the element 'water' by way of 'borrowing' (*ʿalā l-istiʿāra*)."[8] It was a common *Muḥdath* practice "to extract new, often imaginary, metaphors from existing ones;" Ibn Sinān al-Khafājī called this "*al-istiʿāra al-mabniya ʿalā ghayrihā* 'the metaphor that is built (or based) on another,'" and asserted "that such metaphors will always be *baʿīd* 'far-fetched' and, therefore, ugly" (ibid.: 6–7; see also Heinrichs 1977: 27; Ibn Sinān 1953: 134–5).

Second, the Abbasid period saw an "influx of 'new' metaphors (the 'ruby'-for-'lip' type)", based on simple comparisons (Heinrichs 1977: 1), "into the formation of 'old' metaphors", producing a metaphor based on both a *tamthīl* (analogy) and a *tashbīh* (simile) which "will not be an imaginary metaphor; rather, it will have a counterpart in the topic to which it will be tied on the basis of a simile." An example is Abū Nuwās's

> In the area of a cheek whose water [*māʾuhu*] has not trickled away and
>   which the eyes of people have not waded in,

in which

> The poet starts from a nominal metaphor (based on a simile) which … happens to be a lexical item: *māʾ* in the sense of "lustre" … [and] proceeds on the level of the analogue, i.e., the "water," to appropriate verbs … which function as verb metaphors in their new context, and thus form a total image … based on an analogy (such as: "The lustre of the cheek does not become dull, just like water not trickling into the ground"). The potential of this particular type of metaphor for further poetical elaborations and ramifications is considerable, because if we look at the word *māʾ* … more closely we find that it has two interesting properties:

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First, it is a metaphor taken literally – the line is based on the pretense that the lustre of the cheek is real water – and the poet may choose to elaborate on this aspect (e.g. by introducing a real water into the context and playing with the figure of speech called *tajāhul al-ʿārif* "feigned ignorance"). And, secondly, *māʾ* with its two meanings of "water" and "lustre" constitutes the bifurcation point of topic and analogue and may thus be made the starting-point for a *murāʿāt an-naẓīr* (harmonious choice of images). For these reasons this kind of metaphor gradually became the favourite of the *muḥdath* poets … (1986: 7–8)[9]

The metaphor is thus based on the *tashbīh* "lustre is like water" and the *tamthīl* "lustre of cheek does not become dull just like water not trickling into the ground", the latter "artificially and artfully generated from a nominal metaphor … mostly leading to apposite verb metaphors," and reversing the process of extracting "nominal metaphors, mostly of the imaginary type … from non-imaginary verb metaphors" (ibid.: 8–9).

The third characteristic is that "the poet would very often firmly tie the *istiʿāra* into the line of poetry by introducing a concomitant *istiʿāra* and/or a *muṭābaqa* … or a *tajnīs* or any other figure of speech involving repetition, in which the *istiʿāra* would then function as one of the two terms involved" (ibid.: 9). We shall see many instances of such linkage of metaphor with other figures (often in order to build up an extended image or cluster of related images) when we consider examples of imagery later in this chapter.

Despite their complex and often contradictory theories, the critics all agree on the importance of metaphor both for stylistic elegance and for conveying meaning. For Ibn Qutayba in his *Taʾwīl mushkil al-Qurʾān* (on Koranic exegesis), "*Istiʿāra* is a general term for 'figurative use of words',", and thus falls under the more general heading of *majāz* ("everything that goes beyond the strictly logical application of language") (Heinrichs 1977: 30–1). Ibn Rashīq defines *istiʿāra* as "the most excellent kind of *majāz* and the first of the subcategories of *badīʿ*," thus combining the exegetical and rhetorical-poetic traditions (ibid.: 48–9)[10] and apparently considering all *istiʿārāt* to be based on analogy (*tamthīl*) (ibid.: 51). Because of its central importance to poetry *istiʿāra* was ultimately removed from the category of *badīʿ* and placed in the broader one of *bayān*, "stylistics". It was ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (to whom we will return) who developed perhaps the most comprehensive theory of analogical metaphor, and who demonstrates an awareness of both its centrality to poetic language and its unifying potential: in the *Dalāʾil al-iʿjāz*, for example, he states that *istiʿāra*, *kināya*, *tamthīl* and "all figures of speech, are inseparable elements of construction. . . . It is inconceivable that any of them can be used in discourse as a single and isolated element, without being intended to be linked to other elements through grammatical and syntactic relations" (translated by Abu Deeb 1979: 627).

Most Western scholars (like the medieval rhetoricians) have been concerned with establishing a typology of metaphor, and their discussions (like those of

the medieval critics) are based largely on single lines.[11] But as Heinrichs admits,

> It is ... exceedingly difficult at times to find out from a particular line of poetry which method [for generating metaphors] was working in the mind of the poet when he created that particular metaphor. If it turns out that the metaphor in question is semantically superfluous [like Abū Nuwās's "reins of the pupils"], that omitting it would not greatly alter the meaning of the line, this would be a good indication that we are dealing with a "metaphor based on another" and thus with a typically *muḥdath* line of poetry. The question, of course, arises: if it is semantically superfluous, how can it become poetically meaningful? (1986: 7)

In an effort to suggest at least partial answers to this question, Heinrichs identifies two "special effects" achieved by the pairing of metaphors: first, to bring about "formal unity", meaning "that two or more traditional motifs which are contiguous in the ancient poetry are unified and made coherent on a purely literary level by the use of rhetorical figures and images" (ibid.: 14; see also 1973: 63, 65, 67 for examples); and second, "to treat one topic with the vocabulary of another", a technique which Heinrichs considers "of high importance for Arabic literary history" since it "goes a big step towards creating two-layered poetry, i.e., poems with two levels of meaning." For example, "when love is expressed in the vocabulary of war, the additional dimension may say something about the views of the poet on the essence of love." The "culmination point of this development is poetry in which both levels are more or less topically intended, as ... in love and wine poetry intended for the conveyance of mystical truth" (1986: 16–17). Both of these "special effects" – especially the latter, through which, as we have seen, the erotic or descriptive imagery of the *nasīb* expresses topics relevant to the *madīḥ*, but in a different "language" (so to speak) – have clear potential for extension beyond the single line and thus for becoming instrumental in unifying a poem or a part of a poem.

Imagery and poetic unity

One thing that is lacking in most modern discussions of *istiʿāra* is an analysis of metaphor (as of imagery in general) in terms of function, as well as of its use as a unifying technique. It seems clear that poets did not deploy their metaphors, or images, at random, but in relation to the larger poem (and, moreover, that critics were well aware of this), and that, as we have indeed seen, metaphors or images were often extended beyond the single line. Several devices in particular have obvious structural as well as semantic potential: the use of linked or functionally related images to create image-clusters throughout a poem;[12] extended metaphor; and the related device of personification. All of these, moreover, have implications for the creation of allegorical imagery.[13]

Some scholars have viewed the existence – indeed, even the possibility – of personification in Islamic literatures as problematic (see e.g. Clinton 1976: 170 n. 11); others have discussed it in terms of the "animation" or "humanization" of nature or of inanimate objects (see e.g. Ritter 1927; Reinert 1972, 1973; Bürgel 1983; Schoeler 1974 points to numerous examples of both personification and extended metaphor). The issue is often linked with that of attitudes or "responses" to nature (discussed further below), and treated through (anachronistic) comparisons of medieval Arabic and Persian with Western Romantic poetry. We have already seen enough examples of personification – in Abū Tammām's panegyric to al-Muʿtaṣim, ʿAlī ibn al-Jahm's elegy on al-Mutawakkil, Farrukhī's Ramaḍān qaṣīda, Manūchihrī's New Year qaṣīda, to mention only a few – to realize that it occurs frequently and often carries allegorical significance; but it has seldom been discussed, perhaps because of certain assumptions about the procedure that have been inherited from Western criticism, about the "atomistic" nature of Arabo-Persian poetry, and about "Islamic" attitudes towards the animation of the inanimate. Thus it seems appropriate to make a brief digression on the subject.

Personification – "a manner of speech endowing nonhuman objects, abstractions, or creatures with life and human characteristics" – has in classical literatures been linked both to features of language and to the replacement by personified abstractions of "mythical figures when rational attitudes superseded the primitive imagination" and the subsequent rise of allegory (Preminger 1993: 902). E. H. Gombrich ascribes its origins to the common procedure in Latin and Greek "of forming abstract feminine nouns which are indistinguishable from the designation of female divinities" (1971: 249), and asks,

> If it is true that personification can be explained psychologically through the structure of language one would like to know how far the habit is indeed shared among language communities other than the classical ones. . . . Is it a more or less universal feature or is it confined to the classical tradition? . . . is there an independent tradition of this kind in Semitic languages and literature? (ibid.: 249–50)

This question leads to another: "Is it at all possible to study the classical tradition if one studies it in isolation? May not the distinctive features which give it its character escape us if we neglect looking out of the window at other traditions?" (ibid.: 250). But while Sanskrit, for instance, "can form similar abstractions which can be and are personified," Gombrich considers the examples provided by Sanskritists to be exceptions, and concludes, "My hunch is that even within the Indo-European family the classical tradition of personification stands out" and is "unique" in that in it, personification involves the fusion of abstractions with what were formerly deities (ibid.: 250–1). "I do not think this particular development has a parallel in Eastern thought where the question whether the demons and the divinities of mythology really exist is bypassed in favour of other problems which may be more profound but do not

permit this characteristic creation of a twilight zone between mythology and metaphor" (ibid.: 252).

Is personification merely, or even primarily, a question of grammatical gender? Gombrich thinks so: "Those who have emphasized that our languages which endow nouns with genders will tend naturally to personification are of course right" (ibid.: 254). If this is true, we should expect to find personification more prominent in Arabic than in Persian, which lacks gender. Is this in fact the case? Further, is personification merely, or even primarily, a question of mythopoesis, either in a general sense or, more narrowly, as the "metaphorization" of old gods into personified abstractions? And if so, does this not preclude "Islamic" poetry from employing a procedure which smacks of idolatry?

With respect to the first question, Morton Bloomfield has remarked on the relative freedom of "a writer of English after about 1300, unlike his German or French counterparts ... in choosing masculine or feminine gender for his personified figures" (1970a: 244). Although "languages with grammatical gender, unlike English, have automatically built-in personification of some sort" (ibid.: 244–5), Bloomfield does not find this a useful criterion for studying either personification allegory – defined as "the process of animating inanimate objects or abstract notions" – or personification, "the animate figure thereby created", indicated by such grammatical features as "verbs which are normally only used of living beings," "the use of the vocative case or vocative form" and the like (ibid.: 246–7). Bloomfield distinguishes various types of "pseudo-personification": the non-extended (often clichéd) use of "simple animate metaphors" ("the storm is howling outside"); formal personification (calling a ship "she"); emblematic personification (the Slough of Despond, etc.); and characterizing names (e.g. "Fondlove, Wringhim, Quiverful, Thwackum"). Finally, he asserts, "unless the animation is individualized, it is not a true animation. The inanimate notion or object must take on the general characteristics of an individual human being, not just any animate characteristics" (ibid.: 248–9).

The second question can only be answered by reference both to examples and to the discussions of the critics. Let us begin with the critics. One of Ibn al-Muʿtazz's first examples of *istiʿāra* is the Koranic *umm al-kitāb* "mother of the book" (1935: 2; Koran 3: 8), of which, says Heinrichs, "one may say that the word *umm* ... has been borrowed for 'unambiguous verses' ... – which is an unusual application – from 'mother' – which is the usual application," but which differs from other, similar *shawāhid* (e.g. *janāḥ al-dhull* "wing of humility"; cf. Koran 17: 24). Heinrichs suggests (1977: 34) that Ibn al-Muʿtazz's explanation should be rendered, "[The *badīʿ* here] is ... the borrowing of a concept for something in connection with which it has not been known from something in connection with which it has been known," that is, "the borrowing of the concept 'mother' ('wing') for something in connection with which it is not known, *viz.* a 'Book' ('humility') from something in connection with which it is known, *viz.* a 'child' ('bird')" – in other words, we are dealing with "old" metaphors, and the question of personification is not an issue.[14]

Al-Marzubānī provides an example of personification which he himself finds objectionable:

Among obscure narratives [*ḥikāyāt*] and far-fetched allusions are al-Muthaqqib's lines describing his camel:

"When I strap the saddlegirth she says
'Will this forever be my wont and my fate?
Is life but camp and journey?
Will nothing pity and preserve me?'"

This story about his camel is *majāz*, far from (literal) truth; the poet meant by it that if his camel could speak she would express her complaint in words like this. Closer to reality are ʿAntara's lines describing his horse:

"[. . . the lances were like well-ropes sinking into the breast of my black steed.] . . .
and he twisted round to the spears' impact upon his breast
and complained to me, sobbing and whimpering;
had he known the art of conversation, he would have protested,

and had he been acquainted with speech, he would have spoken to me."
(1924: 92; translation of al-Muthaqqib from J. Stetkevych 1993: 295 n. 78; translation of ʿAntara and bracketed line from Arberry 1957: 183)[15]

Averroes, who considers metaphor one of the distinguishing features of "poeticality", of the poetic use of language, observes that Ibn al-Muʿtazz's line,

Oh, abode! Where are your red-lipped gazelles?
In its humanity, there was sociability for me,

"becomes a poem because he makes 'abode' take the place of a speaking being by addressing it, substitutes 'gazelles' for the utterance 'women,' and brings forth a correspondence between the utterances 'humanity' and 'sociability' [*ins/uns*]" (1986: 131; 1953: 243).[16] Elsewhere, he notes that one of the features of the "poetry of the Arabs" is their "placing inanimate objects [*jumādāt*; Butterworth translates "bodies"] in the position of speaking [*nāṭiq*; Butterworth: "rational"] beings in their speeches and petitions when the former have conditions that point to speech [*nuṭq*; Butterworth: "reason"]," as in Majnūn's

I broke into tears when I saw Mount Tūbādh,
and it praised the Compassionate when it saw me;
So I said to it: where are those I knew so well
dwelling around you in safety and blissful tranquillity?
And it said: they went away and left me their villages for safekeeping,
for who will remain in the face of adversity?

"Under this heading comes their addressing [deserted] abodes and the traces of campsites and these replying to them," Averroes continues, quoting lines by

Dhū al-Rumma in which the *rabʿ* is "about to speak", and by ʿAntara in which the *dār* "speaks like the muttering deaf", and concluding, "He [Aristotle] has already mentioned this topic in the *Rhetoric*, noting that Homer used to have frequent recourse to it" (1986: 106–8 [Butterworth's translation emended]; 1953: 228–9. The text has al-Thūbān for al-Tūbādh; on the correct identification see 1953: 228 n. 4. See also al-Mana 1994: 54, 62; and cf. Ibn Sinān 1953: 41–4, who discusses various views on the subject).[17] Not all addresses to the abodes (especially when they are designated as mute, unanswering stones) involve true personification, as they are not (as in Majnūn's lines) individualized, nor is the personification extended. Though they may be said to substitute for their vanished inhabitants, their (usually) inanimate, and silent, state contrasts with the animation they once knew.

Shams-i Qays, discussing *istiʿāra* and *majāz*, states,

> Among other types of *majāz*, that which is more particular to the descriptions of poets, and has greater currency only in versified discourse, is dialogue [*mukālama*] between inanimate objects and creatures without speech, such as debates between sword and pen, candle and lamp, rose and nightingale, and speaking to the *aṭlāl* and the *diman*, the winds, the stars and the *ghūl*; as (for example) Kāfī Hamadhānī says,
>
> > "The nightingale in the garden asked the drunken narcissus, 'Have you news of the rose?' 'Yes,' he said, 'I do.
> > The rose has set up its emerald litter on the rosebush; it has come out of its bridal-tent and taken its seat in the litter.'" (1909: 339)

Here we may note that in addition to imputing speech to nightingale and narcissus, the poet has personified the rose itself as a bride who, her wedding-litter (*mahd*; i.e., green leaves) having arrived on the rosebush, emerges from the concealing bridal-tent or canopy (*killa*; the green sheath of the bud) to take her seat in the litter – the whole image a metaphor for the arrival of spring.

It is with ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī that we find more interesting comments. Labīd's "hand of the northwind" is presented as a standard example of an "old" metaphor which involves "taking a noun from its true [linguistic] context [*ḥaqīqatihi*] and putting it (in a context) in which it has no referent" ("he attributed a hand to the north wind; it is obvious that there is nothing referred to on which the hand could be bestowed", as there is for example in such usages as "gazelles" for "women", "light" for "right guidance", or "hand" in the sense of "power, control", which involve noun substitutions on the basis of contiguity). "Rather, this is no more than that you are to make yourself imagine that the north wind, in directing the morning according to its nature, is like the trainer who controls (the mount), whose rein is in his hand, whose lead in his grasp" (1954: 42–4). There is no "humanizing" verb, nor is the metaphor extended; it is, in Bloomfield's term, a "simple animate metaphor".

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Al-Jurjānī turns next to verb metaphors "which (are) as if the state (represented) spoke of such-and-such": in expressions like "the look on his face told me what was in his heart", or "his eyes spoke to me of what his heart contained", "you find in the state [ḥāl] a description resembling speech in humans; because the state indicates the situation, and contains signs by which the thing is known just as does speech" (ibid.: 48–9). In such cases speech is borrowed (mustaʿār) for the subject; in other cases the human attributes implicit in the verb are "borrowed" for the object (mafʿūl), e.g. in Ibn al-Muʿtazz's

> Truth has been combined for us in an Imam who has slain avarice and
>   brought generosity to life,

where "'has slain' and 'has brought to life' are borrowed because they are brought over to avarice and generosity" (ibid.: 50–1).[18]

In his discussion of "imaginative images" al-Jurjānī treats the device of "phantastic etiology" (al-taʿlīl al-takhyīlī, "imaginative attribution of cause"; e.g., the yellow colour of the setting sun is due to its sorrow at parting, like the lover's sickly hue is due to pain at separation [ibid.: 257]), which often leads to personification.[19] An extended example is Ibn al-Rūmī's poem on the debate between rose and narcissus (see Ibn al-Rūmī 1973, 2: 643–4 [line numbering as in the Dīwān]; Schoeler 1974: 204–21; Heinrichs 1991: 184–6; and see Chapter 6 above. Al-Jurjānī quotes eleven of the poem's fourteen lines, some out of order).

1   The rose's cheeks grew shamed at his being preferred, a shame to which
       their blushes bore witness. . . .

The rose finds this preference to be unjustified, on a variety of grounds (2–5);

6   To the narcissus belongs clear superiority, even if someone were to
       reject this or deviate from that line. . . .
3   The judgement decided (between them was) that this one [the
       narcissus] is the leader of the garden's flowers, while that one [the
       rose] expels them. . . .
14   Where are cheeks, compared to eyes, with respect to preciousness and
       leadership, except by false analogy?

Al-Jurjānī comments:

> The ordering of the art in this poem is that, first, he reversed the two sides
> of the comparison . . . and likened the rose's red colour to the red blush of
> shame. Then he pretended to forget that, and deceived himself into
> believing that it was real shame [ʿalā al-ḥaqīqa]. Then when that had
> settled in his heart and the image [ṣūra] (he had conceived) became firm,
> he sought a cause for that shame; he made that cause, that (the rose) had
> been preferred over the narcissus, and placed in a position it thought it
> did not deserve; and it therefore began to feel confounded by shame, to

fear the blame of the faultfinder and the belittling of the mocker, and to feel itself as one who had received such excessive praise that the falsehood therein was quite apparent, and its exaggeration making a mockery of the one to whom it had been directed. This was then augmented by the penetrating intelligence and productive talent for magical expression that you have seen in (the poet's) adducing arguments concerning the narcissus and the way in which it might legitimately claim preference. Thus (the poet) produced beauty and excellence the like of which you could scarcely find outside (his poetry). (ibid.: 262–3)

Al-Jurjānī, who sees a veritable drama in this poem, also sees clearly beyond the "descriptive" aspects of the comparison "red rose/blushing cheeks" to what might be called its "ascriptive" aspects. Why should the rose blush? Because it is ashamed (not that it is *like* someone who is ashamed). Why is the rose ashamed? Because, to its mind, it has been unjustly elevated in the garden world, to such an extreme extent that it feels exposed to mockery. Al-Jurjānī shows himself quite aware that the poet has imaged forth a whole world in which flowers take on human attributes and sensibilities and comport themselves like humans, and of the mechanism by which this is achieved (argument from cause). That he does not comment on the role of either extended metaphor or personification leads us to assume that he took them for granted, as self-evident.

Al-Jurjānī distinguishes between arguing from an "imaginative cause" (the rose is red because it blushes, perpetually, from shame) and attributing something whose cause is generally known "by custom or nature" to a different cause (ibid.: 273). An example is al-Mutanabbī's

4   Consolation departed with my departure; and it was as if I sent my
       sighs after it to escort it on its way.

Here the poet "has attributed the rising of sighs from his breast to this strange cause," ignoring the normal cause (loss and regret), by saying that comfort and sighs have risen from him "like two good friends: when one departs, the other must see him on his way, discharging the duty of companionship" (ibid.: 276).[20] In other cases this type of attribution leads to *majāz*; for example, in Jamīl's

The days of separation have turned my hair white, and have raised my
       soul to a place above that where it will dwell (after death),

or his

Has the coming of dawns and the passing of evenings made hoary the
       young and destroyed the old?

"the *majāz* lies in asserting that hoariness is the act of the days and the recurrent nights, and that that is what removes [his soul] from the place where it should be; because the truth of this affirmation – that is, affirming making hoary as an action – is that this does not happen without (connection with one of) the

names of God. For hoariness may not be deemed (the result of) anything other than the act of the Eternal" (ibid.: 342–3). As *majāz*, however, the assertion is perfectly acceptable; there is no "Islamic" objection to it.

Al-Jurjānī takes issue with al-Āmidī, who stated, *à propos* of al-Buḥturī's

> (The rain) worked what it worked of grains and leaf of gold, and wove
> what it wove of broideries and brocades,

"the rain's working (gold) and weaving the plants is not a metaphor, but is literal [*ḥaqīqa*]; thus it is not said 'He is a goldsmith' or 'As if he were a goldsmith'" (or weaver), i.e., by way of *tashbīh*. The point of the comparison, says al-Jurjānī, is not in the verbs, which refer to the meaning of their nouns and are thus used literally, nor in the absence of *ka'anna* and the like, but in attributing to spring (represented by the rain) not only the actions themselves but the ability to work gold and to weave (ibid.: 352–5).[21] As for such conceits as ascribing the appearance of vegetation to the action of spring, as if spring were the cause or the agent, this is customary usage: "For when God instituted the custom and executed the decree that the trees should leaf out and the flowers appear and the earth put on her youthful garments in spring, it was believed, on external appearances and according to current custom, that the existence of these things required spring, and the action was predicated for it on the basis of this interpretation and inspiration" (ibid.: 356). Such expressions, which occur frequently in the Koran, are comparable to "the knife cut" or "the sword slew", where the real agent is the wielder of the implement and not the implement itself, or to "the prince struck coins" or "built walls"; there is no doubt about the figurative nature of such expressions in people's minds (ibid.: 257–9).[22]

It thus appears that both personification and extended metaphor were taken for granted, that the former posed no major problems, and that it is the habit of discussing (largely) single lines that has obscured both the widespread use of these devices in poetry and critical awareness of them. But are there features which relate personification in Arabo-Persian poetry to that in Western? In particular, what (if any) are the roles played by (grammatical) gender, and by mythopoeia?

Abū Nuwās's celebration of wine as beloved, a personification allegory extended throughout his *khamriyyāt*, is clearly facilitated (if not generated) by the feminine (grammatical) gender of many words for wine, permitting the transferral to it of attributes associated with the beloved. But there is no question that wine takes on a life of its – her – own; e.g., she engages in a struggle with the water with which she is mixed –

1 Between the wine and the water there is rancour: she bursts into rage
  when water touches her,
2 Until you see, on the edge of the cup, her eyes, white, though she
  suffers from no illness (1958, 3: 6) –

and by which she is sometimes defeated:

1 Break, with your water, the strength of the wine; then you will see how she submits to the water;

2 Withhold your hands from what remains to her: a soul which resembles the souls of the living. (ibid., 3: 7)

She is, as we have seen, both ancient –

4 Grey-haired, she remembers Adam and Seth, and tells stories about Eve (ibid., 3: 10) –

and virginal, reserved for the drinkers:

6 The veil was not raised from her beauties except for us, since we sought her in marriage. (ibid., 3: 24)

She is of noble lineage and universal renown:

6 A nectar whose father is water and whose mother the vine, whose nursemaid was the midday heat, grown intense;

7 Her home a vat about which pitch forms a tent; when she comes forth from it she has no abode.

8 Christian of lineage, dwelling in Muslim towns; Syrian of provenance, produced in Iraq;

9 A Magian who has broken with the people of her faith because of her aversion to the fires which they kindle. (ibid., 3: 14)

And on occasion, the poet engages in a full-fledged dialogue with the wine (ibid., 3: 49–50).

1 You who seek to wed the auburn wine, giving the *ratl* as her dowry, taking from her [your] fill of gold:

2 You have acted meanly with the wine; beware of mistreating her, lest the vine swear he will bear no more grapes.

3 I exchanged for her, when I was shown her, a measure of unpierced jacinths and pearls.

4 She took fright, and wept in the vat, saying, "Woe to you, Mother! I fear the fire and the flames!"

5 So I said, "Don't ever fear them (when you are) with us." – "Nor the sun?" – "No; the heat has vanished."

6 "Who is this suitor of mine?" – "I am," I said. – "And my master?" – "The water, if it is sweet."

7 "And my impregnator?" – "The coldest of ice." – "And my house? for I do not like wood."

8 "The flasks and the cups Pharaoh fathered," I said; she replied, "Now you've really disturbed me.

9 Don't let the quarrelsome drink me, nor the base, who frowns if he smells me;

10 Nor the Magians – for fire is their god; nor the Jews, nor those who
    worship the Cross;
11 Nor the lowly man who can never be generous and abstain from abuse,
    nor he who is ignorant of good manners;
12 Nor the vile and the foolish, who will not treat me with respect; but
    give me to the Arabs to drink!"
13 O wine, forbidden except to the man who is rich, and who wastes all
    his wealth and property on her!

Abū Nuwās' personification of wine has implications which go beyond a
mere rhetorical *tour de force*. In structural terms, as we have seen, wine often
occupies the place of the *mamdūḥ* to become the principal object of the poet's
praise (cf. the panegyric to Hārūn al-Rashīd quoted in Chapter 5) – a praise
which at times borders on the sacrilegious:

1 Praise the wine for her blessings, and call her by her most beautiful
    names. (ibid., 3: 16)

Wine thus becomes an object of adoration as well as praise, and the poet's journey
to the tavern a pilgrimage to her holy shrine which echoes the 'Udhrī poets'
"religion of love" motif. The fact that wine is also described in concrete terms
(colour like rubies, scent like musk, bubbles like pearls, and so on) does not detract
from the vividness of the personifications that make the "daughter of the vine" the
focus of desire, praise, and worship. While later poets, both Arabic and Persian,
continue to make use of this trope, it never quite achieves the prominence given
to it by Abū Nuwās – with one exception: in the early Persian *qaṣīda*, where the
"daughter of the vine" becomes the object, not of desire, but of sacrifice.

Rūdakī's famous and often-quoted "*mādar-i mayy*" *qaṣīda* provides an example
(though not the earliest) of the treatment of this *topos* in a narrative which
comprises the major part of the *nasīb* (1964: 27–39; translation [emended] from
Gold 1976: 259–64). The poem begins,

1 You should sacrifice the grape, seize her child, and put it in prison.

Lines 1–8 "discuss when the children can properly be taken and the mother
killed;" the remainder of the *nasīb* (9–35) describes "the fermentation of the
wine and its excellent qualities" (Hanaway 1988: 74), as well as the feast at
which it is drunk. When the mother (the vine) is beaten and slain, the seven-
month "child" is imprisoned; her blood boils from grief (Gold translates "his")
and she foams with anger, but at last subsides and is sealed in the vat by her
"guardian", where she remains until spring.

17 Then were you to open its vat at midnight, you would see the sun's
    fount shine forth brilliantly....
19 The miser will become liberal, the faint-hearted brave, should they but
    taste it, and the wan face a rosegarden.

20   And he who joyously drinks a cup of it would thereafter suffer neither
     sorrow nor sickness. . . .

After describing the feast, which is attended by princes and nobles and by the
Amīr of Khurasan (the Samanid ruler), waited on by "thousands of Turks, each
of them illuminated like the full moon," and the *sāqī*, "a wondrous idol from
among the beauties, the son of a Turkish *khātūn* and *khāqān*" (28, 30), the poet
moves to the panegyric which constitutes the remainder of the poem.

As William Hanaway points out, Rūdakī's *qaṣīda* alludes to a narrative
treated more fully by other poets, in which the vine (or the grapes themselves)
are impregnated, slaughtered to requite this dishonour, their blood retained in a
vat and, finally, found to be sweet and invigorating. The narrative was clearly
well-known, and Hanaway traces its roots to various pre-Islamic rituals. The last
important exponent of this narrative was Manūchihrī, who employed it in no
less than seven poems dedicated either to Masʿūd of Ghazna or to various of his
officials, all of which were composed on the occasion of the Mihragān (autumn)
festival (celebrated by the Zoroastrians with sacrifice) and at a time when that
festival corresponded closely with the ʿĪd al-Aḍḥā, the feast of sacrifice held in
connection with the pilgrimage in the month of Dhū al-Ḥijja.[23] Hanaway
conjectures:

> The proximity of the festivals, one involving a sacrifice by the
> Zoroastrians and the other requiring a sacrifice by the Muslims, must
> have kept the idea of sacrifice current in people's minds, especially
> Manūchihrī's. This linking of the idea of blood sacrifice in two contiguous
> cultures at the same time of year, and the resonance of this idea with
> Iranian and other ancient myths, could help account for the poet's success
> in repeating this narrative for seven years. It appears to be a unique
> instance in Persian literature. (1988: 76)

While we cannot speculate on the reasons for Manūchihrī's development of the
narrative (which far surpasses most earlier efforts; see ibid.: 74) – it may well
have been a ploy, a specialization which would ensure the poet would be called
upon to celebrate this particular occasion – there can be no doubt of the
strength of the mythopoeisis of wine either by Manūchihrī or by Abū Nuwās
over two centuries earlier. This mythopoeia must derive much of its force from
ancient traditions which still exerted a strong pull on memory; yet if that pull
were a universal, or even a widespread one, we would expect to see far more
examples of its "recycling", so to speak, into the Arabo-Persian poetic tradition.
In fact, we do not: both Abū Nuwās and Manūchihrī (who may well have seen
himself as expanding upon the Arabic poet) are, each in his own way,
mavericks, and even their imitators do not pursue this particular line to any
great extent.

While it is tempting to see a common, mythic-ritual origin to both poets'
handling of the topic – the association of wine with blood-sacrifice and, more

importantly, the resulting ensurance of fertility and prosperity – what is significant here is not the "archetypal" status of the topic but its transformation in two very different ways. For Abū Nuwās, who "espouses" the virgin wine (often to the accompaniment of sexually charged imagery of penetration – not by himself, but by the vintner who pierces the seal of the cask with his implement, an image suggestive both of defloration and of sacrifice), the qualities of prosperity and joy brought by the wine are conferred upon the poet and, often, his companions. In the Persian wine-narratives the grape is sacrificed so that her blood may be quaffed by the *mamdūḥ*, conferring life-giving powers upon him; but these powers become, by convention, his own, so that he himself is seen as the source of fertility and prosperity of which the wine becomes the emblem. Old myths and rituals are not merely preserved, or hollowly echoed, but are in a constant process of transformation – a transformation which we may see in yet another form in Khāqānī's line (1959: 359),

33 It is the blood of Shīrīn's heart, the wine the vine gives forth; it is
      Parvīz's clay that forms the jar its grower offers,

which contrasts so markedly with al-Buḥturī's Nuwāsian description of the wine as

31 … renewing with joy and delight the drinker as he sips,
     Poured into the glass of every heart, and it the beloved of every soul,

and exploits the homiletic use of a topic developed in the quatrains of ʿUmar Khayyām (1898: 31):

> Whether at Naishapúr or Babylon,
> Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
>   The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
> The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

As we shall see later in this chapter, garden imagery provides many instances of "mythopoetic" imagery; so also (to a somewhat lesser extent) does astrological imagery. But are there other types which are not linked to the "animation of nature" or to ancient, possibly mythical or ritual, traditions?

In his *zuhdiyyāt* Abū al-ʿAtāhiya often personifies the world, or the soul, as a faithless woman. The following poem falls into two sections, the first (1–4) addressed to the world, the second (5–10) to the soul, linked at the transitional line (5) by mention of the abode (*dār*), also feminine (1886: 188–9).[24]

1 Have we not seen, World, your changing states, your treachery towards
     us, World, and your constant shifting?
2 You are no abode in which satisfaction is complete, even should a man
     hold you completely in his palm.
3 Your forbidden things, World, lead to destruction; and the wise man
     among us shuns even your lawful.

4 Your friend, World, has many sorrows; there is no escape from you save
     through avoidance.
5 Soul, do not get used to dwelling in a transient abode, but take your
     provision before you depart.
6 Soul, do not forget your Book (of deeds), but remember (and be
     admonished); woe to you if you are given it in your left hand!
7 Soul, today is a day of leisure; make the most of it before the day when
     you will be occupied.
8 You are responsible, Soul; make ready your answer for the Day of
     Resurrection, before you are asked.
9 You are wretched, Soul, in desperate need of the best of what you have
     offered by way of deeds.
10 That is death: so make provision for him, and rejoice if you escape on
     equal terms, nothing against you nor for you.

Both *dunyā* ("world") and *nafs* ("soul") are presented as female figures, the first
blamed, the second admonished. They serve as convenient butts for the poet's
sermon, substituting for the typically masculine, anonymous addressee of the
homiletic poem, or for the collective audience of a sermon, a feminine specificity;
and – like the *dār* – they do not answer back. "World", though addressed, is not
truly personified, but is rather identified with *dār* as an unstable, transient abode.
Soul (which for Abū al-ʿAtāhiya is the lower soul, the *nafs ammāra*, the "soul
which commands to evil"), is, by contrast, given human attributes and ascribed
human actions, as she is reminded of the Day when she will face judgement.
On that Day the angels will present her with the scroll on which are recorded all
the deeds she performed in life – "and woe to you if you are given it in your left
hand," that is, if evil deeds outweigh the good; better to hope that they will at
least weigh evenly in the balance (cf. Koran 7: 9–10; 69: 25). Soul is both
responsible (*masʾūla*, forming a *tajnīs* with the rhyme-word of 8, *suʾālik* "your
questioning") and miserable (*miskīna*), destitute, in dire need of any grain of good
she can bring to her account; the parallelism of 8–9 – *wa-masʾūlatun yā nafsu anti
fa-yassirī . . .//wa-miskīnatun yā nafsu anti faqīratun* – provides a crescendo which
prepares the way for the climactic closure: *Huwa l-mawtu*, "That [lit. "he"] is
Death!", the end of the poem as of life itself, where threatening and vengeful
masculinity, emphasized by the masculine pronoun *huwa*, is contrasted to the
soul's feminine weakness and desire for the things of this world.

   In a *zuhdiyya* noted in Chapter 7 as an example of antithetical construction,
Abū al-ʿAtāhiya weaves various personifications into a more general admonition
(1886: 23–4; translation from Nicholson 1987: 34–5).

1 Get sons for death, build houses for decay!
     All, all, ye wend annihilation's way.
2 For whom build we, who must ourselves return
     Into our native element of clay?

3   O Death, nor violence nor flattery thou
    Dost use; but when thou com'st, escape none may.
4   Methinks, thou art ready to surprise mine age,
    As age surprised and made my youth his prey.
5   What ails me, World, that every place perforce
    I lodge thee in, it galleth me to stay?
6   And O Time, how do I behold thee run
    To spoil me? Thine own gift thou tak'st away!
7   O Time! inconstant, mutable art thou,
    And o'er the realm of ruin is thy sway.
8   What ails me that no glad result it brings
    Whene'er, O World, to milk thee I essay?
9   And when I court thee, why dost thou raise up
    On all sides only trouble and dismay?

The middle section of the poem continues the address to the World – a perpetual source of sorrows (9), a dream, the shadow of a raincloud, the glitter of a mirage (10–11) – and dwells on the poet's sense of sin in loving the world. The final section (14–19) dwells on repentance and the accounting to come:

16 .... What can I plead then? What can I gainsay?
17 What argument allege, when I am called
    To render my account on Reckoning-Day?
18 Dooms twain in that dread hour shall be revealed,
    When I the scroll of these mine acts survey:
19 Either to dwell in everlasting bliss,
    Or suffer torments of the damned for aye.

In this poem, death uses neither "violence nor flattery", but lies in wait for the poet, to "surprise" him; the World – equated with the *dār* (here *manzil*, "halting-place") – is both personified (it "raises up trouble" in response to the poet's courting) and objectified (as dream, cloud, mirage); Time, too, is personified (it "runs to spoil" the poet, "rules" the "realm of ruin"). Is there true personification in this poem? Certainly none that is built up or extended over a number of lines. But it scarcely matters: the rapid shift of addressees in the poem's opening lines – mankind; Death, which comes to all; the World; Time – both creates an initial impression of vividness, of drama, and facilitates the movement from the general to the specific and personal with which the poem concludes.

What is the role of gender (grammatical or otherwise) in the examples of personification considered thus far? It is clearly often a facilitating and sometimes an informing one; yet we should hesitate before drawing any broad conclusions. For example, while for Abū Nuwās wine is predominantly feminine, this is not always the case. Another, grammatically masculine, term for wine, *mudām*, is described as

3   Pure Babylonian, sometimes feminine, sometimes aspiring to masculinity. (1958, 3: 176)

The ambivalence here – particularly with respect to the phrase *yahummu bit-tadhkīri*, "aspiring to masculinity" and, also, "aspiring to fecundate (the female)", i.e. to sexual conjunction (presumably, with the water with which the wine is mixed) – suggests a parallel ambivalence in the object of the poet's erotic attraction, who in the *khamriyyāt* and *mujūniyytā* is usually male, but in *ghazal* is often female; but it also suggests a desirable fusion of both masculine and feminine qualities independent of either grammar or gender roles.

And is the fact that wine (*khamr*) is grammatically feminine due to accident, or to a pre-existing myth? There seems, ultimately, to be no way of knowing. Manūchihrī's grape-sacrifice narratives present the vine, or the grape, as feminine, impregnated by some masculine force (e.g., the sun); but Persian has no gender, so this is not a grammatical but a conventional issue (and we might recall Farrukhī's rather specious remark on the gender of sun and moon in Arabic – reversing the normal panegyric convention – in his "Ramaḍān" *qaṣīda*). Whatever mythical antecedents this narrative may have had, by Manūchihrī's time it is the coherence of the image itself which is of primary importance.

That the soul can be depicted as a frivolous woman, or the world as a spouse who kills her mates, is both convenient grammatically, and serves to emphasize the opposition of both to the male poet, as well as being in keeping with the misogynistic strain typical of ascetic literature.[25] Yet while gender plays a facilitating role in many personifications – for example, the "virgin city" of Amorium in Abū Tammām's *qaṣīda* on its conquest, undefiled until raped by the caliph's armies, as well as a (violated) "mother" to the infidel (sexual violation plays an important part in the imagery of war and conquest) – its role is not always a determining one; in other words, personification is not necessarily "built-in", but the extension of a potential which may or may not depend on gender, and which is sometimes ambivalent. ʿAlī ibn al-Jahm's raincloud, grammatically feminine and embodying "feminine" qualities of nurturing, is in some sense the alter ego of the murdered caliph; while we might think of the cloud as subsuming nature's procreative, hence feminine, powers, the reality is, I think, somewhat different, as I shall suggest later.[26] Sexuality is often determined by function; and function is determined by the personified object's role in the world the poem creates.

Let us look briefly at a few more poems in which personification and/or extended metaphor plays a structural as well as a semantic role, avoiding for the moment those which employ extensive nature or garden imagery, which will be treated in a later section. A *qiṭʿa* by ʿAlī ibn al-Jahm describes a game of chess (n.d.: 179; attributed to Ibn al-Rūmī by Rāvandī, 1921: 415, whose version is somewhat different).

1 A squared, red ground of leather (laid out) between two friends known
   for nobility,
2 Who think upon war and devise its strategies, without committing the
   sin of bloodshed.
3 This one vies against that one and that one against this one, and the
   eye of resolve's ally sleeps not.
4 Regard bold warriors who have plunged into battle with two armies,
   with neither drum nor flag.

In this brief extended metaphor, in which the chess-board is equated with the
battle-field, two friends "make war" with neither bloodshed nor "drum or flag".
The non-metaphorical players and the metaphorical warriors (the chess-pieces,
briefly animated) merge, as the well-known parallel between chess and war
(expanded, as we saw, in Khāqānī's Madāʾin *qaṣīda* to become a figure for life
itself) is amplified into an extended metaphor. *Shaṭranjiyyāt* (chess poems)
became a popular, if minor, genre with later poets, and Khāqānī incorporates
the genre, for his own admonitory purpose, in his Madāʾin *qaṣīda*.

Extensive personification is found in Manūchihrī's famous "Candle" *qaṣīda* in
praise of ʿUnṣurī (1948: 64–8; see also Clinton 1972: 31–43). It begins with a
lughz (riddle) on the candle (a popular subject of riddle-poems, although
Manūchihrī's *nasīb* is not, strictly speaking, a riddle; a similar treatment is seen
in an Arabic poem by the somewhat later Usāma ibn Munqidh; see Smoor
1988: 299–300).

1 O you who have placed your soul atop your head: our body lives
   through soul, your soul lives through your body. . . .
3 If you are not a star, why do you not appear except at night; if you are
   not a lover, why do you always weep for yourself?
4 Indeed, you are a star, but your sky is wax; indeed, you are a lover, but
   your beloved is the bowl. . . .
7 As long as you laugh, you weep; this is very strange; you are both
   beloved and lover, both idol and shaman.
8 You blossom without spring, you fade without autumn; you weep
   without eyes, you laugh without a mouth.

The poet moves on "to a series of comparisons between himself and the candle"
in which "he presents himself in the various postures of the distraught lover"
(Clinton 1972: 33). "We resemble each other completely," he states; "(we both)
are enemies to ourselves, and friends to other men" (9), and burn for the benefit
of others.

11 We are both weeping, pale and melted (by distress); both burning, both
    alone and sorely tried. . . .
14 You are my confidant, continually my friend; we sympathize for each
    other, you and I. . . .

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17 In fear of separation from your face, I've become the sun's enemy;
hoping for union with you, I'm enamored of dark night.

18 I have tested all my other friends, noble and common: not one of them
can keep a secret, no two of them are loyal.

19 But you shine on; and by your light, I read with love, from dark to
dawn, the poems of Abū al-Qāsim Ḥasan,

20 The master of the masters of the age, ʿUnṣurī. . . .

The exordium (1–18) constitutes a virtual *tashbīb* addressed to the candle, which, from being the analogue of the poet, to being personified as his one true friend and confidant, in the transitional line becomes, once more, a candle. The poet plays on two well-established conceits: the comparison (a reversable one) between the candle and the suffering, weeping, emaciated lover (whose burning heart mimics the candle's flame; 12), and the typical *nasīb* image of the poet as supplicant. The ensuing praise of ʿUnṣurī is hyperbolic in the extreme, and includes a long catalogue of poets, Arabic and Persian, who cannot (so to speak) hold a candle to him (27–34), and who are urged

35 . . . to gather here to listen to my master's verse, that they may see a
nature like Paradise, a talent like the white rose;

36 That they may weep over the vestiges of their own poetry, not over
ruined traces, abodes, vestiges, *aṭlāl* and droppings left by
beasts! . . .

38 His poetry is like Paradise, for in it may be found all that the
Beneficent One promised to us in Paradise.

(Needless to say, the catalogue also serves to demonstrate Manūchihrī's erudition, in particular since many of the poets are listed only allusively.) The poem concludes with a *raḥīl* (46–68) describing the poet's noble horse and his night journey to his master's camp, seeking his acceptance, and chiding himself for his own temerity:

69 O Manūchihrī! I fear that, out of ignorance, you're sewing yourself a
shroud with your own hand. . . .

71 Will you take to him your own undernourished poems? Will you place
your own goods in pledge to censure? . . .

73 He of whom the world's masters take utmost caution: don't approach
him out of ignorance; don't be hasty!

74 Your master's court is like a blazing fire, and you like a camel who lies
down without being told.

75 A stupid camel who, in ignorance, lies down along the way, is heedless
of the lion who preys on camels.

It is tempting to equate the "blazing fire" of the master's court with the candle of the *nasīb* – the poet's one true friend – implying both his devotion to, and need of support from, the master poet to whom he dedicates his poem.

ʿIrāqī adapts the imagery of palace descriptions found in panegyric in a lengthy *ghazal* on the "palace of the heart" (1959: 223–4).

1 More beautiful than Paradise, they have decked out the palace of the
     heart,
   so that therein the feast may be adorned by the sultan of the heart.
2 From his own beauty he creates the Paradise of the soul,
   and with his face adorns the idol-temple of the heart.
3 When, in the palace of the heart, the sultan of Truth held court,
   the souls of all the world drew up in ranks round the portico of the
     heart.

This "palace of the heart" (*ayvān-i dil*, *sarāy-i dil*) has all the adjuncts of a royal palace. In it, the body is the "decorated curtain before the court of the soul", while the soul itself is the "curtain-keeper before the beloved of the heart" (4). Reason indites "official correspondence", as it were, to the soul, so that it may write the commands issued from "the *dīvān* of the heart" (5). The description escalates towards images of Paradise, amplifying the motif with which the poem began:

6 The bird of aspiration flies higher than lofty Paradise
   hoping to gain a breeze from Riẓvān's garden of the heart.

Rawẓa-i Riẓvān, "Riẓvān's Garden", is another term for Paradise (Riẓvān is the angel who guards the gates of Paradise), for which many expressions are used throughout the poem: *khuld-i barrīn* (1), *bihisht-ābād* (2), *Firdaws-i aʿlā* (6), *bihisht* (15).
   Word-play links the next two lines:

7 The limitless beauty of the heart will appear throughout the world;
   whoever possesses eyes [*chashmī*] will, like the soul, be bewildered by
     the heart [*ḥayrān-i dil*].
8 The Khiẓr of the soul ever traverses the mirage-land of the heart
   that he may drink the Water of Life from the Spring of Life of the heart
     [*chashma-yi ḥayvān-i dil*].

The next two lines form a transition, as the poet moves to direct address (in the homiletic mode) and, moreover, announces his purpose.

9   Bring your head out from the collar of Unity, that you may plainly see:
    there is no Ṣidra in the world that falls short of the skirt of the heart.
10 Observe the manifest and the hidden; see the beginning and the end,
    that it may become clear to you what are the four pillars of the heart.

The reference to "manifest and hidden", *ẓāhir u bāṭin*, points to the poem's esoteric meaning; *chār arkān*, "four pillars", refers to the four elements (earth, air, fire, and water) and their four associated qualities (dry, cold, hot, moist), which constitute all of creation. We have moved to the macrocosmic level, on

which the "palace of the heart" is the locus of the epiphany of the "sultan of the heart", the Beloved, just as the heart of the world (the court) is where the worldly king appears before his subjects.

But the second part of the poem takes us in a different, descending direction from this pinnacle of revelation.

11   The arch of its palace is the curve of my beloved's eyebrow;
　　 for this reason [*z-īn qibal*] it has become my soul's *qibla* – the palace of
　　　　the heart,

says the poet, in a momentary equation of beloved with macrocosm. But the beloved is elusive; and since he appears in a different colour every moment, "no doubt the heart's colours will change at every moment" (13).

14   In the ocean of the heart the two worlds are less than a single dewdrop;
　　 how can a dewdrop be seen in the limitless ocean of the heart?
15   There is a tinge of Paradise and its adornments in this world
　　 from which they have decked out Paradise – I mean, the mirage-land of
　　　　the heart.
16   Upon the carpet of the heart they have spread the means of pleasure;
　　　　but
　　 where in the world is a man of heart to be the guest of the heart?
17   Is it not a waste that such a feast should be spread in the world,
　　 and we ignorant of the beauty and kindness of the heart?
18   'Irāqī has proven unable to praise the heart, because
　　 whatever perfection he can imagine is a diminishing of the heart.

The reversal seen in this *ghazal* (as well as the move from concrete to abstract, from tangible to intangible), expressed in its concluding *aporia*, is characteristic of esoteric, and especially mystical, poetry, about which I shall have more to say at the end of this chapter. First, however, I would like to touch on another aspect of poetic imagery: its function as argument.

Image as argument

Sustained personification and extended metaphor provide obvious means of unifying poems or parts of poems. But there are many poems in which the images employed seem diffuse, unrelated, fragmentary, or in which the poet resorts to that bane of Orientalists, the use of mixed metaphors. The appearance of fragmentation, however, is often only that, and the impression results largely from the failure to consider the function of imagery in the broader context of the poem.

An example of such a failure is the approach utilized by Benedikt Reinert in his study of Khāqānī's imagery (1972), which is based on the consideration of single lines only. I have discussed elsewhere (Meisami 1998a) a *qaṣīda* from which Reinert drew the following example of a verbal metaphor (Khāqānī 1959:

221–7; according to the rubric, the *qaṣīda* was addressed to the Sharvānshāh Manūchihr on the occasion of ʿĪd al-Fiṭr [see further Meisami 1998a: 45–54], and employs as an *iltizām*, a deliberately self-imposed constraint, the word *ʿīd*, "feast", in each of its 100 lines).

8   Dawn was a bloodletter who opened the [cephalic] vein of night, with
      the sun as basin and the moon of the Feast (the new moon) as
      lancet.

In this image, Reinert comments, a combination of related nominal elements is heightened by a verbal element which integrates the image as a whole, making the "thematic space" bigger than the "image-space" (1972: 33). The verb *gushādan*, "to open" (a vein, a door, or anything else), is however used literally (we noted earlier al-Jurjānī's comments on such metaphors); it is the context provided by the noun elements, and the attribution of agency to "dawn", which determine that the statement is metaphorical. Moreover, identifying the typology of the metaphor (cf. n. 11 to this chapter) does not account either for the image's presence in the poem or for its function in the context in which it occurs. It is, in fact, part of a cluster of imagery based on the sickness-health polarity which forms part of an argument for the ruler's superiority by presenting him as having restored health to a kingdom wasted by prolonged fasting. We cannot begin to understand or to appreciate such images merely by attempting to classify them as "old" or "new" metaphors, as "double", "semi-triple", "triple", "nominative", "verbal" or whatever, or by talking about their "empirical" bases as if these led a separate existence; we must rather consider their functions in the poems in which they occur, and their appropriateness to those poems. The images in Khāqānī's poem are arguments for the ruler's magnificence, his life-giving as well as death-dealing powers.

Metaphors (or, more broadly, comparisons – images), says al-Jurjānī, make claims; in other words, as Tuve insists (1972), they are arguments. In his *Dalāʾil al-iʿjāz* al-Jurjānī defines *istiʿāra* as a comparison that makes a claim for likeness between two things, without the necessity for proof (1947: 53). Similarly, al-Sakkākī states that *istiʿāra* is a *majāz lughawī* "because it builds a claim for the *mustaʿār* which is established for the *mustaʿār lahu* on a type of *taʾwīl* [interpretation]" (1983: 358, and see also 369). Because this claim is based on *taʾwīl* "it differs from a false claim, because he who makes it is freed from (the necessity of) interpretation; and it differs from falsehood because of the establishment of a context [*qarīna*] which prevents the statement from being taken literally" (ibid.: 373).

While there is much dispute amongst the critics over details of terminology, there is general agreement that metaphors do not merely compare or describe; they make claims. The logicians too dealt with the subject of comparisons as means of argumentation. Says al-Fārābī, "Comparison consists in the attempt to verify the existence of an element in a given thing on the basis of the manifest existence of that element in a similar thing" (1981: 62–3); it "is made primarily

in the attributive mode, because its force is that of an attributive syllogism" (ibid.: 120–1). Like the enthymeme, it functions as a persuasive device: "enthymemes occupy in rhetoric the rank of proof in the sciences and of syllogisms in dialectic; the enthymeme is like a rhetorical syllogism and the comparison like a rhetorical induction" (ibid.: 68–9).

While it is impossible to determine the precise degree of awareness, or of conscious use, of the methods of logic and dialectic on the part of poets and critics, it is clear that the gap between poetics and dialectic was by no means as great as is often assumed. Moreover, statements such as that so-and-so "used the method of the philosophers/dialecticians" (cf. Chapter 7 above), and the development of the perception of *al-madhhab al-kalāmī* as dialectical argumentation, suggests an increasing awareness of the means afforded to poetry by dialectic rhetoric. J.-C. Bürgel has argued for a strong relationship between poetry and logic, suggesting (in opposition to other critics; see e.g. Heinrichs 1969: 139) that the "poetic syllogism" (even if not known by that term) is the underlying principle of much poetic argument (1971: 131–2), and that, in particular, "phantastic argumentation" (*al-ḥusn fī al-taʿlīl, taʿlīl takhyīlī*) "is in many cases ... no less than a different term for poetic syllogism" (ibid.: 135).

Noting that al-Jurjānī "connects phantastic argumentation with the well-known dictum ... 'the best poetry is that which contains the most lies'," Bürgel argues that for al-Jurjānī this "is the motto of all the poets who employ illusory and deceiving syllogisms," those which he calls *qiyās takhyīl wa-īhām*, the most important of which is metaphor (ibid.: 135–6; see al-Jurjānī 1954: 245). Bürgel proceeds to furnish some examples from Ḥāfiẓ (whom he terms "one of the masters of the *madhab kalāmī*"; 1971: 139), of which we may look at one (QG4; the second hemistich is misprinted in Bürgel 1971).

4   *ʿAql agar dānad ki dil dar band-i zulf-ash chun khush-ast*
    ʿāqilān dīvāna gardand az pay-i zanjīr-i mā
    If Reason knew how happy Heart feels, bound by his curls,
    wise men would go mad for the sake of our chains.

Here, says Bürgel, "Ḥāfiẓ plays ... with the relationship between madness and chains. The verse has the form of an incomplete hypothetical syllogism based on two unstated premises, which are: a) madmen are put in chains. b) the beloved's curls are chains." The conclusion: "he who is mad can be enchained by the beloved's curls." But also, "men of reason ... can come to the point where they let themselves be enchained by the curls when they see them; they will thus go mad with pleasure at being able to participate in this enchainment." Moreover, there is only one "unreal premise" in this verse – the metaphor curls=chains; "the other – between madness and chains – is real" (ibid.: 139–40).

If Ḥāfiẓ's verse is an argument, what is it an argument for? It is the fourth and central verse of a seven-line *ghazal* which we may quote in full.

1 Last night our *pīr* went from the mosque towards the wineshop;
   after that, what shall we do, companions of the Way?

2 How shall we, disciples, turn towards the *qibla*, when
   our Elder turns his face towards the house of drink?

3 Let's then alight together in the tavern of the Way,
   for this fate was decreed for us in pre-eternity.

4 If Reason knew how happy Heart feels, bound by his curls,
   wise men would go mad for the sake of our chains.

5 Your beautiful face revealed to us a miracle of grace;
   from that time on there's nought but grace and beauty in our
   commentary.

6 At night your stony heart is not affected by
   our fiery sighs and the nocturnal burning of our breasts.

7 – The arrow of our sighs goes beyond the turning sphere; silence, Ḥāfiẓ!
   have mercy on your own life: avoid our shaft!

In examining the arguments of this (or any other) poem, we may have recourse
not only to the notion of the poetic syllogism, but to Tuve's summary of the
"predicaments" on which comparisons (or images) are based, as well as for other
logical bases for arguments (see 1972: 255–330 and *passim*). The predicaments
include substance, quality, quantity, relation, manner of doing, manner of
suffering, when, where, *situs*, and *habitus*; the arguments, general-and-special,
adjuncts, contraries, similitudes, and causes. In addition, we should bear in mind
the rhetorical devices discussed in Chapter 7, as well as such techniques as
arguing from example.

Sūdī's commentary (which contains several additional verses and a number
of variants) suggests that it is this last principle which informs the beginning of
the *ghazal*: "The meaning of *dūsh* here is the past, not its literal meaning of 'last
night', because the first three *bayts* of this *ghazal* allude to the story of Shaykh
Ṣanʿān – that is, ʿAbd al-Razzāq Yamanī ... about whom, in Persian, only
Shaykh ʿAṭṭār in his *Manṭiq al-ṭayr* has versified a detailed story." He glosses the
first line, in keeping with this reading, as meaning, "The disciples say: 'Last
night our *pīr* went from Mecca to Caesarea (whose inhabitants are all
infidels).... This is the meaning of 'wineshop'." The disciples consult, saying,
"Our Elder has fallen in love with a Christian girl, drinks wine, and commits all
sorts of forbidden things. How shall we return to Mecca and the Kaʿba when our
elder frequents the wineshop? Yet surely there must be some mystery in this." So
they decide to take up residence there as well (1979, 1: 80–1).

Whether we agree with Sūdī's gloss or not, it is entirely likely that Shaykh
Ṣanʿān, the ideal type of the love-struck *pīr* who deserts mosque for tavern, and
who appears for the first time in ʿAṭṭār's poetry (and was evidently invented by
him, though later taken to be factual; on the story about him in the *Manṭiq
al-ṭayr* see Davis 1993), inspired later poets as well, including Ḥāfiẓ. Thus to
begin with we have an exemplum (via allusion, *talmīḥ*) which informs the first

three lines of this *ghazal*. In addition, we have several antithetical pairs: disciples/*pīr* ("we"/"him"), mosque (*qibla*)/wineshop, subsumed under the larger antithesis of piety/unbelief. We have arguments from time ("last night", "pre-eternity"), place (mosque, wineshop), habit (piety, impiety), manner of doing (turning away from/towards), among others.

With the fourth and pivotal line, framed in the form of a general statement incorporating yet another antithesis ("reason" versus "heart"), we have the syllogistic image which gives us the argument from cause: if love is the antithesis of reason, it must therefore be madness; but it is a madness of joy which, did only the rational know of it, they too would seek it. (Says Sūdī, "The wise would pretend or appear to be mad so that they might be bound by those chains by which the heart is enmeshed;" 1979, 1: 81.) The double sense of "chains" (curls; chains to bind madmen) looks back to the apparent "madness" of the *pīr*, and forward to the second half of the *ghazal*, which focusses on the beloved. Line 5, which plays on the word *āyat* – miracle, sign, Koranic verse – extolls the beloved's beauty, by which the "disciples" of the mystical path (or order, *ṭarīqat*) are so struck that their "commentary" (*tafsīr*, the adjunct of *āyat* in the context of Koranic exegesis) can speak of nothing else (we may recall the rhetorical figure of *tafsīr*; line 5 in fact provides an amplifying gloss on line 4). But the beloved is hard-hearted (argument from quality and similitude) and is not moved by the lovers' "fiery sighs" (a metaphor with a literal basis in medieval physiology: love heats the blood in the heart, producing the exhalation of hot vapour).

The final line is glossed by Sūdī thus: "He says, by way of disengagement [*tajrīd*]: Ḥāfiẓ, the arrow of our sigh passes beyond the sphere; do not disturb us with your cries and uproar, but have mercy upon yourself, and beware of the arrow of our sigh; otherwise we will annihilate you" (ibid., 1: 84). Harsh words indeed from a beloved of whom nought but "grace and beauty" was predicated! If we recall, however, that in panegyric the motifs of the *mamdūḥ*'s life-giving and destructive powers are typically paired, the sense becomes clearer: just as the beloved's beauty and grace are miraculous, his power is awesome, and the "disciple" must dedicate himself to silent devotion, rather than indulge in vexatious outcry.

Metaphors, comparisons, images, are not merely decorative, fanciful, descriptive, nor even (primarily) affective, but argumentative – a fact that should be borne in mind when we turn to the use of images derived from nature. Before doing so, however, and as a means both of linking what has preceded with what follows and of showing the pervasiveness of the argumentative style, I would like to consider a final example, by that consummate mystical poet, Rūmī (1963, 1: 90–1, no. 216). The first portion of the *ghazal* – the theme of which is progress, movement, the spiritual quest – is based on arguments from nature; it begins with an almost verbatum *taḍmīn* of a line from a panegyric by Anvarī (see 1959: 121, line 15; cf. Keshavarz 1998: 5, 152, where the line is quoted without recognition of the *taḍmīn*), where it served as an argument for the poet's departure from his beloved to seek his fortune as panegyrist.

1 If the tree could move from place to place
    it would suffer no pain from the saw, nor wound from cruelty.

2 Neither sunlight nor moonlight would bestow radiance
    if they were stationary like the hard, deaf stone.

3 Euphrates, Tigris, Oxus: how bitter they,
    were they to stay in one place like the sea.

4 When air is confined in a pit, it becomes poisonous;
    see, see the air's loss, because of its parsimony.

5 When the sea's water travels into the air with the cloud
    it is freed from bitterness and becomes sweet.

6 When fire refrains from the movement of flame and torch
    it moves towards ashes, death, extinction.

The next six lines contain arguments from *exempla*:

 7 Observe Joseph of Canaan: when he left his father's bosom
    he journeyed to Egypt and became exceptional.

 8 Observe Moses son of Amram: when he left his mother's breast
    and came to Midian, by that way he became lord.

 9 Observe Jesus son of Mary, who, from long journeying,
    is like the water of the Fount of Life, and brings the dead to life.

10 Observe Aḥmad the Messenger: when he left Mecca
    he mustered an army and became Mecca's lord.

11 When he journeyed on Burāq the night of his Ascent
    he found the rank of *two bows' lengths or closer.*

12 If you'd not become bored, I'd count, one by one,
    the travellers of the world, by twos and by threes.

This "cutting short of discourse" leads to the sentential conclusion:

13 Since I have shown you a little, know yourself the rest;
    travel out of your nature, by the nature and virtue of God.

    Such a closely argued poem should dispel any notion that mystical poetry is the "subjective outpouring" of deep personal feeling alone. The appeal to logic, as well as to spiritual authority, is marked in this poem, in which specific examples support a general rule: movement is progress, life; stagnation is death. By beginning with the *taḍmīn* from Anvarī, the poet appeals, first, to the support of poetic authority; his poem will, however, transform Anvarī's argument (that one should travel to look for fame and fortune) into a different one: that one should travel away from one's own nature towards the divine. At first this argument is not apparent: the "natural" arguments are all based (with the exception of that of the tree) on the natures of the elements involved: fire moves upwards, water flows, the planets move in their courses, because they were created to do so, because the failure to do so would result in the contravention of nature and of the divine plan.

Yet it then becomes apparent that, implicit in the ensuing arguments from example, man too was created to be a traveller, that refusing to do so would equally be a contravention of his "nature" and of what God intended him to be. (A similar theme is frequently adumbrated by Nāṣir-i Khusraw.) One must leave home, loved ones, parents, in order to become capable of great things. (One suspects an allegorical sense here: "home", "parents", may well signify the material world, which must be abandoned for spiritual flight.) Moreover, as in the "natural" arguments we moved to the highest of the elements (fire), so in the "human" or "spiritual" arguments we move to the highest of the Prophets, Muḥammad, his achievement represented by his Ascent to heaven (Miʿrāj), the inspiration for many a tale of mystical ascent. For not only did Muḥammad become (temporal) lord of Mecca, but he became spiritual Lord as well, as vouchsafed by his being granted the Beatific Vision, as attested by the Koranic verses (53: 9–10) quoted in line 11. There is, in fact, a clear progression from temporal to spiritual, from Joseph to Jesus (who brought the dead to life; the Koranic quotation, 22: 7 – "This is because Allah is the Truth; he brings the dead to life; he has power over all things" – is however predicated of God, anticipating what is to come) which is recapitulated in Muḥammad, who combines temporal rule with spiritual supremacy.

The poet and the natural world

Garden imagery, and imagery derived from nature more generally, has a special place in both Arabic and, especially, Persian poetry. Since its function is often misunderstood, it provides a good topic for a case study of the more general question of the function of imagery. Much ink has been spilled over the issue of the Muslim poets' "response" to nature (or lack of it), the Islamic *Naturgefühl*; and while recent scholarship has, happily, moved away from the equation of nature imagery with "description", discussions of it are still conducted largely against the background of Romantic assumptions of the relationship between poet and world.

We may take as a starting-point G. E. von Grunebaum's classic article (1945) on responses to nature in Arabic poetry, which opens with a broad assertion which the rest of the article seems more or less designed to support: that if "we compare the part accorded to feeling for nature" in classical Arabic poetry, "and, therewith, indirectly the part played by an aesthetical or sentimental response to nature in the Arab's spiritual economy," with the part both play in post-Renaissance Western poetry (here the predilection for skewed comparisons and the anti-medieval bias discussed in Chapter 1 is clearly seen), we find that, "on the whole, nature means considerably less to the Arab than to the occidental artist, both as source and as object of his inspiration ... the poesy of nature does not, in the realm of Arab literature, hold the importance it attained in the literatures of the west" (1945: 137). Now, if we look at the Arabic (or Persian) poetry of almost any period, we cannot but be struck by the abundance of

references to nature (I will not call them descriptions, nor yet "responses", for reasons which will become apparent). But von Grunebaum is interested neither in the quantity nor in the poetic function of such references (except in a purely mechanical sense); he is seeking a "personal relationship to nature", a "sentimental" (read: Romantic) response, which he finds categorically lacking in Arabic poetry prior to the seventh century, and only partially present thereafter – a lack which surely demonstrates the poverty of the "Arab's spiritual economy".

In early poetry, references to or descriptions of "various elements of the Arabic scenery or striking natural phenomena" – von Grunebaum seems to have had difficulty distinguishing between "Arab", "Arabic", and "Arabian" – "are not due to the emotional appeal of the objects depicted," but are, rather, extraneous. They are drawn from a conventional repertoire and "inserted" into the *qaṣīda*, as required, "to underline the excellent qualities" of the *mamdūḥ*, the poet, or both; to emphasize the hardships the poet has undergone; as the "stereotyped background" for an emotional situation (e.g., the *aṭlāl* motif and the associated nostalgia); or "on account of the objective interest they will present to the poet and his audience", that is, as "set pieces" (my term) presented for their "inherent interest, never for any emotion [they] may have touched off in the observer or listener" (ibid.: 137–40). "If we disregard the perfection of form and language" – apparently fortuitous and of no intrinsic importance to the poem – "the beauty of [the poet's] presentation derives entirely from the fidelity of his observation, not from his reaction to the impressions that inspired his song;" and his imagery is, accordingly, predominantly visual (ibid.: 140).

According to von Grunebaum, the coming of Islam, which brought with it the eschatological imagery (descriptions of the Last Day, of Paradise and Hell, and so on) so prominent in the Koran, also brought an opportunity for a new kind of imagery, one in which "cosmic and human events [were] interwoven." But

> Arabic poetry … either quietly eliminated or altogether ignored this offering of a radically new and, in a sense, foreign outlook on the universe … [and] no later than perhaps a decade or two after Mohammed's death, any influence his earlier revelations may have had on the poets' response to nature had been overcome, never again to be admitted into standard verse. (ibid.: 141)[27]

However, towards the end of the Umayyad period changes did begin to appear – although "it should be borne in mind whenever a change is diagnosed in Arabic poetry" – personified perhaps as the "sick man of literature"? – "that this poetry never altogether discards elements and attitudes it once admitted." The poet is increasingly attracted to "the softer, sweeter, friendlier aspects of his environment;" and while desert descriptions are still perpetuated (remember, Arabic poetry does not give up anything easily), they are now rivalled by those

of watered, cultivated lands, pleasant landscapes which appear "as background of love scenes (other than *nasīb*)." The poet begins to establish a "personal relation to nature," which "[evokes] in his heart an untraditional, an individual response," and "to sentimentalize, or to romanticize, nature," usually through personification (though von Grunebaum does not term it that), e.g. by apostrophizing trees. Poets strive "to enrich description of nature by presenting picturesque ruins," as they "now halt occasionally at dilapidated buildings rather than at deserted homesteads;" however, "Arabic poetry remains impervious to exoticism even to the extent of recording characteristic features of places or countries the poet mentions by name" – al-A'shā, for example, complaining about having to travel to Mukrān (in India), "has not one word on the forbidding scenery of that province" – while "nostalgia" (usually for the desert homeland) "becomes a recognized theme" (ibid.: 142–4).

Let us note a few key terms here – "scenery", "sentimentalization" – as we progress to the Abbasid period, when "the move away from the rugged and forbidding in nature becomes final." Descriptions of meadows, of artificial, man-made gardens, of the onset of spring, replace desert imagery: "The power of rendering the forceful and indomitable aspect of nature is lost." (Remember, it was extraneous to begin with.) Nostalgia now encompasses towns, and urban descriptions proliferate, notwithstanding Ibn Qutayba's strictures (which, we should remember, though von Grunebaum does not, were purpose-oriented and limited to the *qaṣīda*). There is a "sudden increase in color-consciousness," and wine poetry "is now regularly being given a background of nature description" in which "flowers have become an indispensable accessory of the reveling" (for a corrective to the claim that flowers were "conspicuous by their absence" in earlier *khamriyyāt* see Schoeler 1974, and n. 40 to this chapter). Finally, the "poetical 'snapshot'" (on which more below) – "a small group of verses . . . purporting to capture some fleeting view, some momentary impression" – is developed and perfected: "It has become perfectly legitimate for a poet to cultivate the epigrammatic sketch for its own sake, with no view to making it fit into the framework of a more comprehensive form" (ibid.: 145–8).

This "new manner of perception" of nature was "undoubtedly the most important contribution to Arabic literature" in the Abbasid period. If Umayyad poets "had exhibited a marked predilection for the personalized response," as against "the exact and merely objective portrayal of nature" – thus verging on the "sentimentalization" of nature – Abbasid poets "discarded the romantic attitude. Allegory and personification no longer satisfy the dominant interest . . . [which] . . . turns away from the individual emotional (or intellectual) reaction to environmental inspiration and becomes focused on personalized presentation instead." "Precise description" gives way to an emphasis on "the interpretation given the visible theme by the poet," the "presentation of the reflection left by the object on his own mind rather than of the object itself;" this represents not (lest we should draw the wrong conclusion) a "personalized response" to nature, but (and this is where Abbasid poetry "parts company with occidental poetry" –

the occidental poetry, we might note, of a thousand years later) an attempt "to transpose the objects described into the sphere of another, an utterly fantastic reality" – "fantastic … because … the poet no longer cares to bring his object closer to the listener or to endear it to him by pointing either to its actual beauty or to its emotional values but concentrates on unveiling its *hidden decorative qualities* which he unfolds by means of comparisons" (ibid.: 149; emphases added).

We will return to this latter point in a moment. The contradictions in this analysis are self-evident, and I will not belabour them; but let us note three more key terms to bear in mind: "fantastic" (which for von Grunebaum has negative, if not pejorative, connotations); "interpretation" (with respect to the poet's "own mind"); and "decorative". Von Grunebaum elaborates: comparisons "do not so much aim at clarifying the elements involved than at presenting startling pictures of visual splendor or acoustical charm but of little if any reality" (hold that thought: "reality"); they "tend to become increasingly intricate – every specification adding optical or fantastic beauty while taking away objective truth," so that "the importance accorded to nature and its phenomena is being diminished" (ibid.). Ultimately,

> this manner of perception contributed more than anything else to removing Arabic poetry from life, from reality, and to freezing it, as it were, at a stage where the decorative had become the leading viewpoint and where variety could only be maintained by ever growing affectation and the admission into description of *recherché* witticisms. (ibid.: 150)

However, "the full exploitation of the possibilities of the fantastic reality was not to be achieved by the Arabs," but by the Persians (and especially by later poets such as Niẓāmī Ganjavī); nor is it "unlikely that it was Persian influence which promoted the adoption and elaboration of the Abbasside type of imagery" (ibid., and see 151 n. 114). This is definitely to have one's cake and eat it.

It might seem like flogging a dead horse to resurrect von Grunebaum's biased and outdated views, were it not for the fact that they remain the basis for many later studies, and that many of his assumptions still manifest themselves even in rebuttals of them.[28] Let us return to several points in this summary of his views, bearing in mind the "key terms" to which I have called attention. The first concerns the "inspirational" role of nature. It has been observed that the Romantics' attitude towards nature became possible only after a "dissociation of sensibility" that transformed "nature", of which man – the poet – was a part, into "landscape" or "scenery", of which he was an observer. This response posits a disjunction between man and nature – the latter something "out there", an independent entity – that does not exist for the medieval poet, for whom nature is not scenery but both part of the continuum of the created world in which he lives and a sign-system pointing to its Creator. It is in this context that nature provides "inspiration".[29]

Second: the missed, ignored, or denied "Islamic/Koranic" opportunity. I shall return to this below; here, however, I would argue that the interweaving of "cosmic and human events" was taken for granted (though perhaps in different ways) both prior to and after the advent of Islam, and is not characterized by "eschatological" imagery alone (although the latter is often invoked – in Abū al-ʿAtāhiya's *zuhdiyyāt*, in Abū Tammām's references to Koranic imagery and Nāṣir-i Khusraw's to Ismāʿīlī symbolism, and in Koranic allusions such as that of Khāqānī to Sura 3: 26 in his Madāʾin *qaṣīda*, to cite only a few examples). The input of Koranic, or more generally "Islamic", imagery into poetry was considerable, and was noted by the critics (although many modern scholars, in their search for myths and "archetypes", are prone to ignore it). Abraham's perception of the "natural phenomena" he observes as signs (*āyāt*) of their Creator provides the Koranic *locus classicus* (see especially Sura 6) for this view, which developed over time and, in particular, under the influence of neo-Platonic thought. One has only to recall al-Jurjānī's comments on the personification of spring to be aware of the Islamic dimension of such imagery.[30]

Third, the turning away from the "rugged and forbidding in nature" (always the source of admiration and inspiration for the Romantics in their search for the "sublime") towards the "softer, sweeter, friendlier aspects" of the environment. Of course there is a change in sensibility, a change reflecting that in the poets' environment, as desert Arabs were transplanted to the burgeoning urban centers of Islam – the Hijaz, Umayyad Syria, Abbasid Iraq, and beyond. Small wonder descriptions of watered landscapes, artificial gardens and flowers, as well as "colour-consciousness", increased – the materials were there, before the eyes, as never before. But they were not merely there; they testified to a civilization made possible by the triumph of Islam and to the prosperity conferred by its leaders, its rulers, on the community. Moreover, we should not forget the very real hostility of the "natural" world outside the garden (or city) walls; the contrast between the desert and the sown is a pervasive image in all periods; and the fate of many cities, destroyed not merely by conquest but by the failure of irrigation works and the encroachment of the desert, is reflected both in Koranic images of vanished cities and peoples and in the so-called "antiquarianism" which produced poems on the ruins of Khawarnaq or Madāʾin, mute reminders of past glory (as the *aṭlāl* come to testify to the death of the Jāhiliyya) and of human mutability. Nevertheless, poets do not cease to speak of "the rugged and forbidding" in nature; but this is (as always) not for its own sake (or because of the Romantic "awe" it inspires in the poet), but because of its appropriateness to the poem in hand.

The type of imagery employed has much to do with both the genre and the occasion of the poem. Victory poems which feature description tend to portray nature as rugged and hostile, as yet another opponent that the *mamdūḥ* has overcome (Sayf al-Dawla's river-crossing as described by al-Mutanabbī; Farrukhī's *qaṣīda* on Maḥmūd's Somnath campaign). Poems celebrating accession, restoration, or a festival such as Nawrūz (a ritual celebration of

sovereignty) quite properly dwell on spring, the garden, the procreative and harmonious aspects of nature, embodied in the ruler's life-giving forces (Abū Tammām's *qaṣīda* on al-Muʿtaṣim's accession provides one example). Nature un-natural, the world upside-down, the absence of prosperity and order, are appropriate to *rithāʾ*: the result of the *mamdūḥ*'s death is that stars are cast down, mountains toppled, fertility denied, cities desolated.[31] *Ghazal* and *khamriyya* turn naturally to pleasing scenes, not as backdrops for, so much as analogues of, love, feasting and good company; homiletic poems focus on the *aṭlāl/qubūr* and on poignant, admonitory ruins. We will explore these connections further below.

Finally, the "poetical 'snapshot'", and its linking of the "real" with the "unreal".[32] The critics distinguished between comparisons with "real" connections and those with "unreal" or "imaginary" (that is, figurative) connections. But do such images (as von Grunebaum argued) – however "intricate" they may be – testify to the "removal" of poetry from "life", from "reality"? We should remember two things: first, that "life", and the "real" world, are characterized by transience, ephemerality; and second, that the correspondences – both horizontal and vertical, between the various hierarchies of creation (mineral, plant, animal, man) and between creation and Creator – are both real and existing; the poet does not fabricate, but discovers, them.[33]

The garden is a potent symbol of the continuity between man (in a state of civilization), nature, and God, at once man-made (an artifact) and the reflection of that heavenly Garden (God's artifact) that is Paradise. Gardens and meadows are, to some extent, interchangeable; both man-made pleasance and natural landscape, touched by the hand of God – or of the ruler – in spring, symbolize new life and prosperity. Both figure importantly in Arabic and Persian poetry (though with some differences, which we may now begin to explore); both generate imagery which employs, as a matter of course, personification and extended metaphor.

Let us look briefly at some examples from poems seen earlier. The exordium of ʿAlī ibn al-Jahm's elegy on al-Mutawakkil (Chapter 3 above) describes the "night-travelling raincloud" which brings life-giving rain to the caliph's domains. The sleepless poet contemplates the cloud as it "makes towards a land, to bestow its generosity upon it" (1), "brought to us by the east wind" (also personified) like "a young maiden pushed gently along [*taqūduhā*] by an old crone" (2).[34] The wind "sways gracefully with the cloud [*tamīsu bihā maysan*]", not forbidding it if it flags, nor calling it back if it hastens on (3); "if the cloud leaves (the wind) for a moment, it grieves for it like a mother whose child has left her" (4). Images of tenderness and nurturing give way momentarily to the effects of the cloud's lightning flashes on the eyes and its thunder on the ears (in which we may discern the motif of the ruler's death-dealing powers); the earth shakes in yearning, or in apprehension that the cloud's purpose may be lost (5–6). But when the cloud sees the earth's longing, sees that the "lands of Iraq are in desperate need of her", she remains there, giving generously of her water until the valleys of Baghdad gush forth with streams (8–9),

10   Until we saw the birds (in her valleys), nearly caught by the hands of fair maidens;

11   And until (those valleys) were clothed with every kind of flower, like a bride adorned by her broideries and striped cloaks,

12   Whom she summoned to loosen her girdle (in those regions); and she hastened there, her necklaces and unique gems trailing behind her;

13   And the Tigris was like chain mail of double weave, with rings whose iron appeared and disappeared.

Again, the imagery combines life-giving and death-dealing attributes (flowers; chain mail), though the former are emphasized. The cloud's departure signals the transition to the *rithā'*, a complex transition which links that departure with 'Ubayd Allāh's hasty flight and moves to what is less an elegy than an attack on the traitors and an exhortation to revenge:

14   And when she had discharged what was due to Iraq and its people, there came to her the north wind's messenger,

15   And she passed away in the twinkling of an eye, as though 'Ubayd Allāh's numerous troops had fled,

16   And left the Commander of the Faithful struck down, martyred – and the best among kings are their martyrs;

17   And he ['Ubayd Allāh] caused firm resolve to perish and impulse to be followed, when he put someone inexperienced over the troops, to lead them.

Yaqūduhā "to lead them" echoes *taqūduhā* "she leads her" (the wind/the raincloud) in line 2, emphasizing the contrast between beneficent Nature (which both stands for the caliph and serves him) and perfidious man. (We also hear echoes of the narrative sections of victory *qaṣīdas à la* Abū Tammām, which are surely intended.) Many such echoes are heard in the second section of the poem: *fa-lammā qtaḍāhā laylata r-rawʿi ḥaqqahu* "and when he [the caliph] demanded of it [the oath of allegiance to which his men were contracted], on the light of alarm" (19) echoes *fa-lammā qaḍat ḥaqqa l-ʿIrāqi wa-ahlihi*, "and when she (the raincloud) had discharged what was due to Iraq and its people" (14); the leader (*ʿamīd*) of the armies remained "in a fishing boat" (*fī zawraqi ṣ-ṣayyādi*) (20), recalling the maidens trying to catch the birds (*taṣīduhā*, 10). *A-lahfan wa-mā yughnī t-talahhufu*, "Alas! but what use is regret?" (36) recalls the earth's "yearning" (*talahhuf*) for the life-giving rain (4); while the concluding line –

47   And such blood was sprinkled the like of which had ne'er been sprinkled upon the earth, and things happened which the likes of me cannot redress –

contrasts the life-giving rain sprinkled upon the earth, bringing to it new life, with the caliph's blood, sprinkled in vain, which will bring no prosperity (*ṭalla*, here in the passive *ṭulla*, is used for the fall of dew or light rain upon the ground).

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The "night-travelling raincloud", its life-giving rainfall bestowed generously on the parched lands of Iraq, is clearly identified with the caliph, whose wrongfully shed blood, by contrast, is a perversion of the natural (i.e., divine) order. The images of nurturing (only mildly tempered by those of power – thunder, lightning, etc.) and of fertility, in which nature is both analogue and servant of the ruler, contrast with those of violence, broken allegiance, treachery and cowardice which inform the human actions recounted in the elegy. They thus argue (anticipating the "breaking of allegiance" in 18) for the un-natural character of the murder, symptomatic of a world upside-down, a world in which the proper order of things has been violated.

Manūchihrī's New Year *qaṣīda* to Masʿūd provides a complex example of extended metaphor plus personification.[35] "Renowned Nawrūz" determines to do battle against the "armies of winter", with Sada as his vanguard. Lines 4–18 describe Winter's usurpation: seizing the opportunity provided by Nawrūz's "near four months' journey" (a specificity that should alert us to the topical-allegorical purpose behind this *nasīb*), it "rushed in" and pillaged his kingdom "with a mighty army and numerous troops" (8), removed the "jasmine's crown" and the "plane-tree's hands" (9), seized "the basil's green fur turbans", "broke the gold-and-pearl caskets of the fruit-trees" (10), and installed its own cohorts – "those officials in white cotton robes; those black Zangī troops, red-lipped and black of deeds" – in Nawrūz's court (12). Nawrūz is informed of the situation by the north wind, who provides further details: Nawrūz's royal treasure has been plundered, the jewels stripped from his sweethearts ("rose and grenadine and jasmine"), the flutes and lutes of his minstrels (turtledove and nightingale) smashed and broken (15–17).

Nawrūz decides to take action: he will assemble an army "clad in green brocades, with locks like chains, the stature of cypresses, ringlets on their cheeks" (19). Their belts will be of Judas-blossoms, their breastplates of green herbs; the footsoldiers will be *nārvan* trees, the cavalry, elms (*nārvān*, 20).

21 I will make bows of the rainbow, arrows from willow-shoots, banners of
      tulip-petals, a cutting sword of lightning;
22 I will make elephants of clouds, the elephant-driver of the wind, and
      from the crash of thunder innumerable elephant-mirrors.

Nawrūz then tells Sada to bear his message to the "king of kings"; the message itself follows, taking up the spring imagery once again: Nawrūz will bring "myriad cups of red, musk-scented wine; myriad red rose-petals" (35), harp-playing nightingales and "amber-cheeked jasmine" (36), so that the king may celebrate, drink wine and listen to music, "feast in Iraq and make war in Hijaz" (44), "make Bābul the quarters of your minstrels, Khullakh the quarters of your cupbearers" (45), "Qayṣar your cupbearer, Jaypāl your *chūbzan*, the Khāqān your stirrup-holder and Faghfūr your chamberlain" (50).

The extended metaphor serves not only to unify the *nasīb* of this *qaṣīda*; its imagery spills over into the *madīḥ* as well. The effect is to make the "battle"

between spring and winter sound very un-warlike (although, as we know, it was winter which defeated Masʿūd in his pursuit of Būritigīn; the spilling over into the *madīḥ* (itself obliquely expressed, in the voice of Nawrūz) highlights Masʿūd's increasing devotion to wine and his neglect of state affairs. Moreover, it is not Masʿūd who will accomplish the feats mentioned; Nawrūz will do this for him.

These two examples have in common the use of nature imagery, extended metaphor and personification for both thematic (ultimately allegorical) and structural purposes. The two can scarcely be separated. What (if anything) do they reveal about the poets' "responses" to nature? Quite possibly, the ultimate irrelevance of the question. Both poems oppose – one explicitly, one implicitly – man and "nature" (embodied in the raincloud and in spring, both instruments of divine order) to demonstrate a rupture in the (ideal) continuum, violated by imperfect humanity. (There is, moreover, a serpent – Būritigīn – in the world-garden that Nawrūz promises to restore to its "natural" state.) The poems differ in one respect: the presence of the poet in the first, his virtual absence (or deliberately obfuscated presence) in the second; yet both share in their appeal to nature as the paradigm upon which human existence should be modelled. To what extent does this appeal apply generally? And what are its poetic implications? We may perhaps begin to answer such questions by examining in more detail the role of nature imagery, and specifically of the garden, in Arabic and Persian poetry.

Earthly Paradises?

As G. Schoeler points out, early Arabic poets do not describe gardens (what Schoeler terms the *Kunstgärten* or enclosed, artificial garden; 1974: 15), but rather pastures, grasslands and the vegetation of the *rawḍa* (meadow, watered land), a term which becomes transferred to the artificial garden in post-Islamic poetry, where it may be used in either sense. In the *nasīb* of the *qaṣīda* fruitful nature is often associated with the beloved, as in this passage from ʿAntara's (d. c. 600) *Muʿallaqa* discussed by Michael Sells (translated by Sells, 1994: 135; see also Schoeler 1974: 16–17).

13 She takes your heart
        with the flash edge of her smile,
    her mouth sweet to the kiss,
        sweet to the taste,
14   As if a draft of musk
    from a spiceman's pouch
        announced the wet gleam
    of her inner teeth,
15 Or an untouched meadow,
        bloom and grass
    sheltered in rain, untrodden,
        dung free, hidden.

16   Over it the white
    first clouds of spring
        pour down, leaving small pools,
    like silver dirhams,
17 Pouring and bursting,
        evening on evening
    gushing over it
        in an endless stream.

Sells argues that such imagery – what he terms the "dissembling simile", since "its deeper poetic intent is something other than description" (1994: 134) – presents, not "the beloved as an object of description, but the mythopoetic world of the lost garden or meadow" (ibid.: 130): "The primary referent . . . is not the beloved but a symbolic analogue of the beloved, the lost garden" (ibid.: 131).[36] The pervasive elements of such imagery – motifs of nurturing, tranquillity and purity; references to fragrances, lush plants, flowing waters –

> when viewed as a group . . . can constitute the mythopoetic world of the lost garden. Though there is no theological definition of this lost garden or meadow, it comprises within the context of the qaṣīdah a world of the sacred as intense as early Islamic notions of paradise, which feature some of the same elements. We might speak of this sacred world as transcendent in the sense that [it is] beyond the world of the poet and unattainable by him. While the Islamic garden can be regained in the future, the qaṣīdah garden is part of an unretrievable past, and can be reached only through memory. (ibid.: 156)

Sells' essay marks a new departure in the discussion of garden imagery (at least with respect to Arabic poetry), as does also J. Stetkevych's study of such imagery in the *nasīb* (1993), to be discussed further below. From having been viewed as "descriptive" or "phantastic", such imagery is now seen as imbued with archetypal symbolic meaning (with the stress on "archetypal"). The shift towards attention to meaning is a welcome one; but does that meaning arise (e.g. in the case of 'Antara) from the poem, or is it imposed upon it? Without going into the complexities of pre-Islamic poetry – an enterprise beyond both the scope of this study and the competence of this writer – it is necessary to chart a course between the Scylla of von Grunebaum's unreconstructed literalism and the Charybdis of Sells' romanticizing flights of fancy. For while Sells quite rightly takes issue with those who deplore the "deficiencies" of Arabic poetic imagery,[37] by positing the garden as a self-standing "theme" (as does also J. Stetkevych), he ignores the question of its poetic function.

There is no doubt as to the mythopoetic strength of images of the garden (taken broadly, as encompassing the felicitous, prosperous and harmonious aspects of nature) in a wide variety of related, and unrelated, literary and

cultural traditions, or to their connotations of transcendental bliss. But are these images identical, do they carry the same freight of meaning, from culture to culture, literature to literature? Are their poetic manifestations reducible to one, archetypal Symbol? Are there no significant differences between, say, the Elysian Fields, the pastoral Arcadia, the Paradise lost by Adam, and that promised to the pious Muslim? Or between these and other, more mundane gardens, frequented by lovers or drinkers of wine? While there are obvious resonances between gardens of all sorts, I would argue that as poetic images they carry their own, culture-specific implications, and that, moreover, the poetic image, however much weighted with literary, cultural, or even archetypal baggage, can be, and is, manipulated to serve the poet's purpose. It will not do to project our own understanding of the garden (literary, religious, or cultural) backwards onto poetry to which it may be irrelevant.

If (as Schoeler asserts, and as the poetic evidence bears witness) there were in early Arabia no "gardens" as such, and if (as Sells admits) there was no "theological definition of [the] lost garden" or of Paradise (either lost or promised), it is difficult to justify the equation of garden or meadow with "sacred space" in the sense of a consciously evoked analogue of Paradise. While the ḥimā (an expanse of ground, usually containing vegetation, taken possession of by an individual or group, which became interdicted to the point where even an animal straying into its precincts might be killed) was sometimes placed under the protection of a tribal deity, its inviolability was imposed, and secular in origin (see EI^2, s.v. [J. Chelhod]); there were also cultivated areas outside the ḥimā which could by no means be called "sacred". Nor were such spaces "transcendent", "beyond the world of the poet and unattainable by him" – he had (at least in his poetry) attained them in the past, and might presumably do so again in the future, if not prevented by age, adversity, or more pressing concerns. The "garden" is, as Sells is right to point out, linked with the beloved, with the past, with recollection; but often as not it is not "lost", but rejected, as part of the soft, feminine qualities associated with erotic relationships in the nasīb, which the poet puts behind him, as part of his jahl, as he moves on to more manly pursuits.[38]

Islam did indeed bring with it both a lost and a promised garden. In contrast to Christianity, which put a primary emphasis on the lost Eden – and we should remember that a number of important pre-Islamic poets were Christian – Islam, as manifested in the first instance by the Koran, put far greater emphasis on Paradise promised. We should also remember that the changes brought by Islam were also the result of the increasing cultural contacts which accompanied Islamic expansion (contacts which, at an earlier stage, arguably influenced Koranic imagery itself). It is thus scarcely surprising that descriptions of nature, or of the garden, began to incorporate stronger associations with Paradise or with a Paradisal state; but again, the use of such imagery cannot be separated from the context of the poems – or the poetic world(s) – in which it occurs.

Commenting on von Grunebaum's lament over the "missed opportunity" provided by Koranic imagery, J. Stetkevych observes, "Provoked by the realization of how much the theme of Paradise and of its topical ramifications in Arabic literature demands the muse … von Grunebaum gives to Muḥammad and the Qur'ān what he takes away from the rest of Arabic literature." He agrees, however, that, "taken strictly as an outgrowth of the qur'ānic topical treatment of Paradise, this 'eminently poetic subject' is, as a rule, of limited scope and elaborateness in post-qur'ānic Arabic poetry," and that (as in the Koran itself) "Paradise is *not* a full-fledged, self-referential 'subject' (i.e., a theme) but, in this formalist sense, merely a motif" (1993: 168–9; author's emphasis). Stetkevych argues, however, that (in the *khamriyya*) "The banquet scene as such is a scene that symbolically and iconically may not be separated from the subject of Paradise as 'theme.' Irrespective of their size, all other *banquet scenes* in archaic Bedouin and in later classical Arabic poetry are equally thematic icons of Paradise, whether qur'ānically influenced or not" (ibid.: 170; author's emphases). As Malraux termed "the song of Paradise Lost" to be the "great music of Europe", so, "underneath the clichés, the material palpability and sensuality, the great poetry of the Arabs is the song of Paradise Lost" (ibid.: 171).

This is, however, to put the (archetypal) cart before the (poetical) horse. There is, as we shall see, considerable poetic nostalgia for lost (earthly) Paradises – youth, love, conviviality and friendship; but "Paradise Lost", as a "great theme", is a Western (and a Christian) preoccupation, not an Eastern (or Islamic) one. Nor can "Paradise", or "the garden", *tout court*, constitute a "theme" – allusion, image, symbol, subject, yes, but not "theme". One suspects that Stetkevych is looking for a "great [read: spiritual, symbolic, transcendental] theme" that will redeem "the clichés, the material palpability and sensuality" of Arabic poetry (on this tendency, and its underlying assumptions, see Menocal 1994); but I would suggest that, rather than, for example, banquet scenes invariably being "thematic icons of Paradise", Paradise – or more generally the garden – itself serves as an icon, or an emblem, of something else: love, pleasure, prosperity. It is not – or at least not necessarily (though it may function as such in certain poems, or with certain poets) – a "space of archetypal remembrance" identifiable with the *dār*, the "symbolic 'abodes of the heart' of the *nasīb*" (J. Stetkevych 1993: 181–2), if indeed the latter can be so designated; for the *dār* also becomes an emblem that functions in diverse ways.[39]

In the *khamriyya* the garden is not merely a background, a setting, but perhaps the strongest of arguments for enjoying life.[40] Abū Nuwās exhorts (1958, 3: 106),

1   Weep not for Laylā; do not grieve for Hind; but drink, among the roses,
     red (wine) like the rose.

The motif resonates throughout the tradition. For the wine-drinker – and this as true of Ḥāfiẓ as of Abū Nuwās – this present, earthly Paradise is far preferable to any promised one.

2   Bring, *sāqī*, the rest of the wine; for in Paradise you'll not find
    the flowing stream of Ruknābād or the rosy meads of Muṣallā,

says Ḥāfiẓ (QG6); and Abū Nuwās, again (1958, 3: 5),

1   Does it not cheer you that the earth is in bloom, while the wine is
    there for the taking, old and virginal?
2   There is no excuse for your abstention from an ancient one whose
    father is the night, whose mother the green vine.
3   Hasten; for the gardens of Karkh arouse wonder and joy; no dusty hand
    of war has usurped them.
4   In them are birds of every sort, who have no quarrel with the flowing
    waters.
5   When they sing, they leave no limb without joy, by which its affliction
    is healed.

This is no mere setting, but an argument which contrasts the blissful and life-celebrating qualities of the garden with other, negative ones. The contrast is announced in the opening description of the wine as "old and virginal" (*shamṭā'u 'adhrā'ū*), an image borrowed, as we saw in Chapter 2, from descriptions of war, but here turned upside-down as in line 3 (with what seems a deliberate allusion to its provenance) the poet assures us that the gardens of Karkh – unlike the field of battle – are unpolluted by the dust scattered by "the hand of war". *Qu'ūd*, "abstention", has, moreover, the sense of "refusing to do battle" – another inversion of a traditional motif whereby true *jahl* is seen to be abstention from wine, and life's pleasures, when they are at hand.[41] Wine and gardens are linked not only by contiguity but by genealogy: as the wine's father is the "night" (i.e., time), her mother is the "green vine", *khaḍrā'*, a word which, like the *jinān* of line 3, carries resonances of Paradise. This is the peaceable kingdom, in which the songbirds have no quarrel with the running waters (evocative of Paradise's flowing streams); their joyful songs infuse every limb, healing the body of its afflictions. The "descriptive" element in these lines (if we are thinking in terms of a visual evocation of a spring garden) is minimal and imprecise – the earth is "in bloom" (*zahrā'*), the gardens "arouse wonder and joy" (*mu'niqa*). What is evoked are qualities – beauty, peace, joy, healing; the delight is that of the soul rather than that of the eye; and the Paradisal garden is an icon of an edenic state which might – were people to heed the arguments its image embodies – be recreated on earth.[42]

As in pre-Islamic poetry, love and the beloved are linked with the beauties of nature, which is not merely a setting, a background, but part of a complex of arguments. Schoeler notes that, for example, flowers are not merely described, but take on emblematic, even symbolic, qualities (1974: 114–15; this procedure is particularly important in Persian, where flowers often figure human types); thus for example al-'Abbās ibn al-Aḥnaf says of Fawz (1986: 271),

12 By God! I will not compare her pact [ʿahd] to the rose, when it should
      end, as the Persians say;
13 But I shall liken it ever to the myrtle; for the rose does not endure, but
      the myrtle endures.

Elsewhere, the garden arouses memories of Fawz (ibid.: 93):

1 Fawz, what are you thinking of? – would you console me with a
      jewelled casket, a ring, a sash?
2 When I go into the garden the scent of eglantine and apple blossom
      reminds me of your scent.
3 I envy the breeze because it touches you, not I; what have I neglected,
      after the winds?
4 Whatever land you alight in, the dwellers therein will have no need of
      a lamp.

The breeze as messenger – reminding lover of beloved, bearing messages
between them – was to become a widespread motif in love poetry both Arabic
and Persian. Here its personification, or humanization, is inchoate, suggested by
the verbs *adhkaranī* "reminded me", and more strongly *tamassaki* "caressed you",
and by its being the object of the poet's jealousy. Later, the breeze becomes a
full-fledged "fictional person" in the drama of love.[43] The "garden" (or meadow,
rawḍa) of love, also to become a full-scale motif, makes a brief appearance in
al-ʿAbbās (ibid.: 99):

1 Said I – as sorrows settled in, and my tears flowed over my cloak –
2 "O sons of Adam! let us go forth and proclaim: We are nothing but
      slaves to women!"
3 Whoever reproaches me about women, I reproach him; for, by God!
      I adore women!
4 O maidens, tell me, by my life! is the lover sold for the one he desires?
5 Leave me to graze in the meadow of love, to wander among its plants,
      and to walk about. . . .

We have already seen that the association of beloved with garden is an
ancient one; in the Umayyad and Abbasid periods it takes on new, more
explicitly "Islamic" overtones. The Umayyad poet-caliph al-Walīd ibn Yazīd
compares his beloved Salmā to "a garden [*janna*] whose low-bending branches,
heavy with harvest, were a temptation" (1979: 75). While the connection with
Paradise is not explicit in al-Walīd's brief poem (*janna*, despite its Koranic
echoes, can mean simply "garden", and Paradise knows no autumn), it becomes
more so with other poets. Al-Farazdaq (d. 110/728) likened the loss of his wife
Nawār to Adam's loss of Paradise (1936: 363): "She was my Paradise [*jannatī*],
from which I went out, like Adam when troubles cleaved to him." Kushājim's
beloved is like an earthly Paradise, his crystalline tears a Salsabīl, the newly-
sprouted down on his cheeks

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> . . . a golden stream which, had a watcher observed it, he would have
>   turned pale.
> Some contemplate the garden of Paradise; I hope to attain from it a
>   scent or a bite.
> A gazelle; the closer I come to him, the greater grows his remoteness
>   and aloofness.
> I concealed my love for him until my tears flowed, he turned them into
>   abundant speech. (al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ 1986, 1: 86)

Here, it is clearly the beloved's unattainability, as well as his desirability, which makes him resemble Paradise, as he holds out a promise perhaps never to be fulfilled. Al-Tanūkhī's beloved is preferable to both garden and Paradise; he recalls past days spent with him, "their length made short by brief pleasures," and his beauty:

> His cheeks, roses; his eyes, narcissi; his teeth, white lilies; his saliva,
>   pure wine.
> Until, when night approached, we bound a garment of embraces
>   beneath our garments:
> Necks a necklace upon necks, cheeks a veil upon cheeks. (al-ʿAskarī
>   1994, 1: 235)

Al-Tanūkhī's "garden", enjoyed, replaces the real garden, for which he has no need; lost, it evokes nostalgia for a Paradise in the past, but the emphasis is upon the happiness of that past, and the tone is one of celebration – underlined by the final simile, "his saliva, pure wine" (that constant adjunct of pleasure) of the union described in the final lines.

Al-Ṣanawbarī describes his beloved (al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ 1986, 1: 50) as

> A garden of beauty in which the eye wanders, delighting in its
>   embroideries and brocades,

and laments both the appearance of "the violet's flower upon [his] cheek" and his own old age:

> It would be the anemone [nuʿmān] of my happiness [naʿīm; also:
>   Paradise], were my head not crowned with the crown of hoariness.

Here there is an intimation of Paradise lost: the garden of love is barred to those "among whose violets jasmine has bloomed". But note, first, the abstraction (in lines by a poet famed for his "nature descriptions"), and second, that the "garden of beauty" at once gives way to mention of "embroideries and brocades" (figurative apparel for the garden; literal apparel for the beloved), the "azure beauty-spot" to the "violet" (down) on the beloved's cheeks, which would in turn be the poet's "anemone" were it not that (by convention at least) the young have no love for the old. Such images of beloved-as-garden evoke less "Paradise" (which may not be mentioned at all) than the *hortus conclusus*, which

serves in *ghazal* as an icon for the beauty, worth, and (frequently) the unattainability of the beloved (cf. the lines by Farrukhī discussed in Meisami 1995: 245, 250–1), in *khamriyya* for the pleasant company of choice and refined companions. It would be wrong to assume that the two – Paradise and *hortus conclusus* – are always and everywhere necessarily identical, however powerful the resonances between them.

Al-Ṣanawbarī's lines feature what is perhaps the most striking aspect of garden imagery (and that which causes most concern to scholars): the constant mingling of natural and man-made, the "unreal" connections made between the two. There is a constant drift from the focus on the garden – the setting for the drinking party, in which setting and *sāqī* mirror each other – towards the human world of opulence and luxury. This mingling of "natural" and "human" is seen even in al-Ṣanawbarī's "descriptive" *rawḍiyyāt*, for example in the following (1970: 260):

1 How many bright teeth, how many languorous eyes of daisies and narcissi are there in the garden;
2 How many chaste cheeks of red poppies never offered to kisses or to bites.
3 Examine the secret of the poppy: in it are tear-jerking marvels of which one who is equal to that will never grow weary.
4 Locks loosed and separated without a comb; curls clipped without scissors;
5 Red upon green; the place midway between the two figured with tokens of white.
6 This a lavender, this a *khurram*, that a gillyflower [*khīrī*] destined for me from His goodness by the Best judge [*qaḍā lī bi-khayrihi khayru qāḍī*].
7 This is a *bahār* of the yellow hue of the lover dying from rejection and evasion.
8 Then pour it for us, like fire in its great redness, in a vessel like water in its pure whiteness:
9 A grenadine-flower its vessel, a dog-rose, the cure of the sick from all ailments.

Schoeler considers the "influence of nature on man" to be a distinctive theme in al-Ṣanawbarī's *rawḍiyyāt* (1974: 290);[44] but I would suggest that, rather than constituting an "influence" (in an emotional, subjective sense), nature imagery, in this poem at least, functions in a variety of interrelated ways. It points to the world of love central to *ghazal*, in a consistent pattern which links the flower-imagery: the daisies and narcissi are not merely like, but identified with, the shining teeth and languorous eyes of lovelies, the poppies with chaste (yet ruddy) cheeks which have never been kissed or bitten, their hidden centers containing wonders of which the mindful observer will never tire, and, finally, the yellow *bahār* with the wan, suffering lover (note too the link between the rhymes of 3 and 7, *i'tirāḍ/i'rāḍ*, "capacity (for mental application"/"evasion"). It

points also to the world of the court (evoked by the tiring-women alluded to in – but absent from – line 4, and the tokens of 5). But most importantly, it points to the beneficence of the Creator, the Best Judge who has bestowed the garden on the poet (on mankind in general) as a blessing and consolation (the heightened language of line 6, with its complicated *tajnīs* by virtue of which the humble gillyflower, *khīrī*, becomes a visible manifestation of God's beneficence, *khayr*, towards His creatures, makes this point admirably). The earthly garden, of which the wine in its vessel becomes itself an image, is a gift from God, a consolation for the pangs of love; the flower/wine is the cure for all ills, but specifically those of love: the final rhyme, *amrāḍ*, links the end of the poem to its beginning, to *mirāḍ* "languorous", the rhyme of the first hemistich. The poem is less a description than an argument (much in the manner of Abū Nuwās) for the enjoyment of the blessings God has bestowed.[45]

The garden is, it is true, often linked with the past, with the nostalgia for lost youth, happier times, as in a long poem by Ibn al-Muʿtazz (1977, 1: 369–70)[46] which begins with an evocation of the *rabʿ*, the spring quarter –

1 You were greeted [*ḥuyyīta*] by a spring quarter (which) prayed that abundant rain might water you; how often were you praised for your deeds! –

which puts a new twist on the topic: instead of the poet praying that the *rabʿ* be watered (and perhaps restored to its former fertile, prosperous state), it is the *rabʿ* that calls down blessings on the poet whose deeds (*athar*; also, his "trace") were ever worthy of praise. This leads almost immediately to a statement which makes clear that the *rabʿ* must be taken (as Ibn Rashīq might say; cf. 1972, 2: 124) *majāzan*, "figuratively":

3 Of the gazelles of the quarter [*ḥayy*; *tajnīs* with *ḥuyyīta*] I have a match [*qarīna*, "match", "wife"; also "analogue"]: the tented gazelle, black-eyed....

After a brief passage on his love for the "tented gazelle", the poet moves to a celebration of wine, and thence to the garden.

7 By God! Such was the pleasant life and age in which I passed youth's afternoon [*ʿāṣartu ʿaṣra ṣ-ṣighar*],

8 Passing from (one) wine to a lasting liquor [*arūḥu min rāḥin ilā mudāmatin*] passed round by one who expressed [*ʿaṣar*] "wine" from his cheeks....

10 As if the perfume of conversation between us, and the perfume of youth's days, were blossoms on a tree.

11 All this. – And how many a garden have I gone to at dawn, with a group of young men shining like lamps:

12 As if [*ka'annamā*] its narcissi were appeasing eyes after long sleeplessness had kept them awake;

13 As if the roses were cheeks bruised by kisses on the day of bidding
    farewell to a lover departing on his journey. . . .
18 As if the lilies mingled there were hoariness scattered over those
    garments.

With this line, near the poem's center, we have the first intimation of its
theme: the lost past. In a long catalogue, still linked by the anaphoric
ka'annamā, "as if", so reminiscent of the *zuhdiyya*, the poet recalls both sights
and sounds: the noria (waterwheel) "which sang to us [like] a eulogizer
[*mu'addid*] weeping for a departed friend", its "vibrating chant [like] a group
reciting the Psalms at dawn" (19–20); the wine, broached, like "a body of gold
[*tibr*] flowing into the cup, the sound of its flasks [like] one who laughs
boisterously, marvelling at something he's seen," and "its cups, when they
showed themselves, [like] stars setting, and after them others" (22–24). The
tambourines "were [like] the bells of camels travelling at dawn" (26; recalling
the * za'ā'in* motif), and "the vibrating pipes a group at dawn reciting the Psalms"
(27).[47] The "moon shining upon us was [like] a man's face, uncovered," and "the
candle in our midst like the body of a lover whose sweetheart had departed"
(30–31); and finally, climactically,

32 As if the goodness of nights which had passed were but a brief glance of
    the goodness of life,
33 Which time gave generously, if not without constraint; and time's
    nature is both clear and turbid.

Ibn al-Mu'tazz recalls a lost garden, a lost past, in which all was beautiful and
desirable, a source of pleasure, garden, wine and beauty mingling in an
idealized scene. The garden is (as in al-Ṣanawbarī's *rawḍiyya*, though to a far
greater extent) "humanized", inhabited by flowers and other objects with
human characteristics and engaging in human activities – activities (and
attributes) relating primarily to love. We may note in this poem a number of
intertextual echoes which tend to lead in directions other than those they
might suggest. The description of the poet's companions, *fityatin mithli l-maṣābīḥi
ghurar*, repeating almost verbatim a favorite formula of Abū Nuwās, reminds us
of the extent to which that poet's *khamriyyāt* provided, as Schoeler observes
(1974: 235), a primary model for Ibn al-Mu'tazz (a model also evoked by the
implicit rejection of *dār* for garden with which the poem begins – we will
speculate a bit more about the *dār* in a moment). But this is not a *khamriyya*;
wine, here, is incidental to, an adjunct of, the life of the garden (a different
destination than that of Abū Nuwās, who was usually headed for the tavern),
and the garden itself is not an argument for drinking, but for something else, as
we shall see.

In line 16 the poet describes the citrons (*utrujja*) as handmaidens (*waṣā'if*), or
as a pale and haggard lover. The *utrujja* recalls a line by 'Alqama describing the
departing beloved (trans. Sells 1994: 131):

6   They carried an utrujja away.
   A saffron-scented perfume trailed.
     Before the senses even now
  her fragrance lingers.

We may note both the association of a round image with the beloved, and the presence of a round object – in imitation of Abū Nuwās? – at the center of this poem. The allusion (if it is deliberate) to ʿAlqama – whose poem begins (al-Tibrīzī 1977, 3: 1324),

1 Is what you knew and what was entrusted to you still concealed? or is
    her bond severed, now that today she is far from you?
2 Or is a grown man who weeps, unable to satisfy his tears after loved
    ones on the day of departure, requited? –

connects Ibn al-Muʿtazz's image (which might otherwise seem "descriptive") with the past, with lost love, as indeed does the second comparison of the citron to the sorrowful lover. It also links it, importantly, to the knowledge obtained from, the lessons of, the past.

Other intimations – intimations of mortality – are provided both by the insistent anaphora of the "descriptive" passage (whose elegiac associations underline the illusory, transitory nature of the beauties described), and by other images: the white lilies, mingling with the brighter flowers, are like "hoary heads" (*shayb*) scattered among bright garments (18), the sound of the noria like a *muʿaddid*, a mourner reciting eulogies for a departed friend (19), the silvery streams (21) like bright blades, their waves like the plaited hair of women; the shining winecups are like setting stars. The thesis which these images are mustered to support is stated explicitly in the final lines:

32 As if the goodness of nights which had passed were but a brief glance of
    the goodness of life,
33 Which time gave generously, if not without constraint; and time's
    nature is both clear and turbid.

We are reminded, again, of Abū Nuwās – "Such are the changing ways of the nights of Time"; and wine itself can be turbid or clear – but the tone here is different: the garden points not only to the good things of the past but to their transience. Perhaps this is, after all, nostalgia for "Paradise Lost"; but I believe it is more than (or not quite) that, for there is more to this poem.

The "more" is embodied in the opening line, in which the poet is greeted by "a spring quarter" which will continue to pray for him, "whose deeds were ever praiseworthy". What quarter? Not the erstwhile abode of Mayya, Salmā, or Hind (for whom the poet has a perfectly acceptable substitute in the "gazelle"). Perhaps the "abode" is no less than the Abbasid capital Baghdad, where the poet moved at the invitation of his uncle, the caliph al-Muʿtaḍid, in 279/892, only to retire from public life some ten years later with the succession of

al-Muktafī; and perhaps the addressee of the *dār*'s greetings is not the poet himself, but the caliph. Such a reading is mere speculation; but the poem, it seems, demands a reading as other than pure description or personal nostalgia for a lost past.[48]

The possibility that garden, or nature, imagery can function in a variety of ways should alert us to the dangers inherent in imposing a restricted or reductive interpretation upon it, of seeing it as conveying either descriptive, "decorative" detail or as reflecting a poetics of "nostalgia" in a generalized (and romanticized) sense.[49] Moreover, as we have already seen, there are other gardens, other meadows, which carry different meanings. In Abū Tammām's panegyric to al-Muʿtaṣim, for example, the garden is linked to the life-giving powers of the caliph, and spring possesses the same "character" (*khulq*) as the caliph himself. There is no doubt, however, which is more important: "The gardens will be forgotten, but the brave deeds you have forged will remain in the memory forever" (24).[50] Moreover, the *nasīb* is allegorical: the coming of spring figures the accession of a new ruler.

That the function of garden imagery is manifestly different in panegyric than in *ghazal* or *khamriyya* should be self-evident. The association of spring and the garden with the life-giving powers of the *mamdūḥ* in Abbasid panegyric – arguably of Persian origins – becomes a typical motif of Persian poetry. (Indeed, the equation of rose and ruler which becomes a commonplace of Persian poetry is already seen in a poem by Aḥmad ibn Yūnus al-Kātib written in rebuttal of Ibn al-Rūmī's praise of the narcissus: the rose is "a king whose life is short but who deserves to be immortalized, were any living being to be immortal"; see Ibn al-Rūmī 1973, 2: 643 n. 1.) The Abbasid adoption of the Persian festivals of Nawrūz and Mihragān undoubtedly encouraged the development of such imagery.

Thus in a *qaṣīda* addressed to al-Haytham ibn ʿUthmān al-Ghanawī, in which the *nasīb* constitutes a lament for lost youth and lost love (it begins, "Was youthful passion ought but a phantom bearing greetings, which alighted a brief moment and then went away?"), al-Buḥturī effects the transition to the *madīḥ* by addressing the raincloud (1963, 4: 2087–92; see also Schoeler 1974: 154–61).

10 I say to the pouring raincloud which came by night, with gathered
      downpours that flooded everywhere:
11 Rain little or copiously; you will not achieve any goal you define until
      you become like Haytham!
12 He is death; do not cross swords with him, or woe betide you! your
      death, should you encounter him in the dust of war, is announced.
13 A youth by whom the nights have put on ornaments by which the
      horizons are illumined, which were dark before.

After praising the *mamdūḥ* the poet addresses him directly:

21 Greetings! and if *salām* is a greeting, then your face will suffice the
      greeter for an answer.

22 Do you not see the Euphrates rise as if it were the mountains of Sharawrā come swimming from the sea?

23 This was not its wont; but it saw good qualities from its neighbour, and learned (from them).

24 Nor has the Syrian garden burst into bloom: a youth has smiled from its east, and it has smiled (back).

25 Radiant spring has come to you, swaggering so gaily with beauty that it almost speaks.

26 Nawrūz has waked, in the dark twilight before dawn, the first roses, that were asleep last night.

27 They are opened by the cool dew, as if it were urging a conversation previously silenced.

28 And many a tree, its garments restored by spring, as you would spread out an ornamental brocade,

29 Has doffed its pilgrim's garb, and appears smiling to the eyes, where it had vexed the eyes when it wore the *iḥrām*.

30 The wind's breeze has become so gentle, you would think it brought the tender breaths of loved ones.

31 It does not imprison the wine, whose bosom friend you are, nor forbid the strings to sing.

32 And you remain a sun for the boon-companions when they grow drunk, and become full moons urging on stars.

33 But you were generous to them before the winecups, and those could not produce any more generosity in you!

In the description of spring animation is pervasive: spring comes to the *mamdūḥ* to partake of his generosity and usher in the feast of Nawrūz; the sleeping roses, awakened by Nawrūz, are opened (like the eyes of drowsy topers) by the dew that urges them to renew a long-stilled conversation; the trees' new garments are spread out like dampened brocades, and they put off their snowy *iḥrām* in celebration of the feast.[51] Schoeler comments that the personification in this poem, which celebrates the triumph of spring over winter, "operates un-Arabicly" (1974: 156), and refers to Ritter's comparison (with respect to the "mythologizing" of nature) "between European 'Romantic' and Oriental nature-response", the former exemplified by Goethe. Al-Buḥturī's "mannerism", says Schoeler, would be unthinkable in Goethe. Nor is the imagery "Persian" (since it does not "surprise"). It is primarily "optical-decorative" (ibid.: 157–60).

If we look at the passage closely, however, we would be hard put to consider it "decorative": the images function not as ornaments, but as arguments. The raincloud of the transition is outdone in generosity by the patron, who is as death itself to the cloud (life-giving plus death-dealing powers). The swelling Euphrates – "as if the mountains of Sharawrā had swum in from the sea" – is in full spate; yet its abundance too is outdone by the "sea" of the patron's generosity. The garden has not burst into bloom of its own accord, but through

returning the smile of the noble youth (*fatan*) who smiled upon it, and who is presented as the agent of spring's advent, as it comes to wait upon the patron, "laughing with beauty, so that it almost speaks"; and when spring's representative (as it were), Nawrūz, awakens the sleeping roses, the image anticipates the final drinking scene: the roses are like drunken boon-companions who have fallen asleep and must be wakened by a sprinkling of cold water, so that they may resume their merriment. Little is gained by attempting to classify such imagery as either optical-decorative, or "mannerist", or "romantic", or by pointing out that the metaphors have no correlate in "reality". For example: the "visual" quality of the image of the trees, "their garments restored by spring, as you would spread out an ornamented brocade," is subordinate to its function: to evoke the motif of "newness" associated with spring and with Nawrūz (the time of donning new garments), and yet its specificity gives it a particular vividness. The tree has "doffed its pilgrim's garb" (its former snowy covering); winter's pilgrimage (implicitly, to the *mamdūḥ*) has been accomplished, the sacred obligation performed, and now it is time to rejoice. (Al-Buḥturī's editor dates the poem to 255/862; the pilgrimage took place in December of the previous year.) Line 30 looks back to the *nasīb*: the gentle breeze seems to bring with it "the tender breaths of loved ones", compensating for earlier loss. (Note also the repetition of the "greetings" motif at the beginning of the *nasīb* [1] and the turn to direct address of the *mamdūḥ* [21].) All is complete: time, place, and loved one/patron all together, the wine released, the strings freed to make joyous song. But the paramountcy of the patron is never lost sight of: he is the sun whose radiance illuminates the boon-companions as they drink, "full moons" which "urge on" bright stars (the cupbearer; a descending hierarchy of importance); his generosity now outdoes that of the winecups – as it did that of the raincloud and the Euphrates – so that "they could not produce any new generosity" in him.

This, then, is the second major context in which garden/nature imagery functions: as emblematic of *mamdūḥ* (spring) and of court (meadow, garden), a celebrational image both of the present and of the timeless order which governs it. Yes, the world is transient – the rose fades, the garden withers; but the world (or at least its poets) also aspires to an ideal state of order, justice, and prosperity, whose most potent image is the garden, the earthly analogue of Paradise.

In al-Buḥturī's *qaṣīda*, as in Abū Tammām's to al-Muʿtaṣim, spring garden, patron, and court/world are inextricably linked by images which present them as both adjuncts and analogues of one another, which testify above all to the centrality, in the earthly order, of the *mamdūḥ* and his assembly. Such imagery anticipates that of Persian panegyric; it is seen already in this spring song by Rūdakī, which is presumably the exordium of a panegyric *qaṣīda* the remainder of which has not survived (1964: 1–3).

1 Fresh spring has come with many hues and perfumed scents; with a thousand joyous pleasures and wondrous ornaments.

2   Perhaps the aged man will now become young again; for the world has
     now exchanged old age for youth.

There follows a series of comparisons between the garden and the human world:
the lofty sphere has arrayed an army of dark clouds, led by the east wind (3); the
cloud "weeps like one in mourning", the thunder "laments like a sorrowing
lover" (5); now and then the sun appears from behind the cloud, "like a prisoner
watching out for the guard" (6), and so on. The victorious rose "has seized the
treasure which the snow held fast before" (9); dry streams now flow with water,
flowers smile, birds sing in happy chorus (9–13)
     In this idyllic state (says the poet),

14 Now drink wine; now live in happiness; for now the lover enjoys his
     beloved's embrace.
15 Choose a *sāqī*, drink wine to light, gay tunes; for the starling laments
     from the meadow, and the nightingale from the garden.
16 But however beautiful to the eyes is the world's new spring, the sight of
     the vizier, that worthy noble, is yet more beautiful.

Rūdakī's garden is a living presence whose denizens mimic human activities, in
particular those associated with love and war – significantly, in terms of
marriage/union and of victory – but also (and importantly) with poetry. The
reciprocity between the world of the garden and the world of the court is
complete; but as in al-Buḥturī's *qaṣīda* the patron is foremost: without him there
would be no spring. Unlike al-Buḥturī, Rūdakī does not directly present the
mamdūḥ as the cause or agent of spring's advent; but the implication is there,
and the images are martialled in service, not of the description of nature *per se*,
but of praise of the *mamdūḥ* (which, we may assume, would have occupied the
remainder of the *qaṣīda*).
     The centrality of the garden to Persian poetry – as to Persian culture – is well
known. (See e.g. Meisami 1983, 1985a, 1995, and the references cited.) The
royal garden of the panegyric *qaṣīda*, emblem of the prosperous state; the garden
of the *ghazal* in which nightingale and rose become archetypal lovers; the
garden as earthly (reflection of) Paradise, an informing symbol of both secular
and mystical poetry – all these are well-known features of Persian poetry. In the
world of Persian panegyric garden and court become analogues; in the world of
ghazal, love itself may be a garden. In all contexts, the garden itself becomes,
as it were, an extended metaphor for the world. It is perhaps because of this that
in Persian poetry there are, in contrast to Arabic, few if any "independent"
descriptions of gardens (if indeed the *rawḍiyyāt* and *zahriyyāt* can be so called);
the garden functions rather within the context of a larger poem as one aspect of
that poem's meaning.
     For the Persian panegyrist the court is the world, the microcosm that
contains the macrocosm. The garden, earthly reflection of Paradise, sacred text
whose signs point to the Creator Whose shadow the King is, links heaven and

earth, divinely ordered cosmos with justly governed world. In Rūdakī's spring song the garden is animated with a life that mirrors that of the court: the patron's life-giving powers are figured by spring's renewal of the world, his death-dealing ability by spring's armies. Nightingales, like poets, sing songs of praise; love becomes possible once more. As Walter Andrews observes of Ottoman poems and Ottoman gardens, we see "gardens and poems in a dance together, mutually constituting, mutually reflecting, mutually interpreting" (1993: 209).

The early Ghaznavid panegyrists were well aware of the garden as the most powerful figure for both court and patron. Thus, for example, while ʿUnṣurī declines to congratulate Sultan Maḥmūd on the Iranian feast of Sada, "the *dihqān*'s feast" (1944: 123–4), he does not fail to observe the festivals of Nawrūz and Mihragān, traditional occasions for the affirmation of sovereignty. Yet the cycle of the seasons represents an ephemerality which contrasts with the ruler's greatness. Though spring may come, it must give way to autumn; whereas

10 True spring is praise of the ruler, the king of the Persians, which
      transforms the talent and thought of poets into a garden. (ibid.: 2)

And yet, in autumn,

  6 If the vines have grown withered and dark from old age, so be it; the
      prince's fortune is sufficiently young, fresh, and bright. (ibid.: 40)

In a panegyric which bears a strong resemblance to Farrukhī's New Year *qaṣīda* (which may have been modelled upon it, in part at least), ʿUnṣurī begins with a spring song whose opening line establishes the occasion as Nawrūz (1944: 10–13).

  1 The New Year's breeze ever showers down pearls, and becomes an idol-
      maker, so that by its art each tree becomes another idol.
  2 The garden, like a draper's shop, is filled with brocades; the breeze, like
      a perfumer's tray, becomes laden with amber.
  3 The garden's lilies steal from it white silver; the earth once more grows
      verdant, like the cheeks of beauties.
  4 The veil over each plot of ground becomes a Chinese robe; the earrings
      on each tree are strings of pearls.
  5 Behold the sun flirting like veiled beauties, now appearing from behind
      the cloud, now hiding within it.
  6 Night transforms the skies into the New Year's book, that the letters on
      each page may be dotted with stars.
  7 The silver crown retreats from the tall mountain peak, and (the
      mountain) once more becomes blue-eyed, silken-cheeked and dark-
      haired.

The underlying conceit of the *nasīb* is that of the spring breeze as an image maker who transforms the barren winter garden into a tableau analogous to the

court itself: a garden filled with noble, elegant courtiers clad in sumptuous robes, sporting priceless jewels and redolent of expensive perfumes. Comparisons are based less on concrete resemblance than on aptness to the courtly milieu, less on physical similitude than on comparable value. Each image contributes to the total effect: for example, the pearls showered by the breeze suggest not only the raindrops which revive the garden and adorn the trees as if with earrings, but royal gifts scattered upon the assembled courtiers, and the sun itself appears not as a symbol of power but as a coquettish royal concubine. The comparison of the heavens to a book whose pages are adorned by the stars evokes the concept of creation as the Book of Nature, a Scripture which asserts both the revivifying powers of spring and the prosperity of the court, thanks to its ruler.

The imagery of line 7 anticipates the transition to the *madīḥ*, as the retreating snow, signalling spring's victory over winter, is likened to the crown of a defeated enemy. The shift of focus which prepares the way for the transition is achieved by the explicit conjunction of the season with the prince:

8 Each day the days increase, like the prince's power, while the nights,
    like the lives of his enemies, grow shorter:
9 The ruler of the East, the Right Hand of Fortune, that king of the
    Persians whose praise crowns fortune's head.

The primary topic of the *madīḥ* is the conventional opposition between the ruler's generosity to his supporters and his ruthlessness towards his foes; while a number of subsidiary topics are added, it is this one which provides a constant thematic link throughout the encomium. The most important subsidiary topic, introduced in line 11, is praise of the ruler's learning and eloquence; lines 21–23 link this topic with poetry, and ruler with poet; praise of the ruler gives new life to the language of panegyric, as nature gives new life to seeds properly sown:

23 Should you praise a name other than his your words would be wasted;
     when you plant seeds in barren ground they are wasted and fruitless.
24 Speech must be polished to sing his praise; gold must be refined to be
     worthy of a crown.[52]

We have already noted Farrukhī's treatment of the garden in his New Year *qaṣīda* to Maḥmūd: the garden "laughs constantly like the beloved's face," the earth "gives off fragrance like precious musk", tulips in the grass seem "carnelians amid turquoises", the garden is spread with silks like "bridal tents". Mixed metaphors, but with something in common: they are both adjuncts of the opulent court and symbols of new life and fertility. Spring is entreated to remain year after year; yet spring is not so fair as the assembly of the prince (indeed, we may imagine, but for the prince it would not have arrived at all). The garden frames the account of Maḥmūd's victories and deeds of bravery in the *madīḥ*, as the poet returns to it in the *duʿā*, where it embodies the prosperous, peaceful

state for which he hopes. The fusion of court and world, of the cycles of life, the calendar, religious and courtly ritual, and the private world of love, lies at the heart of such imagery.

This fusion is also evident in the *duʿā* of Farrukhī's "Ramaḍān" *qaṣīda*, where the image of the garden expresses differences rather than resemblances: autumn's marigolds and grenadine are not like spring's apple-blossoms and waterlilies, nor are the mundane mouse-ear's sap and water-mint's scent and fruit like rosewater or jasmine. These are differences which, like those between the two princes, are not only in kind but in quality (and thus may be assumed to have a topical import); here the garden provides an emblem not of stability but of eternal change: as fall replaces spring, so in the world of court ruler replaces ruler.

We need say no more concerning Manūchihrī's New Year *qaṣīda* to Masʿūd except to point out that in it, the garden figures as an allegory of the troubled court at the end of Masʿūd's reign. Thus while the garden of the *nasīb* of the Persian panegyric *qaṣīda* constitutes an analogue of the Persian court, like it absorbing into itself both the macrocosm of the world-garden and the microcosm of the private world of the self, this analogue is not always an idealized one: the garden *nasīb* is both a poetic microcosm and an ideal vehicle for conveying the many, often conflicting, facets of the world of court.

One of the most thoroughgoing treatments of the garden-court-world image is found in a *qaṣīda* by Azraqī of Herat (panegyrist to various Saljūq princes in the late 5th/11th-early 6th/12th centuries) addressed to Sultan Ṭughānshāh (1957: 65–8). It begins with three lines on the conjunction of the Moon and Jupiter, who seem to have been transferred from heaven to the King's garden (1; they have, moreover, stolen their beauty and radiance from the king, 3), then moves to an explicit likening of the garden to Paradise:

4 It seems as if the garden is Paradise on earth, and that Riẕvān has filled the garden with the Moon and Jupiter.

There follows a lengthy description of the garden in which its elements are given, at one and the same time, courtly and heavenly attributes – for example,

7 In the wind's hand is purest amber without measure; in the cloud's eyes are royal pearls without limit. . . .
9 Over the head of the jasmine's army the Judas-tree's Pleiades have raised silken banners against the sky.
10 The jasmine has sprouted leaves of raw silver; the daisies have placed balls of refined gold in their hearts.
11 Beneath the cypress lute-playing partridges sing; on the willow's branch poetry-singing nightingales cry aloud.

From the garden the poet moves to praise of the king's palace: it is "mountain-like", "starry-faced"; its garden "is broad as the earth and high as the heavens" (15); it features a "marvelous flowing golden water-pipe," with "water

bright as the vital spirit running through it, "turquoises like fine silver wire" which pour down into the reservoir, looking like snakes shedding skins "of refined gold", "silvery serpents with turquoise bones" (19–21). This may seem merely curious or circumstantial; but the associations with the forces of life, with the streams of Paradise, and with the patron's generosity, are clear.

22   A garden like this, a building in this wise, purer than Kawsar, fresher than Paradise.

Both garden and palace – one "natural", one man-made (specifically, patron-made) – testify to the ruler's power and to the prosperity and order he both confers and maintains. Neither could exist without him.
   The garden/nature imagery is carried over into the *madīḥ*. The ruler –

25   Sun of the Realm, the chosen of the age, the kingdom's glory, the caliph's sword, the shadow of Islam, Shāh Ṭughān –

holds a cup of ruby wine "from imagining which thought becomes a tulip-field, the eye a rosegarden" (28); brilliant wine which, "should its drops fall on a dead man's shroud, the withered veins in his body would become Judas-branches" (31). The wine is a life-giving, radiant, heavenly liquid, "More fragrant than amber, more colorful than hyacinth; brighter than the stars, purer than the soul" (35); the king drinks such a wine, in a cup deep as the sea, served by a beautiful cupbearer (36–37).

38   The sphere has entrusted its cycle to his command; the world has given its concerns to his signature. . . .

This identification of the ruler with the cosmic cycle – indeed, as ruler of the cosmic cycle itself – leads to the hyperbole of the encomium:

41   Because of your resolve the sun shines; the sphere is turned by the hand of your magnificence. . . .
43   Whatever occurs to your mind, fate acts accordingly; it is as if your thoughts came from the alchemy of fate.
44   The star remains firm and stable because, on the day of battle, it finds a sign in the reflection of your sword. . . .

Hyperbole or mythopoeia? Some would say, only the first; others might try to "redeem" the obvious "clichés" and "conventions" – perhaps even the "palpable sensuality" of the imagery – by invoking ritual and/or mythical archetypes. Both procedures are reductionist; and the truth lies somewhere in between: the imagery serves as argument, not so much for an actuality, as for an ideal of the Islamic ruler in his court, which his virtue, his valour, his justice hold (along with the rest of the world) in harmony.
   Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāṭ identifies the royal garden with Paradise in the climax to a series of skillfully escalating images in a panegyric to the Khwārazmshāh Atsiz (1960: 20–3).

1 Life-giving spring has come; the world is fresh and fair; in garden and meadow are spread carpets of silk and brocade.

2 On the hillside the violets are bent low like the heart-bereft; in the gardens the blossoms are like the cheeks of lovely heart-stealers.

A wealth of "concrete" comparisons follow: the plain is filled with jacinth and coral, the orchard with pearls and lapis (3); the cloud's armies thunder, filling the world with many-colored troops (4; the images point to the twin motifs of wealth/generosity and power/ruthlessness). The darkened sky sheds tears like those of Vāmiq, the fresh earth smiles like ʿAzrā (5, referring to two famous lovers of Persian romance whose names mean, respectively, "yearning" and "virgin").

In the next passage an explicit royal context is introduced:

6 The whole garden is like Jamshīd's "generosity-place" in blessings; the whole plain is like Kāvūs' "striving-place" in adornment.

Again, the motifs of generosity and courage, *bazm u razm*, are linked. Tulips fill the verdure with brilliant blooms; their mouths, in turn, are filled with dewdrops like shining pearls (7). The cloud passes from river ("sea") to plain, scattering jewels in such abundance that the plain, in turn, looks like a sea of glittering gems (8). The Pleiades are admonished by the design of the rose-trees; the Phoenix is amazed by the songs of the nightingales (9).

With this introduction of cosmic and mythical elements the poet moves to a series of "human", religious comparisons which culminates in the first, explicit likening of the garden-world to Paradise.

10 You'd say the lightning flash was the white hand of Moses, son of Amram, which brings forth light from the collar of the dark sky.

11 You'd say the breeze was the breath of Jesus, son of Mary, which gives sight to the blind eyes of the garden's narcissus.

12 In grace and beauty the garden's expanse is like Paradise [*khuld*], in loveliness and ruddy hue the Judas-bloom like houris' cheeks.

With these references to miracles, culminating in God's miracle of Paradise, the garden virtually comes to life before our eyes; and in the poem's transitional lines, human, natural, spiritual and cosmic elements are all linked.

15 With the basil's blooms, garden and orchard are illuminated throughout like the place of worship of monks on the night of the winter solstice [i.e. Christmas].

16 I know not: is this the world, or the expanse of the Garden of Refuge? I know not: is this earth, or the vault of (heaven's) Green Dome?...

18 Through the efforts of the blue dome the aged, lustreless world has become completely fresh and young, like the fortune of the rightful king,

19 The just ruler of the world....

The imagery of the *nasīb* remains in the background of the *madīḥ*, as its motifs are alluded to repeatedly. The peace and tranquillity of Atsiz's reign "have set at ease the minds of Adam and Eve" (21); in other words, his kingdom is the earthly Paradise, a garden from which none need fear expulsion. His "sacred precinct" (*ḥarīm*) is the refuge of mankind, his courtyard their protection (22).

25 From *his* generosity the spring cloud has taken its generous flow; from
    his judgement the sun's disk, in Gemini, has stolen its light.

In the passage of direct address which completes the *madīḥ*, these motifs are returned to again and again.

27 The world is illumined by your judgement; the earth is a rosegarden
    through your justice; virtue is made firm by your nature; right
    guidance is exalted by your grandeur....
29 You are not one ruler, but a hundred suns, all shining in your assembly;
    you are not one person, but a hundred armies, all boiling in battle....

The time has come (says the poet in the concluding passage) for all regions of the world to submit to the prince's rule; for

38 You are the whole, and (other) kings of mankind like the parts; in the
    end, the parts must return to their whole,

as he exclaims, before returning, in the *duʿā*, to the cosmic theme:

40 As long as the stars' place is in the firmament; as long as the limbs find
    their strength through the soul....
43 May God long grant you and your servants such a month, such a year,
    such a day, and such favour!

So strong is the association of garden with court in the *qaṣīda* that when the court is rejected, the garden may provide a negative argument. We saw, for example, that in Khāqānī's Madāʾin *qaṣīda* both Īwān and garden illustrated the Koranic text, "How many gardens ... did they abandon?" For Nāṣir-i Khusraw, who condemns the world of the court – specifically of the court (or courts) of the Saljuq Turks – and who equally condemns those who serve and praise them (rebuking, in what seems a clear allusion to Farrukhī's "heart-sellers of Khurasan", the "poetry-sellers of Khurasan", whom "greed has seduced ... to *ghazal* and the praise of princes"; 1993: 110), the garden of the *qaṣīda* is a sham, an empty convention (ibid.: 14):

27 How long will you go on describing box-trees and tulips, a face like the
    moon, and amber curls?

How long will learned poets "praise one who is the source of ignorance and baseness," and "put lies and ambitions into verse" (28–29)? Opposed to this false poetry is his own, which serves a higher purpose: praise of religion, of the Prophet's family (i.e. the Fatimids), of knowledge (ibid.: 51):

29 My poetry is a tree of great renown on which fine points and meanings
are the flowers and fruits of wisdom....[53]

The garden is also a reminder of the vanity of this world, of old age and
vanished dreams (ibid.: 108–9) –

1 How long will you go on saying, "When spring comes it adorns (the
world) with flowers, and the almond comes into fruit;

2 The garden's face, like the faces of beauties, are given cheeks of
blossoms and down of verdure...."

10 Speak to me no more of these vanities; I do but reproach vain words.

11 Sixty times has Nawrūz been my guest; and it will be the same should it
come six hundred times....

13 To me its beauty is a dream, a fancy, even if in your eyes it is all designs
and beauties.

But in other contexts the garden is a potent symbol. If, for the court poet,
the court is Paradise, for Nāṣir-i Khusraw Paradise itself is the "garden of the
speaking soul", a symbolic sense invoked when he describes his own poetry, or
poem, as a garden in which meanings are fruits and flowers, and "pleasing
words" the trees that bear them. In the "spring" qaṣīda discussed earlier the
transformation of the courtly to the cosmic garden is complete, as spring
triumphs over winter, truth over falsehood; the garden figures the new world in
which both macrocosm and microcosm will be justly ordered under Fatimid
rule. In another qaṣīda (ibid.: 350–4) he speaks of the "garden of the Sharī'at",
"God's garden", full of grain and seed and abundant trees of every kind,
"planted both by the All-Merciful and by Satan;" he who desires the garden's
fruits may not enter without permission of its gardener, "a great man, famed
and virtuous."

Moreover, there is another court which informs many of Nāṣir's qaṣīdas and
constitutes the microcosm which mirrors, contains, incorporates into itself the
divinely ordered macrocosm: the Fatimid court at Cairo. In a lengthy qaṣīda
(ibid.: 172–7) which extols knowledge as protection against the vicissitudes of
time and contrasts its blessings (ni'am) with the false wealth (ni'mat) of gold
(2–3), the poet, exhorting to the pursuit of divinely revealed truth, describes his
own quest for a spiritual teacher, one supreme among mankind as is, for
example, "the eagle among birds," "the ruby among gems," the Koran among
books, "the sun among the stars" (34–35). His quest leads him, ultimately, to the
gates of Cairo, "a city whose slaves are the heavenly bodies, and before which
the horizons are arrayed in service" (68).

71 A city wherein there are no abodes save those of wisdom; a garden
wherein there is no pine save that of reason....

73 A city which, when I reached it, Reason said to me, "Seek herein your
need; do not leave this halting-place."

This is the Paradise of knowledge and true belief; its gatekeeper, who tells the poet,

76   This is the lofty sphere, filled with exalted stars; nay, this is Paradise, filled with heart-ravishing forms,

and who proves to be the wise teacher he seeks, seems to him like Riżvān, the guardian of Paradise. This teacher (unnamed, but undoubtedly the Ismāʿīlī *dāʿī* al-Muʾayyad fī al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, also recently arrived in Cairo; cf. lines 107–108), serves as physician to the poet's soul, instilling in him wisdom of cosmic dimensions, encompassing all, from the mysteries of creation to the truths of right religion and the Law. In the concluding portion of the poem, the poet blesses both city and teacher –

109   May that city prosper whose gatekeeper he is; may that ship prosper of which he is the anchor –

and sends his greetings, "like a moon-like pearl" (112),

113   Like a drop of rain poured at the foot of narcissus and box-tree; like a breeze wafting over lilies and jasmine;
114   Excellent and pleasing as union with beauties; clear and well-expounded as the words of the eloquent;
115   Full of benefit and blessing as the Nawrūz cloud which descends from the mountain like precious musk;
116   Loyal and blessed as the breath of Mary's Jesus; sublime and adorned as the green dome of heaven,
117   Towards the treasurer of knowledge, governance, and the holy shrine, of noble fame, through whom the age prospers....

The life-giving powers customarily associated with the ruler are here transferred to the teacher; their sacred nature is, moreover, underlined by the *tajnīs*, *bayt al-maʿmūr/muʿammar*, "holy shrine" (the Kaʿba and, more importantly, its heavenly prototype)/"made prosperous". It is knowledge, not wealth or power, which confers true prosperity and felicity, and the poet concludes by expressing his undying gratitude and devotion:

127   Wherever I may be, so long as I live, at every moment, I shall dedicate pen, ink and book to gratitude towards you.
128   As long as the cypress sways the wind, may the court be adorned by you, like the garden by the cypress.

In the Persian *ghazal*, especially in its period of florescence in the eighth/fourteenth century, the various functions of garden imagery seen in the *qaṣīda* converge, and the garden's potential for allegory and symbol is exploited to the full. In the panegyric *ghazal*, the analogy between garden-beloved and patron seen in earlier *nasībs* is echoed in this early example by Masʿūd-i Saʿd (1960: 673).

1 To me your face, O tender idol mine,
   more pleasant seems in winter than in spring.
2 For from your face, when yellow grows the mead,
   I gather crimson roses, tulips red.
3 No cypress in the garden grows so tall;
   Qandahar boasts no image like your face.
4 What fairer than your beauty, in the world,
   or pleasing – save the mighty sultan's feast:
5 Masʿūd, crown-bearer, lord of all the world;
   monarch o'er all the earth, sovereign Masʿūd,
6 Whose fortune preserves honour in our day:
   may he endure as long as Time's own sway!

It is, of course, the ruler's powers which endure despite the hardships of winter, his qualities which exceed the nobility of the cypress and the beauty of the temples of Qandahar. (We may also recall Ḥāfiẓ's *ghazal* [QG390], discussed in Chapter 6, which describes the accession of the "King of the flowers".) The analogy is developed by such poets as Ḥasan-i Ghaznavī, who addresses his *mamdūḥ* in the "language of the flowers" (1949: 289).

1 He who obeys you (is), like the rose, full of splendour and might;
   he who envies you (is), like the rose, colourless and lifeless.

In another *ghazal*, praise of the garden-beloved becomes the analogue of praise of the patron (ibid.: 290–1).

1 O spring of soul and heart, stroll gracefully now through the
     meadow;
   kindle with fire this moment your bloodthirsty glance.
2 Show the fire of your face, and burn the tulip's heart,
   that from love of you the meadow may forget itself, like me.
3 Though your beautiful face has the colour of Judas-branch,
   and if your down has the dog-rose's scent and hue,
4 The tulip remains fixed in mud from envy of your face;
   the *narvan* beats its head in shame before your stature.
5 And well do you know how, from the breeze of the flame of your curls
     and cheeks,
   to scatter dust on the violet and water on the jasmine.
6 The sweet-spoken parrot munches sugar when it speaks of you,
   as do I, in singing the praise of the illustrious vizier:
7 Face of success, refuge of fortune, support of right guidance,
   forefront of faith and kingdom, lord of the world, Ḥasan.

The culmination of this use of imagery comes with Ḥāfiẓ, with whom the rose-beloved-*mamdūḥ* analogy becomes complete, while at the same time marked by many complexities and ambivalences, as we shall see.

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One might imagine that in the *ghazal*, the love poem *par excellence*, the sensuous aspects of the garden would come into their own, as in earlier Arabic poetry. But as the *ghazal*'s imagery and diction become increasingly abstract, terms like "moon", "rose", "hyacinth" and so on become signs rather than images, pointing beyond physical attributes to create the "garden of love" which is in reality no garden, but a state, a condition, an emotion, which may in turn be linked to any, or all, of the *ghazal*'s fields of meaning (cf. Andrews 1985: 100–1, 150–8). The components of the *ghazal*'s repertoire of imagery (and not only garden imagery), whose sensuous aspect becomes increasingly evocative of the poet's emotional state, are, in a sense, a kind of shorthand, indicating something more, and other, than what they ostensibly depict. Sensuality becomes displaced as the *ghazal*'s field of reference widens to encompass matters beyond the sensual or sexual. The master of this widening referentiality is Ḥāfiẓ, for whom the "garden of love" becomes, as here, the world-garden (*P*490).

1   Last night at dawn I went to the garden to pluck a rose;
    suddenly the song of a nightingale came to my ears.
2   Poor wretch, like me, had been stricken with love for a rose,
    and in the meadow had set up a clamor of cries.
3   When the nightingale's song had affected my heart,
    I became so that I could no longer endure it.
4   I wandered round that meadow and garden constantly;
    I contemplated that rose and that nightingale.
5   The rose became the companion of beauty, the nightingale the likeness
        of love;
    this one with no favour, that one unchanging.
6   Many roses open in this garden; but
    no one has plucked a rose without a thorn.
7   Ḥāfiẓ, have no hope of relief from the sphere's turning;
    it has a thousand faults, and shows no favour.

In an ascending series of analogical relationships – between beloved and lover, patron and poet, time and man – the garden becomes the World, whose rose shows no favour to the nightingale who sings its praises. The absence of visual imagery (emphasized by the importance given to song, to what is heard) assists the poet's larger purpose; no longer tied to the physical, the images drawn from the garden become vehicles for other levels of meaning, *exempla* which can figure general truths or specific allusions.

In Chapter 6 we looked at two *ghazal*s by Ḥāfiẓ in which the world-garden, the macrocosm, was conjoined with the courtly garden, the body politic, and with the microcosm of human love; one of these (*QG*81) began with a dialogue between nightingale and rose. Such *ghazal*s may have evolved from the rather plainly stated allegory of *P*490; in order to see how deliberate that evolution is, and how peculiarly Ḥāfiẓian, we may compare a *ghazal* by Ḥāfiẓ's older

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contemporary Khvājū of Kirman (d. 753/1352), which also begins with a dialogue between nightingale and rose (1957: 446).

1 Once or twice the frenzied nightingale
   intoned this *ghazal* in the New Year's season:
2 "O fresh-faced rose, with laughing lips;
   heart-adorner, garden-illumer:
3 "Had I but known that your absence
   would be so hard to bear, so heart-consuming,
4 "I would not have been without you for a moment;
   I would not have sought a day's distance from you.
5 "I am so far from you; in union with you
   the sharp-pointed thorn is triumphant.
6 "In my heart there is a lengthy burning,
   and all these wounds from that heart-stitching spear."
7 The rose laughed and said, "Be silent!
   Do not kindle the heart's fire with thorns!
8 "If you would be worthy of our company,
   stitch closed your open eyes with thorns.
9 "You are distant? go, play, like the harp.
   You are present? come, burn like aloes.
10 "To him who desires your affection,
   say, 'Come; learn love from Khvājū.'
11 "And from these gems to which he alludes,
   choose, one by one, and string them."

It seems clear that this *ghazal* (like that of Ḥāfiz, to which it may allude; the word in the final line is *taḍmīn*) is panegyric in intent: poet-nightingale is separated or estranged from prince-rose, and desirous of his favour, of which the proud "beloved" tells him he must prove worthy, by "stitching his eyes with thorns" (weeping), "burning like aloes" (suffering), "playing like the harp" (composing poems). Only then will he have earned the right to associate with the ruler (*barg*, in line 8, incorporates a play on "leaf": the nightingale would be as close to the rose as its own leaves or petals); only then will he be (as poet and as lover) qualified to teach love, through song and through example.

For Khvājū (as for Nāṣir-i Khusraw) poetry itself is a garden, adorned by his eloquence (ibid.: 222).

1 My heart-bedecking words are the rose of wisdom's garden;
   my fluent speech is the nightingale of the garden of discourse.
2 I am that sweet-singing parrot which, when it speaks,
   gives other parrots sugar from my sugar-biting words.
3 All night the nightingale who sings in the sphere's rosegarden
   listens to the murmuring of my melody and song....

9 The fount of the Water of Life for which Khiẕr thirsts
    is the least drop of my sea-like talent.
10 Although that Cathay Turk calls me his Hindu slave,
    whose slave is the moon-faced Turk of the sphere? 'Tis mine.
11 May the world-vizier's fortune endure, through whose fortune
    my place is above all those who sit in high places in the world.
12 What should I do with a cup of wine? for like Khvājū, at the morning
        draught,
    the cups of my eyes are my winecup.

The panegyric motive, here explicit, prevents us from reading more into this
ghazal (about the nature of inspiration, for example) than the text supports. The
hyperbolic images drawn from the garden, along with others which accompany
them (e.g., the poet's verses are more brilliant and precious than pearls [4–5]; his
bent stature, like a *nūn*, is like the letter of the "enigma" of the divine fiat *Kun!*
"Be!" [6; the *ghazal*'s central and pivotal line], bent stature also suggesting
suffering and supplication; the "licit magic" of his poetry, like the white hand of
Moses, would shame the angels of Babylon who taught men the arts of magic
[7]) are arguments, in this poetic *fakhr*, for his claim to favour, patronage, and
reward.

The popularity of garden imagery in the *ghazal* seems to reach its height in
the eighth/fourteenth century, as roses and nightingales, tulips and parrots, all
the flora and fauna of the garden run wild, as it were, through the *ghazal*s of
Ḥāfiẓ and his contemporaries. But it is Ḥāfiẓ who develops this imagery most
extensively. In an early article I wrote that Ḥāfiẓ "is unique among the court
poets of his time in emphasizing the allegorical nature of the garden within the
courtly *ghazal*" (Meisami 1983: 153). That article dealt at length with Ḥāfiẓ's
garden imagery (see also Meisami 1985a, 1987: 286–97), and there is no need to
repeat those arguments here; but two further comments may be made on the
"allegoricity" of Ḥāfiẓ's gardens.

First (and in the light of Bürgel's remarks on the poetic syllogism), Ḥāfiẓ's
images must be considered with respect to their function not as descriptions but
as arguments, generally with a moralizing intent, and generally directed at his
mamdūḥ (whether the panegyric element is explicitly stated or no); for Ḥāfiẓ's
ghazal, despite appearances and despite the ostensibly private nature of its
predominant theme of love, is eminently public not only by virtue of its
performance context but by intent. Thus for example when he exclaims, in a
ghazal (*P16*) whose dominant theme is the vanity of hope in this world,

11 There is no sign of loyalty in the rose's smile;
    weep, loving nightingale, for there is reason to cry out,

he refers to the fickleness both of time and of the prince, who withholds his
favour from his "nightingale". The verse which follows, and concludes the
poem, puts this argument (which sums up all that has preceded) in context:

12 Why, O weak-versed poet, are you envious of Ḥāfiẓ?
    Quick-wittedness and graceful speech are gifts from God.

The *ghazal*, with its wealth of images (it begins, "Come, for hope's castle is of weak foundation; bring wine, for life is founded upon wind"), is designed to make not only a moral point, but a poetic (and a political) one: it constitutes a proof of the poet's divinely-given skill and a rebuttal of the criticisms of his detractors. Similarly, when Ḥāfiẓ laments (*P49*),

3 The rose had barely opened its veil before it readied to depart;
   weep, nightingale, for the cry of those of despairing heart is sweet,

he reminds us not only of mortality but also (in all probability) of the exiled Shāh Shujā', further suggested as he concludes,

7 Ḥāfiẓ, the way to happiness is to forsake the world;
   think not that the state of those who rule the world is sweet.

A more specific allusion is seen in the reproachful,

5 How amazing is your grace, O rose, that you sit amongst the thorns;
   apparently you see in that the interest of the times (*P462*),

in which the poet chides his prince for associating with the unworthy. The *ghazal* is worth looking at in more detail.[54]

1 Is it by whim that you decline to sit by the edge of a stream?
   For whatever disturbance you see comes from yourself.

Sūdī glosses the line as a reproach: water mirrors the actions of the person who sits beside it; any inappropriate action seen therein (Ḥāfiẓ uses the word *fitna*, which has the implication of "civil strife, sedition") is the viewer's own. Sūdī also notes a variant, *bi-nishīnī* ("do sit" rather than the negative *na-nishīnī*), in which case there is an added sense: that the viewer is unmindful of his own actions (1979, 4: 2583). We might also note that "sitting by the stream's edge" suggests a party, a gathering for pleasure, which gives a different twist to the next verse –

2 By that God of Whom you are the chosen servant,
   choose not another over this (your) long-time servant –

and would tend to support the reading *bi-nishīnī* (as, indeed, would line 5 – see below), with the sense that in his present gatherings the prince (the "beloved") has preferred his new-found "friends" (the "thorns") over (some) loyal and long-serving person.

The next two lines seem to confirm this reading:

3 What fear, if I can bear to safety the burden of my trust?
   being heart-reft is easy, so long as faith's not lost.

4   Hereafter we must beg; for at love's stopping-place
     travellers have no choice but wretchedness.

Sūdī glosses 2 as meaning, "You should not prefer another over me" (ibid.: 2584); I will reserve judgement on this, as on his gloss of 3 (line 5 in his version) for now. The introduction of the theme of love, which presents the speaker as a traveller on love's path, condemned to suffer, leads to the line quoted above.

5   How amazing is your grace, O rose, that you sit amongst the thorns;
     apparently you see in that the interest of the times.
6   Hear some impartial words from your sincerest servant,
     you who are well-regarded by those who see the truth (?):
7   Such a delicate one as you, pure-hearted and pure-natured:
     'tis best that you not associate with wicked men.
8   It seems to me a waste that you should go to observe the meadow,
     when you are more lovely than the rose, fresher than eglantine.

These verses, which form a closely-knit group at the center of the *ghazal*, oscillate between flattery and advice: the lovely "rose" is mistaken (though he may think it expedient) to keep company with thorns, too lovely and fresh (implying youth) to pay attention to the meadow (which we might read as this world) when it is the meadow that should be admiring him. Between the two garden images lies an explicit gloss upon them: heed the advice of one who wishes you well; don't keep company with the evil and the base. It is this oscillation between indirection and directness which makes the *ghazal* so suggestive, and which removes it from any "pastoral" connotations to place it firmly in the realm of politics.

In the concluding lines (9–12) Ḥāfiẓ returns to the theme of the lover's sorrow and the beloved's (perhaps unwitting) cruelty.

9   Look at the soapy bubbles of my tears, on every side,
      if you will but sit a while and look at this sight.
10   Refinement and modesty have made you the prince of moon- faced
      beauties;
      bravo to you, who deserve a hundred such stations.
11   With such delicacy and grace, O candle of Chigil,
      you are worthy of the service of Khvāja Jalāl al-Dīn.

This apparent return to the "beloved", identified here as the "candle of Chigil" (a region in Turkistan known for the beauty and fair skin of its inhabitants), is clearly meant to throw the hearer off the track; and line 11 is profoundly ambiguous. Sūdī glosses, "You are so lovely that you are worthy to serve in the assembly of Khvāja Jalāl al-Dīn" (ibid.: 2589, preserving the fiction that the addressee is the "beloved");[55] but it could equally be read, "You deserve to be served by Khvāja Jalāl al-Dīn." I shall return to this point in a moment; but the *ghazal* is not finished yet, as Ḥāfiẓ concludes,

12 This flood of these flowing tears has borne away Ḥāfiẓ's patience and his
    heart;
    the limits of endurance have been reached, O pupil of my eye; so go
    away!

That the last half-line is in Arabic suggests (perhaps, again, as a red herring)
that it is a *taḍmīn* (though none of Ḥāfiẓ's commentators have identified it); it
appears as an abrupt about-turn from the long-suffering stance adopted by the
speaker in the body of the poem. We may note that in both Pizhmān's and
Qazvīnī-Ghanī's recensions it parallels, in position, line 6, in which the speaker
offers his "impartial" advice; is this the ultimate conclusion of that advice? or
has the speaker become so exasperated with his "beloved" that he has no other
recourse than to wish him away?

    And who is the "Khvāja Jalāl al-Dīn" named in line 11? Lescot numbers this
ghazal among those composed for Jalāl al-Dīn Tūrānshāh, one of Ḥāfiẓ's most
important and sympathetic patrons, who was appointed vizier by Shāh Shujāʿ in
767/1365–6 and retained that position, briefly, under the latter's son and
successor Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn, before that ruler imprisoned, blinded, and ultimately
executed him in 787/1385 (1944: 21; see also Āhūr 1984, 1: 197–9). Though
Lescot assigns no date to the poem (and Āhūr does not mention it among those
composed for Tūrānshāh), it seems likely that it dates from the brief period
between Tūrānshāh's fall from favour and his execution, that he is the "ancient
servant" who has kept his trust even when ill-treated, and that the "rose" –
whose delicacy and freshness are emphasized throughout the poem – is the
young Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn. Sūdī reads the "rose" simply as the beloved, who has
fallen in with bad company and thus treats the lover (who, here, is not
described as nightingale, but as "sincerest servant") with cruelty and injustice;
but it seems clear that the poet's suffering is caused by the ill-treatment of his
patron, and that he feels himself in a strong enough position (as a sage elder and
advisor, a persona often adopted by Ḥāfiẓ, as for example in the "Shiraz Turk"
ghazal) to venture explicit as well as indirect admonition. The opening line,
then, makes the position clear, whichever version we accept: the prince needs a
mirror in which he can observe his own actions; if he will not "sit by the stream"
and contemplate himself therein – or if he does sit by it, but fails to recognize
that the "disturbance" reflected in it (the turbulence, the muddied water) is the
result of his own actions – the poet's flowing tears will provide that mirror, and
show him the injustice of his ways.

    In a final example, Ḥāfiẓ mourns the destruction of the garden, in a *ghazal*
which begins with an echo of Khayyām (QG477):

1 Two clever friends, two *man* of ancient wine,
   freedom from care, a book, a corner of the meadow:
2 I would not give this state for all of this world or the next,
   even though a whole crowd were to speak ill of me.

3   He who exchanges the corner of contentment for the treasure of this
       world
     has sold an Egyptian Joseph for the lowest price.
4   Come; for the brilliance of this workshop will not be made less
     by the asceticism of one like you or the sin of one like me.

Here, as so often in Ḥāfiẓ, we see the argument that contentment is the greatest
wealth, worth more than this world or the next, temporal power or promised
Paradise; he who exchanges "contentment's corner" for "this world's treasure",
says the poet (in a *tajnīs* on the orthographically similar but conceptually
antithetical *kunj/ganj*, "corner/treasure") has "sold an Egyptian Joseph at the
cheapest price." (The allusion is to Joseph and his brothers, who sold him into
slavery in Egypt.) The second section of the *ghazal*, however, moves from the
bliss of the meadow to the ruin of the garden; here Sūdī inserts three lines
which, though absent in other recensions, link the two sections and clarify their
relationship (1979, 4: 2555).

4a   On the day of calamity one must confide one's grief in the wine,
       for in such an age one cannot trust anyone.
4b   Sit happily in a corner, and observe;
       for no one can remember such awesome disturbances.
4c   Do not deliver your idol into the hands of the base:
       for even so has the sphere recognized the service of one like me.

The import of these lines is clear; and, if Sūdī's version is correct, they occupy
the centre of the poem, which underlines their importance. (If, on the other
hand, they are a later interpolation, they stand as a not inappropriate gloss on
the poem as a whole, perhaps added under similarly trying circumstances.) Both
Qazvīnī-Ghanī and Pizhmān omit them, following the first section with (in
slightly different order) a further expression of the motif of calamities (Sūdī
follows these lines with what is the penultimate line in *QG* and *P*; I follow the
order in *QG*; *P* reverses 5 and 6):

5   Because of the tempest of calamities one can no longer see
     if, in this meadow, there once bloomed a rose or jasmine.
6   Observe in Jamshīd's mirror the design of the Unseen:
     for no one can remember such an amazing time.
7   After that hot wind which passed over the garden,
     how wondrous that there's (still) the rose's scent, the hue of eglantine.

The concluding lines provide a summation:

8   Heart, strive for patience; for God will not surrender
     a precious ring like this into the hand of Ahriman.
9   – Ḥāfiẓ, calamity's destroyed the temper of the time:
     where is the thought of a sage, the judgement of a Brahman?

The interpretation of the *ghazal* presents difficulties, as it has been ascribed to four different periods in Ḥāfiẓ's career. Humāyūn-Farrukh believes that it dates from the reign of the usurping Shāh Maḥmūd (765–7/1363–6), that the "tempest" refers to the attack by the latter's armies and their sack of Shiraz, that "Jamshīd's mirror" signifies the history of the past, which reveals the design of history (and shows that no such calamity had ever been witnessed before), that the "idol" (*nigār*) in (his) line 8 equals Shiraz, that the "Ahriman" or demon in 8 (his 9) – which alludes to the theft of Solomon's ring by a demon who temporarily took his place on the throne – designates Shāh Maḥmūd, and that the final line alludes to the story, in the book of fables the *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, of the king of India's consultation with the wise Brahmans, signifying the need for both a just ruler and a wise vizier (1975, 2: 1470–6). Lescot (following Ghanī) dates the poem to the reign of Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (1944: 78), as does Ahvar, who speculates further that it was composed after Tīmūr's sack of Isfahan in 789/ 1387 ("Ahriman" standing for Tīmūr) and the sultan's flight to Shiraz (see 1984, 1: 77, 107–8). Sūdī places it in the reign of Shāh Manṣūr, who succeeded in retaking Shiraz after it had been occupied and sacked by Tīmūr's Turkmen troops (see 1979, 4: 2556–8).

There is nothing to refute the possibility that the *ghazal* might not in fact have been revised at various points in time, especially in view of the additional verses quoted by Sūdī. It seems not unlikely, especially in view of the many variants in the manuscript tradition, that the *ghazal* was originally composed during Shāh Shujāʿ's exile (Ḥāfiẓ frequently refers to Shāh Shujāʿ as "Yūsuf" [cf. Meisami 1991a], and the reference to Joseph's betrayal by his brothers seems apt in this context) and was reworked later, at some point during Tīmūr's incursions. This need not concern us here, except to point to the pitfalls that often surround interpretation, and to the frequent scholarly obsession with finding the "original", "authentic" version of a poem. What I wish to comment on is the juxtaposition of the ruined garden with the "ideal" meadow or garden (in which, says the poet, consolation may be found), which makes of the former an emblem of the world upside-down, of nature de-natured. The consolation offered, I would suggest, is more than (as the commentators generally concur) a personal one (an exhortation to turn away from the public scene to find private solace), a reading which seems supported by the recurrent "doublets" in lines 1, 4 and 9: "two clever friends", the ascetic versus the libertine, the sage (or wise ruler) and the Brahman. The poem's circular structure suggests that the first and last pair may be analogues: the "clever friends" (whose company includes a book: of poems? of the *Kalīla wa-Dimna*? in any case, a source of wisdom), while sinner and ascetic may represent the poet and his detractors. The final line sounds too despairing a note to constitute (as Sūdī argues) the conclusion to a *ghazal* celebrating Shāh Manṣūr's restoration: the times are still out of joint and need to be set right. The Paradise that was Shiraz has been lost; who will rebuild it?

A second observation to be made concerning Ḥāfiẓ's imagery – one which I think the preceding examples have made clear – is that, although informed by

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the same basic principle as is esoteric imagery (discussed below), i.e., the use of *visibilia* to point to *intelligibilia*, it is not (generally speaking) used to suggest, much less to convey, esoteric or mystical doctrines, to argue for a mystical position. Though Ḥāfiẓ has often been read, in both East and West, as a mystical poet (engendering an extensive controversy which will not be repeated here), his poetry cannot – as Helmut Ritter warned long ago – be glossed in accordance with some mystico-theological "code" which sees every image or lexical item as standing for an element of mystical doctrine. Ritter cautioned "that on principle one should not consider as allegory anything that cannot be confirmed, either by the *ipsissima verba* of the poet, or by the failure of other methods of explanation, as being irrefutably intended as such" (quoted in Rypka 1968a: 267). Ḥāfiẓ's imagery is allegorical; but it is so in, primarily, a topical and/or a moral sense. The two are closely interwoven, as Ḥāfiẓ recreates, in a poetic world, the Shiraz of his time.

Thus his gardens must be seen, in the first instance, as real gardens (as were, indeed – in the first instance – those of Ibn al-Muʿtazz, al-Ṣanawbarī, Farrukhī and countless others), the gardens and pleasure-spots of Shiraz, which then become poetic icons, emblems of an ideal (real) state of conviviality and contentment. When he bids the *sāqī*,

> . . . bring the rest of the wine; for in Paradise you'll not find
> the flowing stream of Ruknābād, or the rosy meads of Muṣallā,

we need not be tempted to resort to a mystical reading of *mayy-i bāqī* as "the eternal wine", nor to speculate on the possible implications of the literal meaning of Muṣallā as a place of prayer; the argument is for a recognition of the fact that life is fleeting, that this world is all we are truly certain of, and that Shiraz is undoubtedly the finest place to spend one's life. Similarly, whenever we see "Joseph" mentioned (as in the "Shiraz Turk"), we need not think of him as figuring the notion, "Love for the Divine beauty lures the true lover from the chastity of formal faith to the infamy of helpless unreason" (Arberry 1962: 142 n. 5); it is more likely that the reference is (a) emblematic and/or (b) to Shāh Shujāʿ.

The garden does of course provide strong moral arguments:

1 Plant the tree of friendship, which bears the fruit of fulfillment;
   uproot the sapling of enmity, which bears countless suffering,

says Ḥāfiẓ in a *ghazal* (QG115) which argues (most probably to the *mamdūḥ*) for the virtues of friendship and justice:

3 Count as gain the night of company; for after our time
   the sphere will revolve many times, bring many nights and days. . . .
5 Seek the spring of life, O heart; if not, this meadow every year
   brings a hundred flowers like the wild rose, and a thousand
      nightingales. . . .

7   In this garden, Ḥāfiẓ asks of God that he may, in his old age,
     sit by the edge of a stream; embrace a cypress in his arms.

The commentators see the *ghazal* as purely personal, a composition of Ḥāfiẓ's old age. Its moral arguments are, however, more broadly applicable (the theme is the age-old one of *carpe florem*, which need not be interpreted as a "confessional" motif, particularly in view of its prominence in Ḥāfiẓ's poetry); while the mention of flowers and nightingales certainly suggests princes and poets, as does the final line: Ḥāfiẓ wishes that he may continue to sing his songs of praise for a youthful beloved (the "edge of the stream", moreover, recalls the previous poem – is the reference to the youthful Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn?).

Ḥāfiẓ's gardens are multi-faceted: they are the real gardens of Shiraz, the garden of love, the courtly garden of the *mamdūḥ*, the world-garden. Ḥāfiẓ both combines and transcends the earlier meanings of the garden discussed in this section. It is typical of his poetic style (and his poetic project) that he should do so. But there have been still other permutations of the garden, as we shall see in the concluding section to this chapter.

Esoteric imagery

The esoteric dimension of imagery has already been touched upon in connection with Nāṣir-i Khusraw and with mystical poets such as Rūmī, whose poetry, while employing well-established structural and rhetorical devices, often displays as well an exuberance, a prodigality of imagery which nevertheless still functions as argument, in poems composed for public performance – frequently before an audience of adepts, but often for a more general one.[56] That esoteric imagery is, broadly speaking, allegorical, goes without saying; but as indicated earlier, it is important to distinguish between allegory as a method of composition and allegoresis as a method of reading. In the case of religio-spiritual allegory, both are closely linked with *taʾwīl*, allegorical exegesis, whose hermeneutic method is extended both to the composition of poetry and to its interpretation.[57] Thus for Nāṣir-i Khusraw both the created world (the "visible book") and the Koran (the "audible book") are God's texts (*nibishtahā-yi khudā*), each with its external (*ẓāhir*, or sensible) and internal (*bāṭin*, or intelligible) aspect, the former pointing to the latter, both linked in a relationship of necessity (1953: 232). The *ẓāhir* is the *masal* or "sign", the *bāṭin* the "reality" (in Ismāʿīlī terms); one sign, moreover, has many correspondences in "reality".

Similarly, Rūmī writes in his *Masnavī* (1925, 4: 237; Nicholson's translation),

Know that the words of the *Qurʾán* have an exterior (sense), and under
     the exterior (sense) an interior (sense), exceedingly overpowering;
And beneath that inward (sense) a third interior (sense), wherein all
     intellects become lost.

> The fourth interior (sense) of the *Qur'án* none hath perceived at all,
>   except God the peerless and incomparable.

The rubric states that these verses are a "Commentary on the Tradition of Muṣṭafá (Mohammed), on whom be peace, that the *Qur'án* hath an exterior (sense) and an interior (sense), and that its interior (sense) hath an interior (sense), (and so on) to seven interior senses." But this is where poet and allegorizer, allegory and allegoresis, diverge (as Nicholson's heavily glossed translation of Rūmī, and the accompanying commentary, demonstrate): for while Rūmī speaks in images or in parables, and while he (like Nāṣir-i Khusraw) stresses the potential multiplicity of images,[58] the commentators attempt to "explain", in an operation aimed not merely at grasping the intelligible which lies beyond the image but at reducing the image itself to a specific equivalent. (Cf. J. Stetkevych 1993: 89–92, 96–102; de Bruijn 1997: 71.) But Rūmī's "interiors" are not "senses" – not paraphrasable or reducible items or concepts in a "code"; they are the layers of the onion, the unfolding petals of the rose, and however much one may pretend to peel them away, to strip them one by one, they are still onion, they are still rose.

How then do esoteric and mystical poets conceive of their imagery as operating? In his "*Mīzān*" *qaṣīda* Nāṣir-i Khusraw stated,

54   In treatises, with logical discussion, I produce proofs as brilliant as the
        sun;
55   Over intellectual problems I place *sensibilia* in charge, as shepherd and
        guardian.

Sensibilia – the "visible book" – are, like words, the signs of intelligibles (which for Nāṣir-i Khusraw include everything from the nature of both worlds – cosmology and eschatology – but which are for Rūmī a sort of half-way point, an intermediary world of ideals). Nāṣir-i Khusraw uses the term *masal* ("likeness, analogy"): "God's words in the Koran are," he says, "by way of analogy [*bar sabīl-i masal*]" (1953: 37). Rūmī goes a step further: in his *Discourses* (*Fīhi mā fīh*) he distinguishes (perhaps deliberately) between *misāl* ("comparison") and *masal* ("likeness"). "Comparison is one thing, and likeness another," he says, citing as an example the Koranic "Light Verse" (24: 36),[59] in which God "likened" (*tashbīh kard*) His Light to a lamp, and the saints to the glass of that lamp, "for the sake of comparison [*misāl*]": for "God's Light is not contained in phenomenal being and space; how then should it be contained in a glass or a lamp?" "In the same way," he says, "you discover your image in the mirror; yet your image is not in the mirror, only when you look in the mirror you see yourself."

> When things appear unintelligible and are enunciated by means of a comparison, then they become intelligible; and when they become intelligible, they become sensible [*maḥsūs*].... It is like an architect who conceives inwardly a picture of a house, complete with breadth and length

and shape: this does not appear intelligible to anyone. But when he draws the plan of the house on paper, then it becomes visible; and being given definite form it becomes intelligible in every detail to anyone looking at it. Being intelligible, the architect then proceeds to build the house according to that design, and the house becomes sensible. (1993: 174–5; 1959: 203–4)

Here both the neo-Platonic bases of Rūmī's thought, and the inadequacy of Arberry's translation, become apparent. For *misāl*, the key term in this passage, is not, strictly speaking, "comparison" (*masal*) or "likening" (*tashbīh*): it is the image – the *symbolon* – through the mediation of which the unintelligible (*nā-maʿqūl*), which cannot be grasped by the intellect, is made intelligible (*maʿqūl*) because it can be grasped by the senses (*maḥsūs*). It is through the reversal of this sequence – the move from the sensible through the intelligible image to the unintelligible – that we can understand, for example, what the conditions of the next world will be "like", even though they are not, formally, like the images that point to them.[60] Hence the distinction between *misāl*, the image, and *masal*, the "likeness".

Comparison does not resemble likeness. Thus, the gnostic gives the name 'spring' to relaxation and happiness and expansion, and calls contraction and sorrow 'autumn': what formal resemblance is there between happiness and spring, sorrow and the autumn? Yet this is a comparison without which the intellect cannot achieve and grasp that meaning. So it is that God most High declares:

Not equal are the blind and the seeing man,
  the shadows and the light,
  the shade and the torrid heat. [Koran 35: 20]

God here has related faith to light and unbelief to shadows, or He has related faith to a delightful shade and unbelief to a burning and merciless sun boiling the brain. Yet what resemblance is there between the brightness and subtlety of faith and the light of this world of ours, or between the sordidness and gloom of unbelief and the darkness of our world? (1993: 176; 1959: 205)

We might say that the kind of imagery Rūmī describes falls under the rubrics of analogy-based metaphor, "imaginary" metaphor, or the poetic syllogism; indeed, the above passage recalls al-Jurjānī's discussion of the same images (1954: 245–6). But Rūmī is also describing a mode of thought, of perception, in which "unreal" relationships are posited between things that exist on ontologically different planes (the sensible; the intelligible; this world and what Rūmī constantly refers to as "that world" or "the other side" – the world of the transcendent, the divine), through the medium of the image which, when realized in words, becomes sensible, *maḥsūs*. Words are not reality; "Words are the shadow of reality and the branch of reality" (*sukhan sāya-yi ḥaqīqat ast*

va-farʿ-i ḥaqīqat). "Words are the pretext [*bahāna*]" which draws men to seek knowledge of the unintelligible, to seek out a teacher, to whom, in turn, they are drawn by "congeneity" (*munāsabat*; relationship, affinity). Moreover, while the images, or "thoughts" (Rūmī uses the term *khiyāl*, "phantasy imagined") which draw the (congenial) individual towards "reality" (*ḥaqīqat*) may be numerous, that Reality is one (see 1993: 18–19; 1959: 25).

> The world of phantasy [*khiyāl*] is broader than the world of concepts [*muṣavvarāt*] and of sensibilia [*maḥsūsāt*]. For all concepts are born of phantasy. The world of phantasy likewise is narrow in relation to the world out of which phantasy comes into being. From the verbal standpoint this is the limit of understanding; but the actual reality [*ḥaqīqat-i ʿālam-i maʿnā*] cannot be made known by words and expressions.
>   Someone asked: Then what is the use of expressions and words?
>   The Master answered: The use of words is that they set you searching and excite you, not that the object of the quest should be attained through words. If that were the case, there would be no need for so much striving and self-naughting. Words are as when you see afar off something moving; you run in the wake of it in order to see it, it is not the case that you see it through its movement. Human speech [*nāṭiqa*] too is inwardly the same; it excites you to seek the meaning, even though you do not see it in reality. (1993: 202; 1959: 228)

Words, images, thoughts, fancies: all are ultimately veils [*ḥijāb, niqāb*] which interpose themselves between men and Reality. "God has created these veils for a good purpose. For if God's beauty should display itself without a veil, we would not have the power to endure and would not enjoy it. Through the intermediary of these veils we derive succour and benefit." Rūmī cites the example of the sun, whose light is beneficial to mankind, and makes the garden fruitful, but which were it to come nearer would destroy the world through its heat.

> When God most high makes revelation through a veil [*ḥijāb*] to the mountain, it too becomes fully arrayed in trees and flowers and verdure. When however He makes revelation without a veil, He overthrows the mountain and breaks it into atoms.
>
>   *And when his Lord revealed Him to the mountain*
>   *He made it crumble into dust.* [Koran 7: 143]

> Someone interposed the question: Well, is there not the same sun too in the winter.
>   The Master answered: Our purpose here was to draw a comparison. . . . Likeness is one thing, comparison is another. Although our reason cannot comprehend that thing however it may exert itself, yet how shall the reason abandon the effort? If the reason gave up the struggle, it would no more be the reason. (1993: 46–7; 1959: 57–8)

Herein lies the basic paradox which informs Rūmī's poetry: words, images, desires, the created world itself, are veils which both reveal and conceal Reality. "Speech that rises from the soul, veils the soul …". While Nāṣir-i Khusraw emphasizes the importance of reason, which enables men to pass beyond images to the truth they point to, for Rūmī only the heart, illumined by God's grace or by that God-related part within itself, can grasp, dimly, what lies beyond the veil – even though, by its very nature, reason must go on striving to grasp what it cannot. This, at least, is the "theory"; what we must do in what follows is to look at the poetry as poetry.

Rūmī's observations point to the difficulty in imposing predetermined meaning on mystical poetry; for even though "reality" may be one, its verbal manifestations are many and are irreducible to equivalences. Moreover, such reductionism will inevitably lose sight of the poem as poem. Commenting on a poem by the Arabic mystical poet Ibn al-Fāriḍ, J. Stetkevych observes that "we realize how comparatively little we are able to draw on if we look for an extraliterary repertory of equivalences in a symbolic reading" of a poem which expresses its "allegory" not "through a directly transferable idiom of equivalences with what could be called an objective circumstance," but "through form and structure, through eminently literary avenues" (1993: 91).[61] The Egyptian Ibn al-Fāriḍ (d. 632/1235), as well as the famous Andalusian mystic Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240), were predecessors of and, arguably, influences upon the younger Rūmī – indeed, there is a (perhaps apocryphal) account that the young Jalāl al-Dīn met the aging Ibn al-ʿArabī in Konya – and a brief digression upon the Arabic poets seems appropriate here.[62]

Both poets (like Rūmī himself) have been commented on extensively, their poetry resolutely brought into line with prosaic, not to say dogmatic, conceptions of "orthodox" mysticism. Ibn al-ʿArabī even wrote his own commentary on his collection of lyrics, the *Tarjumān al-ashwāq* (which his contemporaries had criticized for its outspoken, "secular" lyricism), which, predictably, reduces every metaphor, every image, to some "equivalent" mystical concept. Says J. Stetkevych,

> [Ibn al-ʿArabī's] commentary appears trapped in its own hermeneutic logic, detached and esoteric. His poetic text would hardly have been served by anything else, however, if the modest amount of mystical substance contained in it was to be salvaged and the general symbolic pretense maintained. . . . The result is that the commentary develops largely its own sphere of content, treating the poetry merely as a "point of departure," and the poetry, going its own traditional ways, never quite manages to warrant the flights of symbolic imagination of the commentary. (1993: 92)

Such is, indeed, the way of commentaries: taking the texts as point of departure, they go off less into "flights of symbolic imagination" than into attempts to pin everything down, to equate (an effort of the intellect rather than of the imagination). One need only look at Nicholson's translation of the *Tarjumān*

and its commentary – again, like Rūmī's *Masnavī*, heavily glossed to prevent "misunderstanding". While there is no doubt that mystical and esoteric poets often intended their poems to be vehicles for "ideas" (in the broadest sense), conveyed through imagery and the other devices of poetry (see Utas 1998), what is at issue here is the school of thought that seeks to impose meaning rather than to allow the poem to reveal its own.

Thus when Ibn al-Fāriḍ exclaims, at the beginning of a poem discussed by Stetkevych (1993: 82–5; Stetkevych's translation; see Ibn al-Fāriḍ 1985: 98–9),

1   *A-barqun badā min jānibi l-ghawri lāmiʿū*
    ami rtafaʿat ʿan wajhi Laylā l-barāqiʿū
    Did lighting [sic] flash from far-off vale,
        Or did veils lift from Laylā's face?

the interpretations of the commentators (al-Būrīnī and al-Nābulusī; paraphrased by Stetkevych) are patently both reductive and inadequate:

> Was it the manifestation of divine being – *lightning-like* – illuminating the depth of my heart, infused with divine spirit – *coming from the depth of far-off vale* – or has all that perishes disappeared in the luminous manifestation of the divine face – *like veils lifted from Laylā's face*? (ibid.: 96, and see also 267 n. 89; author's emphases)

If we look at the verse, we will see that this is not what the poet is saying. The two halves of the line posit an antithesis between the flash of lightning and the brightness of Laylā's face (is it one or the other? the poet asks) which belies their apparent "formal" similarity (brightness), an antithesis supported by the *tajnīs zāʾid/radd al-ʿajuz* between *barq/barāqiʿū* "lightning/veils", reminiscent of al-Maʿarrī's technique in the poem discussed in Chapter 7. Yet this is less a true antithesis than a paradox: as Rūmī might say, the lightning *is* the veil; it is a *misāl*, but not a *masal*.

Stetkevych comments:

> [This] type of questioning . . . is based on a parallelism of alternatives. It is not a purely rhetorical device, however. The resulting "either-or" has its tension between a physical phenomenon and a thought, a name, a desire. The poet does not see or smell with the senses alone. His senses are invariably associative with what totally occupies his heart and mind. The transfer of meaning is a process which for him is contained in the external phenomenon itself. One could call this the conviction of metaphor. When there is a light over the horizon, the poet's first thought is: the beloved! When there comes a breath of perfume, the poet's sense of smell knows only one response: the beloved! The alternative questions, as far as the poet's feelings are concerned, should even be reversed. The poet actually asks himself: Are these the apparitions of my beloved or are they but deceptive physical phenomena? (1993: 84–5)

I would agree with much of this – except for the emphasis on "the poet's feelings" (about which we can know virtually nothing), and the notion that meaning inheres "in the external phenomenon itself" and is transferred thence to the poet's mind. I see the process as being the other way around: the thought seeks an image to convey it, but the two are not identical. There are many reasons why the image is appropriate – similarity (the least relevant, as *barq* is transformed into *barāqiʿ*, light into darkness), poetic and literary convention, and, importantly, the contrast between the ephemerality of the lightning-flash and the radiant epiphany of the beloved's face. Is Laylā the beloved? Or Salmā, or ʿAzza, who also feature in this poem? These too are – again, for many appropriate reasons, not least their iconic status as "beloveds" in *nasīb* and legend (especially in the case of Laylā; the star-crossed lovers Qays-Majnūn and Laylā were adapted by mystical poets to figure the madness of divine love) and the etymological connotations of their names: drunkenness, peace/salvation, glory/exaltation – *misāl*s for the ultimate Beloved whom the poet seeks in the holy shrine towards which his heart turns.

Certainly there is an "experience" behind this poem – shaped and conveyed by a language that is as toughly and deliberately "rhetorical" (and I would argue that there is no such thing – in a good poem – as a "purely rhetorical device"; rhetoric serves a purpose) as anything seen in, say, al-Maʿarrī. It is, precisely, the highly charged language and imagery that lets the hearer or reader know what to expect: not just another *nasīb* in which the poet (for whatever reason) recalls lost loves, but a spiritual pilgrimage leading to the holiest of shrines. The insistent anaphora of lines 5–22 (*wa-hal . . . wa-hal*, evocative of the *ubi sunt* topos), links past and present:

17 **Wa-hal** *amma bayta llāhi yā Umma Mālikin*
    ʿUraybun lahum ʿindī jamīʿan ṣanāʾiʿū
    Are they headed to the house of God,
        O ʿUmm [sic] Mālik,
    The beloved Arabs, to whom
        I owe so much?

The "beloveds" of *nasīb*, the Arab poets – all are headed in the same direction: to the house of God, to be united in one glorious spiritual and poetic union.

23 **Laʿalla uṣayḥābī** *bi-makkata yubridū*
    bi-dhikri Sulaymā mā tujinnu l-aḍāliʿū
24 **Wa-ʿalla l-luyaylāti** *llatī qad taṣarramat*
    taʿūdu lanā yawman fa-yazfaru ṭāmiʿū
25 **Wa-yafraḥa maḥzūnun** *wa-yaḥyā mutayyamun*
    wa-yaʾnasa mushtāqun *wa-yaltadhdha sāmiʿū*
23 Perhaps in Mecca a dear company
        will with Sulaymā's name
    Allay my bosom's fire,

24 Perhaps sweet nights cut short
    will soon return
  To still the longing:
25 So once again the sad one may rejoice,
    the lovelorn live,
  The yearning one find peace,
   the one who hears the song
    in it delight!

Luyaylāti, "sweet nights", in which one can hear the echo of "Laylā", evokes, as Stetkevych notes (1993: 89), the joyous trilling of the wedding feast; while *yubridū*, "allay" (literally, "make cold"), also suggests an association with *burda*, the cloak with which the Prophet is said to have awarded the poet Kaʿb ibn Zuhayr following the recitation of his famous *qaṣīda* beginning *Bānat Suʿādu*, "Suʿād has departed" (see S. Stetkevych 1994), which became known thereafter as the *Burda*. The balance of the last line, moreover, suggests not merely the cessation of longing but the restoration of order and tranquillity.[63]

Before passing to Rūmī (the only Persian mystical poet I shall consider here; individual poems by others have been touched upon in preceding chapters), let us look briefly at Ibn al-ʿArabī, whose chief vehicle is the independent love poem (*ghazal*). A short lyric from his *Tarjumān al-ashwāq* shows some affinities with the poem by Ibn al-Fāriḍ discussed above (1978: 20–1, no. 14; translated by Nicholson, ibid.: 74–5).

1 He saw the lightning in the east and he longed for the east, but if it had flashed in the west he would have longed for the west.
2 My desire is for the lightning and its gleam, not for the places and the earth.
3 The east wind related to me from them a tradition handed down successively from distracted thoughts, from my passion, from anguish, from my tribulation,
4 From rapture, from my reason, from yearning, from ardour, from tears, from my eyelid, from fire, from my heart,
5 That 'He whom thou lovest is between thy ribs; the breaths toss him from side to side'.
6 I said to the east wind, 'Bring a message to him and say that he is the enkindler of the fire within my heart.
7 If it shall be quenched, then everlasting union, and if it shall burn, then no blame to the lover!'

The poem falls into three sections: the lightning (1–2), the *ḥadīth* "transmission" (3–5), and the address to the east wind (6–7). The first topic points to the last: the lightning flash is the external manifestation of the inward flame kindled by love. The *ḥadīth* comes complete with an *isnād* (chain of transmission), at which we will look in a moment. First, however, let us consider what light, if any, Ibn

al-ʿArabī's commentary sheds on the poem (ibid: 75–6; [abridged] translation by Nicholson).

Immediately we encounter a problem. The lightning flash in the east "refers to the vision of God in created things," and the "east" is glossed as "the place of phenomenal manifestation;" had the lightning flashed in the "west", that is, "if it had been a manifestation of the Divine essence to the lover's heart, he would have longed for that purer manifestation in the world of purity and mystery." In line 2, he goes on to explain: "He says, 'I desire the forms in which the manifestation takes place only in so far as they are a *locus* for the manifestation itself.'" This is, I submit, deliberate obfuscation, designed to throw the poet's critics off the track – to deny that he imputes to himself any *direct* experience of the divine. First, the commentary flies in the face of what lines 1–2 (especially 2) actually say. The lines are parallel in structure:

1	He saw the **lightning** in the **east**	and desired the **east**
	Had it flashed in the **west**	he would have desired the **west**
2	My desire is for the **lightning**	not for places and the **earth**

In this context, east=lightning, west=earth. There is a long tradition behind this spatial/geographical orientation, in which the east (orient) is the source of light and of the soul, while the west (occident) is the domain of forms and the region of the soul's exile, its imprisonment in the body.[64] This is not to say that Ibn al-ʿArabī's poem is determined by this traditional symbolism; rather, the poet exploits it (much as panegyrists exploit the conventions of the *nasīb*) to convey meaning in his poem.

The poem's central section (3–5) focusses on the *ḥadīth* related by the Ṣabā (the lovers' messenger, we may recall), *muʿanʿanan*, "handed down" through successive transmittors. Of line 3 the commentary states: "The world of breaths [*ʿālam al-anfās*, i.e. the Ṣabā] communicated to me the inward meaning of these phenomenal forms;" in 4, *sukr* "rapture" (literally, "intoxication") is glossed as "the fourth degree in the manifestations" (i.e., of the Sufi states, *aḥwāl*; cf. the gloss to line 5). Of the *ḥadīth* itself (that is, of its *matn*, its text, which does not appear to be attested in Ḥadīth collections), not a word.

Before considering the *matn* of the *ḥadīth*, let us look at its *isnād*, introduced by *muʿanʿanan*, which is perhaps a neologism based on the expression *ʿanʿanatu al-muḥaddithīn*, "a saying of the *muḥaddith*s", referring to a tradition transmitted with suppression of verbs such as *rawā ʿan*, "he related from", *samiʿa ʿan*, "he heard (the tradition) from", and so on (see Lane, *ʿ-n*). The structure of the chain of transmission is thus: *ḥaddathanī* [Z] *ʿan* [X] *ʿan* [Y], and so forth, "Z related to me on the authority (or transmission) of Y, from X," and so on; the last link in the chain is the source ultimately attributed with having heard the saying from the Prophet or witnessed the action or event described in the *ḥadīth*. If we look at Ibn al-ʿArabī's *ḥadīth* backwards (that is, from its original to its most recent source, rather than the reverse, as is the convention for *isnād*s), substituting "to" for the normal "from" (*ʿan*) it becomes instructive. The source

is *qalbī* "my heart", who relates the *ḥadīth* to *nār* "fire, flame", and so on; the progression is: *qalbī* > *nār* > *jafnī* "my eyelid" > *al-damʿ* "tears" > *jawan* "ardour" > *al-shawq* "longing" > *ʿaqlī* "my reason" > *al-sukr* "intoxication" > *karbī* "my tribulations" > *al-ḥuzn* "anguish" > *wajdī* "my passion" > *al-bathth* "distracted thoughts" – the penultimate link in the chain of transmission, which ends with the Ṣabā.

In this *isnād* we do indeed see successive "states" of mystical yearning, though they are not ordered by any external scheme such as that suggested by the gloss to line 4. The source of the *ḥadīth* is the poet's heart; its final transmittor is the (grammatically feminine) Ṣabā. What emerges from the *isnād* is the poet-mystic's volatile, fluctuating emotional state, now up, now down – states which would be described, in technical terms (as Ibn al-ʿArabī does not) as *basṭ*, "expansion", and *qabḍ*, "contraction" – a vision of the mystical "experience" far more vivid and immediate (and perhaps more dangerous?) than the cold and neutral systematization of the gloss. This volatility is brought out by the final line: "if the flame of longing is quenched, it can only be by everlasting union" (a clear impossibility), "and if it burns on, the lover is not to blame!" (We may note the *tajnīs nāqiṣ* between Ṣabā, the lovers' messenger, and *ṣabbī*, the smitten lover.) One must read the gloss, as already suggested, as deliberate obfuscation, an attempt to "rectify" the passion of mystical longing into a system which would become acceptable, because depersonalized.

As for the text (*matn*) of the tradition – "He whom thou lovest is between thy ribs; the breaths toss him from side to side": as noted above, it does not appear in the concordance to the major canonical Ḥadīth collections, nor in the indexes to works on mysticism. It may well be a *ḥadīth qudsī*, a "sacred *ḥadīth*", whose ultimate source is the Divine (transmitted to the heart of the mystic in a moment of ecstasy), of the sort that circulated in Sufi circles. It was, in any case, a popular *topos*, and was echoed by Ḥāfiẓ in a famous *ghazal* (QG142) which begins:

> 1 *Sāl-hā dil ṭalab-i jām-i Jam az mā mīkard*
> *v-ān-chi khud dāsht zi bīgāna tamannā mīkard*
> For years my heart sought Jamshīd's cup from me:
> and that which it possessed itself, it sought from a stranger.

That the object of love is "tossed from side to side by the breaths" suggests less that "the overwhelming awe inspired by this manifestation produces in him various ecstasies" (as the gloss states) than, again, the ups and downs of the lover's emotional state, which may change from moment to moment (*anfās*, "breaths", can also mean "moments").

The commentary (Ibn al-ʿArabī's own, we must remember) is both pedestrian and obscurantist. What originated (beyond doubt) as a poetic expression of the mystical lover's condition becomes transformed into a dry exposition of mystical "doctrine". (This, along with successive transformations by later commentators, was not enough to legitimate Ibn al-ʿArabī's writings in the eyes of many

conservative critics; the reading, and teaching, of those writings is currently banned in Egypt, for example.)

Although mystical poetry exists in a context of thought from which it cannot be divorced, context is not the same as lexicon, and the two should not be confused. Mystical poets do not set out to present (in lyric at least) a system of thought, but to point to aspects of that thought through imagery: "poetry with all its elements, is not the key to a mystical truth, it *is* the mystical truth in the guise of a linguistic message" (Keshavarz 1998: 9). The poet-mystic does not seek to systematise his experience, but to express all its varied states. It is perhaps to be expected that, while the imagery of the Arab is drawn largely (though not exclusively) from the traditional motifs of the *nasīb*,[65] the garden plays a major part in Persian mystical poetry, and not least in that of Rūmī, as in the following *ghazal* (1963, 2: 245, no. 595).

1 New spring, you are our life; (come then), our life renew;
   make the gardens bloom again; the sown fields renew.
2 The rose has kindled beauty's flame; the nightingale has learned to sing;
   without the east wind nothing moves: come, and the east wind's breeze renew.
3 To lily says the cypress tree: come, and loose your tongue;
   To tulip says the ear of wheat: now your loyalty renew.
4 The plane trees beat upon their drums; the pine trees clap their hands in glee;
   the ring-dove coos its sad lament: *kū, kū?* your gifts renew.
5 The perfumed roses rise in prayer; and see the violet bowing low;
   the vine-leaves kneel in worship; come, come, the prayer renew.
6 The roses all seek peace, although the thorn, bad-natured, looks for war;
   O Vāmiq, rise, and now, once more, your pact with fair 'Azrā renew.
7 The thunder says: the cloud has come and scattered musk upon the ground:
   rosegarden, wash your face, refresh your hands and feet anew.
8 The narcissus comes to the nightingale, and winks a sleepy eye at him:
   "Come now, commence your song again; your love and passion now renew."
9 The nightingale heard this from him; said to the hundred-petalled rose,
   "If you a concert would enjoy, this miserable one renew."
10 Those dressed in green like Khiẕr's robes are saying over and over: "Go,
   and, like the blossoms all abloom, the mysteries of the saints renew."
11 But that trefoil, that jasmine, and that star-jasmine are saying: "No;
   in silence you should look upon this alchemy, and *it* renew."

This garden – like many of those in Rūmī's poems (compare for example the *ghazal* discussed in Meisami 1985a: 239–45) – is filled with personified denizens who welcome, in their various ways, the returning spring, which produces a magical transformation of the world, and figures both the divine epiphany and

the spiritual rebirth of the soul from its winter sleep (the "winter of reason", perhaps, as Rūmī says in the *Discourses*, which will be dispelled by the "Divine Ṣabā" invoked in line 2; cf. 1993: 69). "If in the winter time the trees do not put forth leaves and fruit, let men not suppose that they are not working. . . . Winter is the season of gathering in, summer is the season of spending" (ibid.: 62). What, then, is the garden's response? Flowers display their beauty; birds burst into song; trees celebrate joyfully; conflict is resolved, as all the garden's inhabitants rejoice in the alchemy (*kīmiyā*) of spring.

We might "translate" these images into mystical concepts, as Rūmī himself does on occasion (ibid., 2: 435–6, no. 1064) –

5 See the rose in the nightingale's soul; look from the rose to the
        Universal Intellect;
    fly from colour to colourlessness, that you may travel there.
6 The rose pillages the intellect; the eglantine makes allusions;
    here, behind the veil, is He who makes images. . . .
9 What place for garden, hillside, rose? what place for sweetmeats, cup of
        wine?
    what place for spirit, universal reason? when you're sweeter than the
        soul of souls? –

but that would be to destroy the totality, and the immediacy, of the imagery. Or we might comment on the "formal" bases of the comparisons – the lily with its tongue-like stamens, the palm-shaped leaves of the plane trees, and so on; but this would tell us nothing about their function in this tableau of joyous celebration. "What formal resemblance is there between happiness and spring, sorrow and the autumn? Yet this is a comparison without which the intellect cannot grasp that meaning."

1 O gardener, O gardener, autumn has come, autumn has come;
    on branch and leaf of the heart's grief now see the sign, now see the
        sign.

Thus Rūmī begins another, much longer *ghazal* (ibid., 2: 173–4, no. 429) whose first section shows us the other side of the coin, as it were. The gardener is bidden to "listen to the wailing of the trees", to the hundreds of "tongueless mourners" that lament on every side (2); such weeping, such suffering, does not occur for no reason, but heralds the entrance into the garden of the "crow of grief", who asks, "with magic and with cruelty, 'Where is the rosegarden?'" (4).

5 Where lily, where the eglantine? where cypress, tulip, sweet jasmine?
    where meadow-dwellers dressed in green? Where judas-tree? where
        judas-tree? . . .
7 Where my sweet-singing nightingale? My ring-dove too, that cries, *Kū?*
        kū?
    my peacock like an idol fair? the parrots, where? the parrots, where?

8   They have, like Adam, eaten grain, and from the nest have fallen
      down;
      their crowns and silk robes scattered all, from such a fall, from such a
      fall.

The litany of flower-names echoes like the *ubi sunt* of the *zuhdiyya* – *kū sūsan u
kū nastaran? kū sarv u lāla u yāsman?* (5) – and the ring-dove takes up the cry,
Kū, kū? "Where, where?" The grain-fattened birds have fallen from their nests,
as Adam fell from Paradise for eating the forbidden grain.[66] The rosegarden
(says the crow) "is troubled, like Adam, both mourning and expectant: who was
it who told them, 'Do not despair'; He is the Benevolent" (9). Is this – at last –
the lost Garden?

     The Koranic text alluded to – "Do not despair of the mercy of God; for God
verily forgives all sins; He is the all-Forgiving, the all-Merciful" (39: 54) – and
the ensuing images, tell us differently: for while all the trees are "standing in
line, clad in black, mourning", this is not an expulsion, but a trial (*imtiḥān*, 10).
The crow, who asks the stork (*laklak*; cf. 22),

11   "O stork, who are the village head, give me an answer: have you fled
      unto the depths? or have you soared into the sky, into the sky?"

is answered by the garden:

12   They said: "O crow, who are our foe: that water will return; seek, go:
      the world will take on scent and hue like Paradise, like Paradise."

In three months's time the "Feast of the world" (*ʿīd-i jahān*, i.e. Nawrūz) will
manifest itself before the blind, foolish crow; "our Isrāfīl" will blow his trumpet,
and in that Resurrection "we will be revived from our death in that Mihrajān"
(13–14). The use of the Arabized form is deliberate; for Rūmī, ever mindful of
etymology, construes Mihrajān, the feast that signals the onset of autumn, as
mihr-i jān, "the soul's love". Winter is not an expulsion, but a promise.

     "How long," the crow is asked, "will you continue to doubt? Regard this
beauty; then, like the vetch, fly to heaven without a ladder" (15). Autumn will
creep away, and the bright dawn will repel the Hindus of darkness, liberating
mankind with its own white magic (17). The sun will re-enter the house of the
Ram (Aries; 18), and will revive the dead flowers in the rosegarden, as if it were
Resurrection (19). The garden will once more be filled with beauties (*shāhid*
[21]; in mystical terminology the "witness" of God's epiphany); the stork will
return, and will acknowledge the divine revivifying power (22).

23   The nightingale will come, and strum his lute; the ring-dove cry *kū? kū?*
      The other birds, all minstrels, sing that fortune young, that fortune
         young.

The two carefully balanced halves of this *ghazal* show us the two seasons of the
world, or of the soul: the winter of deprivation, the spring of new life. The

parallelism is brought out by that between the two references to the stork, *laklak*, who is questioned in 11, and who sounds his trimphant cry, *al-mulk lak*, "Yours is the power", in 22. But the poem is not yet concluded; and in the final lines we hear the poet's voice.

24 This resurrection's quickened me; the tongue's words now I will renounce;
 for my heart's thoughts cannot be sung upon the tongue, upon the tongue.
25 Be silent, father, listen, heed this news from garden and from birds:
 swift-flying messengers, like arrows, have from No-where come, from No-where come.

The final line alludes both to a common *topos* with Rūmī and to the opening line of another *ghazal* (ibid., 2: 651, no. 1571):

1 O new and smiling spring, you have arrived from No-where.
 You resemble somewhat our friend; what have you seen of our Friend?

 Spring (with all its significations) is but a semblance of the Reality which exists in that "No-place" (*lā-makān*), the "other side" (*ān sū*), as Rūmī often terms it, which cannot be grasped by the intellect (except through the imperfect, veiling image), but can be attained through love, as the soul seeks reunion with its source (ibid., 1: 58–9, no. 134):

1 Amid the veil of blood love has its rosegardens;
 there lovers are occupied with the beauty of love without qualities.
2 Reason says: The six directions are the limit; beyond them lies no path.
 Love says: There is a path, and I've traversed it many times. . . .
6 Reason says: Set no foot there, for in annihilation there are only thorns.
 Love says to Reason: These thorns are only within yourself.
7 Come, be silent! remove the thorn of being from your heart's foot,
 that you may see the rosegardens within yourself.

To equate this "path" with the Sufi *ṭarīqat* would be to oversimplify. There is, however, a prototype: the "path" taken by the Prophet in his spiritual Ascent where (as Niẓāmī says), in that "absence of direction" he approached *to the distance of two bows, or closer*, to gaze without eyes upon the unveiled face of his Creator, to commune without tongue with Him, to listen without ears (1995, §3: 55–72).

 As Fatemeh Keshavarz (1998) points out, Rūmī's lyrics are a poetry of action, of movement – indeed, often of turbulence; to attempt to confine this movement (which was emphasized in the *ghazal* quoted earlier in this chapter which begins with the *taḍmīn* from Anvarī) within the neat trajectory in which the commentaries would like to have us believe would be to deny the nature of both the poetic and the mystical experience. In the *ghazal*s (and in contrast to

the *Masnavī*) Rūmī departs from the homiletic mode of the *qaṣīda*s (seen, for example, in the *qaṣīda*s both of the Ismāʿīlī Nāṣir-i Khusraw and of the mystic ʿAṭṭār) to take full advantage of the potentials of the love-lyric.[67]

One final example will show us the extent of the complexity of Rūmī's *ghazal*s: an example which combines poetic sophistication, religious allusion, and points of "doctrine", but which, in the end, proves to be about – poetry (1963, 2: 547, no. 1351; on this *ghazal* see also Bürgel 1994: 53–4).

1 The camels have grown drunken; now see the camel dance!
   Who seeks from drunken camels manners, learning, or works?
2 Our learning is what He has given, our path the road that leads to
      Him;
   our warmth is from His warming breath, and not from the sun of spring.
3 His breath will give you life upon the day the Trumpet sounds: accept;
   His work is, "'Be!' and it became," and on no rational cause depends.

The image of the drunken camels dancing in ecstasy which opens this *ghazal* is indeed a striking one. It has antecedents in religious poetry (and beyond, as we shall see): the camel "dances intoxicated on thorns when listening to the voice of the beloved caravan leader"; "the joy of the 'intoxicated camel' who runs through the desert once he hears the beloved's voice is a common expression, especially in Rumi's poetry" (Schimmel 1992: 194, and see 402 n. 18). As Keshavarz has pointed out, dancing figures importantly in the *ghazal*s, especially in poems on (or for?) the *samāʿ*, but also in other contexts: the entire universe dances in joy (see 1998: 84–6). This particular *ghazal* might be read as an apology for the Sufi dance: can one expect manners (*adab*; Bürgel translates "erudition"), (religious) learning (*ʿilm*), or pious works (*ʿamal*, the application of *ʿilm* expressed in deeds) from those who are drunk with love? It is also (as the final line indicates) an apology for the poetry of dancing, whose source is, ultimately, the divine.

Rūmī's camels, moreover, do not tread upon thorns, but make their way through the garden of love which forms the central image of so many poems.

4 Along this path we tread upon wild roses and carnations;
   no ordinary camels we, the common mud to tread upon.
5 Camels that tread on common mud to this same water and earth are
      bound;
   but in our souls and hearts what place is there for water, earth and
      mud?

No ordinary camels indeed, but a manifestation of divine love, as was the camel produced for the Arabian prophet Ṣāliḥ (see Koran 7: 74–80, 11: 62–69, 27: 46–54, 54: 23–30).

6 Because of Ṣāliḥ's prayer God's camel was brought forth,
   as a miracle of faith, from the rocky mountain's waist.

Ṣāliḥ's people, Thamūd, rejected his prophetic mission, hamstrung the miraculous she-camel which was its proof, and were accordingly destroyed utterly by a "great cry" (*ṣīḥa*) sent from the heavens by God. Such is the fate against which the poet warns in the next line:

7   Yes, yes! we are Truth's camels; make no objection,
    lest your heads be cut off by the blade of death's sword.
8   We do not travel towards the East; we do not go towards the West,
    but evermore our feet beat on towards the eternal Sun.

Echoes of Ibn al-'Arabī are surely heard here: East and West are but physical places, with no inherent meaning (and Rūmī's line seems almost as a gloss on the opening line of Ibn al-'Arabī's poem discussed earlier); it is the source of the light, the sun (*khūrshīd*) towards which the camels – the adepts – travel. *Khūrshīd* is the Persian equivalent of the Arabic *shams*; thus Rūmī anticipates the final line of this *ghazal*, in which he bids himself

9   Have done! Sit down, and shake your head, and say, "Yes, verily:
    Shams-i Tabrīz will show to you the *ghazal*'s many mysteries."

The "Sun of Tabriz" is the inspirational force behind Rūmī's poems, both because of his powerful impact on the poet, and because he is the earthly manifestation of the divine light, which, if perceived without the veil of that physical form, would be unbearable to the human eye. Like the camel-driver, who sings poetry to his beasts (cf. Bürgel 1994: 54), Shams charms and intoxicates the poet; the result is poetry.

Rūmī's *ghazal* is itself a dance of words which, in the end, tells us more about poetry than it does about mystical doctrine. Rūmī's camels dance on towards the eternal Sun, just as Rūmī's words dance on along the path of love. Poetry – like Ṣāliḥ's camel – is the proof of the poet-prophet's mission of revelation.

CONCLUSION:
THE COHERENCE OF THE POEM

> His conceits adorn his words,
>   and his words are the ornaments of his conceits.
>   Anon.

Word and image: A privileging of styles?

What has our survey of Arabic and Persian poems, and of the critical poetics
which parallels, but does not always wholly keep pace with, poetic practice,
taught us about how such poems work? Before attempting to sum up, and before
broaching some further issues with respect to how we might begin to read such
poetry, what questions we might ask ourselves about it, what others might
perhaps prove unanswerable, I would like to look at two further poems,
markedly different in form, genre and style, which I think demonstrate what
I should like to call the "privileging of styles" which both links and distinguishes
(also in a broad sense) Arabic and Persian poetry: Abū Tammām's *qaṣīda* on the
conquest of Amorium, and the first *ghazal* of Ḥāfiẓ's *Dīvān*.

Abū Tammām's Amorium *qaṣīda* (1951, 1: 45–79, with al-Tibrīzī's
commentary; translation based on Arberry 1965: 50–63) holds a prominent
place in the Arabo-Persian poetic tradition. It has been widely discussed by
Western scholars, notably Hamori (1967, 1974: 126–34), Badawi (1978), and
S. P. Stetkevych (1991: 187–211), all of whom focus primarily on the use of
tajnīs and *muṭābaqa* as organizing devices and on the relation of these figures to
the poem's thematics and imagery. None of these critics agrees as to how the
poem is organized. Badawi, employing an essentially thematic approach, divides
the *qaṣīda* "into six roughly equal sections and a conclusion," as follows (1978:
46–7; slightly modified):

I.   1–10:   an attack on astrologers who falsely predicted that the
              city would not fall to the Muslims at that time of year.
II.   11–22:   an account of the victory which includes a description
              of the conquered city.
III. 23–36:   a description of the fighting and the destruction of the
              city.

IV. 37–49: praise of the Caliph, the conquering hero.
V.   50–58: attack on Theophilus, the Byzantine ruler.
VI. 59–66: further description of the fighting and the capturing of
             enemy women.
VII. 67–71: conclusion pointing out the religious implications of the
             victory.

(This produces a sequence of 10 + 12 + 14 + 13 + 9 + 8 + 5 lines). Focusing on the use of *muṭābaqa* and *tajnīs*, Badawi concludes "that the structure of the poem is one of simple contrasts and balances" – contrast between the attack on the astrologers (I) and the emphasis on the religious implications of the victory (VII) and between praise of the Caliph (IV) and the attack on Theophilus (V); balance between the two descriptions of the battle (II-III, VI), in which the motif of rape which describes the city's destruction in III is recapitulated in VI – but that "these sections do not constitute watertight compartments," as "the themes in them merge and overlap" (ibid.).

While Badawi's analysis reveals important connections between rhetoric and meaning, his approach obscures some important structural features. Some of these are brought out by Hamori, who divides the *qaṣīda*, in a slightly different manner, into seven sections (1967: 84):

1–12:   The Muslim swords have disproved the astrologers' predictions,
        who thought the time inauspicious for conquest.
13–22: The city, which had never before been taken, is compared to a
        previously unconquered woman.
23–35: Description of the devastation, especially of the fire in the
        city.
36–49: Description and praise of the caliph.
50–61: Contrasting description of Theophilus. His flight.
62–66: Further description of the siege, and of the women captured
        by the victors.
67–71: High praise of the caliph and of the victory.

(This produces a sequence of 12 + 10 + 13 + 14 + 12 + 5 + 5 lines). Hamori's reading shows that the *qaṣīda* is based not merely on a pattern of "simple contrasts and balances" but on a complex tension between its thematic and its structural organization which is augmented by the use of rhetorical devices. His analysis also reveals the poem's symmetrical structure and its circularity.

Both Hamori and Badawi focus primarily on the poem's content, rhetorical figures and imagery, as does Suzanne Stetkevych, who divides her translation of the *qaṣīda* (1991: 187–96) into ten sections of varying length, on an apparently arbitrary basis (1–10, 11–14, 15–22, 23–29, 30–35, 36–40, 41–49, 50–59, 60–66, 67–71, a sequence of 10 + 4 + 8 + 7 + 6 + 5 + 9 + 10 + 7 + 5 lines). None of these analyses does justice to the precise (in fact, extremely precise)

organization of the poem in accordance with the principle of proportional segmentation, which is revealed by a consideration of other factors, both generic and verbal (grammatical and syntactical).

How do we begin to retrieve this structure? A clue is provided by the one conspicuous point of agreement among these three analyses: that the *qaṣīda*'s concluding segment (67–71) consists of five lines. If we follow up this clue, and if we remember the frequency with which victory poems tend to be divided into five-line segments, we can begin to reconstruct the poem's symmetries. Close reading shows that the *qaṣīda* is indeed based (with some modification, allowing for amplification and abbreviation) on units of approximately five lines, which, if considered mechanically, would give a sequence of 14 x 5 + 1 = 71. The distribution is not, however, mechanical; and we may begin a further investigation of how it works by asking, where is the one, "extra", line – if there is one. There is – though not where we might have expected it, at the poem's center, which, instead, marks a turn (35–36) which begins, with praise of the caliph, the only larger passage in the poem which is not balanced by another (36–49). The "extra" line (which in fact it is not, as it completes the proportional symmetry of the exordium and the first "descriptive" passage) proves to be 25, in which the caliph is addressed for the first time, but is not named.

That this address occurs at line 25 lends further support to the argument that the poem's basic unit is five. If we look more closely still, we will see that this contention is borne out on the levels of syntax, semantics, thematics, and imagery. The *qaṣīda*, in short, proves to be (as was briefly noted in Chapter 6) an example of somewhat loose ring composition, with a pattern ABCXCBA; the approximate center is marked by the naming of the caliph al-Muʿtaṣim (37), which serves as transition to praise of the ruler (38–41) preparatory to further description of the battle. This segment divides the poem into two asymmetrical portions, in which the segments which balance one another (A^1, exordium, 1–14/A^2, peroration, 67–71; B^1: rape of the city/13–22, B^2, rape of the women, 62–66; C^1, devastation of the city, 23–35/C^2, defeat of Theophilus, 50–61) are marked by amplification in the first portion and abbreviation in the second (with the partial exception of the description of Theophilus and his flight, amplified because it is a new topic not previously introduced).

The overall symmetries of the *qaṣīda* may be shown as follows:

Exordium + Transition (1–14)

A^1 (5) 1–5 Contrast: falsity of astrology vs. truth of battle, sport vs. earnestness; proof of opening *sententia*

(5) 6–10 Amplification: astrologers' predictions; transition marked by *ʿajāʾiban zaʿamū*

(4) 11–12+ Transition (1): Proof by Battle; Victory (*fatḥa l-futūḥi/fatḥun*)

13–14 Transition (2): Name of battle (*yā yawma waqʿati ʿAmmūriyyata . . . abqayta*)

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Rape of the city (15–25)

B¹ (5) 15–19 Description of Amorium (*ummun lahum . . . ḥattā*)

(5) 20–24 Sack of city; transition (20–22: omen of defeat) marked by perfect verb (*atathum*), *tajnīs* between *kurba/kurab* (20), "disaster . . . disasters"

(1) 25 Address to caliph: "Commander of the Faithful, you left . . ." (*la-qad tarakta . . .*)

Narrative (1): Devastation and Fire (26–35)

C¹ (5) 26–30 Contrast: dark (battle, 26)/light (destiny, 30); linked by past tense (*ghādarta . . . l-layli > taṣarraḥa d-dahru*)

(5) 31–35 Contrast: dark (31), "lovely denouement" (35) (*lam taṭluʿi sh-shamsu/tabdū*)

Praise of the Caliph (36–49)

X (5) 36–40 Address to the victorious caliph (*lam yaʿlam . . . lam yaghzu . . . law lam yaqud*) (36–37: transition: omen of defeat; pun on the caliph's name)

(5) 41–45 Victory; caliph supported by God (*ramā bika llāhu*)

(4) 46–49 Caliph's response to call for help (*labbayta . . . ḥattā tarakta*; amplificatory digression)

Narrative (2): Theophilus (50–61)

C² (5) 50–54 Theophilus (1): cost of war (*lammā raʾmā*); contrast: money spent by Theophilus/Muslims not intent on plunder

(5) 55–59 Theophilus (2): flight (*wallā*); contrast: flight of Theophilus/ steadfastness of Muslims

(2) 60–61 Joy/rage (transition marked by *yā rubba*, 60)

Rape of the Women (62–66)

B² (5) 62–66 Rape of city/women; *kam* marks transition, repeated (63–65)

Peroration (67–71)

A² (5) 67–71 Benediction (67; *khalīfata llāhi* marks transition); praise of caliph (68–71)

The pattern of proportional distribution, and the method by which transitions will be effected, is made clear in the exordium. The opening sententia – "The sword is truer in tidings than (any) writings; in its edge is the boundary between earnestness and sport" – establishes the contrast between falsehood (astrology) and truth (battle) (as well as a secondary contrast between "sport" – *laʿib* also means "a joke" – and "earnestness") which is the exordium's dominant theme and which the victory at Amorium exemplifies. Lines 6–10 amplify the motif of the astrologers' false predictions; the transition is marked by the inversion of normal word order –

6   *ʿAjāʾiban zaʿamū l-ayyāma mujfilata ʿanhunna fī Ṣafari l-aṣfāri aw Rajabī*
    Marvels they alleged the days would reveal in (portentous) Ṣafar or
        Rajab –

with the accusative plural placed at the beginning of the line for emphasis. The
closing line repeats the topic of "revelation" and of the astrologers' inability to
reveal the truth:

10   Had they [the stars] made clear any matter before it occurred, they
        would not have concealed what befell the idols and the crosses.

   Lines 11–14 form an extended transition between the general theme of the
exordium and the specific victory which illustrates its argument: 11–12 stress
the sublime nature of the victory by repeating the opening word *fatḥ* (11: *fatḥa
l-futūḥi*, "in a victory of victories [Arberry: 'In a notable victory']" too great to be
described"; 12: *fatḥun tafattaḥu abwābu s-samāʾi lahu*, "A victory in honour of
which the gates of heaven open," with the *tajnīs fatḥun/tafattaḥu*, "victory"/
"open"); 13–14 identify the battle (13: "O day of the battle of Amorium") and
its outcome:

14   You have left the fortunes of the sons of Islam in the ascendant, and
        the polytheists and the abode of polytheism in decline.

Here *jadd*, "fortune", harks back to *jidd*, "earnestness", in line 1. There follows a
five-line description of Amorium (15–19), introduced by *ummun lahum*, "(She
was) a mother to them" (i.e., the "polytheists"), "comely of face" and repelling
all attackers (16), existing "from the age of Alexander" (17), ancient yet
virginal (18, recalling the mutual allusivity of descriptions of war and of wine),
untouched,

19   Till [*ḥattā*], when God had churned the years for her as a miserly
        woman churns milk, she was the cream of (all) the generations
        [*zubdata l-ḥiqabī*].

This succession of closely related phrases, beginning with *ummun lahum* and
ending with *ḥattā*, exemplifies the hypotactic style typical of Abū Tammām.
   Lines 20–24, describing the city's defeat, are introduced by the perfect verb
atathum, "came upon them", and the *tajnīs-cum-radd al-ʿajuz* between *kurba/kurabī*:

20   Black disaster [*kurba*] came upon them, confounded at her whose name
        was the great deliverer from disasters [*kurabī*].

The ensuing lines describe the bad omen provided by the earlier sack of
Amorium's "sister" Anqira (21–22) – pointing back to the opening *sententia*
(the true portent was provided by this earlier battle, not by the stars) – and the
carnage in the city (23–24).
   Inserted between this segment and the next (26–30) is the single line of
ilmām in which the poet addresses the caliph:

25 Commander of the Faithful, you left the stones and wooden beams
      there abject to the fire.

This line is marked by the use of the perfect in its opening, for emphasis (*Laqad taraktu Amīra l-Muʾminīna*, "You left, Commander of the Faithful . . ."), and serves as a transition which divides the description of the battle into two nearly equal parts: the general picture of carnage (15–24) and the narrative which follows (26–35), divided into two smaller segments (26–30, 31–35). The first begins,

26 You left behind [*ghādarta*] there the pitchblack night as [if] it were
      noonday,

and describes the darkness of night lit by the flames of the burning city and the sun of day obscured by their smoke, and concludes with a return to the "revelation" motif:

30 Destiny revealed itself [*taṣarraḥa*] plainly to her as the clouds (disperse
      to) reveal (the sun), (disclosing) a day of fierce battle, a day (at
      once) pure and defiled thereby.

The entire segment is linked by the use of the past tense (*ghādarta . . . taṣarraḥa*) in the opening and closing lines, while the focus shifts from the caliph to the city. The second segment recapitulates this pattern:

31 The sun rose not [*lam taṭluʿ*] that day upon any one of them (the
      enemy) that was a bridegroom, nor set upon any (of the victors)
      that was a bachelor . . .
35 And a lovely dénouement of visible consequences whose cheerfulness
      resulted from an evil dénouement.

    Like the preceding segment, this one is unified by the dark/light contrast ("the sun rose not . . . of visible consequences" [*tabdū ʿawāqibuhu*, "whose consequences appear"]), followed by a linking line –

36 Unbelief did not know [*lam yaʿlam*] for how many ages fate was lying in
      wait for it between the tawny (lances) and the bows –

which repeats the verbal structure of 31 and introduces praise of the caliph (36–40), named through a pun (al-Muʿtaṣim billāh, "one who clings to God", 37) and praised for his courage both in general (38–39) and on the day of the battle (40).[1] The segment is unified through repetition of the *lam* construction which begins three of its five lines: *lam yaʿlum*, "(unbelief) did not know" (36), *lam yaghzu*, "(who) never raided" (39; i.e., the caliph), *law lam yaqud*, "had he not led" (a troop; 40).

41 God smote through you the twain towers of her and destroyed her –
      and had other than God smitten through you, you would not have
      hit the mark.

This Koranic allusion (cf. 8: 17), again in the past tense, introduces the further description of the battle (41–66), divided into six smaller segments each introduced by a verb in the past tense: "God smote through you" (*ramā bika llāhu*, 41), followed by the collapse of the Byzantines' confidence in victory (42–45); *labbayta*, "you responded" (46), telling of the caliph's response to the call for help of a woman from a town taken by the Byzantines (46–40) and concluding with a phrase reminiscent of 25: "So that you left [*ḥattā tarakta*] the tentpole of polytheism uprooted" (suggesting a further organization of the *qaṣīda* into three larger movements: 1–25, 26–49, 59–71); *lammā raʾā*, "When he (Theophilus) saw" (50) ... *wallā*, "He turned his back" (55), marking the phases of the description of the futile efforts of the Byzantine emperor Theophilus (r. 829–42) to ensure victory through extravagant expenditure (contrasted with the caliph's restraint of excessive expense and the fact that the campaign was mounted "to call (the offender) to account, not ... to procure gain") and of his flight and the slaughter of the Byzantines (50–59); the whole passage concluding with a transitional segment (60–62) constructed as a single statement introduced by *yā rubba ḥawbāʾa*, "Ah, many a (Muslim) soul," *yā rubba* being a common transitional marker.

This reading shows that praise of the caliph (*madḥ*; 36–49) and the description of Theophilus' defeat and flight (*waṣf*; 50–59), which form a thematic contrast, have different structural functions, signalled by the transition to the praise section at the approximate center of the poem (36–37), and by the fact that the generic dominant in the flight segment is not *hijāʾ* (which would contrast generically with the *madḥ* of al-Muʿtaṣim) but *waṣf*, which relates it generically and structurally with the description of the destruction of the city. Each of the two five-line segments describing Theophilus and his fleeing army (50–54, 55–60) concludes with a generalization contrasting them with the resolute Muslims.

The climactic segment, in which the rape of the women figures the conquest of the "virgin city" (63–66), is introduced by another transitional marker, *kam*, "How many a ...." (repeated in the opening of the next two lines, in an anaphoric sequence reminiscent of homiletic poetry), and concluding with a complex *tajnīs*:

66 White (blades) [*bīḍ*]– when they were drawn from their sheaths [*ḥujb*], they returned with better right to the (Byzantine women) white of body [*bīḍ*] than their veils [*ḥujubī*].

The final segment (67–71), introduced by direct address to the caliph (*khalīfata llāhi*, "Caliph of Allah", 67), praises al-Muʿtaṣim and compares his victory to that of the Prophet at the battle of Badr in 624 (70). This triumph over unbelief prefigures that over the Byzantines:

71 They (the days of victory) have left the sons of sickly al-Aṣfar pale of face [*ṣufra l-wujūhi*] as their name, and brightened the faces of the Arabs.

(The Byzantines' descent was traced by Arab genealogists to one al-Aṣfar.) The "marvels" predicted by the astrologers for the month of Ṣafar have been revealed in their true nature.

The careful balance maintained by the poem's complex symmetrical structure is reinforced by its rhetoric and imagery. The two are inextricably linked, recalling Heinrichs' conjecture that the original meaning of *badīʿ* was precisely the combination of metaphor with "verbal" figures such as *tajnīs* and *muṭābaqa*, which, as already noted, are the primary organizing features of the poem. The fundamental antitheses on which the poem is based are announced in the exordium:

[*ṣidq/kidhb*, truth/falsehood]

	ṣidq	*kidhb*
(1)	swords (*sayf*)	books (*kutub*)
	seriousness (*jidd*)	sport (*laʿib*)

[*mutūn*: blades/texts]

(2)	white blades	black pages
	(*bīḍu ṣ-ṣafāʾiḥi*)	(*sūdu s-ṣaḥāʾifi*)
	clarification (*jalāʾ*)	doubt and uncertainties
		(*al-shakki wal-riyabī*)

[*ʿilm*: true knowledge/false knowledge]

(3)	flames of lances; two armies	seven luminaries
	(*shuhubi l-armāḥi*)/	(*al-sabʿati sh-shuhubī*)
	(*al-khamīsayni*)	

Their interrelationships are explored throughout the poem.

As Hamori points out, while *tajnīs* is a recurrent figure, "the reader cannot fail to be struck by the way it is clustered in two passages, namely verses 1–3 and 63–66" (1967: 84). The *tajnīsāt* in 1–3 incorporate plays on *ḥadd*, "edge/boundary"; on *ḥadd/jidd*, "edge [of the sword]/seriousness", orthographically identical except for their pointing; on *ṣafāʾiḥ/ṣaḥāʾif*, "blades [true]"/"pages [false]"; on the two meanings of *mutūn* (sg. *matn*), "broad side [of a sword]"/"writing, text"; and on the double meaning of *shuhub* (3), "flare [of lances]"/"heavenly body". These wordplays establish "the contrast between the knowledge gained from the clear-cut results of battle and the writings of the astrologers." The highly charged *mutūnihinna* "combines reference to the swords ... and the writings ... [which] are brought together by means of a verbal coincidence, while their context puts them in contrast." *Ṣafaʾiḥ* and *ṣaḥāʾif* "have identical grammars (genitives following construct nouns), but govern opposites: *bīḍ*, 'white' and *sūd*, 'black';" while *shuhub*, "flare"/"heavenly bodies" "have the same acoustic form, but ... there is a contrast in the arrangement of the qualifying words: *fī šuhubi l-armāḥi ... fī s-sabʿati š-šuhubī*." The "affirmative" *tajnīs*, *fī ḥaddihi l-ḥaddu*, "the boundary is in its edge", "links together two objects both phonetically and logically. In each of these cases the trick is done by the

notion that the shape of a word is bound up with the object designated by it; a myth which is used faithfully when one of the named objects is meant to entail the other, and, in the strict sense, ironically, when the two objects are put in opposition" (ibid.: 84–5).

Bīd, a loaded word whose appearance in line 2 anticipates its later, highly charged occurrence in 66, is linked to the polarities which inform the poem – truth/falsehood, faith/unbelief, Islam/the Byzantines – expressed through the contrast between light and darkness. Thus "the opposition established in verses 1–3 ... represents the hero, al-Muʿtaṣim, historically as acting against dark predictions and religiously as acting with God against falsehood.... The light-dark opposition is developed alongside the idea of *disclosing*, or *unveiling*, which, in its variations and expansions, gives the poem its framework" (ibid.: 85; author's emphases). The triumph of light proves the falsity of the astrologers' predictions of "dark catastrophe" (*dahyāʾa muẓlimatin*, 7) – or rather, realigns that prediction as relating to the Byzantines rather than the Muslims. A further *tajnīs* (3) between ʿ-l-m/l-m-ʿ – "and knowledge (*ʿilm*) shines (*lāmiʿatan*) between the flames of lances" – makes explicit the association between light and (true) knowledge implicit in the contrast between "white blades" and "black pages": "the sword is more truthful ... than books, swords have texts ... and lances have knowledge" (Badawi 1978: 49).

Badawi observes that of the *qaṣīda*'s 71 lines, 52 contain examples of *muṭābaqa* (ibid.: 49). Not all of these relate to the poem's basic polarities; but those that do not reinforce one or another of its oppositions: between truth and falsehood, faith and unbelief, light and darkness, and so on. Moreover, as with the *tajnīsāt*, they fall into a number of thematically related clusters. The first of these concerns the astrologers' predictions, described as neither "pliant willow" nor "firm-rooted mountain tree", i.e., neither strong nor weak, without substance (5) – or (S. as Stetkevych glosses), "neither fit for making bows like the wood of the *nabʿ* tree nor for balm like the willow. That is to say, they neither incite to action nor comfort the wounded or distressed" (1991: 201). The astrologers predicted that dark calamity would be brought by a (bright) star (*kawkab*; 7), a clear allusion, on Abū Tammām's part, to the Koranic *kawkab durrī*, which we saw earlier in the poet's description of the general al-Afshīn as *kawkab al-Islām*. Their categorization of the houses of the Zodiac as moving or not moving (*munqaliban/ghayra munqalibī*, 8; entrance of a planet into a fixed house would indicate action was to be taken, into a moving one that it was to be avoided) suggests, as Stetkevych argues, that action versus inaction are among the poem's thematic polarities: the caliph, the "man of action", is contrasted with the passive astrologers (1991: 201). But the signs themselves "are heedless which of them revolves in a 'sphere' (*falak*) and which on a pole" (*quṭubī*; 9); that is, they themselves are powerless to determine the course of events.

This cluster of *muṭābaqāt* concludes with an antitheton which returns to the "revelation" motif:

10 Had they [the stars] made clear [*law bayyanat*] any matter before it
      occurred, they would not have concealed [*lam tukhfi*] what befell the
      idols and the crosses

11 In a notable victory. . . .

The motif of the victory introduces a second cluster of contrasts and antitheses:
it was "too sublime to be described by any ordered verse [*naẓmun mina sh-shiʿri*]
or scattered discourse" (*nathrun mina l-khuṭabī*, i.e. [prose] orations [11]); in its
honour "the gates of heaven open and earth comes forth in her new garments"
(12). Another true antitheton concludes this brief topic: the victory has "left
the fortunes of the sons of Islam in the ascendant and the polytheists and the
abode of polytheism in decline" (14). *Jadd*, "fortunes", echoing *jidd* in line 1,
gives another shade of meaning to the notion of "seriousness"; the astrologers'
terms (ascendant, decline) are turned against them, underscoring, again, the
reversal of their predictions.

The next series of contrasts comes in the description of the city: she was a
mother (*ummun*) to the Byzantines for whom "they would have given as ransom
every loving mother and father" (*ummin . . . wa-abī*; 15); though with the
passage of time "the forelocks of the nights might have become white [*shābat*],
yet she has not become white" (*lam tashibī*, 17); she is a virgin never deflowered
(18). This cluster concludes with the *tajnīs*,

20 Black disaster came upon them, confounded at her whose name was
      the great deliverer from disasters.

Al-kurbatu s-sawdāʾu "black disaster"/*farrājata l-kurabī* looks back as well to v.16
– "Comely of face withal, so fit of physique that she reduced Chosroes to
impotence, and utterly repelled Abū Karib [*ṣaddat ṣudūdan ʿan Abī Karibī*]" – in
which "the term for a female camel refusing a camel stallion (*ṣadd*)" – and also,
we may note, for the "turning away" (*ṣudūd*) of the beloved – "is used to describe
the city's repulse of the attack of Abū Karib [one of the Tubbaʿ kings of Yemen;
d. c. 420 CE] as the refusal of sexual overtures" (S. Stetkevych 1991: 202).
("Black disaster" recalls both the "black pages" of line 2 and the "dark calamity"
of line 7; but calamity is in store for the unbelievers, not the Muslims.)
Stetkevych comments further that "the lyric nostalgia, the sense of loss and ruin
inherent in the classical *nasīb*, becomes associated with the devastated city. . . .
ʿAmmūriyah is at once the *maḥbūbah* (beloved) and the ruined abodes (*aṭlāl*)"
(ibid.). Before we succumb to the "lyric nostalgia" of the *nasīb*, however, we
should recall that this "beloved" is raped, and her *aṭlāl* are the creation of the
"lover" who rapes her; it is this which distinguishes the use of *nasīb* motifs here
from that in the *qaṣīda* to al-Maʾmūn discussed in Chapter 5. For the "virgin
city" of Amorium, *nomen* is no longer *omen*.

The next cluster of *muṭābaqāt* accompanies the description of the battle:
slain knights lie dyed (*mukhtaḍibī*) in their blood "by the usage of sword and
lance" (*bi-sunnati s-sayfi wal-khaṭṭī*) not by "the usage of religion and Islam"

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(*sunnati d-dīni wal-Islāmi*, 24). Stetkevych posits a contrast between the men of Amorium, "hennaed by the way of the sword – that is, bloodied by their belligerent nature, hence dead," and the Muslims, "hennaed in the way of Islam" in two senses: "first, bleeding and dying *fī sabīl Allāh* (in the way of God) out of religious zeal . . . and hence guaranteed immortal life; and second, literally dying their hair with henna in accordance with the *sunnah* of the Prophet Muḥammad, likewise a symbol of renewed life or life everlasting," and avers that the reference to henna also suggests "the deflowering of the city, since blood and henna are symbolically associated with deflowering, as expressed in the custom of hennaing the bride on her wedding day" (ibid.: 203).[2]

In 26–35, the natural order of things is turned upside-down – here, for the good, as the semi-miraculous events (like the sun standing still for Gideon) testify to divine support for the Muslims. Night, lit by the flames, becomes day (26), "as though the robes of darkness forsook their (habitual) hue, or as though the sun had never set;"

28 A radiance [*ḍaw'un*] of fire while the shadows [*aẓ-ẓulamā'u*] brooded,
     and an obscurity [*ẓulmatun*] of smoke amidst a pallid noon [*ḍuḥan*].

From this gloom the sun (i.e., the flames) "rises" after it has set (*aflatat*; an allusion to the Koranic *āfilūn*, the "setting ones", sun, moon and stars, whose rising and setting proved to Abraham that they could not be gods; cf. 6: 77), and "sinks" (*wājiba*), covered by the smoke, when it has not (really) sunk (*lam tajibī*; 29).

The return to the light/darkness motif anticipates the *tajnīs* of line 30 ("Destiny became clear [*taṣarraḥa*] to her, as clouds clear [*taṣrīḥa l-ghamāmi*] (from the sun)", which "holds together the aspects of the ensuing disclosure: the physical dispersion of clouds, and the revelation of historical truth, the destined Muslim victory" (Hamori 1967: 85); in the same line, the turn to the rape of the women is accomplished by the antitheton *ṭāhirin* "pure"/*junubī* "defiled": the day was purified (for the Muslims) by the blood of the foe, defiled (for the enemy) by the defilement of their women. The sun did not rise (*lam taṭluʿ*) upon an (enemy) bridegroom nor set (*lam taghrub*) upon a (Muslim) bachelor (31); "the Muslim soldiers return from the battlefield pure, having performed the religious duty of *jihād* against the Infidel, and at the same time polluted from sexual intercourse" (S. Stetkevych 1991: 204–5; cf. al-Tibrīzī's gloss). Lines 32–33 return to *nasīb* motifs to conflate abode and beloved with the ruined city: "The thronged quarter of Mayya" (*rabʿu Mayyata maʿmūran* [32]; an allusion to the beloved of the poet Dhū al-Rumma) was not more beautiful (to him) than her devastated quarter (*rabʿihā l-kharibī*) to the Muslims, nor the blushing cheeks of maidens (*khudūd . . . udmīna min khajalin*) more so than her dust-stained cheek (*khaddihā t-taribī*, 33). (The Arabic form of Amorium, ʿAmmūriyya, is derived from the root ʿ-m-r, "to live (long), dwell, to be inhabited"; the irony in line 32 is clear.)

This passage ends with two explicit antitheses:

34 An ugliness [*samājatun*] by which our eyes are made needless of every
      visible beauty [*ḥusnin badā*] or marvellous sight,
35 And a lovely dénouement [*ḥusnu munqalabin*] of visible consequences
      [*tabdū ʿawāqibuhu*] whose cheerfulness resulted from an evil
      denouement [*sūʾi munqalabī*].

Munqalab, "denouement", echoes *munqaliba*, "moving", of 8: the "moving"
aspect of the stars, which predicted disaster to the Muslims, has brought them
victory; manifest beauty is made unnecessary by the manifest consequences of
the battle. *Inqilāb*, in astronomical terms, is the solstice, "the overthrowing
of darkness by light," symbolic of the reversal of the fortunes of the infidel
(S. Stetkevych 1991: 205). The "marvellous sight" (*manzarin ʿajabī*) harks back
to the "marvels" (*ʿajāʾib*) predicted by the astrologers, further reinforcing the
motif of the reversal of those predictions.

There follows the description of the caliph and his army, introduced by a line
featuring strong internal rhyme (*tarṣīʿ*):

37 *tadbīru Muʿtaṣimin   bil-lāhi muntaqimin*
    lillāhi murtaqibin   fil-lāhi murtaghibī
      The contriving of one who clung to God, who took revenge for God,
        whose whole desire was for God, who waited (on God).

The line stresses that, in this case, *omen est nomen*: the caliph is, by his very
name, destined for victory (cf. ibid.: 206). The *tajnīs* in 38 – "[his spearpoint]
never debarred from (taking) the spirit of any well-protected (foeman) [*wa-lā
ḥujibat ʿan rūḥi muḥtajibī*]" – "links up with the general theme of disclosing, and,
more specifically . . . recalls the metaphor of the city as a woman" (Hamori 1967:
86); the associated *muṭābaqa* "never debarred"/"well-protected" introduces
another cluster of contrasts: had the caliph not led a great army (*jaḥfalan*) on
that day, he "would have been accompanied by a clamourous troop (*jaḥfalin*)
consisting of himself, alone" (40); God smote the enemy through him, and had
other than God smitten "you would not have hit the mark" (41).

Lines 43 and 45 are linked by the imagery of water and herbage. The
Byzantine commander had declared that the Muslims would find "no pasturage
or coming to water" there (43), an expression which Stetkevych (following
al-Tibrīzī) interprets literally as "[expressing] his confidence that there is no
water or pasturage nearby to enable the Muslim army to sustain a siege" (1991:
206), but which is resonant of the imagery of the Jāhilī *qaṣīda*, in which water-
sources and pasturage, the elements necessary to sustain life, figure the resources
– kinsmen, ancestry, virtue – to be drawn on by the protagonist-poet. In 45 –

Truly the twain deaths [*al-ḥimāmayni*] (proceeding) from white
  (swords) and tawny (lances) [*min bīdin wa-min sumurin*] were the
  twain buckets of twain lives [*dalwā l-ḥayātayni*] (procured by and
  procuring) water and herbage –

"the lack of life-sustaining natural elements is compensated for by man-made weapons: two forms of death, by the sword and the spear, are equated with the two bases of life, water and hay [*sic*]" (ibid.: 207; as al-Tibrīzī makes clear, and as both *marta'* and *'ushub* attest, it is not "hay", but growing pasturage, which is intended). The "twin buckets" (*dalwā*) again allude to pre-Islamic imagery, where resources are figured as water drawn up in buckets; the duality stressed by the use of the dual forms *ḥimāmayn, dalwā, ḥayātayn* is rounded off by the light-dark contrast *bīḍ/sumr*, "white (swords)"/"tawny (lances)", resonant also of bright water and dark herbage, and harking back to the *bīḍ* of 2 and forward to that of 61.

Further contrasts based on *tajnīs* and *muṭābaqa* are seen in the ensuing lines. Al-Mu'taṣim, responding to the call of the "Zibaṭrian voice", was diverted by the "heat of the frontiers" (*ḥarru th-thughūri*) from "the coolness of (the maidens') teeth" (*bardi th-thughūri*; 47; "you answered it" (*ajabtahu*) with unsheathed sword, "and had you answered (*ajabta*) otherwise you would not (truly) have answered (*lam tujibī*)" (48). The Muslim armies fought "to call to account" (*muḥtasibin*), not for gain (*muktasibī*, 52); in contrast to the Byzantine commander's futile expenditure (51); the attention of the "lions of battle" was fixed on the plundered (*al-maslūbi*), not on plunder (*as-salabī*, 54). Theophilus's speech (*manṭiqahu*) was changed to silence (*saktatin*) from fear (55); he fled, "speeded by fear, not by joy" (*min khiffati l-khawfi lā min khiffati ṭ-ṭarabī*, 57).

61 And (there was) many a one enraged [*mughḍabin*], whom the white swords [*bīḍu s-suyūfi*] brought back from their destruction live with satisfaction, dead as to rage [*ḥayya r-riḍā . . . mayyita l-ghaḍabī*].

This further reference to "white swords" anticipates the second cluster of *tajnīsāt* (63–66) which recapitulates the rape motif in a series of lines introduced by anaphora (*kam nīla . . . kam kāna . . . kam aḥrazat*, "How many a . . . was captured, how many were . . . how many a . . . (was) attained"), evoking the style of *zuhdiyya* or *rithāʾ*:

63 How many a radiant moon [*sanā qamarin*] was captured under the radiance of it (the battle) [*taḥta sanāhā*], how many a gleaming molar [*'āriḍin shanibī*] under the cloud of it [*taḥta 'āriḍihā*]!

64 How many a means there was [*Kam kāna . . . min sababī*] of coming to the curtained virgin through cutting the cords of the necks (of their menfolk) [*asbābi r-riqābi*]!

65 How many a slender branch shaking on a sandhill [*quḍubin tahtazzu fī kuthubī*, i.e., woman] the quivering [*tahtazzu*] drawn blades of the Indian (swords) [*quḍūbu l-hindiyyi*] attained!

66 White (blades) [*bīḍun*] – when they were drawn from their sheaths [*min ḥujbihā*], they returned with better right to the (Byzantine women) white of body [*al-bīḍi abdānan*] than their veils [*ḥujubī*].

Hamori comments:

> In the[se] four verses there are seven instances of *tağnīs*. They describe the objects of conquest in terms which are linguistically linked to the words denoting the means and activities of conquest. The homophony is hermeneutic: the poet sees the objects as immanent in the means, and the language is made to bear proof of this immanence.... In terms of the whole poem, this idea of immanence eliminates chance. No in-between is left to separate the subject and the object of his action. (1967: 86–7)

Line 66, repeating the play on *ḥ-j-b* ("veiling, protection, barring") of 38, confirms its truth; and the return to the language of the *nasīb* further recalls the statement (32) that the ruined city was fairer than the "thronged abodes of Mayya". After this climactic cluster of *tajnīs* and *muṭābaqa* the incidence of both decreases, in the final segment of the poem, serving only to summarize the importance of the victory in the final line, which returns to the light-dark contrast:

71   They (the days of victory) have left the sons of sickly al-Aṣfar (as) pale
          of face as their name, and brightened [*jallat*] the faces of the Arabs.

Hamori describes this *tajnīs* as "a piece of mockery made from the position of superiority built up over seventy lines. That the verb used to describe the Arabs is *jallat*, 'brightened,' derived from the same root as *jalā'*, 'clearing up,' 'disclosing' [line 2] ... is on the other hand a kind of hidden pun that comments on the structure of the poem" (1974: 130). *Abqat*, "(the days of victory) have left" echoes *abqayta*, "you (the battle day) have left" (14), which depicted the fortunes of the Muslims in the ascendant and those of the Byzantines in decline. The poem has come full circle; the truth of the sword, and of the faith, is made manifest by the Muslim victory.

Abu Tammām's *qaṣīda* illustrates the extent to which the Arab poet can draw on "verbal" devices – in particular *tajnīs* – both to generate and to reinforce conceptual, thematic and semantic patterns as well as patterns of metaphor and imagery. These resources are, as was argued in Chapter 7, peculiar to the Arabic language, by virtue of its mophological system. The Persian poet has fewer such resources at his disposal, unless he borrows heavily from Arabic vocabulary, which will give his poem an artificial quality (as in the elaborate rhetorical *qaṣīda*s of Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāṭ, for example); *tajnīs*, in particular, is difficult to sustain throughout a long poem, and is thus less characteristic of Persian poetry than of Arabic.

But Persian poems are, as we have seen, no less complex than Arabic. The chief instrument in achieving this complexity would seem to be metaphor and imagery. Moreover, as the *ghazal* increases in importance, there is a corresponding increase in concision, density of expression, allusivity. This tendency culminates in the poetry of the acknowledged master of the form, Ḥāfiẓ, who stands in relation to the *ghazal* much as Abū Tammām does to the

Abbasid panegyric *qaṣīda*: as the poet who exploits to the utmost both the potentials of the form and the resources of the tradition (which is, in Ḥāfiẓ's case, a very lengthy one indeed).

This is particularly evident in the first *ghazal* of Ḥāfiẓ's *Dīvān*, which, as I suggested earlier, is a programmatic poem that announces Ḥāfiẓ's poetic project, pursued throughout his *oeuvre*. The poet himself either placed this poem, or issued instructions that it be placed, at the beginning of his *Dīvān* (see Arberry 1962: 9), in violation of the normal alphabetical arrangement with respect to its rhyme (*-ilhā*); thus its placement must have been deliberate, and is therefore instructive. The *ghazal* as a whole may be seen as an application of the figure *ḥusn-i maṭlaʿ* or *ḥusn-i ibtidāʾ* on the level of the *dīvān* as a whole. We must therefore consider, among other things, what it has to tell us about that *dīvān*.

The *ghazal* opens and closes with two half-lines of Arabic which form a frame (I use the version of QG1, and the commentary by Sūdī, 1979, 1: 1–17).

1 *A-lā yā ayyuhā s-sāqī adir kaʾsan wa-nāwilhā*
   ki ʿishq āsān nimūd avval valī uftād mushkilhā
   O *sāqī*, pass the wine-cup round and proffer it;
   for love at first seemed easy, but difficulties have come to pass.

7 *Ḥuẓūrī gar hamī khāhī az-ū ghāyib ma-shū Ḥāfiẓ*
   matā mā talqa man tahwā daʿi d-dunyā wa-ahmilhā
   If you desire presence, Ḥāfiẓ, do not be absent from him:
   when you have found the one you desire, leave this world, and ignore it.

The source of the closing half-line (which may be of Ḥāfiẓ's own composition, which adds further support to the poem's implicit argument) has not been identified; that of the first, however, is generally considered to be a *bayt* by the Umayyad caliph Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiya (60–4/680–3)–

Anā l-masmūmu mā ʿindī bi-tiryāqin wa-la-rāqī
adir kaʾsan wa-nāwilhā a-lā yā ayyuhā s-sāqī
I am poisoned (by love), and have no antidote, nor any charm (to
   protect me);
pass round the wine-cup and proffer it then, O cup-bearer –

of which (says Sūdī) Ḥāfiẓ "reversed the order so as to make it correspond with the rhyme of his *ghazal*, and introduced it as a *taḍmīn*."[3] Sūdī states that "some poets have objected" to Ḥāfiẓ's use of this verse; he quotes lines by Ahlī Shīrāzī and Kātibī Nīshāpūrī (both Ṣafavid, and thus probably Shīʿī, poets). Ahlī appears to defend the poet, who, he says, appeared to him in a dream one night; when asked why he used Yazīd's line in his *ghazal*, the poet replied: "You don't understand the point: the unbeliever's property is licit to the believer." Kātibī (in what appears to be a response to Ahlī) is considerably less charitable:

Even though the property of unbelievers is licit to Muslims – on that
   there is no dispute –

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It is, nonetheless, shameful for a lion to steal a bone from a dog's mouth!

Whether Ḥāfiẓ's use of the line would have aroused such controversy in his own time must remain an open question. What is important here is the poet's reason both for beginning his poem with this *taḍmīn*, and for framing it with two Arabic *miṣrāʿs*.

The *taḍmīn* treats two themes which recur throughout Ḥāfiẓ's *ghazals*: the pains of love and the consoling powers of wine. It also features one of the earliest examples of the address to the *sāqī* which is so prominent in Ḥāfiẓ's own poems. Structurally, it is clearly part of the *maṭlaʿ* of a longer wine-poem. Ḥāfiẓ's *ghazal* thus presents itself initially as a *muʿāraḍa* (the poet uses the same *hazaj* meter as did Yazīd, though not – significantly – the same rhyme, -*āqī*, which would have required its placement elsewhere in the *dīvān*); but this is a *muʿāraḍa* with a difference, as we shall see.

The first *miṣrāʿ* establishes the *ghazal*'s setting as the drinking-party; the second states its theme: the difficulties of love. In Ḥāfiẓ's poetry these difficulties range from the topical (his relations with his patrons) to the more broadly ethical (the world, like the beloved – prince, rose – shows no favor to the lover – poet, nightingale) (see Meisami 1987: 271–98). Sūdī glosses the line: "*Sāqī*, give me wine, for love of the beloved at first seemed easy, but in the end many difficulties have manifested themselves," and explains that when, having first treated the lover kindly, the beloved begins to demonstrate *istighnā* (that is, independence, or lack of need, of the lover), the unfortunate lover seeks to console himself, "sometimes with wine, sometimes with opium or coffee" (a nice Ottoman touch!) in order to ease his frenzied heart.

Love's difficulties – in their various manifestations, and with various, and wide-ranging, implications – are the subject of the next two lines, which amplify the *maṭlaʿ* by way of *tafsīr*.

2 *Ba-bū-yi nāfa-ī k-ākhar Ṣabā z-ān ṭurra bi-gshāyad*
   zi tāb-i jaʿd-i mishgīn-ash chi khūn āftād dar dilhā
3 *Ma-rā dar manzil-i jānan chi amn-i ʿaysh chun har dam*
   jaras faryād mīdārad ki bar bandīd maḥmilhā

2 At the scent of that musk-sac which, at last, the Ṣabā loosed from
      those locks,
   from the shining twists of his musk-black curls, what blood rushed into
      (lovers') hearts.
3 In the beloved's abode what security of enjoyment/life do I have,
   when at every moment the bell cries out, "Bind on the camel-litters!"

Sūdī transposes lines 3 and 4 (see below; most editors, however, concur with the order in QG),[4] and states that he has written an entire treatise (*risāla*) of commentary on line 2, a statement which alerts us to its semantic density.) In these two verses Ḥāfiẓ juxtaposes two images of separation that may be seen

as typical of Persian and of Arabic poetry respectively: that of the beloved's dark hair concealing his countenance from the lover (developed in Persian to the point where the mere mention of curls and face becomes a kind of shorthand for separation), and that of the departing women of the tribe, which has its origins in pre-Islamic Arabic poetry.

Let us follow Sūdī's gloss of 2. *Būy*, he states, is used in both its "customary" sense of "scent, fragrance", and its figurative one of "hope": the fragrance of the beloved's hair (like the fragrance of Joseph's shirt to Jacob) brings hope to the lover. *Nāfa* is the gland of the musk-deer, from which the fragrance is obtained (there is a long digression on the musk-deer: when it becomes heated, it produces blood which collects in the region of its navel, *nāf*; when this sac is filled with blood it becomes detached, and is collected and processed to produce the fragrance). The *Ṣabā* is "the breeze that blows from the direction of the rising sun", i.e. the east wind – or, "in the language of poetry ... that breeze which comes from the beloved's quarter". *Ṭurra* is the upper part of the forehead, or the hair of the forelock. *Tāb* "has several meanings; here the best one is that of twisting"; we may note that it also means "shining" (as in *mah-tāb*, "moonlight"), "brilliance, lustre", and "heat". *Dil* means both "heart" (*qalb*) and "mind" (*khāṭir*); here it is used in the former sense.

The line's meaning is this:

> Because of the fragrance – or, in the hope of the scent of musk – which the Ṣabā brings from the beloved's twisting locks – or, from that shining forehead [*ṭurra-yi tābdār*] – what blood has fallen into lovers' hearts! Meaning: it (the Ṣabā) has filled the hearts with blood; and the reason [for the lovers' suffering, the figurative meaning of "blood-filled hearts"] is (the lovers') long waiting (for this to happen). For the Ṣabā is slow in loosing the twistings of the beloved's locks, and thus causes anxiety in the lovers' minds. ... [Ḥāfiẓ] has compared the curls to the musk-sac and the Ṣabā to a musk-seller, and (has ascribed) the cause of blood falling into hearts as hope and expectation.

But the line is ambivalent at best: if the breeze wafts the scent of musk from the beloved's curls, it must also loose those curls, obscuring the beloved's face in their "musky twisting", a dark brilliance (*tāb*) which conceals the light of his countenance; and indeed, it is *tāb-i jaʿd-i mishkīn-ash*, "the twisting of his musky curls", that Ḥāfiẓ makes the explicit cause of the lovers' suffering.

This is borne out by line 3: there can be no permanence in love when the danger of parting is always imminent. (Sūdī reads *amn-i ʿaysh* as "a life in security and safety"; some variants have *ʿishq*, "love", for *ʿaysh*, "pleasant life", which seems more in keeping with the statement of the theme in the *maṭlaʿ*.) Sūdī notes that *manzil*, which may mean "stopping-place" (*maḥall-i nuzūl*) or "house, dwelling" (*khāna*, *maskan*), is used here in the former sense, and that Ḥāfiẓ has used a singular noun in place of the more appropriate plural because of the exigencies of the metre: for "the road to union with the beloved is not

restricted to a single road; many roads are required, because to reach the beloved the lover must endure much trial and torment, and pass through many stages [*marāḥil*] until he understands the value of union with the beloved and girds himself to his service." Sūdī also notes the correct sense of *jaras* (a bell tied to the necks of camels or mules); but in the end he curiously misreads the sense of *bar bandīd maḥmilhā* (or perhaps not curiously; Sūdī tends to an overall optimism): life in the beloved's abode is insecure "since at every moment the bell cries – that is, announces – 'Bind on your burdens, and join the beloved as quickly as possible; for opportunity is gain'." (This is quite in keeping with his optimistic reading of line 2; but we should not forget that this is a poem about the *difficulties* of love.)

The Ottoman Sūdī is far from the conventions of the early Arabic *nasīb*. So, it seems, is Arberry, who comments: "The poet compares this world with the alighting-place (*manzil*) of a caravan-train; every moment the bell of a camel departing from the caravanserai warns all other travellers that their lodgment there is only temporary, and that they too must soon be quitting this life" (1962: 139, n. 3). But while the notion of life's journey as a caravan, and of the world as caravanserai, is certainly part of the field of reference here (we might also recall al-Mutanabbī's "God curse this world as a place for a rider to halt"), it is not to the fore, as Ḥāfiẓ is still speaking about the difficulties of love and, as well, about the poetic languages in which these difficulties have been expressed: in 2, that of the Persian *ghazal*, and here, that of the Arabic *nasīb*, in which the departing tribe carry the beloved away. The rhyme-word *maḥmil* indicates the camel-borne litter in which the *ẓaʿāʾin* ride (we may recall Ibn al-Ḥajjāj's parody); and *manzil* (which, Sūdī stated, should have been in the plural) provides a link with the line which follows.

If the *ghazal*'s first three lines constitute what is, in effect, a *nasīb*, in which the poet complains of the trials of love in appropriate language(s), the next two may be seen as alluding to the *raḥīl* (anticipated by the transitional line 3), and as further combining other topics from the two traditions and widening the poem's field of reference.

4 *Ba-may sajjāda rangīn kun gar-at pīr-i mughān gūyad*
   ki sālik bī-khabar na-bvad zi rāh u rasm-i manzilhā
5 *Shab-i tārīk u bīm-i mawj u girdābī chunīn hāyil*
   kujā dānand ḥāl-i mā sabuk-bārān-i sāḥilhā

4 Stain your prayer-carpet with wine, should the Magian elder bid you to;
   for the traveller is not ignorant of the way and customs/signs of the stopping-places.
5 The dark night, fear of the waves, the dreadful whirlpool:
   what do they know of our state, who pass lightly on the shore?

Arberry gives these lines a mystical gloss: the "Magian elder" (*pīr-i mughān*), the wineseller, "is the symbol of the man intimate with all the secrets of life; he

knows by experience that reason is powerless to solve the ultimate riddle of the universe ... and that it is only the wine of unreason that makes life in this world a tolerable burden;" and further, "The terms *sālik* [traveller] and *manāzil* [stopping-places] belong to the technical vocabulary of the Ṣūfīs" (they did not, however, originate with them). Line 5 comprises "a fine description of the 'dark night of the soul'; the imagery of the sea is more common in Persian mystical poetry than might have been expected of a people little given to seafaring" (1962: 139, nn. 4, 5).[5]

For Sūdī the *pīr-i mughān* is the Zoroastrian priest in charge of the fire-temple ("and *mugh* is used categorically for *kāfir*, unbeliever"), and, principally, the wineseller, who above all others knows the customs and protocol of the tavern and the needs of its customers. *Sālik* is simply "traveller" ("here, a *kināya* for the *pīr-i mughān*, [that is] the wine-seller") and *manzilhā* the taverns (*maykhāna-hā*). So: If the wineseller tells you to stain the symbol of piety, the prayer-carpet, with wine, obey him, because he is the expert.

Let us return, here, briefly, to the master of the Arabic *khamriyya*, Abū Nuwās, and to the poet to whom he so often alluded, Imru' al-Qays, for a further consideration of *rāh u rasm*, loosely rendered as "customs" but perhaps (in Ḥāfiz's project of appropriation) also to be identified, by virtue of the juxtaposition with *manzilhā*, as the *rusūm*, the traces of the ruined encampment. In his *Mu'allaqa* Imru' al-Qays bade his travelling companions to "stop and weep at the memory of a loved one and a lodging" (*bi-dhikrā ḥabībin wa-manzilī*); later he asked, "What is there left to lean on where the trace is obliterated?" (*hal-li-rasmin dārisin min mu'awwalī*). (We might note here that, in terms of Arabic prosody, if we subtract from the *ghazal*'s rhyme the Persian plural suffix *-hā* the poem is, like the *Mu'allaqa*, a *lāmiyya*.) The *sālik* – the traveller – knows both the road which leads to the abandoned *manāzil*, and the signs which identify them.

For Abū Nuwās, the *manzil* is the tavern:

6 How many a vintner's dwelling [*manzili khammārin*] have I circum-
   scribed, when the night's robes were black as pitch (1958, 3: 5),

he exclaims, in a line which curiously anticipates Ḥāfiz's imagery, and in which the *manzil* is both the tavern at which the poet stops and the shrine he circumambulates (*aṭaftu bihi*). Not only the poet, but the great kings of the past, have prostrated themselves (*sajada*) before the wine (cf. ibid., 3: 10, 80), bought from a Magian (*Mājūsī*; cf. ibid., 3: 102, and see also 279). And if for Abū Nuwās the *rasm* is generally negative, the ruined traces over which the poet fruitlessly weeps ("He is mad who weeps over the traces of a ruined encampment!"; ibid., 3: 252), are not love's ruins among the "many stages" (Sūdī's *marāḥil*) the lover must traverse as he seeks his heart's desire?

In this first *ghazal* Ḥāfiz retraces a life in poetry – both his own and that of the tradition that informs it, a tradition that begins with Imru' al-Qays and passes through many hands (not least those of Abū Nuwās) and many *manāzil* until it

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reaches the Persian poet. (It is perhaps significant that the characteristically Persian imagery of the garden, which is certainly not absent from Ḥāfiẓ's *oeuvre* in general, is virtually lacking in this poem.) That it is the tavernkeeper (less, I think, than the Magian elder in his Persian incarnation as spiritual guide) who knows the stopping-places on this road, who can read the signs of the abandoned camps, is scarcely surprising. To follow the development of these poetic "traces" to any further extent is beyond the scope of this chapter; but that they continue to linger in the poetic memory, like those of the beloved of the classical *nasīb*, will by now be evident.

But what of the "dark night of the soul" – for it surely is that, though not, as Arberry would have it, in a predetermined mystical sense (even though *ḥāl* is also part of the "technical vocabulary of the Sufis"). Sūdī glosses:

> The darkness of the night of absence, fear of the spy [*raqīb*], dread of drowning in the whirlpool of eternal separation: this is our situation and condition. Then how can those who have reached the shore of union, and who no longer worry about (the presence of) strangers nor fear separation from the beloved, understand our state?

This is clearly another of Sūdī's optimistic readings, which moreover invokes what I have called elsewhere the "basic fiction" of the *ghazal* (see Meisami 1987: 251–69, Meisami 1991a), to the point of supplying both a *raqīb* and "strangers" (*aghyār*), perhaps in an effort to find a correspondence for every element in the image, which he clearly reads figuratively – the *raqīb* must thus be, rather oddly, aligned with the waves. We may recall here Imru' al-Qays's description, in the *Muʿallaqa*, of the long night of cares –

44   Oft night like a sea swarming [*ka-mawji l-baḥri*] has dropped its curtains
      over me, thick with multifarious cares, to try me (1958: 48; trans.
      Arberry 1957: 64) –

which certainly finds an echo, if not a direct allusion, in Ḥāfiẓ's line, as does Abū Nuwās's arrival at the tavern under cover of a night whose "robes were black as pitch". The key word here is *sabuk-bārān*; and here, Sūdī's gloss appears to undercut his optimistic reading: "*Sabuk*, the opposite of *sangīn* "heavy", meaning light; *bār*, in Arabic *ḥaml* "burden"; *sabuk-bār*, a burden which is not heavy; *sabuk-bārān*, those whose burden is light, a *kināya* for people who are at ease [*āsūda*] and thoughtless [*bī-khiyāl*]." If the poet has indeed been extolling the joy of (anticipated) union, rather than cataloguing the "difficulties of love", why, now, should he contrast "those who have achieved union" (the *sabuk-bārān*) with "us" (the lovers, and amongst them the poet)? Moreover, *sabuk-bār*, like *bī-khiyāl*, generally connotes one who is "thoughtless" in the sense that he takes life easy, heedless of the sufferings of others (cf. Āhūr 1984, 1: 449). The "lightly-burdened" can only indicate those who have never dared the sea, and who can therefore have no knowledge of the perils and terrors of the poet's quest.

In line 6 there are further echoes of Abū Nuwās, and further problems arise from mystical glossing.

6 *Hama kār-am zi khud-kāmī ba-bad-nāmī kishīd ākhar*
   nihān kay mānad ān rāzī k-az-ū sāzand maḥfilhā
   All my affairs, from self-indulgence, have led at last to bad repute:
   How should that secret remain concealed about which gatherings are
      made?

Sūdī glosses this line extensively, quoting parallels from other Persian poets. The gist of the verse is, he says: "Since all my deeds were (performed) in accordance with my own heart's inclinations, desires and wishes – that is, I was concerned with achieving my own desires and wishes, not bound to achieving those of the beloved . . . this is why my affairs have led in the end to disgrace and bad repute." The "gist of the discourse" (*ḥāṣil-i kalām*) – that is, what the line actually *means* – is given at greater length:

> The requirement of love and affection is gaining the heart [*khāṭir*] of the beloved. To attain this goal one must renounce wealth and life and perform services which are worthy of the beloved's status, while observing complete propriety. Even, on occasion, one must ignore one's own relatives and dependents. In short, in order to gain proximity to the court of good fortune and the threshold of felicity of the beloved, one must continually frequent the beloved's abode. Then, in the second *miṣrāʿ*, he has produced a sententia [*ẓarb al-masal*] with regard to the intent of the first, saying: When did a secret remain concealed that is spoken about in gatherings and parties?

He quotes a similar verse by Hilālī (d. 936/1529–30) –

> After this, Hilālī's secret cannot be concealed;
> for in every private (gathering) they have made a (public) assembly
>   from it –

and explains that "organizing gatherings" (*sākhtan-i maḥfilhā*) means "telling secrets here and there."[6]

Love's secret – as the poets repeatedly tell us – should not be, but inevitably is, revealed. (We may recall al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf's poem on *kitmān*, "concealment of love", discussed earlier.) Arberry, again, forces a restricted mystical meaning on the line: "It is the eternal affliction of the lover of God that he is constrained by the ecstasy of his emotion to reveal the secret that should remain hidden; so did Ḥallāj, who paid for his indiscretion upon the gallows" (1962: 140, n.6). The reference to Ḥallāj seems gratuitous here, the more so as he is seldom alluded to in Ḥāfiẓ's poetry.[7] As Sūdī indicates, what is involved is a breach of protocol: the poet has followed his own wishes, not those of the beloved, and in the end has been exposed and fallen into bad repute. We may recall in this connection the final line of another *ghazal* (P48) –

Ḥāfiẓ's tears have cast wisdom and patience into the sea:
what could he do? He could not hide the burning of love's grief –

which contains similar resonances, as well as Abū Nuwās's famous lines (1958, 3: 126–7):

1   Give me wine to drink, and tell me it is wine; and do not give me to
      drink in secret when openness is possible....
5   Speak openly the name of the one you love; spare me by-names [*kunā*],
      for there is no goodness in pleasures over which there is a veil.

These lines lead us back to the opening of Ḥāfiẓ's *ghazal*, with its invocation of the *sāqī* and its implied setting, that of the drinking party, also suggested by the *maḥfilhā* of 6. We are back in the convivial gathering; and now it seems, in the light of the intertextual allusions so far uncovered, that the poem is not merely "about" the difficulties of love, but about those connected with drinking wine (banal as that might seem, it is not inappropriate in view of the accusations of libertinism levelled at the poet by his rivals and detractors). How often does Abū Nuwās complain that his pursuit of the daughter of the vine has led to bad repute and to censure, only to respond (ibid., 3: 2),

1   Leave off blaming me, for blame is an enticement, and cure me with
      that which was the affliction!

But other things go on in such gatherings besides drinking; and one of these, not least in importance, is poetry, the singing of *ghazal*s which, ever since poets began to sing of love, reveal the lover's secret. In Ḥāfiẓ's time, such openness was not always appreciated; does not the poet himself complain that he wishes, "despite detractors, to write libertine poetry like Ḥāfiẓ" (*P93*)?

We should not be surprised – especially in view of its self-conscious and deliberate "literariness", as well as its position at the head of the *dīvān* – to find that this is a *ghazal* which is about not only love and wine, but also poetry. But it is not merely about poetry in the abstract – as a literary exercise – but also about poetry in the context in which it is composed, performed, lived. Let us turn to the *ghazal*'s final line.

7   *Ḥuẓūrī gar hamī khāhī az-ū ghāyib ma-shū Ḥāfiẓ*
      matā mā talqa man tahwā daʿi d-dunyā wa-ahmilhā
      If you desire presence, Ḥāfiẓ, do not be absent from him:
      once you have found the one you desire, leave this world, and ignore it.

We may note, here, the striking echo, in *man tahwā*, of Abū Nuwās's "Speak openly the name of the one you love" (*buḥi sma man tahwā*); but before considering any possible implications, let us return to Sūdī's commentary. *Ḥuẓūrī*, "presence", he informs us, "is the opposite of *ghaybat*, absence, and is also used in opposition to *safar*, journey; here, however, it means tranquillity and ease" – as, for example, peace of mind. *Az-ū* refers to the content of the

second *miṣrāʿ*, "and attributing it [the pronoun] to God [as some have done] is the most flagrant of errors." *Ghāyib*, "absent", is used in the sense of *ghāfil*, "negligent". *matā mā talqa* is interpreted as *matā aradta an talqa*, "If you wish to find", *matā* being taken in a conditional sense (*sharṭ*); as for *man*, "those who believe that the pronoun *ū* in the first *miṣrāʿ* refers to this word ... have both uttered a contradiction and committed an error." Finally, Sūdī comes to the *maḥṣūl*:

> It is this: If you seek tranquillity [*āsāyish*], Ḥāfiẓ, do not neglect it [*ū*].
>
> That is: Ḥāfiẓ, if you wish to attain what you desire, abandon the world, meaning, expend all you have on the path towards union with the beloved and on the way to his service, such as the mention of places [*zikr-i maḥall*] and the discussion of states [*irāda-i ḥāl*]. For the meaning of renouncing the world is to renounce wealth and worldly possessions and, in general, all worldly connections, as mentioned in the preceding line; because the greatest means to reaching the beloved is to forgo wealth and, after that, to expend one's life. One who ignores both [wealth and life] becomes worthy of service, and, moreover, (attains) knowledge and sagacity [*ʿilm va-maʿrifat*].

It is possible that by *maʿrifat* Sūdī means gnosis; but it is more likely that he means "recognition" or "gratitude", i.e. for services rendered on the path of love. In terms of courtly protocol and poet-patron relations, *ḥuzūrī* connotes proximity to the ruler and his court. It appears, further, that in his eagerness to strip the poem of any putative mystical meaning (which also militates against reading *maʿrifat* as "gnosis"), Sūdī has (deliberately?) misconstrued the *ū* of the first *miṣrāʿ*. In his defense it should be said that he was undoubtedly approaching Ḥāfiẓ's poem as a *written* text, and was thus constrained to account for its grammatical features in terms of their possible referents within the text: if *ū* cannot refer to *man* (which is evidently the view of many commentators), and still less to God (Who is *outside* the text), it must refer back to something, and Sūdī links it to *āsāyish* (even though an implied *maʿshūq* would seem more likely, as indeed his own further comments would suggest).

But there is an alternative, which Sūdī has not considered but which is appealing if we assume that the *ghazal* – despite its highly literary, allusive texture – was, in fact, performed. This seems supported by internal evidence – the address to the *sāqī* and the reference to *maḥfilhā*, "gatherings" (like this one, it is implied); the addresses to members of an implied audience (*ba-may sajjāda rangīn kun*; *kujā dānand ḥāl-i mā?*, and so on) which involve them in the poem. It may not be too far-fetched to suggest that the *ū* is, indeed, a "he" (the same "he" as is implied in *man tahwā*) – the *mamdūḥ*, the object of the poet's desire, perhaps present at the poem's performance. (It is also possible that – as the final line suggests – it is the poet himself who is absent, that his *ghazal* is performed by a *rāvī* or a singer, and that the line incorporates a plea for restoration to proximity.)

We may briefly note another possible allusion here. In the short poem discussed in Chapter 8, Ibn al-ʿArabī related the following "*ḥadīth*": *anna lladhī tahwāhu bayna ḍulūʿikum*, "He whom thou lovest is between thy ribs." If this did indeed circulate as a *ḥadīth qudsī*, it would surely have been known to Ḥāfiẓ's audience (many of whom might also have been familiar with Ibn al-ʿArabī's poem itself). But rather than taking this as reinforcing a mystical reading, I would suggest that, for Ḥāfiẓ, what is "between the ribs" – that is, "in the breast" (*dar sīna*, *dar bar*, which would be Persian equivalents of Ibn al-ʿArabī's phrase) is, in the end, the ultimate object of desire: poetry, which links the wine-poet Abū Nuwās, the mystic Ibn al-ʿArabī, and the Persian master of the *ghazal* and heir to the combined traditions of "secular", courtly, and mystical poetry, elements of which he has appropriated not only in this *ghazal* but in his entire poetic *oeuvre*.

Concluding remarks

As the preceding discussion has hoped to show, the brief *ghazal* can be every bit as complex, in terms of structure, texture, and allusivity, as the lengthy *qaṣīda*; in fact, its very brevity makes for a compactness, a density, that contrasts with a greater diffuseness in the *qaṣīda* where, as may be seen in Abū Tammām's Amorium *qaṣīda*, moments of particular intensity are focussed on small groups of lines.

At the beginning of this chapter I suggested that the comparison of two admittedly quite different poems, which however share the status of being consummate and deliberate efforts, by acknowledged masters of their respective forms, at exploiting the full potentials of those forms, might suggest an ultimate privileging of styles in the two related traditions. This might seem an over-simplification; after all, these are only two poems, out of uncounted (and undiscussed) thousands – hundreds of thousands – and may be deemed unrepresentative because of the very level of their craftedness. Yet I think that this very evidence of deliberate crafting demonstrates what, generally speaking, poets in the two traditions strove for.

Despite a wealth of experimentation (especially in the early Abbasid period) with shorter lyric forms, and despite the growing popularity of more "popular" forms in later periods and in regions far from the centre (e.g., the emergence of the Andalusian *muwashshaḥa*), the *qaṣīda* retained its pre-eminent position in Arabic well into the twentieth century. It remained the preferred form not only for panegyric, but also for religious and mystical poetry. In Persian, however, even though the *qaṣīda* was still widely used, from the seventh/thirteenth century onwards it yielded its dominant position to the *ghazal*, which was employed, as we have seen, for a wide range of purposes, and became the predominant lyric vehicle for mystical poets.

The reasons for these developments were briefly touched upon in Chapter 2, and it is beyond the scope of this final chapter to explore them further. In order

to demonstrate what I see as the distinguishing features (broadly speaking) of the two traditions, let us go back for a moment to our two poets. Abū Tammām's opening line –

1   *Al-sayfu aṣdaqu anbāʾan mina l-kutubī
    fī ḥaddihi l-ḥaddu bayna l-jiddi wal-laʿibī* –

constitutes a straightforward, sententious statement, whose wording, however – the implications, here unstated, of "books" (to be clarified later), the *tajnīsāt* employed (which rest on both homophonic identity – *ḥadd/ḥadd* – and phonic and orthographic difference – *ḥadd/jidd*) – creates greater resonances which will be echoed throughout the poem. (We might also note the prophetic/apocalyptic allusions in *aṣdaqu* – cf. *ṣādiq*, "truthful", and *ṣiddīq*, "righteous", the latter an epithet of the Prophet's father-in-law, and the first caliph, Abū Bakr – and *anbāʾan* – cf. *nabī*, "prophet", literally, one who announces, specifically the End of Days – also a concern of astrology.) There is no imagery here (let alone metaphor, unless we wish to consider the sword as an agent which brings true tidings). The impact of the verse rests on its verbal density and allusivity; and while later in the poem the use of imagery will become more prominent (e.g., in the description of the rape of Amorium and of its women), the primary effect resides in the wording, the use of verbal figures such as *tajnīs* and *muṭābaqa*.

Passing rapidly over five centuries of history and of poetic developments in both Arabic and Persian which remain to be studied in detail, we arrive at Ḥāfiẓ's *ghazal*. In this *ghazal*, imagery is not always to the fore, but almost everything is, so to speak, metaphor-ized: the bells crying out the call for departure, the Ṣabā loosing the beloved's locks, the stained prayer-carpet and so on (the last embedded in an apparently straightforward imperative which will not, however, allow an exclusively literal reading, as the moral – not to say spiritual – implications of staining one's prayer-carpet with prohibited wine are considerable). One of the most dense and vivid images is that of line 5:

*Shab-i tārīk u bīm-i mawj u girdābī chunīn hāyil
kujā dānand ḥāl-i mā sabuk-bārān-i sāḥilhā.*

Note, first, that the connection between the two *miṣrāʿ*s is implicit; there is no, "Here we are/I am, in this perilous state," only (a) an image and (b) a question (rhetorical though it may be). Second, the image is unusually vivid; but it also moves quickly from the ostensibly visual (*shab-i tārīk*) to the explicitly emotional level (*bīm*; *hāyil*), retrospectively inviting us to interpret even the visual image in emotional terms ("the dark night of the soul"). Third, the image is continued in the second *miṣrāʿ* with *sabuk-bārān-i sāḥilhā*, "the lightly-burdened on the shore", who will never fear shipwreck because they never venture out into the depths. We may note, also, how the repetitive long *-ā* sounds, escalating in the second *miṣrāʿ*, heighten the line's emotional effect.

The image is internally consistent: mariners who have braved the depths, their trials unappreciated, uncomprehended even, by those who cling to the coast. But here (even with the interpolated question) no *statement* is involved (as there is in Abū Tammām's line, however dense its allusivity), and we must look beyond the image for its (metaphorical) meaning. If with Abū Tammām this can be elicited (a) through context, and (b) through an exploration of the words themselves – their morphology, their associations, etc. – this is not true of Ḥāfiẓ, or at least not to the same extent.

It is only with *sabuk-bārān* that we can apply a lexical-semantic approach (of course this is possible elsewhere, for example in the case of *manzil/manzilhā*). Even when qualified, such lexemes as *shab* ("night"/dark), *mawj* ("wave"/ frightful) and *girdāb* ("whirlpool"/awesome) resist such an approach; they are linked only on the level of the image, and by their qualifiers. So we cannot understand Ḥāfiẓ's line (as we can Abū Tammām's) on the basis of what it *says*, because if taken as a simple statement, it does not actually *say* very much. It *implies* very much, as of course does Abū Tammām's line; but while the implications of the latter are latent in the wording (and will be worked out explicitly in the course of the poem), with Ḥāfiẓ we must go through, or beyond, the words to discover the meaning of this lapidary line and its relation to the remainder of the *ghazal*.

We might have adduced other examples of these contrasting procedures, or others which might appear to contradict the generalization that there is a contrast in preferred techniques. But in the end, I think, the distinction holds up: with Arabic, one needs to get *into* the language, the *lafẓ*, in order to reach the *maʿnā*; with Persian, one needs to go *beyond* it. But I will not belabor this point further; instead, I will conclude with some suggestions as to how, in general, we may begin to read this poetry (poetries).

On the level of structure, segmentation (encompassing both sentential and numerical division) is a crucial factor in analysis. We must be alert to markers which indicate both connections and shifts, and to the methods used to call attention to specific points in the poem. In the case of the *qaṣīda*, we must look for signs of the relationships between its larger divisions – *nasīb*, perhaps *raḥīl*, *madīḥ*, *duʿāʾ*, and so on – on the level of wording, of imagery, or both. Position is also important: that of the naming of the *mamdūḥ*, the placement of an object of value; identifying such items of importance will often provide a clue to interpreting the structure of the poem as a whole. More broadly, we need to be aware of a poem's generic components, in terms of the content-oriented conception of genre discussed in Chapter 2; the sudden appearance of an "unexpected" genre – a segment of *vaʿẓ* in a *ghazal*, for example, with a corresponding shift in the persona of the speaker – may necessitate a different reading of the poem than first appeared to be called for.

It is obvious that much more work needs to be done, and a much larger corpus investigated (especially with regard to the work of less well-known poets) than has been possible here. Instead of Abū Tammām or al-Mutanabbī,

we might consider later poets, such as al-Ṭughrāʾī or al-Abīwardī; instead of Farrukhī, Masʿūd-i Saʿd or Abū al-Faraj Rūnī; instead of Ḥāfiẓ, Khvājū or Salmān Sāvajī. We might well find that those periods which have long been neglected because they were considered as representing a decline from the classical "peak" were, in fact, vibrant and creative.[8] For poetry does not die, nor does it (like old soldiers) fade away, but perpetually recreates itself.

NOTES

1 INTRODUCTION

1 For general overviews see Scheindlin 1974: 1–7; van Gelder 1982a: 14–22; and the references cited by both. For representative views see Massignon 1963, 3: 9–24; von Grunebaum 1952a: 348–50, 1971: 337–49; Bausani 1958: 145–53; Heinrichs 1969: 285–6; van Gelder 1982a: 14, 21, 198–9. For criticisms see e.g. J. Stetkevych 1980; Sperl 1989; see also Rehder (1974: 60–3) on Arberry's analogy.

2 On this paradigm of identity see J. Stetkevych 1980: 111–23; idem, 1969: 145–56; Menocal 1987, especially 1–25. As W. Andrews notes (1985: 14–16), the "scholarly illusion" or "myth" of objectivity which informs the West/East opposition incorporates an element of racism seen, for example, in traditional views of Ottoman lyric as derivative, stereotyped, and sterile, as contrasted to the creative dynamism, originality, and progressive nature of Western literature.

3 The quotations are from Rypka 1968a: 99–107; the final opinion (ibid.: 100–1) is that of H. H. Schaeder. These quotations have been chosen as representative; many other examples could be provided from discussions of Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman poetry.

4 Von Grunebaum's approach (ably analyzed by Marshall Hodgson) illustrates the classic stance towards Islam in general (with obvious implications for Islamic literatures): it "exemplifies . . . the Westernistic commitment or outlook," according to which "the formative assumptions of Islamdom . . . are derived at least in part negatively, by way of contrast (what Islam lacks), from certain contrary formative assumptions he ascribes . . . at once to the West and to Modernity . . . [and which] . . . turn out to be central to what is most distinctly human" (Hodgson 1974, 2: 362, n. 6). As Andrews observes (1985: 14–16), such attitudes have infiltrated indigenous literary criticism; one may note, for example, the debates on the absence of drama in Arabic literature which permeated Arabic criticism of the 1920s, or the views expressed by Mīrzā Āqā Khān Kirmānī in the prologue to his *Sālārnāma* (quoted in Browne 1983: xxxiii–xxxvi). Cf. also Massignon 1963.

5 Von Grunebaum comments disparagingly on "that general mediaeval outlook on the world as a static entity, whose individual elements obtained their rank and value from their immutable position within the whole which made everything at the same time a constituent and a result of the all-pervading harmony of the universe" – an outlook contrasted with that of the "West", in which "science and philosophy, by transforming the static world into one of dynamic motion, forced man to re-examine his position in the universe and also to re-examine himself" (1971: 330–9). See Menocal 1987: 9 for a critique of the view of the medieval period as the "Dark Ages"; Petrarch (whose own reaction to the medieval past was influential in forming this

view) is the first poet of the "enlightened" Renaissance. Rehder, discussing some modern studies of Ḥāfiẓ, considers "European poetry from Petrarca (1304–1374) to Waller (1608–1687)" as "that which is closest to the poetry of Ḥāfiẓ and perhaps the most interesting to compare with it" (1977: 98), and omits the medieval tradition from any position of relevance. For similar problems in the study of medieval Western literature see for example Jackson 1980: 1–21; for Renaissance and Baroque literature see Steadman 1974: 212 n. 40.

6 Miner's position has been criticized, with some justice, by Tatlow (1993), who, however, takes only drama as his example. Thus while seeing the attraction of the argument, "salutary in particular for a Western-trained critic, provided of course that it is true, [which] holds that the dominant Western understanding of literature is the exception rather than the rule, if we contemplate a global poetics," he questions what he sees as Miner's "fundamental premise", namely, "linking all Western drama to the foundational mimetic expectations governing Western poetics and literature which are derived from drama" (1993: 10). This is not quite my understanding of Miner's thesis; but I am concerned here only with the implications of a poetics based on lyric.

7 Von Grunebaum observed that since, "to a very large extent, medieval Orient and medieval Occident arose from the same roots … the interaction between East and West in the Middle Ages will never be correctly diagnosed or correctly assessed and appraised unless their fundamental cultural unity is realized and taken into consideration" (1952b: 238). Unfortunately, he used this principle to support his notion that medieval Muslim society distorted its classical antecedents, while the West remained faithful to them; see for example 1971: 25–9. See also Menocal 1987: 92, 113 n. 18; and, for a discussion of comparative methods (and some of their pitfalls), Guillén 1993.

8 It will be clear that I still consider comparative literature a valid academic discipline. It has been argued that "comparative literature has had its day. Cross-cultural work in women's studies, in post-colonial theory, in cultural studies has changed the face of literary studies generally" (Bassnett 1993: 161). Why not the other way around? Implicitly, because "literature" is not as important as "culture"; but here, also, the modernist, print-culture bias is also manifest: only textual contacts are worth scrutiny. Pre-modern literatures (except insofar as they have been appropriated by later generations) are, except perhaps for those who insist in specializing in them, invisible, and those of the "eastern and southern hemispheres" largely irrelevant.

9 This is essentially the approach taken by Cantarino in his comparison of medieval Arabic views on poetry with those of the early Christian West. Criticizing "the idea that any comparative study of the cultures which have contributed to the intellectual formation of our world should be based only on the analysis of mutual influences and dependence," he argues that "the opposite might be even more enlightening, namely the consideration of contrasting attitudes adopted and divergent solutions given to problems of common formulation or based on similar principles" (1970: 75).

10 Hence the difficulty of restricting more general studies of medieval Arabic and Persian literature to "imaginative literature", as advocated for example by Yarshater (1988: vii) and Roger Allen (1976: 400).

11 Averroes rendered Aristotle's "six parts of eulogy" (i.e. tragedy) as *al-aqāwīl al-khurāfiyya, ʿādāt, wazn, iʿtiqādāt, naẓar,* and *laḥn* (1953: 209; translated by Butterworth as "mythic statements, characters, meter, beliefs, spectacle, and melody", Averroes 1986: 76). *Aqāwīl khurāfiyya* are "invented statements", *ʿādāt* and *iʿtiqādāt* are Hermann's *consuetudines* and *credulitates*; by *naẓar* (Hermann's *consideratio*) Averroes means "speculation" or "reflection". See further J.B. Allen 1976; on the connection of poetry with ethics see e.g. Ibn Ṭabāṭabā 1956: 12–14; al-Fārābī 1961: 49–50; Niẓāmī ʿArūẓī 1899: 43.

12 "Where man's choice is unimportant it cannot become a literary theme. Human conflict is strangely absent from Muslim and especially Arab-Muslim literature" (von Grunebaum 1968: 11; see also 1952a: 332–3; 1964; and 1962: 221–57, on the "depersonalization" and "deindividuation" of man and the "absence of a humanist concept of man's nature" [231]). See also Zipoli 1988: 20; Rosenthal 1974; J. Stetkevych 1975; van Gelder 1983; Meisami 1987: 131–6; and see further Chapter 2. On the association of mysticism with "human creativity" and self-expression, see von Grunebaum 1952a: 332–3, and 1971: 58–9; see also Bürgel 1988. On the problem of "realism" see also Kilito 1978, especially 18–21.

13 "Analogy is a relation between a text and a particular reality which is based on positing the appropriateness of the one to the other on the basis of an indexical correlation … [or] on a more sensuous type of similarity" (Al-Azmeh 1986: 92, and see 87–94). Further, "A word corresponds to a sense, or to a concept, when it corresponds to a representation, a 'mental image', and is primarily posited with reference to this representation, not to the reality that this representation indicates" (ibid.: 117). See also Sperl 1989: 155–75; on analogical imagery see Meisami 1987: 30–9; and see Chapter 7 below.

14 Nor is it always clear what "our language" is. As G. Windfuhr observes, "Literary studies have not yet matured to a stage where a coherent theory, or even a partial theory, has been developed and agreed upon, a theory that would comprise much, or at least a significant part of previous scholarship and would interpret its multiple facets in terms of a coherent model, prove its superior explanatory power, and formulate what is relevant within that theory. Thus, so far, much – if not all – study of literature is eclectic, subjective, and/or 'school'-oriented. Until such a theory of literature is developed, any single step in that direction is most welcome … even if it is negative, i.e., disproves certain nebulous, intuitive assumptions about literature or its many aspects, or deep- rooted assumptions about a certain genre of a certain literature" (1974b: 529–30).

15 Although van Gelder debates the notion of "efficiency" ("If 'efficiency' is defined as the power to effect the object intended one ought to define this object, and show that it was not effected before one points out any shortcomings" [1982a: 207], he too concludes that "Neither [the critics] nor the poets … expected anyone to analyse a poem as a system where everything is simultaneously present, where each level and each part interacts with any other, where, ideally, nothing can be ignored, deleted, added, or altered" (ibid.: 200). I shall argue that understanding the poem as a system (albeit in more flexible terms that van Gelder would have it) is central to both critical discourse and poetic practice.

16 Cantarino criticizes the "lack of system" of the Arab critics, who "do not seem to have had a proper interest in an organic presentation of the subject," and ignored or paid slight attention to "topics which *may now be considered* of essential importance" (1975: 3; emphases added; see Meisami 1992; and compare J.B. Allen 1982: ix–xiv). A corollary of this view is that of the critics' "traditional conservatism"; see e.g. Cantarino 1975: 3–4; S. P. Stetkevych 1991, especially 48–106; and compare Kemal 1989. Kemal argues that the medieval Arab critics' "method of analysis and exegesis consists in exhibiting the validity of poetic usage, and is an exercise in philosophical aesthetics as much as it is an analysis of particular poems.… By exhibiting the grammatical and philological structure of poetry they clarify the status and validity invoked in using poetic or prosaic language because such exhibition is the method of satisfactory explanations generally.… Thus, literary theory … constitutes poetry by exhibiting the nature of aesthetic discourse and response as it is deployed in particular works" (1989: 129). See also Hamori 1984a.

17 Cf. Miner 1979: 343–5, on the "process by which a culture comes to distinguish what
it knows into kinds of knowledge;" see also Miner 1976. As Miner notes, "The origin
of literature and the origin of criticism entail different explanations, with criticism
a matter posterior to literature" (1979: 342). On *adab*, see Khalidi 1985: 51–8;
Bonebakker 1990b (who overemphasizes the putative relationship between *adab* and
"belles-lettres"). That poetry is a type of knowledge explains the attention given to
poetic language by both the philosophers and the grammarians, each of whom
believed that their subject (logic, language) provided the best means to knowledge;
see e.g. Mahdi 1970; Kemal 1991: 43–138.

18 Ibn al-Muʿtazz (d. 296/908) states in his *Ṭabaqāt al-shuʿarāʾ* that he has not quoted
poems by well-known poets in their entirety (*ʿalā al-wajh*) because their *dīwāns*
(collected poems) are available; but as for those poets "whose poems are found only
among the elite," he will quote them "in full or in large part" (1956: 47–8; cf. also
80–1). Similarly, Ibn Dāʾūd al-Iṣbahānī (d. 297/910) states in his anthology of love
poetry the *Kitāb al-Zahra* that his quotations are lengthy and not confined to single
lines because "one verse requires (other) verses, and a statement demands proofs; it is
not good to mention a (single) verse because it contains a topic appropriate to the
chapter, and separate (from it) the rest of its meanings which are connected with
the verse which follows, which orders them [the *maʿānī*] and calls attention to their
soundness and beauty" (1932: 370). See also Minnis 1984: 141–2; Steadman 1974:
160.

19 Van Gelder cites as "reasons for quotation" of poetry the necessity to "complete a
collection", i.e., the inclusion of verses (not to mention whole poems!) in a *dīwān*,
and the use of individual verses as *shawāhid* (evidentiary examples) for various
philological, rhetorical and critical purposes (e.g., "to illustrate the qualities or
defects of a particular poet"), to demonstrate plagiarism, for inclusion in a prose
work, and so on (1982a: 195–6). None of these uses precludes an awareness of poems
as wholes (al-ʿAbbāsī [1947], for example, routinely cites large sections from, if not all
of, the poems from which his *shawāhid* are derived in order to demonstrate their
context), any more than does the use of poetic citations in the *OED*. See also
Monroe 1983: 94, on the dangers of confusing critical with poetic practice.

20 On the chess analogy, compare Fowler: "A position in chess is not adequately
described without specifying who has the move. And this introduces a diachronic
element. To determine who has the move (as retrospective chess problemists will
know) may involve opening up, with great difficulty, many previous stages.... *We
need to know many stages of the game, since any move is liable to answer another far in the
past*" (1982: 50; emphases added).

21 Memory plays a central role in all cognitive activities, among which literature must
be included (see Miner 1976, especially 505–6). In pre-modern Europe memory was
an important adjunct of rhetorical studies as well as more generally; on memory and
teaching see Yates 1966; and see the practical instruction given by Geoffrey of
Vinsauf (1967: 87–91). On the association of memory and composition see Yates
1966; Steadman 1974, especially 132–3, 143–5 n. 14. The operation of memory is not
uniform; it possesses both sequential and non-sequential (spatial) aspects (see for
example Arnheim 1974: 372–8). While visual perception can accommodate both
simultaneously, literary and musical perception operate in a linear mode. This is not
to say that linear perception is restricted to what is currently being read or heard. For
a discussion of the operation of memory in the reading process (described as a
twofold, temporal/achronic, stylistic/linguistic model) see Segre 1979: 11–12.

22 "The creation of each single [verse] does not make of it an independent unit; in
reality, the poet composes it independently of the others, which is quite different.
There is no question of [the verse constituting] an isolated formula, since, once

received and retained, it is appointed its place in accordance with the thematic progression, the phase of development [of the poem], in short, according to the role it has within a [larger] program" (Bencheikh 1975b: 120–1).

23 By "anthropological" I refer to studies such as those of S.P. Stetkevych (see the Bibliography) which see the poem (specifically, the Arabic *qaṣīda*) as possessing a ritual structure reflecting a mythical "pattern" such as "rites of passage", and which rely heavily on the theories of anthropologists such as Gaster and Mauss. I will refer to these studies in the course of discussing specific poems. A recent attempt to refute the notion that poems (in this case, Persian and Urdu *ghazal*) are "wholes" invokes contemporary South Asian musical practice. Frances Pritchett argues (1993) that since Indo-Muslim singers of *ghazal* learn their songs in the form of individual *bayts*, and since moreover (apparently) "within Indo-Muslim culture, virtually no one knows any whole Urdu or Persian *ghazal* by heart" (1993: 125; a comment, if anything, on the declining role of memory in a print culture), the "unity" of the *ghazal* resides in the *bayt* (Urdu *shiʿr*) alone (ibid.: 131–3). The fact that collections of song-texts (specifically, Persian and Ottoman) present whole poems, along with directions for singing them (in their entirety) would seem to belie this theory (I am grateful to Owen Wright of SOAS for this information).

24 Thus for example R. Blachère attempted, with respect to Arabic poetry, to identify "frames" (*cadres*) such as the "love elegy", into which the poet inserts "themes of love [which] set in motion a series of evocations the connection between which remains free although a controlling idea is clearly perceived," or the *qaṣīda* "into which lyric themes are inserted" (1952: 373, 375). He defined a "theme" as "a conceptual group, a series of images or evocations which combine themselves with several others to constitute a more general theme which is somehow 'axial'": for example, "a 'love theme', made up in reality of more specific themes" strung together because of their relationship to a certain subject. Such "themes, even when simply juxtaposed, are difficult to isolate; they follow each other, complete each other, are sometimes included [*s'imbriquent*] within one another," and sometimes "certain themes belong to several genres at once": for example, bacchic "themes" (ibid.: 387–8. Blachère is speaking specifically of poetry up to about 50/670). Such imprecision is characteristic of the thematic approach. A. J. Arberry, analysing Ḥāfiẓ's "Shiraz Turk" *ghazal* (the poem translated by Sir William Jones), identifies its "principal theme" as "the fair charmer" (a person, further qualified by various attributes), a "subsidiary theme" – "wine (and music) are the sole consolation of the lover" (a situation) – and a "signature" or "clasp" theme (the *takhalluṣ*; see Chapter 4): "the poet looks upon his handiwork and finds it very good" (an action) (1964: 351–2). As Rehder rightly observes (1974: 70–1), "Thematic analysis is not subtle enough for connections of this kind." See also Hillmann 1975 and 1976: 8–27, and Bashiri 1979, both of whom analyse the "Shiraz Turk" *ghazal*; Wickens 1952a and the critiques by Boyce (1953) and Andrews (1973: 98); Bürgel 1980.

25 Most structuralist analyses limit themselves to linguistic features and describe the poem's constituent elements in terms of syntactic structures or as speech acts. See for example Audebert 1975, 1977 (on ʿUmar ibn Abī Rabīʿa); Tomiche 1980 (on al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf). Far more productive is Scheindlin 1974, still a landmark in the field, which will be cited in the course of the present study (for a detailed discussion of Scheindlin's method see Meisami 1988b). For Persian poetry see especially Windfuhr 1974a, who argues that there is an independent but parallel ordering of the semantic and syntactic elements of the poem; he cites Shams-i Qays Rāzī's discussion of the traditional distinction between *alfāẓ* and *maʿānī*, "'wording, outward form or pattern' vs. 'meaning, underlying form or pattern,'" which, Windfuhr suggests, "corresponds in some way to modern notions of surface structure and

underlying or deep-semantic structure" (1974b: 335–6, and see in general 334–7. A more ambitious effort is that of Zipoli (1988), who focuses on the *ghazal* and also takes as his point of departure the ubiquitous passage from Shams-i Qays. His analysis is replete with diagrams, charts, and algebraic-like formulas, supplemented by a series of fold-out leaves at the back of the book. Zipoli takes Shams-i Qays's remarks, predicated for the *qaṣīda*, as equally applicable to the *ghazal*, in view of "the strictly organized and monolithic tradition in which [both forms] are found" (1988: 23). The poet's activity consists in reorganizing materials he has appropriated from his heritage, and applied in practical exercises, into new constructions. Zipoli's essential unit of analysis is the verse, presented as a prosodic framework into which lexical, semantic and thematic elements are inserted (see ibid.: 39–53). For critiques of structuralist approaches see S. Stetkevych 1983; Jauss 1982: 66–70.

26 Cf. Monroe's objection to traditional criticisms of the *maqāma*: "All the authors cited are essentially saying the same thing, and to such an extent is this so, that it is hard to avoid the impression that they are repeating received information rather than coming to terms personally with the works under discussion" (1983: 89).

27 That poems were indeed objects of value is demonstrated by their function in the gift-based exchange system of medieval Islamic society. Several articles dealing with this point in Arabic, Persian and Ottoman poetry were presented at the conference on the *qaṣīda* held at the University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, in July 1993, and have been published in the conference proceedings; see S. Stetkevych 1996; Meisami 1996; Andrews 1996.

28 On the further implications of such metaphors – e.g., the artist as analogous to Creator or Demiurge – see Coulter 1976: 95–103; on their persistence in the Renaissance see Steadman 1974, especially 146–212. The theoretical formulations of this perception owe much to Aristotelian discussions of causality and form, coloured as well by Neoplatonic notions of analogy and cosmic harmony.

29 The traditional comparison of the elements of the Arabic poem to those of a tent (the verse is called *bayt*, "tent" or "house", the hemistich *miṣrāʿ*, a "panel" of which the tent is composed, metrical units are *sabab* "tent-rope", *watid* "tent-peg", etc.) should probably be viewed as providing support, in retrospect, for the analogy between poem and building rather than constituting, at the early period when it appears, an expression of that analogy.

30 For a discussion of this passage (in which Niẓāmī refers to his poem as a *tarkīb*, analogous to Old French *conjointure*) and the implications of its architectural and pictorial allusions, see Meisami 1987: 201–2 and the references cited in n. 30; 299–304 and notes. Many other instances of such comparisons, used by both critics and philosophers, could be cited; see for example ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (1946: 40–3, 70–4), who comments (40) that such metaphors indicate that poetry is more than merely "stringing words together" but involves ordering meanings (*maʿānī*) "in accordance with their order in the soul."

31 On Qudāma's knowledge of Aristotle see S. A. Bonebakker's introduction to Qudāma 1956: 36–44. Bonebakker does not, however, note this particular connection.

32 The Aristotelian notion of the "four major causes which … governed all activity and change in the universe" (Minnis 1984: 5) was applied to literature in modified form by the later Neoplatonists and by medieval European exegetes, in whose "Aristotelian prologues" "the auctor would be discussed as the 'efficient cause' or motivating agent of the text, his materials would be discussed as the 'material cause', his literary style and structure would be considered as twin aspects of the 'formal cause', while his ultimate end or objective in writing would be considered as the 'final cause'" (Minnis 1984: 118; see also J.B. Allen 1982: 67–178). The Neoplatonists attributed to Plato a fifth "cause", which is (says Seneca) "the pattern which [Plato]

calls the 'idea'," and which is either outside the artist or "within himself, conceived and placed there by himself [as is the case with God]" (*Epistulae morales*; quoted by Coulter 1976: 99–100, and see generally ibid.: 95–126). Abū Sulaymān al-Sijistānī (d. between 375–80/980–86) identified six causes, four Aristotelian and two Platonic: efficient, material, formal, final, paradigmatic (*mithālī*, e.g. the form of the chair pictured in the heart) and instrumental (see Kraemer 1986b: 91–3). Nāṣir-i Khusraw, in keeping with Ismāʿīlī symbology, discerns seven: "efficient" (the Creator), instrumental, material, formal, spatial, temporal, and "perfective" (1953: 6–9). See also Al-Azmeh 1986: 14, 80; and compare Jābir ibn Ḥayyān, in Kraus 1935, 2: 8.

33 I would argue (contrary to van Gelder; see 1982b: 58–65) that al-Ḥātimī's passage does in fact express "Aristotle's concept of organic unity" (ibid.: 59) as understood in late classical and medieval times – that is, of a discourse as possessing a certain magnitude, and a beginning, a middle and an end (cf. al-Fārābī, in Aristotle 1953: 7–8; Avicenna, in Dahiyat 1974: 99). Van Gelder comments, "There are no clear indications that [al-Ḥātimī] was familiar with either Aristotle's Poetics or his Rhetoric. If the concept of organicism was derived from these works one could have expected more borrowings; and even if he knew the Arabic translations that existed in his time it is doubtful whether he could have benefitted from these notoriously inadequate versions" (1982b: 61). Both the *Rhetoric* and the *Poetics* were widely studied (see e.g. Kraemer 1986b: 152–3); moreover, not all Aristotelian notions concerning literary discourse derive from those works alone (see e.g. Black 1990; Kemal 1991). That both scholars (including critics) and poets had access to translations and discussions of Aristotle is shown by Kraemer's exemplary studies on literary and philosophical circles in tenth-century Baghdad (1986a, 1986b); Kraemer cites, for example, Abū Tammām al-Nīsābūrī's remark to his patron, the Ṣaffārid ruler Abū Jaʿfar Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad (310–52/922–63): "Were we to employ rhetoric to emblazon your virtues, following Aristotle's exposition in the *Rhetorica*, still we would be doltish, dumb, and faltering. But if we are incapable of what is remote, it is not fitting for us to be silent concerning what lies at hand" (1986a: 18). Al-Mutanabbī was frequently criticized (by, among others, al-Ḥātimī; see 1965: 23–4) for his "borrowings" from Aristotle; see also al-ʿAbbāsī 1947, 4: 189–90, for examples of his "versifying" (*ʿaqd*) aphorisms attributed to Aristotle.

34 Such passages suggest that we should consider the "form vs. content" problem in a less simplistic fashion and, in particular, that we should understand the specific meaning of critical terms according to the context in which they are found. Terms such as *maʿnā* and *lafẓ* have a broader range of signification than is implied by their rendering as "idea" or "concept" and "word" or "wording"; the former may encompass anything from the archetypal idea (in a Platonic sense) underlying the discourse to a specific notion or topic expressed within it, while the latter may be used for anything from general formal principles to precise phonetic effects. For a survey of medieval Arabic discussions see Ibn Rashīq 1972, 1: 80–3; al-Jurjānī 1954: 4–14. See also Al-Azmeh 1986: 114–23; Arazi 1986: 487–8; Peled 1991, especially 40–1; Athamina 1991.

35 On this passage see also Clinton 1981; Windfuhr 1974; Andrews 1973: 98 (where Shams-i Qays is mistakenly assigned to the eighth/fourteenth century); Zipoli 1988. As both van Gelder (1982a: 43) and Zipoli (1988: 23), but neither Windfuhr nor Clinton, have remarked, this passage essentially paraphrases one in Ibn Ṭabāṭabā's *ʿIyār al-shiʿr* (1956: 5) in which, in addition to comparing the poet to a painter and a jeweller (as does Shams-i Qays), Ibn Ṭabāṭabā likens him to "a skilled weaver who weaves a striped brocade [*yufawwifu*] in the best manner, filling in the gaps and making it doubly strong, and weaving no part of it flimsily so as to mar it." This too is taken up by Shams-i Qays, who defines the first of the *maḥāsin* ("ornaments") of

poetry, *tafwīf*, as "when the foundation of the poem is laid upon a pleasant metre and agreeable wording, sounds expressions, correct rhymes, an easy construction and subtle meanings . . . so that each verse is independent in word and sense and does not require or depend on another except with respect to meanings and continuity of discourse . . . and the whole *qaṣīda* is of one type [*ṭarz*] and one style" (1909: 298). Ibn Ṭabāṭabā also uses the building analogy: "Some [poems] are like strong palaces and firm buildings which endure the passage of time; while some are like pitched tents buffeted by the wind and weakened by the rains, so that they soon become decrepit, and are in danger of collapse" (1956: 7). Arabic rhetorical works were well known in Persia, and Persian rhetorical works are often highly derivative.

36 Hellenized, rhetoric-based education was widespread in the Middle East both prior to the rise of Islam and for several centuries thereafter, in pagan, Christian and Islamic centers; it was a living tradition of learning, not an antiquarian one, and preserved the pedagogical methods associated with that tradition. On hellenistic survivals in both the western and eastern parts of the Arab empire see Peters 1968: 10–55; see also Bidez and Cumont 1938, especially vol. 1, for an extensive account of Greek-Iranian contacts.

37 Ḥāzim is presumably singled out because he cited Aristotle as the source of some of his views; before him, Qudāma ibn Jaʿfar is considered the theoretician most strongly influenced by Aristotle. The *Kitāb al-Burhān fī wujūh al-bayān* of Qudāma's contemporary, Isḥāq ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Wahb al-Kātib, which was long wrongly attributed to Qudāma under the title *Kitāb Naqd al-nathr*, is also strongly marked by hellenized thought (see Ibn Wahb 1933).

38 "The *Minhāj* is organised in four parts: on *alfāẓ*, 'words', 'wording' or 'expression' (this part is lost); on *maʿānī*, 'concepts', 'thoughts', or motifs; on *naẓm*, 'composition'; and on the *ṭuruq* or *asālīb*, 'paths' or 'methods'. . . . *Naẓm* deals with the joining of *alfāẓ*; the part on *asālīb* is concerned with the joining of *maʿānī*" (van Gelder 1982a: 172). On the relation between *ʿilm al-maʿānī*, the "science of meanings", and invention, see Chapter 2.

39 See for example Cantarino 1975: 80–99, 206–20. Van Gelder observes that the importance of the *Minhāj* "lies in its approach: Ḥāzim applied Aristotelian ideas on poetry (known to him through Ibn Sīnā) to Arabic poetry, not in order to explain Aristotle, but in order to develop an Arabic poetics, where traditional Arabic theory is fitted in whenever appropriate" (1982a: 172; cf. Heinrichs 1973: 33). Heinrichs considers Ḥāzim the first critic "to attempt to develop a theory *stricto sensu*, that is, a system . . . in which all the elements of poetry find their logical place and which . . . attributes to poetry a general and essential function;" his Aristotelian terminology (derived from Avicenna) makes him the first to introduce "foreign elements drawn from . . . philosophy, considered a foreign science," to the Arab science of poetic criticism (1969: 285). Rather than developing a theory of poetry as such, however, Ḥāzim follows the Greek tradition by insisting on the separation of the techniques appropriate to rhetoric (as an instrument of dialectic) and to poetry. As Cantarino observes, "the real opposition is not that between prose-writing and poetry, but between poetic and rhetorical writings" (1975: 206).

40 On the senses of *khayāl*, *takhyīl*, *takhayyul* and other words derived from the root *kh-y-l* see Cantarino 1975: 80–99. The restriction of *takhyīl* to "imaginative creativity" ignores medieval concepts of the imagination; as Douglas Kelly observes, "Imagination is a mental faculty. It governs the invention, retention, and expression of Images in the mind; it also designates the artist's Image, projected as it were into matter" (1978a: xi–x; cf. also J. B. Allen 1982: 183–8). See further Chapter 2.

41 Arabic theory divides the "science of eloquence" (*ʿilm al-balāgha*) into three categories: *maʿānī* ("notions", consisting of (a) topics and (b) grammatical usages and

syntax), *bayān* ("modes of expression", e.g. simile and metaphor), and *badīʿ* ("figures", "tropes"); although these do not parallel the Western division, some aspects overlap. *ʿIlm al-maʿānī*, originally concerned with topics, ultimately comes to deal chiefly with the "different kinds of sentence and their uses", *bayān* with figurative expression (*majāz*). See *EI*[2], arts. "balāgha" (A. Schaade/G.E. von Grunebaum), "al-maʿānī wa-l-bayān" (S.A. Bonebakker).

2 INVENTION

1 On the parts of rhetoric see Curtius 1973: 68–71; Dixon 1971: 24–35; on the technical aspects of invention as treated by Cicero in the *De inventione* see G. Kennedy 1980: 92–6. In the European tradition the notion of invention varies widely, and there is little agreement on precisely what it includes or omits. Particularly vague is the distinction between the realms of invention and of disposition; see e.g. Geoffrey of Vinsauf 1967: 16–18; see also Steadman 1974: 183, and in general 180–7. While I will treat the two categories separately, for the sake of convenience, their close interrelationship should not be lost sight of.

2 On the various senses of *maʿānī* in the disciplines of grammar, logic, and criticism see *EI*[2], s.v. (articles by C.H.M. Versteegh, O.N.H. Leaman, J.-E. Bencheikh); compare the variety of senses of "idea" in the Renaissance, in Steadman 1974: 172–4 n. 6; see also Al-Azmeh 1986: 117 and *passim*. According to Bencheikh, Qudāma ibn Jaʿfar was the first to discuss *maʿānī* in the sense of the general themes or forms of poetry; later it becomes central to discussions of *takhyīl* ("imaginative creation"), especially among philosophers and logicians (*EI*[2], 6: 347–8, art. "Khamriyya"). Bencheikh makes no connection between the terms *maʿnā/maʿānī* and notions of invention or of topics; it is, however, made by Al-Azmeh (see 1986: 119–20). See also Sadan 1991: 61–7.

3 Collections of *maʿānī*, in which excerpts from poems (individual verses or longer segments) are classed generically or topically, are characteristic of Arabo-Persian rhetoric (cf. Heinrichs 1973: 43). Such catalogues are virtually absent from classical and medieval rhetoric (although detailed instructions for the invention of *topoi* are often given; see Kelly 1978b: 235), but are typical of the Renaissance (see Colie 1973: 15–17). (On topics see also Veit 1965, who notes [42–3] the importance of the historical study of topics and, further [46–7], the potentials for the enlargement of topics into images, motifs, etc.) An important source relating to the invention and development of *maʿānī* is discussions of *sariqa* or *akhdh* ("plagiarism", "borrowing") by medieval writers; cf. von Grunebaum 1944; Kanazi 1989: 112–22; Peled 1991; and see e.g. al-ʿAskarī 1986: 196–238.

4 Modern scholars almost universally rely on nineteenth-century concepts of imagination when translating the verb *takhayyala* (meaning "to form an image in the mind") and its derivatives as "to imagine", "to make s.o. imagine", and so forth, stressing its subjective aspect; see e.g. Heinrichs 1969: 236 ff., and, following him, van Gelder 1982a: 172–3. According to Avicenna, poetic premises produce acts of imagination which lead to "the arousal of wonder, aggrandizement, downplaying or belittlement, grief or delight" (*Kitāb al-majmūʿ* 15.4–16.2; quoted by Black 1990: 181–2; compare Niẓāmī ʿArūẓī 1899: 43). As used by ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī in his *Asrār al-balāgha*, the term *takhyīl* "directly expressed the process necessary for achieving the subject matter," i.e., the invention of appropriate topics etc. (Cantarino 1975: 38, and see further 78–9). In medieval faculty psychology it is the imagination which stores sense impressions and forms (or images) associated with them (cf. the views of Avicenna in the *De anima*, quoted by Harvey 1975: 49; Avicenna 1959: 165–78; Black 1990: 231–5; and see R. L. Montgomery 1979: 13–49. On the

epistemological aspects of *takhyīl* see Black 1990: 180–208; Kemal 1991: 89–106. See also the entry "Imagination", in Meisami and Starkey 1998 [J. S. Meisami]). The problem of "imaginative assent" is beyond the scope of this study; see Black 1990: 181–85; Kemal 1991: 153–203.

5 "In al-Fārābī's opinion, *takhyīl* was the way in which poetic discourses imposed on the listener's mind an opinion or feeling which might or might not be justified by the reality of the object considered, a way which was totally different and independent from any other logical way of thinking" (Cantarino 1975: 83). Al-Fārābī defines poetic discourse as "that which is neither demonstrative nor argumentative nor rhetorical nor sophistical" (*Iḥṣāʾ al-ʿulūm*, quoted in ibid.: 83), in the context of his classification of the logical arts. Elsewhere he distinguishes between imaginative impression and persuasion: "Excellence of persuasion aims at the hearer doing the thing, after a conviction of truth, while excellence in producing an impression of this kind aims at the soul of the hearer rising up to seek the thing imagined or flee from it, and be drawn to it or dislike it, even without a conviction of truth" (1961: 48–9, and see further 49–50). For poetry as imaginative syllogism see Black 1990: 209–41; see also Bürgel 1971.

6 The issue of whether poetry deals with truth or with lies, the definition of "truth" (in grammar, the literal meaning of a word; in philosophy, the "essence" of a thing or concept), and related matters is beyond the scope of this discussion. See e.g. Cantarino 1975: 84–5 *et passim*; Bürgel 1974; Jacobi 1972; Ajami 1988; Meisami 1991b, 1992; Black 1990: 180–208 *et passim*; see also the entry "Truth and Poetry" in Meisami and Starkey 1998 (J.S. Meisami). As Al-Azmeh points out, "Truth is not an absolute and unitary entity, but is relative to its provenance. Indeed, *ḥaqīqa* [truth] is a term of linguistic provenance, and it is classified as linguistic (in the lexical sense of a word designating an object), terminological and nomothetic" (1986: 108). See also Heinrichs 1984b. Black comments (re. Averroes' *Talkhīṣ*; see 1986: 114), "Here the 'truth' underlying poetic assent simply requires that the appeal of the imaginative depiction be effective, not that the depiction itself accurately represent any real state of affairs" (1990: 184).

7 Discussions of Arabo-Persian poetics frequently stress the problem of "fidelity to the object represented" in the context of the truth value of poetry; however, it is not objective reality which is depicted but the location of that "reality" in a specific value system. Cf. Al-Azmeh 1986 (quoted above, nn. 2, 6); see also Sperl 1989: 166–7, who describes al-Buḥturī's "classical" style as one that establishes a relationship between the objects, events, or persons described and a correlate "reality" which "is not the sensible reality of everyday experience … [but] pertains to something more real than the mere 'world of appearances': this is the ideal order of society and nature … the correlate of this poetry is not so much reality as that which reality stands for: ideality."

8 For the Classical period see especially Cairns's theory of generic composition (1972), which has many parallels with Arabo-Persian notions of genre. Cairns holds that genres "are not classifications … in terms of form as are epic, lyric, elegy, or epistle, but classifications in terms of content…." (ibid.: 5–6). While Cairns' model is perhaps too restricted to admit to more general application (cf. the criticisms by Fowler, 1982: 39), it contains some significant points: e.g., that *topoi* may be shared by different genres; that genres may be included within one another; that *topoi* can generate new genres; and that one genre may itself become a *topos* of another. Poems generated by such a system of composition "assume in the reader a knowledge of the circumstances and content of the particular genre to which they belong, and they exploit this knowledge to allow logical connexions and distinctions to remain implicit or be omitted altogether" (Cairns 1972: 6–7). H.-R. Jauss's formulation of a theory of genre for medieval literatures is somewhat broader: "Every work … belongs

to a genre – whereby I mean … that for each work a preconstituted horizon of expectations must be ready at hand … to orient the reader's (public's) understanding" (1982: 79, and see generally Chapter 3, "Theory of Genres and Medieval Literature," 76–109; on medieval genres see also Huisman 1978). On the flexibility of Renaissance concepts of genre see Colie 1973; see also Dubrow 1982: 58–61. On the relation between genre and invention see Williams 1980: ix; Colie 1973: 17; Williams notes the relative lateness of "generic composition" in classical poetry, which parallels the situation for Arabic, and further that an "idea" "could be regarded as a semantic unit, analogous to a word, and could be subject to configurations with other ideas just as had been done previously with words" (cf. Chapter 1 n. 15), a notion that bears considerable affinity to Arabic treatments of *maʿānī*.

9 As al-Marzubānī points out (1924: 242), the poet was at the time 120 (or perhaps 130) years of age, which may well have contributed to his indisposition to compose on demand.

10 Description (*waṣf*) acquires the status of a separate genre in that it can constitute independent poems. The question of why the Arab rhetoricians originally included *waṣf* (or *tashbīh*) in their lists of genres and why they later dropped it does not admit of discussion here; perhaps its loss of status was a corollary of the general decline of non-canonical genres (wine poetry, love poetry) in Arabic from the reign of al-Maʾmūn (198–218/813–33) onwards (as suggested by Bencheikh, 1977: 34–8; it should be noted, however, that these poetic types flourished outside the caliphal court itself), or perhaps it is associated with the relative decline of the *raḥīl*, in which it served as implicit *fakhr* or *madīḥ* (cf. J. Montgomery 1986: 4). Heinrichs' argument, that "*waṣf* is not a *gharaḍ* in a strict sense, since it is not addressed to a specific person as are all the others" (1973: 40–1, and see n. 100), fails to convince, on the evidence of the *khamriyya* (technically, *waṣf al-khamr*), which often has neither an explicit nor an implied addressee. The utility of retaining *waṣf* as a generic category lies in its presumed neutrality, which facilitates its use for the indirect expression of praise or blame.

11 The division into praise and blame is often considered "Aristotelian"; van Gelder (1988: 97) comments on the consequences for Arabic genre theory of the early rendering of Aristotle's "tragedy" and "comedy" as *madīḥ* and *hijāʾ*, which "provided a starting-point for those critics who made the polarity of 'praise' and 'blame' the basis of a generic theory of poetry". The view of poetry as praise or blame arguably antedates Aristotelian influence, and it was simple enough for philosophers to adduce Arabic examples in support of this classification (as did Averroes in the *Talkhīṣ*). As Butterworth observes, "The pedagogic or political role [Averroes] assigns the poet is clearly linked to his understanding that poetry focuses either on praise or on blame, but this understanding of poetry's function derives more from the rank he ascribes to poetry in the hierarchy of knowledge than from his misapprehension of what Aristotle meant by tragedy and comedy" (Averroes 1986: 13–14). For a representative view of the "misunderstanding" thesis see Hardison 1970; for challenges to this view see e.g. J. B. Allen 1976; Black 1990: 4–13. Heinrichs notes the "coincidence" between the system in the *Burhān* and that of Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī (d. 360?/971?) in his redaction of the *Dīwān* of Abū Nuwās, organized on the basis of *aghrāḍ* and progressing from the "serious" to the "lighter" genres (1973: 42–3).

12 See e.g. Qudāma's *Naqd al-shiʿr* where, after defining the six major poetic genres as *madīḥ*, *hijāʾ*, *marāthī*, *tashbīh*, *waṣf* and *nasīb* (1956: 23) and announcing that he will describe them "one by one" (28), he concludes, "We have discussed these … as an example of others and a lesson concerning those we have not discussed" (70). Persian discussions of genre are perfunctory: Shams-i Qays treats the *ajnās* of *nasīb* and *tashbīb* as categories of *ghazal* (love poetry), primarily in the context of the *qaṣīda*'s exordium

(1909: 383–96); neither Rāduyānī's (late fifth/eleventh century) *Tarjumān al-balāgha* (1949) nor Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāṭ's (d. 573/1177) *Ḥadāyiq al-siḥr* (1960) include discussions of genre. Arabic (and later Persian) genres resemble what Fowler terms "rhetorical" genres (or types), which are less "genres" in the later Western sense of a combination of formal and substantive elements than "a family of topics and formulas" which "could combine with several external forms" and "be used in different formal kinds" (1982: 113–14). Cairns attempts a distinction between rhetorical and non-rhetorical genres, the latter being those "which were never embraced by rhetoric and were never taught and practised in the rhetorical schools" (1972: 75, and see 71–85); the distinction is not useful for Arabic or Persian. Although Arabic writing on rhetoric did not begin in earnest until the fourth/tenth century, the centrality of a rhetorical concept of discourse – of discourse as eloquent communication – is evident from the earliest recorded examples. Elements of this native rhetorical tradition (especially *dicta* in praise of eloquence) were incorporated into later writings on *balāgha*.

13 Abū Tammām was criticized for this line by one Aḥmad ibn ʿUbayd ibn Nāṣiḥ, who asked him, "Did you mean to describe their good condition after (his death) or their bad condition?" "Their bad condition," he replied. "By God, the stars are not more beautiful when the moon does not accompany them," said Aḥmad, citing verses by Abū Isḥāq al-Khuzaymī in illustration, which silenced Abū Tammām (al-Marzubānī 1924: 306–7). Cf. al-Ṣūlī's comment: "His critics said: He wanted to praise him, but lampooned him; for his tribe were undistinguished, but when he died they were illuminated by his death" (ibid.: 322–3).

14 Something of this is reflected in the "grammatical" approach to genre seen in the statement of Ibn al-Muʿadhdhal (p. 28 above). On the connection of the persona with grammatical persons see Elliott 1982: 29–30; J. B. Allen 1984; on the identification of genre/speaker/author see also Kilito 1978: 31–2.

15 Cf. Jauss 1982: 81. The combination or inclusion of genres does not deprive the poem of an overall generic identity (see Cairns 1972: 158–76); Jauss uses "generic dominant" to denote the chief element "that shapes the system" of the poetic text.

16 The critics were well aware of such techniques of generic transfer. Usāma ibn Munqidh (d. 488/1188), for example, has a lengthy chapter on *naql*, defined as "moving a topic from one *gharaḍ* to another," e.g. from wine to love (1960: 205, and see in general 205–12).

17 J. Montgomery suggests that the term "movement" "captures the essence of the *qaṣīdah* and how it was composed in a way in which the words 'section' or 'passage' do not. . . . Its self-containment and potential independence capture the peculiar nature of any movement of a pre-Islamic *qaṣīdah*, which is both integral to, and independent of the *qaṣīdah* when considered as a holistic phenomenon" (1986: 1, n. 3).

18 This is often associated with the change "from an oral convention to a literary tradition" (Heinrichs 1986: 1; cf. Monroe 1972: 37–8; S.P. Stetkevych 1991: 33–5, 105–6; Meisami 1994b: 68, 72). This issue will be alluded to from time to time; but a thorough discussion of it is beyond the scope of the present work.

19 Badawi's suggestion that such forms provided outlets for self-expression in an otherwise restrictive milieu (1980: 12) raises the question of the poetic persona and its relation to the "self" of the poet discussed in this chapter. It might be possible to see the "minor" genres as non-canonical, versus the canonical *qaṣīda*; but the question of canons is a complex one which is outside the scope of this discussion. For useful comments see Altieri 1983; his definition of canon as "those texts a culture takes as absolutely basic to its literary education" (1983: 63 n. 6) has considerable relevance for the Arabo-Persian tradition, particularly with respect to the anthologizing tendency characteristic of *adab*.

20 "La renouvellement de la poésie commence ... par la musique et va toujours plus loin qu'elle" (Vadet 1968: 96). Vadet stresses the importance of the musician, who could make or break reputations, and who was both performer and critic, manipulating texts to his own ends, and (because of his humble origins) becoming in particular the promoter of love poetry. For the situation in the Abbasid period, Bencheikh insists, "aucun des arguments avancés pour prouver l'influence de l'art musical sur la création poétique n'est convaincant, et les hypothèses avancées se basent, la plupart du temps, sur des impressions ou sur des investigations fragmentaires. Nous croirions plutôt, au vu de la nature des relations qui lient le poète et le compositeur, à un développement parallèle des deux arts. S'il se crée un type de mélodie qui convient à un certain type de poésie – nous pensons ici à la production élégiaque – c'est que le milieu bagdadien agit *simultanément* sur le *muġannī* et sur le poète qui finissent par puiser à une inspiration commune" (1975a: 126; author's emphasis). See further Chapter 4.

21 For Ibn Qutayba's (d. 276/889) famous definition of the *qaṣīda* see Chapter 3; for discussions see Meisami 1987: 49–60; Jacobi 1982. J. Stetkevych finds the distinction between poems on the basis of length unfruitful, and stresses the importance of generic classifications which would further clarify the precise relationships between different types of poems, short and long, which co-existed because they fulfilled different functions (1967: 2–3). On the *qiṭʿa/qaṣīda* distinction see further Bencheikh 1975b: 111–15; the view that *qaṣīda*s were "built up" from shorter units is discussed by Jacobi (1971: vi; see also the review of Jacobi 1971 by Windfuhr [1974b: 531]). On differences between short and long poems see e.g. Ibn Rashīq 1972, 1: 186–9 (short poems can be memorized and "fall easier on the ears", long poems are "for the understanding"); Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī 1981: 303 (short poems should consist of a single *gharaḍ*, long *qaṣīda*s may – preferably should – combine several). Shams-i Qays distinguishes between *qaṣīda* and *qiṭʿa* on the basis of length: if a poem is more than fifteen or sixteen verses, it is a *qaṣīda*, if less, a *qiṭʿa*; in Persian *qaṣīda*s *taṣrīʿ* (the rhyming of both hemistichs of the opening line) is obligatory, and if this is not observed the poem is a *qiṭʿa* no matter what its length (1909: 171).

22 To some extent this move towards the development of hitherto minor genres into independent poetic types continues trends begun earlier, for example in the erotic poems of the ʿUdhrī and Hijazi poets and the wine poems of al-Walīd ibn Yazīd (cf. Badawi 1980: 13–18; Meisami 1993a). But most such efforts make no pretensions to canonical status; it is my contention that it is this distinction which marks early Abbasid generic experimentation (cf. also Schoeler 1990: 294). Such poems, moreover, differ from the brief *qiṭʿa*s and epigrammatic poems which also flourished at this period.

23 Topics relating to the description of wine had, in earlier Arabic poetry, either a subsidiary position within the larger *qaṣīda*, or an explicitly occasional status denoted by extreme brevity (see P. Kennedy 1989; Bencheikh, art. "Khamriyya", *EI*[2], 4: 998–1009). The origin of the independent wine poem is popularly attributed to the Umayyad caliph al-Walīd ibn Yazīd (d. 126/744) (n. 23 below; and see Heinrichs 1973: 25; Badawi 1980: 16–17); on the historical development of the *khamriyya* see Bencheikh's article; P. Kennedy 1997.

24 It is, of course, a prominent feature of the entire Arabo-Persian tradition, and we shall have occasion to discuss other aspects of the structural uses of allusion later (see especially Chapters 3 and 7). For an approach to the typology of allusion see Perri 1978.

25 Ibn Qutayba (1981: 426) gives *maẓinna*, "the place where something is likely to be found", for *maṭiyya* in both poets' lines; but the latter seems the more likely reading.

26 Ibn al-Muʿtazz (1925: 12–13) attributes the origin of the affliction/remedy topic to al-Aʿshā (d. ca. 7/629), as does Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī (Abū Nuwās 1958, 3: 2); it appears

in a brief description of wine inserted into a *qaṣīda* praising a group of the Banū Qays (al-Aʿshā 1928: 120–2, no. 22: "And a glass which I drank in pleasure, and another with which I cured myself of its effects"). Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī's discussion of the topic suggests that it was transferred from wine poetry to *ghazal*; after quoting al-Aʿshā's line, he continues, "All those who took this topic from him fell short in its expression, and cannot be considered to have produced its like. Abū Nuwās said, 'And heal me with that which was the affliction,' and padded the statement with something which was not needed, (namely) the words 'which was the affliction [*kānat hiya d-dāʾu*]'. Al-Majnūn said, 'Just as the wine-drinker cures himself with wine' [*ka-mā yatadāwī shāriba l-khamri bil-khamri*], but this is not in the same context as al-Aʿshā's line. Similar is al-Buḥturī's line: 'I cured myself of Laylā with Laylā, but was not healed of my affliction: he who clings to his affliction is cured' [*tadawaytu min laylā bi-laylā fa-ma shtafā mini d-dāʾi man qad bāta bid-dāʾi yashtafī*]" (1994, 1: 316–17). It should be noted that *laylā* is not merely a proper name, but means literally "the dizziness induced by wine."

27 It is to such patterns that Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406) refers in his discussion of the poetic *uslūb*, "a mental form for metrical word combinations which is universal in the sense of conforming with any particular word combination. This form is abstracted by the mind from the most prominent individual word combinations and given a place in the imagination comparable to a mold or loom" (1958, 3: 376). After citing a number of representative examples – which include al-Nābigha's "O abode of Mayya" (quoted above, p. 34), the opening line of Imruʾ al-Qays's *Muʿallaqa*, various invocations for rain to water the abodes, and so on – Ibn Khaldūn concludes, "The author of a spoken utterance builds his utterance in (the molds) used by (the Arabs). They are known only to those who have expert knowledge of (Arabic) speech, such that in their minds they have an absolute universal mold, which is the result of abstraction from specific individual molds. They use (that universal mold) as their model in composing utterances, just as builders use the mold as their model, and weavers the loom" (1958, 3: 380, and see 375–81; on *uslūb* in this sense see also ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī, quoted by Peled 1991: 44).

28 For further examples of Abū Nuwās's adaptation of conventional topics of other genres to wine poetry see Hamori 1969, 1974: 47–77. It was remarked upon by the poet's contemporaries and by later critics, and was one of the sources of his lasting fame. Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī quotes the grammarian Abū ʿUbayda (d. 209/824–5) as saying, "Abū Nuwās is to the *muḥdathūn* what Imruʾ al-Qays was to the Ancients; for it was he who opened these strategies [*fitan*] to them and guided them to these *maʿānī*" (Abū Nuwās 1958, 1: 11, and see 9–23). Cf. also the negative criticism of Abū Nuwās, on generic grounds, by Abū ʿAlī al-Baṣīr (d. ca. 251/855–6): "Poetry . . . is either *madḥ* or *hijāʾ*. Abū Nuwās excels only in wine and hunting poems. Moreover, the best of what he does in these two genres is stolen from the others" (quoted in Bonebakker 1970b: 97). See also Jacobi 1990 for a discussion of the development of one specific motif, that of the *ṭayf al-khayāl* or "vision of the beloved", from pre-Islamic to Umayyad poetry. Such observations call into question Bencheikh's contention that "the norms of Arabic classicism were determined during the 6th and 7th century [*sic*]" (Jacobi 1990: 50; cf. Bencheikh 1975b: 258), although Jacobi's emphasis on the "reality" of the poetic experience is overstressed.

29 Significant as well in this respect is the "ascetic" Abū al-ʿAtāhiya's admiration for, and association with, the famous singer Mukhāriq (d. 231/835), who set a number of his poems to music, and who was a practitioner of the "modern", experimental school of music. Bencheikh observes concerning this link between a "modernist" musician and a poet who frequently broke with previous tradition, "Mélodie et poésie ont ici un langage commun. L'une trouve son inspiration et ses expressions dans une sorte de

sagesse populaire; l'autre recherche des accents qui soulèvent l'enthousiasme des foules" (1975a: 128; see also 134–40, and especially 135–6, where Bencheikh notes that song-texts rarely comprised more than four verses, each sung individually as a unit, and that musicians chose from a poem only those verses that suited their performance requirements; and 139: "The musician ... neglected the 'official poetry' ... [which was] an essential part of the production of the time").

30 While the division into "schools" has been suggested by Schoeler (see 1990: 281–2), he is careful to note that "Hijazi, ʿUdhrī and Kufan love poetry – especially the first two – frequently overlap in their motifs," and that poets such as Bashshār practiced all three (282; see also Hamori 1990: 204–7). While the authenticity of ʿUdhrī poetry has often been questioned, as Schoeler points out, its existence for poets such as Bashshār and Abū Nuwās "was already a *fait accompli*."

31 See for example the *ghazal* by ʿUmar ibn Abī Rabīʿa discussed by Seidensticker (1994). Such structuring takes the form of progressive movements, pauses, recapitulations and so on that seem indicative of sung poems.

32 On the early *ghazal* and the relationship between sung (*malḥūn*) and "literary" (*mujarrad*) types see J. Humāʾī in Mukhtārī 1962: 569–76 n.1. Humāʾī notes that the sung *ghazal* featured two musical systems: prosodic (or metrical: *ʿarūẓī*), and rhythmical (*īqāʿī*) (as Arabic sung lyrics may also have done; see Stoetzer 1994), the latter corresponding to the musical modes (*maqāmāt*) (571); this musical tension is still found in many "literary" *ghazals* composed in writing. Humāʾī's description of the "three stages of development" of the *ghazal* (sung lyric; independent, written poem; introduction to the *qaṣīda* [i.e. *nasīb*, *tashbīb*]) fails to take into account the conflation of Arabic terminology at the first and third stages, when poets termed their erotic exordia *ghazal* (cf. the "Ramaḍān" *qaṣīda* by Farrukhī discussed in Chapter 3). Cf. also Shams-i Qays 1909: 571–2. The Ziyārid prince Kaykāvūs ibn Iskandar, writing in 475/1082, states in his *Qābūsnāma* (a mirror for princes addressed to his son), "If you compose *ghazals* or songs [*tarāna*], let them be simple, graceful, and fresh, graceful, in well-known rhymes; do not use cold, strange Arabisms. (Depictions) of the lover's state, delicate words and pleasing examples are appropriate, such that both the élite and the common folk may enjoy them, and so that your poetry may become famous. Do not use heavy prosodic [*ʿarūẓī*] metres; for [he does so] whose taste is unsound and who is incapable of (producing) pleasing words and refined meanings. But if you are asked to do so, then it is allowed" (1967: 190).

33 This is not the place to enter into a discussion of the mystical interpretation of Ḥāfiẓ, which has occasioned so much heated debate between its proponents and its critics, although I shall have occasion to refer to specific examples when discussing individual *ghazals*.

34 The line has been interpreted as referring to the release of Shāh Shujāʿ's vizier Jalāl al-Dīn Tūrānshāh from prison and his restoration to his position in 769/1367 (see further Chapter 8); more probably, however, the appeal is to the newly-restored Shāh Shujāʿ, entreating the poet's release either from literal imprisonment or the figurative prison of disfavour. See Meisami 1990a: 151–2.

3 DISPOSITION: THE PARTS OF THE POEM

1 Aristotle divides the parts of a speech into exordium, statement, proof (which includes refutation and comparison), and epilogue (*Rhetoric* III. xiv.1). Classical rhetoric focused primarily on the oration; Williams observes that "the whole thrust of rhetorical theory was to assimilate the condition of poetry to that of prose (particularly oratory) so that it could be subjected to the sort of ordering, both interpretatively and prescriptively, that had been worked out for prose over many

centuries" (1980: xi). The thrust seems to have been in the opposite direction in Arabo-Persian rhetoric and literary practice: poetry and the poetic use of language was the standard to which oratory was likened and artistic prose assimilated (see Mubârak 1931).

2 "Natural order relates events or circumstances in the order they actually or ideally follow. Artificial order revises this order, either by rearranging events or circumstances into a sequence that is not real or normal, or by adding some device like a prologue, interpretive commentary, or transposition of the subject into another mode (as when a dream vision is made to anticipate a historical narrative)" (Kelly 1978b: 242–3; see also Gallo 1978: 70, 73–7).

3 Cf. Dino del Garbo's commentary on Cavalcanti's *Canzone d'Amore*: "In the opening lines … Dino finds, by implication, the four Aristotelian causes": the lady he addresses (the efficient cause); the "scientific" or magisterial manner in which he will answer her request (the formal cause; the "method of treatment" or *forma tractandi*); the "satisfaction of the lady's petition" (the final cause), and the subject matter, "love as apprehended by the soul" (the material cause). Dino goes on to discuss the progression of the next stanza, whose opening employs "artificial order" because it begins with memory (an "intermediary power" located between the intellect and the senses; cf. the poem by al-Muʿtamid discussed in Chapter 6), then follows the stages of apprehension from lower to higher. For a full discussion see Gallo 1978: 77–80.

4 A convenient example of *distinctio* is Hugh of St. Cher's list of the kinds of rule: "The king [rules] the kingdom, the sailor his ship, the rider his horse, the captain the battle, the father his family, the teacher his students, the guide the blind man, the shepherd his sheep, the abbot his cloister, the soul the body's members, and reason the heart" (J. B. Allen 1982: 146). *Distinctio* is the basic principle of ordering both in *maʿānī* collections (see Chapter 2) and in works on *badīʿ*, rhetorical figures (see Chapter 7), where a category is first posited and examples arrayed within it (see e.g. the works discussed by Sadan, 1991). See also Tuve 1972: 299–309.

5 See e.g. Cairns 1972: 5–7; Jackson 1980: 9–12; von Grunebaum 1971: 346–9; van Gelder 1982a, and the criticisms by Hamori (1984b) and Sperl (1989: 3, 6–7). J. B. Allen observes, "Medieval poems tend to operate as if incomplete – or rather, as chapters or books in the whole poem made of ethics – the whole poem of the real world;" he posits a contrast between such "incomplete" medieval poems and Renaissance poems, "which are … whole microcosms" (1982: 151; on the Renaissance poem as "literary microcosm" see Heninger 1974). The distinction is difficult to maintain for either European or Arabo-Persian poetry: what, after all, constitutes a "whole microcosm"? Arguably many Arabic and Persian poets viewed their poems as just such. See further Meisami 1990c, 1993c, 1993d; and see Chapter 6.

6 Ibn Qutayba has been criticized for his "conservatism" in asserting that poets should not depart from these conventions (though they frequently did) by describing, for example, a journey by boat, or through gardens or urban landscapes (see e.g. Lecomte 1965: 399; idem, *EI*² , art. "Ibn Ḳutayba"; Trabulsi 1955: 70–3, and, for contrasting views, Bonebakker 1970b: 96; Bencheikh 1975b: 117–19; van Gelder 1982a: 42–5 *et passim*; Jacobi 1982). The issue is one of function; and as Ibn Rashīq points out (and Ibn Qutayba was undoubtedly well aware), "It is meaningless for the urban (poet) to invoke the ruined encampments except figuratively [*majāzan*]" (1972, 1: 226, and see in general 225–30 on comparisons between urban and bedouin conventions in *nasīb* and *raḥīl*). As Monroe comments (1972: 42–3), the actual order of the parts of pre-Islamic *qaṣīdas* is far more flexible than Ibn Qutayba's scheme would suggest, lending weight to the argument for its idealizing status.

7 Whether *ḥusn al-ibtidāʾ* refers to the first *maʿnā* to be composed or extends to anticipating the theme of the entire poem is not always clear; in practice sometimes one seems meant, sometimes the other. For the notion that the beginning of a poem anticipates its theme see Gordon Williams' discussion of "thematic anticipation", whereby "a theme that will become significant later is introduced at a much earlier stage in such a way that the reader must recognise in the prior context a signal to suspend judgement," a technique that "often has a close structural similarity to the poetic use of analogy." The "device [is] particularly suited to creating coherence and sustaining the energy of a poem without submitting the movement of ideas to a prosaic system of logic," and "can be used to hold complex structures together, and so permits a wide range of experimentation" (1980: xii, 96, and see especially 95–161).

8 According to Ibn Rashīq, *taṣrīʿ* does not merely indicate rhymed hemistichs (for which he uses the term *taqfiya*), but the equivalence of the *ʿarūḍ* (the final foot of the first hemistich) to the *ḍarb* (the final foot of the second) in the rhyming line, though they may differ in the remainder of the poem (1972, 1: 173). Shams-i Qays states that *taṣrīʿ* is obligatory if the poem is to be considered a *qaṣīda* – otherwise, no matter what its length, it must be termed a *qiṭʿa* – and that the quatrain (*rubāʿī*) is distinguished from other *muqaṭṭaʿāt* by the presence of *taṣrīʿ* in its first distich (1909: 390–1). The occurrence of *taṣrīʿ* in other than the poem's opening line has often led to the view that some ancient *qaṣīda*s, as they have come down to us, represent the fusion of two separate poems; cf. P. Kennedy 1989: 100, n. 16 (who cites in particular an example by Imruʾ al-Qays; the line in question would appear to be a transitional line), and Van Gelder 1982a: 120 (who suggests a "fusion of two originally independent poems," where *taṣrīʿ* indicates the beginning of the second poem, in the case of early poetry especially); and compare Williams 1980: 122–53.

9 Cf. Shams-i Qays 1909: 391: "[The poets] may give a *qaṣīda* several *maṭlaʿ*s, when they move from one description to another; among the poets Khāqānī was the most enamoured of this procedure, and composed several *qaṣīda*s with multiple *maṭlaʿ*s." See for example Farrukhī's "Ramaḍān" *qaṣīda*, discussed in this chapter; the device is also used often by Mukhtārī, Anvarī, and others.

10 "ʿAskarī acknowledges in passing a point that seems to be basic to the form of Arabic poetry in general, namely, that a poem often begins with an apostrophe, either to some imaginary companion or to the poet himself, never to the auditor. After relating several anecdotes about poets who unintentionally insulted the addressees of their poems by beginning with a verse that could have been construed as applying to them ... [he] lists a number of first lines by several famous poets. He concludes with the remark that the function of the excellent beginning is to draw the attention of the auditor, and to arouse his curiosity about what comes next. But from the examples, it is clear that he does not have in mind any particular kind of connection between the beginning of the poem and its main point" (Scheindlin 1974: 17). What Abū Hilāl actually says is that if poems have unpleasant opening lines "the hearer may take a bad portent from them, even though he knows that the poet addresses himself rather than the *mamdūḥ*" (al-ʿAskarī 1986: 431); while he gives examples of addresses to companions, he makes no general statement concerning the addressee of an apostrophe. In one of his examples the poet addresses his soul, in others the beloved, the "blamer", a named individual, etc.; in others he asks a rhetorical question (see ibid.: 434–6). Thus no generalization about addressees can be made; equally, the point is not that there be a "particular kind" of connection between the poem's beginning and its theme, but that there *be* a connection.

11 This passage was criticized by the editor of Bashshār's *Dīwān* as being "of trivial meaning and weak praise" (1950, 1: 112 n. 1); but if read as implying ʿUqba's lack of true generosity, its function in the poem becomes crucial. On the other hand, it

shows us that poetry was not always "sublime" and unconnected with the world in which the poet moved.

12 Pre-modern Western writers did not wholly ignore transitions. Williams has discussed the importance of transitional stanzas in Augustan poetry (see 1980: 2, 4, 11, 42), while J. B. Allen's emphasis on the importance of knowing where the divisions in a medieval text occur implies a system in which the proper order and division of the parts of a text were considered of crucial importance (1982: 129–31).

13 See e.g. Ibn al-Muʿtazz, who in his *Ṭabaqāt al-shuʿarāʾ al-muḥdathūn* speaks of *al-takhalluṣ min al-nasīb ilā al-madīḥ* (1956: 181); al-Jāḥiẓ in *al-Bayān wa-al-tabyīn* (1968, 1: 192, 212); and other instances quoted by van Gelder 1982a: 34. *Ḥusn al-khurūj* was used by Thaʿlab (d. 291/904; see ibid.: 47), whose examples include transitions from topic to topic within larger segments of the poem. In the *Kitāb al-badīʿ* Ibn al-Muʿtazz discusses *ḥusn al-khurūj min maʿnā ilā maʿnā*, "excellent transition from topic to topic" (see ibid.: 50–1). As van Gelder points out, whatever the terminology, the examples demonstrate the occurrence of a "shift of focus" (ibid.: 51), and point to sentential divisions between topics. See further Chapter 4.

14 Ibn Ṭabāṭabā's third type (which van Gelder places second) exemplifies the relationships of contrast or congruence described by Sperl (1979, 1989: 9–27). This type is found frequently in Persian poetry (the first type is also seen among those poets who imitate Arabic models; see Meisami 1996), which supports the suggestion that the *ʿIyār* was known to Persian writers well before it provided a model for Shams-i Qays Rāzī (see Chapter 1).

15 "The *abyāt* in relation to an ordered poem [*al-shiʿr al-manẓūm*] are like isolated letters in a composite word [or discourse: *kalām*]; segments [*fuṣūl*] made up of verses are like words made up of letters, and *qaṣīda*s made up of segments are like expressions made up of phrases (*alfāẓ*). . . . Just as words have two values [*iʿtibārān*], one relating to their matter and essence and the other to the meaning they indicate, so are segments valued (both) for themselves and for what is connected with their form and denotation [*waḍʿ*], and according to the *jihāt* [the specific aspects of the *aghrāḍ* to which they relate] the connected descriptions of which are contained in the segments" (al-Qarṭājannī 1981: 287). Van Gelder objects that "whereas clear boundaries are crossed by combining words into 'expressions' (into the realm of syntax) or by combining 'letters' or sounds into words (from phonology into morphology and semantics), there is no such clarity between the levels of lines and passages or between passages and poems" (1982a: 179). I would suggest that rather than viewing these various domains (syntax, phonology, morphology, semantics) as separate, Ḥāzim sees them as part of a hierarchy (that of intelligible speech), and intends an analogy rather than a systematic comparison; moreover, it might also be suggested that he sees *maʿānī* as semantic units susceptible of combination (into lines, segments etc.) in the same manner as are words on the syntactic level (cf. Williams 1980: ix).

16 Van Gelder finds this passage "problematical": "Although *istiṭrād* is correctly described as 'a sudden turn', to state that *takhalluṣ* is always gradual is obviously untrue" (1982a: 186). The problem is one of terminology rather than of practice; moreover, in this passage *iltifāt* does not refer specifically to "apostrophe", but to a "turn" towards another topic, as it does in the next passage cited. (See further the discussion of *iltifāt* in Chapter 7.)

17 The lines by Muslim are from a *qaṣīda* dedicated to Yaḥyā ibn Khālid al-Barmakī: "Do you really not know that many a night whose darkness seemed to pour forth because of your joining it, I remained sleepless – until there showed forth a bright blaze like that of Yaḥyā's smile when Jaʿfar is mentioned." Ḥāzim comments: *Fa-takhallaṣa ilā*

madḥ Yaḥyā wa-staṭrada minhu ilā dhikr Jaʿfar, "He made his exit into praise of Yaḥyā, and digressed from that to mention of Jaʿfar" (1981: 317)

18 Cf. Ḥāzim's discussion of the *nasīb*: "In most cases traditional poems (*al-qaṣāʾid al-aṣliyya*) begin with a reference to the lover: his halting at the dwelling-places, watching the lightning, suffering during the long night. After this, most refer to the adversities that befell both lover and beloved together. . . . Less often one opens with references to the beloved." This portion concluded, "'the reins of the discourse should be skillfully turned' towards the *madīḥ*" (al-Qarṭājannī 1981: 304–5; translated by van Gelder 1982a: 184). Van Gelder comments: "There can be no doubt that Ḥāzim's expression 'turning the reins' is not merely a metaphor. It is an allusion to the *raḥīl*, made 'in passing' as though it were only a brief transitional theme. . . . Since *raḥīl* often forms a substantial part of the introduction . . . it ought to be treated as part of rather than as a point in the poem. *Raḥīl* is not listed among the traditional *aghrāḍ* such as *nasīb* and *madīḥ*; this might be the reason why Ḥāzim, in his discussion of the parts of the poem, implicitly included *raḥīl* in the *nasīb*." See also Sperl 1989: 9–13; Hamori 1974: 16–20; Jacobi 1982.

19 On the night of the murder ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Yaḥyā ibn Khāqān, al-Mutawakkil's vizier, was at work with his secretary Jaʿfar ibn Ḥāmid. A servant burst in and asked, "'Why are you sitting, my master?' He asked, 'What's the matter?' The servant replied, 'The palace is a single sword!'" ʿUbayd Allāh ordered Jaʿfar to investigate; he returned with the news that the caliph and al-Fatḥ ibn Khāqān (al-Mutawakkil's closest companion and a powerful official) had been murdered. ʿUbayd Allāh fled, accompanied by his servants and his personal entourage, forced open three of the river gates, found a skiff and embarked in it (see al-Ṭabarī 1989: 182). The line is an example of *istiṭrād*; ʿUbayd Allāh is criticized (lines 23, 45) for fleeing and for refusing to avenge the caliph (see ibid.: 183, and, on the murder of al-Mutawakkil, 171–84; Hodgson 1974, 2: 485–6).

20 I read this poem as celebrating al-Muʿtaṣim's accession after the death of al-Maʾmūn (d. 218/833). The new caliph is figured by "spring", while "winter", which sowed the seeds that will prosper under him, refers to his predecessor. This seems borne out by the reference to "nineteen years" in line 8, which has been read by some as indicating that the poem was composed for al-Maʾmūn (cf. Abū Tammām 1951, 2: 193, commentary; and see Ashtiany 1993: 473 n. 2: "Although al-Tibrīzī's rubric identifies [the caliph] as al-Muʿtaṣim," his gloss on line 8 suggests al-Maʾmūn. See also Ashtiany 1994, 215 n. 4). Line 28 in the edition used by Ashtiany (but not translated by her) reads: *bith-thāmin al-mustakhlifi ttasaqa l-hudā ḥattā takhayyara rushdahu l-mutaḥayyiru*, "With the eighth appointed caliph right guidance has become well ordered, so that even the bewildered has chosen his truth" (ibid.: 481); if it is authentic (and we may note that *takhayyara* forms a *tajnīs* with *tatakhayyaru*, "being free to choose", in the preceding line, and that the image of well-ordered rule extends over lines 27–29), there can be no doubt of the *mamdūḥ*'s identity: al-Muʿtaṣim was the eighth caliph. The conceit that this spring is even more flourishing than all previous ones suggests that al-Muʿtaṣim's reign will surpass that of his predecessor, and is appropriate to an accession poem.

21 Ibn Rashīq defines *istiṭrād* as occurring "when a poet builds many words (*kalām kathīr*) on a word (*lafẓ*) of a different type (*nawʿ*) on which he breaks off his words, and which is (in fact) his aim rather than what preceded; after which he returns to his first words. So it is as though he came across that word unintentionally, without design. Usually it takes the form of a comparison" (1972, 1: 236; van Gelder 1982a: 117).

22 Van Gelder comments: "Von Grunebaum translated *al-mustaṭrad* and *istiṭrād* with 'the digressing (poem)' and 'digression'. Indeed, *istiṭrād* came to mean 'digression' in the

sense of 'deviation from the subject in discourse or writing', which aptly describes the figure of speech in Abū Tammām's lines. However, Abū Tammām used the term in a somewhat different sense, for he did not temporarily deviate from the main subject by introducing an unrelated *à propos*. On the contrary, his avowed purpose was the derision of ʿUthmān, whereas the description of the horse served as a rather deceptive introduction. This deception he called *istiṭrād*, a word that belonged to the terminology of military tactics: a feint or shamming manoeuvre, whereby a horseman first turns his back, then suddenly attacks. . . . Later authors often dispensed with the contexts of [the] examples [which they cited]. As a result, some confusion arose between the concepts *khurūj*, or *takhalluṣ*, and *istiṭrād*, since both are characterized by the occurrence of a personal name" (1982a: 35–6). Averroes uses *istiṭrād* in the sense of *takhalluṣ*; cf. 1986: 29, 90, 111. Shams-i Qays, who defines *istiṭrād* as being "when a poet produces a description in such a manner that, when he brings it to an end, he joins to it that which is the intention of the poem and thereby points to it" (1909: 346), seems also to equate it with *takhalluṣ*.

23 The feast of Sada was celebrated some forty days before Nawrūz, in midwinter; among its rituals was the lighting of giant bonfires.

24 The order is so in the editions; but perhaps the two lines should be reversed.

25 Von Grunebaum based his conception of the "openness" of Arabic and Persian poems on theories of *apertura* developed in connection with modernist art forms (literature, music) by Luigi Pareyson (*Estetica-Teoria della formativita*, 1954) and Umberto Eco (*Opera operta*, 1962). But while Eco distinguished between modernist *apertura*, which often arises from a deliberate rejection of closure (cf. Smith 1968: 234–60), and the polysemy characteristic of medieval texts which leads to openness of interpretation, von Grunebaum found the concept of the "open work" of "considerable heuristic value" for Arabic and Persian poetry and did not hesitate to employ it in a broad sense (see 1971: 346–9). Even such apparently open-ended poems as that of al-ʿAbbās ibn al-Aḥnaf discussed in Chapter 1, however, employ recognizable closural strategies.

26 Cf. Shams-i Qays's discussion of endings, which contains no theoretical statements but merely presents examples of good and bad endings, only one of which is extensively criticized as representing a breach of decorum rather than closural failure (1909: 379–83).

27 On the motif of the *ṭayf al-khayāl*, the night-visiting phantom, in Arabic poetry, see Jacobi 1990. Al-ʿAbbās modifies the convention by having the phantom appear in a garden rather than in the desert, as was customary in earlier poetry, and by presenting the apparition as a desirable companion rather than something to be feared.

28 Smith suggests that the effect of such "closural allusions", which include "references not to termination, finality, repose, or stability as such, but to events which, in our non-literary experiences, are associated with these qualities . . . such as sleep, death, dusk, night, autumn, winter, descents, falls, leave-takings and home-comings," may be attributed to processes of association: "that death, night, autumn, and farewells are terminal events, that references to them would presumably signify or suggest that something was ending, and that by some process of psychological conduction this significance might be conveyed to the reader's experience of the poem itself" (1968: 172, 175–7). I would argue (along with Tuve; cf. 1972: 290) that the "associations" evoked are deliberate and not to be confused with the psychological notion of "free association", and that both audience and poet shared an awareness of their significance not predicated on some elusive and subjective "process of psychological conduction".

29 Imruʾ al-Qays's *Muʿallaqa* was a frequent subject of such parodic *taḍmīn*; Usāma ibn Munqidh, who notes the *taḍmīn* in line 20 of ʿAlī ibn al-Jahm's *qaṣīda* (1960: 355; he quotes lines 18 and 20), cites several other examples (by e.g. al-Ṣūlī, Ibn al-Muʿtazz;

ibid.: 352, 358). See also al-ʿAbbāsī (1947, 4: 158–60), who comments that "(many) poets have played with quoting from this *qaṣīda*" and provides a number of examples (mostly by secretary-poets or officials), including a "strange" instance "invented", he says, by the Ṣāḥib Fakhr al-Dīn Ibn Miknās in a jesting poem to one of his friends who had a large nose (which does not bear quotation); and, most importantly, excerpts from Ḥāzim al-Qartājannī's lengthy *qaṣīda* in praise of the Prophet (see Meisami 1997 for a study of this poem, and see Chapter 7).

30 The allusion is presumably to Maḥmūd's campaign against Ganda (Nanda), who had occupied the fort of Kālanjar, in 413/1022, referred to in the "New Year" *qaṣīda*; the fort was not taken, as the siege ended in a truce. There is no evidence that Muhammad participated, let alone acquitted himself notably, in that campaign, the details of which are obscure, as is this allusion. See further Meisami 1990b: 36.

31 On these events see Bayhaqī 1995: 221–36 (the execution of Ḥasanak); 282–96 (the plot against Aryāruq, who was made drunk by Masʿūd for the purpose of entrapping him); 322–9 (the arrest of Amīr Yūsuf, who died in prison in 423/1032); 359–60 (the celebration of ʿĪd al-Fiṭr 422/1031).

32 The emphasis on self-naming has been linked to increased concern with problems of authorship and of individual creativity, as well as to the development of mystical poetry and to the growing use of artisans' signatures in other crafts – painting and the decorative arts, for example (cf. Rypka 1968b: 552; Grabar 1968: 652; and compare Stevens 1978). Whatever the historical and social reasons, there is no doubt that in structural terms the development of this convention reflects an increasing tendency towards explicit closure, and towards the unification of the brief lyric. Losensky (1998a) moves towards a typology of such signatures in the *ghazal*.

4 DISPOSITION: LARGER STRUCTURES

1 Cf. for example line 22 where, after praising Kāfūr, the poet asks, "Father of musk, is there a superfluity in the cup for me to take? For I have been singing a while since, and you have been drinking;" and 26–27: "I yearn for my people and long to be with them, and where is the ʿAnqāʾ of the West in relation to the passionate lover? But if it be either the father of musk or they, you are sweeter and more delectable to my heart." See also n. 10 below.

2 They are arguably features of earlier poetry as well, but I have not extended my examination backwards to incorporate any significant number of pre-Abbasid texts. The early poetry, moreover, presents textual problems relating to its transmission and redaction which include not only the possibility that texts as we have them are either fragmentary or conflated (cf. Chapter 3, n. 6 above), but that Abbasid redactors may have "regularized" them in accordance with contemporary aesthetic standards.

3 Roman considers this an "open" poem ("that is, a message with different possible interpretations"), a concept he derives from Eco (Roman 1978: 186, 185 n. 1, and cf. Chapter 3, n. 25 above).

4 As an example of the negative propaganda value of poetry, we may note that among al-Maʾmūn's propaganda weapons in the conflict against his half-brother al-Amīn over the succession to the caliphate was the reading of Abū Nuwās's poetry in the Friday sermon, as an illustration of the vices of al-Amīn, whose boon-companion the poet was (cf. al-Marzubānī 1924: 289).

5 Nada Tomiche observes that with al-ʿAbbās "It is the end of the poem … which reveals the essential idea of the text. This is not a cluster (*noeud*) located near the centre of its structure. It is a 'flight' which ends the song with an ascent. It is perhaps this particular strategy, regularly repeated in the last verses of each poem, that gives the feeling that the poem is finished" (1980: 294–5).

6 Jean During posits a formal parallel between the *ghazal* and the *gūsha*s (melodies) of the Persian musical system: the *ghazal* "is made up of *beyt*s, or distichs, which are linked to the totality of the poem by euphonic affinities – chiefly the rhyme scheme – and by color, atmosphere, or mood. A *ghazal* need not be based on any thematic or narrative unity . . . one might easily omit or rearrange distichs without betraying the poem (all except for the first and the last *beyt*). The same holds true with the *gushe*s [sic]: one may omit, rearrange, or add new material (except for the first) without altering the mode (*dastgah*). Hafez said that the poet works like a jeweller, stringing random pearls" (1991: 156). As has already been suggested (Chapter 2, n. 32), there is a difference between poetic practice and music performance practice. A poet composes a poem; a singer selects bits of that poem to set to music. This is discussed by Bencheikh (1975a) for Abbasid practice; and it is noteworthy that the *Kitāb al-Aghānī* will give, for its song-texts, the name of the poet, of the singer(s) who selected and performed it, and the text of the poem excerpted from and its occasion. There is no reason to believe that the same "double standard" does not apply for the Urdu *ghazal* as discussed by Pritchett (1993) – singers select from established texts what they consider appropriate – as is true (based on personal experience) for modern Iranian *ghazal* performance: the sung version of a *ghazal* by Ḥāfiẓ is, for example, often markedly different (i.e. abbreviated) from the original; but many performers also show an awareness of both.

7 We know even less about the performance context of the *qaṣīda* than of the *ghazal* (although we do know that parts of *qaṣīda*s were excerpted as songs – and not always, as might be expected, the more lyrical *nasīb*; cf. the example of Jarīr's poem, Chapter 3, p. 101. A poet might recite his poem himself, or entrust it to a *rāwī*, a professional transmitter-reciter (often an apprentice poet) for memorization and performance. We do not know whether the erotic *nasīb* might have been sung rather than declaimed, although there are internal indications (e.g. the use of internal rhyme and parallel phrasing, an address to a minstrel; see further Chapter 7) that suggest that this might have been the case.

8 Sperl divides this *qaṣīda* as follows: [1–6: *nasīb*] A: The reprovers (1, 2; 2 lines); B: the *aṭlāl* (3–5; 3 lines); C: the *nasīb* (6–8; 3 lines; sectional parallelism between A and C); [9–38: *madīḥ*] D: Introduction to *mamdūḥ* (9–11; 3 lines); [Part one: general praise] E: First section of general praise: the ruler's virtue (12–15; 4 lines); F: Second section of general praise: the ruler as warlord (16–19; 4 lines; parallelism between E and F); G: The ruler and his tribe (20–24; 5 lines); [Part two: the ruler at war] H: The ruler and his enemies: first section on Bābak (25–29; 5 lines; parallelism between G and H); I: Second section on Bābak (30–33; 4 lines); J: War against the Byzantines (34–37; 4 lines; parallelism between I and J); K: Finale (38; 1 line) (1989: 28–29). See also Sperl's analyses of *qaṣīda*s by Mihyār al-Daylamī and Abū al-ʿAtāhiya (ibid.: 49–50, 57–8; 85–93), which show that proportion is an important principle of composition and that, moreover, both the basic proportional relations and the fundamental thematic, semantic, imagistic and other features are introduced at the outset of the poem, in the *nasīb* (ibid.: 93; see also, on al-Maʿarrī, 132–54.)

9 It is a subject for speculation whether such basic units were or were not associated with certain types of poetry because of a symbolic numerical value. Five (the number of the microcosm) is especially frequent in panegyric, and particularly in victory poems; six is frequent in other (non-victory) types of panegyric and in admonitory poems (see e.g. Abū al-ʿAtāhiya 1965: 24–5); seven (the number of the cosmos) is often found in religious, esoteric and mystical poetry, as will be seen in Chapter 6. A more extensive investigation of this aspect might yield interesting results; however, it is not maintained here that there is always, or even in most cases, a symbolic significance to the numerical unit chosen as the base.

10 The *qaṣīda* to Kāfūr employs the following scheme: *nasīb* (1–16) + *takhalluṣ* (where Kāfūr is named: 17–22): 6 + 5 + 5 + 5; *madīḥ* (22–42) + Peroration (43–47): 6 + 5 + 5 + 5. The parallelism between the first part of the *nasīb* (emphasizing the poet's deprivation) and the first part of the *madīḥ* proper (emphasizing his hope of compensation), each amplified by one line (the panegyric segment framed, moreover, by the two references to "father of musk"; cf. n. 1 above), places a pronounced stress on these motifs.

11 Quintilian observes, "The term epideictic seems to me ... to imply display rather than demonstration, and to have a very different meaning from encomiastic. For although it includes laudatory oratory, it does not confine itself thereto. Will any one deny the title of epideictic to panegyric? But yet panegyrics are advisory in form and frequently discuss the interests of Greece. We may therefore conclude that, while there are three kinds of oratory, all three devote themselves in part to the matter in hand, and in part to display" (*Institutes* III.iv.12–14).

12 The pedantic explanation emphasizes the comparison; Muḥammad was, moreover, linked to the "moon-like face" (of the *sāqī*) in the "false transition" at line 18, suggesting his love of drinking. There is a considerable body of literature relating to such comparisons and their decorum; see, for example, al-Jurjānī 1954: 322–3.; Meisami 1990b: 37–8, 43 n. 44.

5 DISPOSITION: THE *QAṢĪDA* AND ITS ADAPTATIONS

1 On the *qaṣīda* to al-Mustaʿīn cited by al-Marzubānī see al-Buḥturī 1963, 1: 524–6; it is dated to Rabīʿ II 249/June 863, following the murder of al-Mustaʿīn's crony Utāmish and the latter's secretary Shujāʿ, on which see ibid., 1: 524n.; al-Ṭabarī 1985: 12–13.

2 Aḥmad ibn Abī Duʾād was *qāḍī al-quḍāt* (chief judge) under al-Muʿtaṣim, and patronized a number of poets and men of letters, among them the famed prose writer al-Jāḥiẓ.

3 "Al-Ḥajjāj [governor of Iraq] had imprisoned Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab during the reign of al-Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik; Yazīd escaped from prison, and went to Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik in Jerusalem. Sulaymān honoured him, and sent his son Ayyūb with him to the court of his brother ʿAbd al-Malik.... When they entered al-Walīd's presence, he pardoned Yazīd, and sent him to Sulaymān, where he obtained his favour, and Sulaymān honoured him greatly" (Abū Tammām 1951, 1: 399–400; ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz was a son of al-Walīd).

4 ʿUnṣurī was apparently accused of addressing a poem to Amīr Yūsuf that had originally been composed for someone else (see Yūsufī 1972: 90). There is no record of any other panegyric composed to this prince, who died early in Masʿūd's reign; ʿUnṣurī did address a number of panegyrics to Maḥmūd's younger brother Abū al-Muẓaffar Naṣr, who was apparently his sponsor at the Ghaznavid court and who died in 412/1020–21. Did he perhaps recycle a poem intended for Naṣr and dedicate it to Yūsuf after Naṣr's death?

5 Van Gelder also quotes Ibn al-Athīr's remarks on mixing genres in *madīḥ*, especially in victory poems, which should omit the *nasīb* (1992: 17); these, however, cannot be directly related to the problem of *nasīb/hijāʾ* combinations.

6 Van Gelder speculates on the subject of "penetrate" (*li-takhriqa*), which cannot be *nasīb*, which is masculine; I suggest it may be *awāʾilihā*, "their beginnings" (i.e. the poems), and that the somewhat odd *takhrīqa* (also meaning "to go beyond the bounds of the ordinary") is chosen for its semi-*jinās* with *muḥriq*, "burning", and *sa-arhaqu* (5), "I shall constrain him".

7 Yaʿqūb ibn Dāʾūd was the caliph al-Mahdī's vizier; his brother Ṣāliḥ was al-Mahdī's governor of Basra. Both were lampooned by Bashshār, who in one poem asserted that

Ya'qūb was the true caliph, while al-Mahdī spent his time occupied with pleasure. According to the *Aghānī*, Ya'qūb seized his chance when Bashshār composed an invective verse against the caliph, had the poet imprisoned, beaten to death, and his body thrown into the Tigris (see al-Iṣbahānī 1955, 3: 238–45).

8 This did not go unremarked. Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī comments: "Al-Mubarrad said, 'I never knew a poet praise a caliph and begin with such a *nasīb*; however, he became serious in the panegyric, and achieved his goal. Al-Rashīd was one of those who refused to permit, either in his presence or wherever [it might reach him], any mention of kisses, drinking cups (of wine), and the like, because of his magnificence and the nobility of his rule, and his remoteness from any imputation of indecency or anything close to it. But Abū Nuwās used to begin his excellent panegyrics with that (type of) *nasīb* [i.e., with wine], in which he moved freely and which was the major element of his style.' 'Īsā ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Sahl al-Ḥārithī said, 'Al-Rashīd would not listen to any poetry containing obscenity or jesting, and in the exordia to his panegyrics kisses or glances were not mentioned. But when Abū Nuwās came from Egypt and asked leave to praise him, and was introduced into his presence by the Barmakids, he recited, "Long have I wept over the traces of ruined encampments." When he reached the description of wine al-Rashīd's face altered; but when he came to "If the red wine has exhausted all my money," he grew quiet a bit. When he recited, "Many a cup like heaven's lamp have I drunk," (the caliph) was about to order him (to stop); but when he recited, "Blessings on Him Who guides all matters with His power," he was seized with delight, and commanded (that the poet be paid) twenty thousand dirhams'" (Abū Nuwās 1958, 1: 120–1).

9 See also Bashshār 1963: 99–100, which follows the *Aghānī*; this version differs substantially from that of the Cairo edition (Bashshār 1950, 3: 170–2). Lines 1–3 and 5 of the *Aghānī* version, and 1–3 and 6 in the Cairo edition (with some variations), are also attributed to Muṭī' ibn Iyās (al-Iṣbahānī 1955, 3: 287). The poem exemplifies Bashshār's erotic style; Abū Ghassān Damādh recounts: "I asked Abū 'Ubayda why al-Mahdī forbade Bashshār to mention women (in his poetry). He told me, 'At first this was because of the infatuation of the women and youths of Basra with his poetry, until Sawwār ibn 'Abd Allāh the elder and Mālik ibn Dīnār [noted ascetics] said, "Nothing incites the people of this city to sin more than this blind man's poetry." They continually admonished him; Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā' used to say, "Indeed, this blind heretic's words are the most deceitful and seductive of Satan's snares." When this increased, and news of it reached al-Mahdī by various routes, and he [Bashshār] recited his panegyrics to al-Mahdī, (the latter) forbade him to speak of women or compose *tashbīb*; for al-Mahdī was the most jealous of men.' I (Abū Ghassān) said, 'I don't think his poetry is more expressive on these topics than that of Kuthayyir, Jamīl, 'Urwa ibn Ḥizām, Qays ibn Dharīḥ and that group;' (Abu 'Ubayda) answered, 'Not everyone who hears those poems knows what they mean; but Bashshār approaches women in such a way that what he says and what he means are not hidden from them. And what chaste woman can hear Bashshār's words without her heart being affected by them? to say nothing of flirtatious women, and girls who are only interested in men!' Then he recited Bashshār's poem, *Fa-qad lāmanī fī khalīlatī 'Umarū/ wal-lawmu fī ghayri kunhihi ḍajarū* [the present poem] ... and said, 'Hearts incline to this sort of poetry, and (by it) the difficult is made easy'" (al-Iṣbahānī 1955, 3: 176–8.)

10 This is suggested by some self-referential verses: *Rajulun yudda'ī n-nubuwwata fī s-sukhfi wa-man dhā yashukku fī l-anbiyā'ī//Jā'a bil-mu'jizāti yad'ū ilayhā fa-ajību yā ma'shara s-sukhafā'ī*, "A man who claims prophetic station in *sukhf* – and who would doubt the prophets? – has produced miracles which give proof of (his prophetic station); then follow him, O *sukhafā*" (al-Tha'ālibī 1934, 3: 27). Ibn al-Ḥajjāj's hostility to al-Mutanabbī is well known; his opposition helped to prevent that poet's

becoming attached to the entourage of the Buyid vizier al-Muhallabī (see Kraemer 1986a: 55). Moreover, the Buyids were the bitter enemies of the Hamdanids, and it is not unlikely that this enmity would be expressed poetically by targeting their erstwhile panegyrist for satire.

11 On al-Basāsīrī's revolt in 448–51/1057–59 see Daftary 1990: 205–6. Al-Basāsīrī entered Baghdad at the end of 450/1058, pronounced the *khuṭba* in the name of the Fatimid caliph al-Mustanṣir (427–87/1036–94), and appropriated the Abbasid caliphal insignia, which he sent to Cairo; he was defeated and killed by the Saljuqs in December 451/1059. The *qaṣīda* must thus have been written in the spring of 451/1059, when Nāṣir-i Khusraw was probably in Balkh. For further details concerning the allusions in the poem see Meisami 1996: 170.

12 For the complicated puns on chess terms in lines 23–25 see Meisami 1996: 178–9. The injunction to "dismount" (*az asb piyāda shu*) enjoins humility: the *asb* ("horse") is the knight in chess, the *piyāda* (literally, one who goes on foot; a footsoldier) is the pawn: "From being a knight, become a pawn in fate's game of chess." *Rukh*, "face", is the rook, or castle; *bar naṭʿ-i zamīn nih rukh*, "place your face on the mat of earth", means "place your pawn on the chessboard", "enter/submit to the chess-game of fate." *Pīl*, "elephant", is our bishop in chess. "Elephants of day and night" (*pīlān-i shab u rūz*), are white and black, the colours of the chess pieces, but also light and darkness. *Shāhmāt*, "checkmated", also "the king has died", "put to death by a king"; "with a king-elephant" (*ba-shāh-pīlī*), "castled" in chess. Compare the "peaceful" chess-game in the poem by ʿAlī ibn al-Jahm (also attributed to Ibn al-Rūmī) quoted in Chapter 8.

13 An earlier prototype for Khāqānī's *qaṣīda* is one on Īwān Kisrā by al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā (d. 436/1044; 1958, 2: 160–3) which contrasts the past glory of the Sasanians with the ruined state of the Īwān and is explicitly homiletic in tone, with (as in Khāqānī's poem) strong political overtones. See further Meisami 1996: 174 n. 3, 1998b: 75–6. Khāqānī's poem was composed (as a chronogram in the final line indicates) not directly after his first pilgrimage of 551/1156, but in 561/1166, some ten years later (Rypka 1968a: 206; see also Beelaert 1996: 1–2). In the intervening years, following the death of his patron the Sharvānshāh Manūchihr and the succession of the latter's son Akhsitān, the poet was imprisoned, then fled to Darband, and for many years attempted to find patronage elsewhere (in 559/1164, notably, he was in Iraq; see *EI²*, art. "Khāḳānī" [B. Reinert]). The reference to the death of al-Nuʿmān suggests a combination of personal and ethical with political motives: al-Nuʿmān had imprisoned, then killed, his poet, ʿAdī ibn Zayd; that ruler's death at Khusraw Anūshīrvān's hands was brought about by Zayd ibn ʿAdī's demand for vengeance. The *qaṣīda* thus contains a warning to Akhsitān on the consequences of treating his poet unjustly.

14 De Bruijn notes two similar *qaṣīda*s by Sanāʾī, no. 44 and no. 285 (Sanāʾī 1962: 68–71, 641–7); the latter bears a strong resemblance to Anvarī's *qaṣīda* (see de Bruijn 1983: 44). Anvarī's patron was clearly an official, perhaps a vizier, as he is referred to (line 30) as Jalāl al-Vuzārā, "Grandeur of Viziers".

15 *Chu sag bā tīghār*: so in Anvarī 1959, perhaps for *tīghāl*, "lair", "nest"? Mudarris Raẓavī's edition (Anvarī 1993, 1: 167) has *chu bā sag shanghār*, "like a falcon with a dog," which does little to clarify matters.

16 The reference to the "demon" (Ahriman) occupying Solomon's throne, a story recounted in the Legends of the Prophets, may possibly allude to Shāh Maḥmūd's usurpation of Shāh Shujāʿ's rule in 765–7/1362–4.

17 Compare the *nasīb* by Farrukhī (1932: 325) which begins, "A garden is my young love's face, wherein doth bloom the jasmine white," discussed in Meisami 1995: 245, 250–1. Examples of such blazons may be found in the *nasīb* of the *qaṣīda*, in the *ghazal*, and in descriptive passages in epic and romance (see ibid. for examples in all forms).

6 DISPOSITION: VARIETIES OF STRUCTURE

1 Important studies in the West include Heninger 1974; Peterson 1976; Eckhardt 1980; Mitchell 1980 (for earlier studies see the bibliographies in these works). For Arabic and Persian see e.g. Molan 1978; Monroe 1979; Meisami 1987: 203–36, 1988b, 1990c, 1993c, 1993d. For similar compositional techniques in Old Persian see e.g. Schmidt 1974, 1985; for ring-composition in a Babylonian hymn see Abusch 1984. This is not the place to speculate on the universality of such techniques or on the influence of earlier Near Eastern antecedents on Arabic and/or Persian poetry; however, their appearance in many (often related or contiguous) traditions demonstrates their importance as compositional principles.

2 Many such examples could be cited; some have been noted already, others will be discussed later. Examples by Abū Nuwās include: "And you who are like the Pleiades, nay, even more remote" (1962: 214; line 8 of a 15-line poem); "When the drinker tosses it down, you would think him approaching, in night's gloom, a star" (ibid.: 37; line 4 of 7); "Like a tear in the eye of a beautiful woman, white, without kohl, made to flow by mention of calamities" (ibid.: 116; 3 of 5). Cf. the *durrdāna* at the center of Ḥāfiẓ, *P*93, discussed in this chapter. On the association of round objects (eggs, pearls, etc.) with the beloved see Sells 1994: 133.

3 The principality of Sharvān is located on the western shore of the Caspian Sea; Akhsatan's capital was Baku; the quickest way to travel to Tabaristan, Gurgan or Khurasan would be by sea.

4 The Saljūq governor of Khurasan in Nāṣir-i Khusraw's time was Chaghrī Beg Dā'ūd, brother of the Saljūq sultan Ṭughril I (429–55/1038–63).

5 The number seven also refers (among other things) to the seven "Speakers" (*nāṭiq*) descended from the Prophet through his son-in-law ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (the seven Imāms of the Ismāʿīlīs) and to the seven "Completers" (*mutimm*) of the law revealed to the prophets. Seven is also the sum of the two major luminaries (the Sun, equated with the Sābiq – the first emanated principle – and the First Intelligence, and the Moon, equated with the Tālī – the second principle – and with the World Soul) and the five planets, together responsible for the governance of the world. For further permutations of these numerical hierarchies see Ivanow 1948: 66–70.

6 Cf. the opening verse of Sūrat al-Furqān (25: 1): "Blessed is He Who has sent down the Discriminating Book to His servant, that he may be a Warner to all the peoples," and, in the light of the central rhyme *mīzān*, 25: 25: "He has created everything and has determined its measure." See also *EI*^{2}, 2: 949–50, s.v. "furḳān" (R. Paret).

7 On the further significance of the number 28 see Meisami 1993c. Further, as the sun symbolizes at once Revelation, the Prophet who conveyed it, and the Imām who possesses its esoteric knowledge, the prayer to be illumined by the "Sun of knowledge" (39) may be read as the poet's wish that his work be inspired by the Imām, whose knowledge of *ta'wīl* (esoteric exegesis) illumines the *ḥujjat* (a title adopted by the poet) as the sun does the moon (a symbol both for the *ḥujjat* and for *ta'wīl*).

8 Cf. Koran 42: 18: "Allah it is Who has sent down the Book with truth, and also the Balance," which in Ismāʿīlī terms may be interpreted as referring to the *ẓāhir* (exoteric) and *bāṭin* (esoteric) aspects of revelation; and see also 21: 49; 55: 8–10; and 57: 26: "We have sent Our Messengers with manifest Signs and have sent down with them the Book and the Balance, that people may act with justice."

9 Cf. Nāṣir-i Khusraw 1959: 28: "Know that God most high has made the visible world the sign of the invisible world, and physical creation the sign of spiritual creation;" ibid.: 157: "The wise man is he who can take the sensible as an indication of the intelligible."

10 On the concept of texts as literary microcosms see Coulter 1976; Heninger 1974; Meisami 1990c, 1993c, 1993d, 1996.

11 This garden, a part of the city of "Many-Columned Iram" (Iram Dhāt al-'Imād) built by the legendary Arabian king Shaddād, of the tribe of 'Ād, was destroyed by a tempest as a warning against worldly pride; cf. *EI²*, art. "Iram" (W. Montgomery Watt); Koran 89: 7–9. In the Persian tradition it is identified with the seat of the ancient Iranian king Jamshīd (Takht-i Jamshīd, Persepolis; Jamshīd is also conflated with Solomon), who after a prosperous reign displayed overweening pride and was carried off by a whirlwind; his magical world-seeing Cup was unable to warn him of his impending doom.

12 Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī also cites al-A'shā's poem (quoting lines 5, 8–10) as an example of "complete representation in description" (*al-muḥākāt al-tāmma fī al-waṣf*), namely, "exhausting [*istiqṣāʾ*] the details [*ajzāʾ*] which together complete the imaginative representation [*takhyīl*] of the thing described." In *ḥikma* this involves exhausting all parts of the meaning established as "exemplifying the course of affairs and states and how matters persist in this way throughout the ages;" in history it is "exhausting the details of the account represented and their sequence to the extent to which they are ordered with respect to their occurrence." Al-A'shā's lines are such a "complete representation; if he had omitted mentioning some of the details of the story it would have been deficient, and if he had only mentioned them summarily [*ijmālan*] it would not have been a representation but a mere reference [*iḥāla*]" (1981: 105–6).

13 This *ghazal* is only one of a series with identical or similar metre and rhyme schemes which treat this "mystical" topic, often in a light-hearted or even satirical manner. The earliest examples (to my knowledge) are by the Saljuq court poets Burhānī (d. after 465/1071) and his son Mu'izzī (d. after 552/1157?) (my thanks to Ms. G. Tetley for this information). Around half a dozen examples are found in Sanā'ī's *dīvān*, and at least one in that of Sa'dī.

14 Debates involving true personification are rare in Arabic poetry before the post-Abbasid period (seventh to ninth/thirteenth to fifteenth centuries). Heinrichs does not discuss this, seeing that in such *munāẓarāt* "personification is clearly the end result of a development that takes its inception in the prehistory of the genre, in the *zahriyyāt*, or *nawriyyāt*, i.e., poems devoted to the description of flowers" which treated their characteristic features as representative of certain qualities (1991: 195–6). This does not, however, account for the fact that debates between other objects – e.g. sword and pen – did not employ full personification extensively until this period; nor for the fact that in Persian, in contrast to Arabic, personification appears both earlier and with greater frequency (and not necessarily in debate poems). Van Gelder attributes this (implicitly at least) to a certain aversion to "fiction", and especially to such fictions as ascribe speech (considered the divine gift to and the distinguishing attribute of man) to objects, animals, and so on (see 1987: 329–30). See further Chapter 8 below.

15 Al-'Askarī recounts that when Abū Tammām, dressed in bedouin garb, recited this *qaṣīda* before al-Ma'mūn, the caliph "began to marvel at the unusual motifs that he produced in it and said, 'These are not the poetic motifs of the bedouin Arabs!'" When he reached the verse (13), "These are doves ….", with its play on *ḥamām*/ *ḥimām* "he said, 'God is most great! You have confused me all day long. I had thought you were a bedouin Arab, but when I reflected upon your motifs, I realized that they are the motifs of the urban poets. So you must be one of them!' This lowered the poet in the Caliph's esteem" (1994, 2: 470; translated in S. Stetkevych 1991: 121).

16 Stetkevych takes issue with Gibb's view that the attraction to bedouin motifs represents a perennial nostalgia for the desert in Arab culture (see Gibb 1948: 577) and sees a political motive in the preservation of the ancient conventions: "As a poet

courting the patronage of a dynasty that traced its origins and its authority to tribal Arabia, upholders of a religion founded upon the 'Arabic Qur'ān,' defenders of a state based on Arab hegemony in the face of the ever-increasing influence of the predominantly Persian *mawālī*, and heirs to a literary tradition whose supremacy was now being questioned by the *Shuʿūbiyyah*, how better could the poet begin his *madḥ* to al-Maʾmūn than by paying homage to that lost desert and its poetry? ... And how better proceed to praise the head of the Islamic ʿAbbasid state than by invoking the sources of his Caliphal authority: the genealogical – the blood relation of the Banū Hāshim to the Prophet Muḥammad that rests on pre-Islamic tribal concepts of kinship; and the theological – the concept of the Caliph as the successor to the Prophet in moral and spiritual, as well as political, terms. Moreover, it was vital to ʿAbbasid claims to legitimacy that these two elements be so completely fused as to be inseparable" (1991: 127–8). This is an intriguing argument whose implications cannot be dealt with here (although one might suggest that by al-Maʾmūn's time the political importance of tribal allegiances, and of Islam's Arabian origins, had decreased somewhat). The crucial issue would seem to be, in the end: does the use of desert conventions serve the purposes of the poem (purposes both political and poetic)? In the case of this poem it manifestly does; in other poems, however, Abū Tammām had no hesitation in abandoning such conventions and employing other urban, Persianized ones (cf. the panegyric to al-Muʿtaṣim discussed in Chapter 4). For a contrasting view on Arabic poetic "nostalgia" see J. Stetkevych 1993; see also Meisami 1998b.

17 A saying attributed variously to the Basran ascetic ʿAṭāʾ al-Sulamī and to Wahb ibn Munabbih runs: "Faith is a leader and deeds a driver and the soul a refractory beast. If the leader grows lax, it will turn away from the road and not follow the straight path for its driver; and if the driver grows lax, it will turn away from the road and not follow the straight path for the commander. But the one will not agree with the other until (this agreement) is based on faith" (Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣbahānī 1931, 4: 31). Al-Marzubānī criticizes Abū Tammām's use of *tajaḥḍama*, "for it is said *tajaḥḍama l-faḥlu* when (the stallion) mounts his mates, and (of) a camel, *jaḥḍama l-janbayni* [the flanks of a she-camel], i.e. he spreads them. So you can see that there is loathsomeness and artificiality in this verse" (1924: 314).

18 Stetkevych is prone to see in such polarities (light/dark//faith/unbelief//Islam/ Byzantines) evidence "that Manichean dualism, although theologically rejected, nevertheless permeated the ʿAbbasid poetic imagination" (1991: 148). In *qaṣīda* 68, for example (Abū Tammām 1951, 2: 166–82), she sees "a Persian Manichean or Magian image" in the image of the general Abū Saʿīd al-Thaghrī as "the star of Islam that pierces the darkness of Infidelity" (ibid.: 151); in *qaṣīda* 130 (Abū Tammām 1951, 3: 132–45) she finds an "image of apparently Persian (Magian or Mazdean) parentage" in the comparison of the general al-Afshīn "to a star – i.e. of Islam – that rends the darkness – that is, the spiritual darkness of *Kufr* (heresy)," an image "especially appropriate here for the Persian general ... for whom, ironically, accusations of being a crypto-Majūsī would, in the end, prove fatal" (ibid.: 170–1; the comment reads as if al-Afshīn's fate was already known to Abū Tammām). But the pervasive presence in the Koran of metaphors of light and darkness as figuring belief and unbelief, together with other Koranic echoes (e.g. of Koran 8: 18 in 130, l. 6: *Fa-ramāhu bil-Afshīni bin-najmi llādhī ṣadaʿa ḍ-ḍujā ṣadʿa r-ridāʾi l-bālī*, "He hurled at him al-Afshīn, the star which rent the darkness like a worn-out cloak") go unheeded.

19 There may be implicit associations with blood; water (like blood and semen) are metaphorically used in pre-Islamic poetry for the resources available to a warrior or a tribe, and there is a complex cluster of imagery involving buckets, ropes, and pools or

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wells, in this connection (cf. Jamil 1999; I owe this information to personal communication); but they are only implicit, and do not play an obvious part in Abū Tammām's line.

20 The two words are derived from the same root. *Imām*'s various meanings are combined here: the leader of the Friday prayer; the leader of the holy war (*jihād*); the spiritual leader of the *umma*. Al-Ma'mūn adopted the title *Imām* in 195/816, during the civil war in which he wrested the caliphate from his half-brother al-Amīn, to emphasize both his genealogical and politico-religious legitimacy; he reaffirmed it in 198/819 following his defeat of the anti-caliph Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī "with the object of consolidating his role as guide of the *umma*, following the example of the 'Alid *Imām*s;" the resumption of the Byzantine campaigns in 215/830 (in abeyance during the civil war and the disturbances which followed), which this *qaṣīda* celebrates, took place under the personal command of the caliph, "who thus intended to prove himself worthy of his title of *Imām* ... meaning a guide endowed with great knowledge (*'ilm*) and with tried and tested political and military knowledge" (*EI²*, art. "al-Ma'mūn" [M. Rekaya]). Abū Tammām thus affirms al-Ma'mūn's politico-religious claim to leadership of the *umma*.

7 ORNAMENTATION

1 The division of rhetoric (*'ilm al-balāgha*) into *ma'ānī*, *bayān* and *badī'* has been noted in Chapter 1; the division in the latter of the figures "into those pertaining to 'word' (or expression) and those pertaining to 'sense' (or concept)" (*lafẓī* and *ma'nawī*) led von Grunebaum to posit a correspondence with the Greek distinction between *schemata lexeos* and *schemata dianoias* (see Bonebakker 1970a: 90; von Grunebaum in *EI²*, art. "balāgha" (A. Schaade; G. E. von Grunebaum). The 6th/14th-century Arabic rhetorician Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Jurjānī distinguished between *muḥsināt ma'nawiyya*, "embellishments of meaning", which included *muṭābaqa* and various related figures, *tawriyya* (pun), *jam' wa-tafrīq* and related figures, *mubālagha* (hyperbole), etc., and *muḥsināt lafẓiyya*, which included *tajnīs*, *radd al-'ajuz*, *taṣrī'*, *luzūm mā lā yalzam* and *tashṭīr* (see al-Jurjānī 1982: 259–305). Compare Williams (1980: 20–1) on the divisions made by classical rhetoricians between figures of speech (which included metaphor and metonymy) and of thought (involving "configurations of thought ... by which the content was not altered, only the presentation"). A critic like 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī would argue that any change in presentation – that is, in form – also alters the content.

2 The problems of the origins of the *badī'* style, its connections with the intellectual milieux of Basra and Baghdad and with the development of dialectical argument among the Mu'tazila and their opponents, have been discussed by S. Stetkevych (1983; 1991: 5–37; see also Meisami 1994b [review of S. Stetkevych 1991]). W. Heinrichs argues that "to derive all *badī'* phenomena ... from this Mu'tazilī connection seems to be a case of over-emphasizing and stretching one explanatory principle" (1986: 3). It appears that at first *badī'* meant simply "new, noteworthy, original, outstanding"; only later did it take on the additional meaning of rhetorical figures *per se*. See e.g. al-Bāqillānī 1950: 2, n. 2; Bonebakker 1981, 1990b; *EIr*, art. "badī'" (J.T.P. de Bruijn); and see further Chapter 8.

3 S. Stetkevych sees in this evidence of Ibn al-Mu'tazz's conservatism and hostility to the new style (1991: 20–1); Abu Deeb, on the other hand, argues that it represents his awareness of the distinguishing features of that style (1990: 346–8). The search for precedents in pre-Islamic poetry and the Koran may be interpreted as a search for authoritative precedents; it was, moreover, symptomatic of the Arabs' attitude towards the language of the Koran as inimitable and far surpassing anything mere

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humans could achieve. For comparisons with Christian attitudes towards the Bible (as seen in Bede's *De schematibus et tropis Sanctae Scripturae*) along with a brief sketch of the development of the theory of *iʿjāz al-Qurʾān* see von Grunebaum's introduction to al-Bāqillānī 1950: xiii–xix; unlike Ibn al-Muʿtazz, al-Bāqillānī "[set] out vigorously to prove the inferiority of all Arabic literature to the Koran" (ibid.: xix, and cf. 54). Heinrichs rejects Stetkevych's claim that Ibn al-Muʿtazz did not know what *badīʿ* really meant: "it seems to me a safer heuristic principle to assume that he knew what we do not know and that it is we, therefore, who do not understand the purport of the *badīʿ* discussion" (1986: 3).

4 S. Stetkevych cites Muḥammad Mandūr's criticism of Ibn al-Muʿtazz for combining, in these five devices, "three unrelated categories: 1) metaphor, which is the very essence of poetry, 2) means of expression … which depend on form and are not absolutely essential to poetry – *tajnīs*, *ṭibāq* and *radd al-ʿajuz ʿalā al-ṣadr*, and 3) a mental process – *al-madhhab al-kalāmī*;" in her view, "in the hands of the *badīʿ* poet categories one and two become subsumed under category three, which alone is the distinguishing feature of *badīʿ* poetry" (1981: 16 n. 32). This not entirely accurate: in the hands of the poets (and to a certain extent in the opinion of the critics, as their examples, if not always their explicit statements, suggest) all five features reflect analogical habits of thought which come to inform poetic structure, as well as imagery, first in Arabic and subsequently in Persian poetry. Further, *al-madhhab al-kalāmī* quickly disappears from the lists of rhetorical figures. As for the *maḥāsin*, Bonebakker considers this part of the book to have been written later than the chapters on *badīʿ*, and added as a sort of appendix (see 1967: 193–4).

5 I am told that the same situation with respect to *tajnīs* exists in Hebrew, which has a similar morphological system, as in Arabic, which further supports this conjecture (Prof. Daniel Frank, Ohio State University; personal communication). On the other hand, Hebrew poetry (at least that of al-Andalus) seems to rely more on personification and extended metaphor than does Eastern Arabic poetry (both are marked features of Andalusian Arabic poetry, especially with Ibn Khafāja (d. 533/ 1138–9); cf. Scheindlin 1993, 1996; on Ibn Khafāja see Bürgel 1983; Nowaihi 1993; Scheindlin 1995).

6 The two types of *tajnīs* were first defined by al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad (d. 175/791); subsequently the term was developed by various critics with different subcategories and shades of meaning; the alternative term *jinās* seems to be of later origin. On the relationship between *tajnīs* and etymology see e.g. al-Bāqillānī 1950: 20–1 n. 171; on terminology and the various types of *tajnīs/jinās* see al-Ṣafadī 1987.

7 S. Stetkevych posits a "logical/historical progression" in the notion of *tajnīs* of which Ibn al-Muʿtazz is "unaware": "At one extreme there are the idiomatic constructions of the Arabic language such as the *mafʿūl muṭlaq* [e.g. *ḍarabahu ḍarban*, 'he struck him a blow', i.e., 'he beat him soundly',] or expressions such as *qāla qāʾilun* (it is said) which, although they might technically fit the definition of *tajnīs*, could hardly be considered conscious rhetorical devices. Next would be the *takrār li-al-taʾkīd* (repetition for the sake of emphasis) which adds at least an emotive significance. After this comes the *tajnīs* proper, the more or less unconscious association of similar-sounding words or names tending more toward alliteration than pun. Finally, there is the conscious or self-conscious punning which is based on a highly developed awareness of *ishtiqāq* (etymology) as well as of the subliminal semantic connection between homonyms and etymons" (1981: 20). I would suggest that many of these distinctions are blurred, in practice, as early as pre-Islamic poetry and the Koran, and that with the poets of the *badīʿ* style it is, precisely as the critics note, a question of degree rather than of principle. According to al-Ṣafadī (see 1956: 92–95), the etymological connection was recognized by Qudāma as well as by other early critics; see also al-Bāqillānī 1950:

20–5 and nn. 171, 190 (the latter points to the practice of deriving omens from sound resemblances).

8 Khāqānī alludes to a popular story in various versions of the Legends of the Prophets: When Joseph's brothers had cast him into the pit, they dragged a wolf before Jacob, saying it had devoured his son. "[Jacob asked], 'O dog of God, why did you devour my son?' The wolf replied, 'By God, O Prophet of God, I know nothing about this matter; I have fallen on evil days, for my sons are disobedient.' Jacob asked, 'Where do you come from?' – 'I am a stranger in this land; I come from Egypt and am going to Jurjan [Arabic for Gurgan].' – 'What will you do there?' – 'I will visit my brother for God's sake.' – 'For what purpose?' – 'Because I have heard from the prophets who came before you that if one visits a brother for God's sake, for each step he takes good deeds a thousandfold will be recorded for him, and sins a thousandfold erased'" (Meisami 1991d: 69, and see 343 n. 8).

9 Terri DeYoung argues that "*jinās* and paronomasia allow a much greater latitude" than does punning, whose "activation in the reader's mind is based on similarity in pronunciation and not in the visual appearance of the words," and because "both elements [aural and visual] must be present in the syntagma" (1992: 184). "Puns" such as Khāqānī's *ṭarabistān/Ṭabaristān*, *āb-khur-i-āsān/āb-i khurāsān* depend on both orthography and pronunciation; *gurgān*, however, would readily fit the English conception of a pun (it is in fact a *tawriya*, on which see Bonebakker 1967). See also DeYoung's useful discussion of *ishtiqāq*, especially on Ibn Jinnī's notion of relationships between roots having the same three radicals in different order (e.g. *ḥamada/madaḥa* "to praise") or two out of the three (e.g. *nawā/hawā* "to desire", or the antithetical *shabba/shāba* "to be young/to grow old") (ibid.: 184–6).

10 The notion of *muṭābaqa/ṭibāq* and the terminology applied to antithetical figures varies considerably; see e.g. al-Bāqillānī 1950: 37 n. 287; al-Qazwīnī 1975: 477–98. Again, S. Stetkevych sees Ibn al-Mu'tazz's discussion of the figure as deficient (see 1981: 23–5); but such a line as that by the Umayyad poet 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Zabīr al-Asadī "describing women ravaged by war" – "Then it turned their black hair white/And their white faces black" (*fa-radda shu'ūrahunna s-sūda bīḍan wa-radda wujūhahunna sūdā*) (ibid.: 23) – suggests greater complexity than she would allow: it is not a simple antithesis between white and black but between the associations they carry, white hair being a sign of age, black faces a metonymy for disgrace. (Al-Asadī's line seems to anticipate the amplification of white/black imagery, especially in connection with women, in Abū Tammām's Amorium *qaṣīda*.) This figure is also termed *'aks*, "reversing", or *tabdīl*, "exchanging" (see e.g. al-Qazwīnī 1975: 497–8).

11 Von Grunebaum equates *al-madhhab al-kalāmī* with the syllogism or enthymeme, commenting on Ibn al-Mu'tazz's "mistake" in listing it "as a figure of speech" (al-Bāqillānī 1950: 27 n. 221; on the "poetic syllogism" see Bürgel 1971; and see further Chapter 8).

12 Al-Jāḥiẓ, discussing the style and language of the *mutakallimūn*, noted the poets' use of their terminology, as well as of other technical terms, e.g. prosodic, non-Arabic vocabulary etc.; he does not use the term itself (see 1968, 1: 138–44).

13 *Iltifāt* is usually translated "apostrophe" (see e.g. al-Bāqillānī 1950: 40 and n. 308; van Gelder 1982a: 185–6 and *passim*); but it is clear that the conception is a broader one. Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī classes *iltifāt* as the "second type" of transition from one topic to another, in which the second topic is not anticipated from the beginning (1981: 314); it involves joining two unrelated statements, "turning from one to the other subtly, with no intermediary, to provide a preparation for getting from one to the other in a kind of transformation [*taḥawwul*]" (ibid.: 315; see also 314–23; and see van Gelder 1982a: 185–7). Shams-i Qays defines *iltifāt* thus: "when the poet leaves his (first) topic, in completing the line he points to another which, even though

independent in itself, is connected to the first; as Munjīk Tirmidhī said, 'My heart has become weary by the arrow of your separation; O patience, against the separation of beauties you are a fine shield'" (1909: 351).

14 Ibn al-Muʿtazz has *yawma taṣqulu ʿāriḍayhā/bi-ʿūdi bashāmatin*, "the day when she polished her teeth with a balsam twig", for *idh tuwaddiʿunā Sulaymā bi-farʿi bashāmatin* "when Sulaymā bade us farewell", as in al-Bāqillānī and in Jarīr's *Dīwān* (1964: 417; the poem is a *hijāʾ* of al-Akhṭal which begins with a *nasīb*).

15 Ibn Rashīq notes, "Ibn al-Muʿtazz made [this figure] a separate category following that of *iltifāt*, but others combine them," citing Jarīr's lines and al-Aṣmaʿī's comment on the second ("Don't you see how he turns toward his verse when he turns to [*iltafata ilā*] the balsam and prays for it?"). He adds, "Ibn al-Muʿtazz only considered what was of this type; otherwise, it is (considered) 'interjection of a statement into another.' Ibn al-Muʿtazz expressed *iltifāt* well when he said, 'It is when the speaker departs from statement to address or from address to statement'." Ibn Rashīq cites Kuthayyir's line as his first example of *iltifāt* (1972, 2: 45–6).

16 C. Perri provides the following "working definition" of allusion: "allusion in literature is a manner of signifying in which some kind of marker (simple or complex, overt or covert) not only signifies un-allusively, within the imagined possible world of the alluding text, but through echo also denotes a source text and specifies some discrete, recoverable property(ies) belonging to the intension of this source text (or specifies its own property(ies) in the case of self-echo); the property(ies) evoked modifies the alluding text, and possibly activates further, larger inter- and intra-textual properties with consequent further modification of the alluding text" (1978: 295). "Along with being a technique of literature, used within poems," she suggests, "allusion may also be a literary mode. Poets use allusion incidentally (by which I do not mean 'unimportantly') or centrally, as the informing principle of composition" (ibid.: 306). That this is so with Arabic and Persian poetry (as with pre-modern Western literatures) is clear from the various gradations of allusivity recognized by the critics; see n. 17 below.

17 These include *taqlīd*, "imitation in its most general sense"; *tatabbuʿ* ("tracking, following"), "the basic term in Persian for imitation in the technical sense of writing a poem using the same rhyme and meter as an earlier one," sometimes "adversarial and predatory"; *iqtidāʾ*, "active, voluntary following and positive emulation"; *mushāʿara*, the "poetic duel", and the closely related *musābaqa* "competition" and *muʿāraḍa*, "competing poems written in the same meter and rhyme"; *naẓīra-gūʾī*, "speaking the similar", and *javāb-gūʾī*, "speaking in reply"; and *istiqbāl* ("welcoming"), "naturalizing" an earlier text into a new context (Losensky 1994: 230–2). On *ihtidhāʾ* ("imitation, copying") and *muʿāraḍa* with reference to the views of ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī see Peled 1991. On the *javāb* in Persian see also Zipoli 1993.

18 *Muʿāraḍa* also means "practice by imitation"; Ibn al-Athīr, for example, advises that the aspiring secretary or poet should "take an epistle, or a poem, attend to its topics, reflect on its beginnings and endings, and establish all this firmly in his mind. Then he should charge himself with composing something similar on the same topics," substituting his own wording, but following the course of the original; next he should polish his own composition, and then proceed to another. He should continue to "practice imitating [*muʿāraḍa*] epistles, if he is a scribe, or poems, if he is a poet, until he has acquired ample skill and trained his talent and made his mind fully accustomed to this practice" (1956: 26–7; cf. Niẓāmī ʿArūẓī 1899: 50).

19 The line is in fact two *shaṭr*s of Rajaz trimeter, not two *miṣrāʿ*s of a *bayt*; the *taḍmīn* thus falls into the category of overlapping between lines.

20 The *Dīwān* has *bar ṭarīq*, "on the road", for *naw ṭarīq*, "new style" (line 1), *ba-sabq* (meaningless) for *nasq*, "style" (line 3), and numerous other errors.

21 I suspect there is more to this than meets the eye; but Lane is fairly unhelpful. "Ḥubaysh", often used as a proper name, is a type of small bird; it is also the diminutive of ḥabash, "black, Abysinnian", and this is the sense in which I have taken it, in the context of "free woman". "The daughter of Sāʿid" is presumably a pun: ibnat sāʿid (if not a proper name) would mean "the daughter of the forearm", i.e. the palm. Bir-rifā, "enjoy", means literally, "enjoy close union with", a customary wish on the occasion of a wedding.

22 The du bayt is a brief epigrammatic form consisting of two lines (four hemistichs); it was a speciality of certain poets and, due to its popularity and epigrammatic nature, is often anonymous. See Thiesen 1982: 166–73.

23 In the Dīwān the order is 3, 5, 4, 6; 3: Dhī Khāl, for Dhī l-Ḥāl; alaḥḥa, "beset", for alajja, "poured"; 3: raʾs, "head", for rass, "well"; 6: munaṣṣaban, "long neck", for mundaddan, "well-ordered teeth" (see Imruʾ al-Qays 1958: 139–40).

24 In the Cairo edition (with al-Sukkarī's commentary) of the Hudhaylī poets this line appears once, and concludes the poem; for dhikr, "mention", Cairo has ḥīn, "instance" (al-Sukkarī 1965, 3: 1080).

25 Ibn Rashīq also considers al-madhhab al-kalāmī a type of takrār, presumably because the examples he cites (by al-Farazdaq, Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī and Ibn al-Muʿtazz, taken from the Kitāb al-badīʿ) feature the repetition of words (1972, 2: 78–9); he also cites two other verses by Abū Nuwās (one of which does not feature repetition) as examples of "the philosophical dialectical method" (madhhab kalāmī falsafī; ibid., 2: 80).

26 "It is said that [the grammarian] Ibn al-Aʿrābī was a member of the salon of one of the caliphs, and recited to him the verses of a zuhdiyya by Abū al-ʿAtāhiya. A man in the gathering said to him, 'This poetry is not worth mentioning.' He asked, 'Why not?' 'Because it is weak poetry.' Ibn al-Aʿrābī said (and he was a vehement person): 'By God, it's your brains that are weak, not Abū al-ʿAtāhiya's poetry! How can you say his poetry is weak? I have never seen a more natural poet, nor one more competent over his verse. I consider his style nothing less than a sort of magic.' Then he recited the lāmiyya which has just been mentioned" (Abū al-ʿAtāhiya 1886: 197).

27 The Dīwān has mikarrin mifarrin, "attacking and fleeing" (as in the Muʿallaqa) for mikhashshin mijasshin; ḥullab is, apparently, a sort of bean which shrinks the stomachs of animals who eat it (Imruʾ al-Qays 1958: 171 and n. 4).

28 Sanni states that al-Tibrīzī analyzes "the employment of the word rajul as a rhyme, once with the definite article and in the other line without the article … under an aesthetic characterization. According to him, the use of al-rajul and rajul in the same poem should not be regarded as īṭāʾ, but rather, an illustration of complete paronomasia (al-jinās al-tāmm), which is one of the most effective rhetorical beautifiers…. In other words, such a usage should be regarded as a demonstration of artistic skill rather than an offensive defect" (1990: 161). Although al-Tibrīzī alludes to al-Aʿshā's lines (a well-known example of īṭāʾ), he neither quotes them nor refers to tajnīs explicitly in his discussion. It should be noted that the rhyme-word rajul is also repeated in line 17 of al-Aʿshā's poem (ʿulliqtuhā ʿaraḍan wa-ʿulliqat rajulan/ghayrī wa-ʿulliqa ukhrā ghayrahā r-rajulū, "I became enamored of her by chance; and she was enamored of another man; and that man was enamored of another woman").

29 Nawār figures notably in the Muʿallaqa of Labīd (d. ca. 41/661) and in a qaṣīda by Kaʿb ibn Zuhayr (first/seventh century); Nawār was also the wife of al-Farazdaq, mentioned in the naqāʾiḍ addressed to him by Jarīr, whom both poets eulogized on her death. She is said to have protested against her coerced marriage, and al-Farazdaq eventually relinquished his claim, which he almost immediately regretted (see Smoor 1991: 117–18, 123–6). Abū Tammām mentions "al-Farazdaq's regret" in his qaṣīda on the execution of the Persian general al-Afshīn by al-Muʿtaṣim: "When the son of the

unbelieving woman begins to feel pain for the loss of his own unbelief, just as al-Farazdaq did on account of Nawār,//And when he remembers his former unbelief, he bemoans its loss...." (*yusirru bi-kufrihi wajdan ka-wajdi Farazdaqin bi-Nawārī*, which could also mean, "He rejoiced in love of unbelief as Farazdaq loved Nawār"), alluding to al-Farazdaq's line, "I suffered remorse (*nadimtu*) ... when Nawār, whom I rejected, left me.//She was my Garden of Paradise, which I forsook, just as Adam had to forsake Paradise when his disobedience over-mastered him" (ibid.: 125–6). As Smoor points out, the root sense of Nawār (from *nāra*, *yanūru*) is "to flee, to run away", a sense appropriate to al-Maʿarrī's poem. It also connotes light, whiteness, branding with fire, and the explosion of sedition, all of which are pertinent here (my thanks to Dr. Nadia Jamil for this observation).

8 ORNAMENT: METAPHOR AND IMAGERY

1 The discussion of *majāz* (figurative language) had a theological basis: such expressions as "He (God) settled himself on his throne," or references to His hand, sight, etc., which if read literally were for many dangerously close to anthropomorphism (*tashbīh*, the attribution of human qualities to God), presented no problem if read figuratively. See Heinrichs 1984b; Modarressi 1986; Wansbrough 1970.

2 The reader is referred in particular to Abu Deeb 1979; Ajami 1984; *EI*[2], art. "istiʿāra" (S.A. Bonebakker); Heinrichs 1977, 1984a, 1986; Ritter 1927.

3 Al-Sakkākī, "only allowing one-term comparisons as a means of interpretation, detects two different metaphors in this expression: an *istiʿāra takhyīlīya* ... and an *istiʿāra bi-l-kināya*.... The term *istiʿāra* as a conceptual tool for the identification of what we have called 'old' metaphors has ceased to exist" (Heinrichs 1977: 14–15). So al-ʿAbbāsī (following al-Sakkākī): "Here he compared in his mind death with a beast of prey, in its seizing of lives by force and strength without distinguishing between the beneficial and harmful and with no tenderness towards the victim; and he affirmed for it claws, without which seizing is not accomplished by the predator, to produce a hyperbolic comparison. Comparing death to a beast of prey is an *istiʿāra bil-kināya*; affirming that it has claws is an *istiʿāra takhyīliyya*" (1947, 2: 164).

4 Heinrichs notes elsewhere (1984a: 180–2) that *istiʿāra* is not the transference of a name or concept but "of an object from its natural owner or environment to a new owner or environment to which it does not belong in our real world," and involves "a comparison between two sets of elements."

5 In a line by the pre-Islamic poet Ḥujr ibn Khālid ibn Marthad: "So if you perish, power and generosity will perish, and the young she-camel of praise will become scabby and sterile," which might be paraphrased: "'Praise will lose all its vigour and finally die out after the death of the *mamdūḥ*, because no praiseworthy man will be left, just like a young she-camel turning scabby and sterile'" (Heinrichs 1986: 4–5). I suggest that the sense of this analogy is that "praise" will die of "disease" – that is, from praising the unworthy – after the death of the *mamdūḥ*.

6 As Heinrichs points out, such metaphors figure importantly in Persian poetry (1986: 12); for examples see Meisami 1979: 5–6 and notes. On genitive metaphors in Abū Tammām's poetry see Schippers 1981.

7 Al-ʿAbbāsī considers Abū Nuwās's line an example of *al-tarshīḥ* ["preparation"] *fī al-istiʿāra*, where the comparison is based on "what is appropriate to the *mustaʿār minhu*" (the analogue); the *ʿulamāʾ al-badīʿ* consider this the highest degree of metaphor (see 1947, 2: 151–61 for discussion and examples).

8 Averroes objected to this line, which he quotes in his discussion of "discovery" of the "representation of conceptual matters ... by means of sense-perceptible matters" based on a commensurate quality they share. "Whatever is not commensurate or is

dissimilar ought to be rejected," he states, citing Abū Tammām's line and commenting, "After all, water does not correspond to censure" (1986: 98–9). It is perhaps possible to trace *mā' al-malām* back to wine poetry (where it would indicate wine itself); cf. Abū Nuwās's *a-lā tasqinī khamran wa-qul lī hiya l-khamrū*, "Pour me wine to drink and tell me it is wine", and *da'i l-malāma fa-inna l-lawma ighrā'ū*, "Leave off blaming me, for blame is an enticement", which Abū Tammām appears to conflate and develop (as well as transfer to the context of love poetry). Schippers (1981: 257, and see 258–9) considers the metaphor as alluding to Abū Nuwās's "You have found the water of my speech sweet" (*lammā nadabtuka lil-muhimmi ajabtanī/ labbayka wa-sta'dhabta mā'a kalāmī*) (Abū Nuwās 1958, 1: 253; cf. Wagner 1965: 334; and see al-Ṣūlī 1937: 37, and on Abū Tammām's *bayt*, 33–7. The line comes from a poem in praise of 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Ḥalabī; Abū Tammām's poem employs the same rhyme scheme).

9 The conceit is also popular in Persian, where *āb* means "water", "lustre", and (metaphorically) "honour" (from *āb-i rūy*, the "lustre of the face", used in the sense of "honour" = "a bright face"). Al-'Abbāsī quotes Abū Nuwās's line as another example of *tarshīḥ* (1947, 2: 155, and see n. 7 above).

10 Heinrichs distinguishes "two different traditions" in the study of *isti'āra*: "the 'Koranic' (for scriptural exegesis) and the 'poetic' (for literary criticism)." In the first, "*Isti'āra* is the borrowing of words, *i.e.*, the name of object A is borrowed from it and given to object B, because there is a connection between A and B;" in the second, it is "the borrowing of objects (or, rather, concepts, because we are on the level of language), *i.e.*, object A is borrowed from object B which is its 'owner' and given to object L as its new 'owner' or, to use a more general way of expression: A is borrowed from its natural context ABC … and inserted into the alien context LMN." Heinrichs suggests a connecting link between the two traditions in Ibn Qutayba, who perhaps "took this term from the language of the experts on poetry and expanded the range of its application in order to adapt it to the exigencies of his subject-matter." In the "poetic" tradition *isti'āra* was first used for "old" metaphors, but later came to include "other, related, kinds of metaphor," such as the "verb metaphor", or the "noun metaphor in which object A has a counterpart in its new context LMN …, say, *e.g.*, object L" (1977: 53–4); the transitional figure here is Qudāma, "the first to introduce the word *tashbīh* into the discussion of *isti'āra*," although he did not discuss the relationship between the two due to "their widely different categorial status in Qudāma's system" (ibid.: 36). From denoting certain kinds of transference, *isti'āra* became a generic term encompassing all types of "comparison" (Heinrichs 1984a: 184).

11 Thus for example Benedikt Reinert distinguishes three "Metaphor-types" in Arabo-Persian poetry: *triale* (e.g. "the hand of the north wind"), where the elements of the *Urbild* (the "empirical phenomenon" from which the comparison is drawn, i.e., the analogue, *musta'ār minhu*) have no parallel in the *Themenbereich* (the "topical field" of the comparison); *duale* (e.g. eye = narcissus), where the *Bild* (image, *musta'ār*) and *Urbild* are posited as identical (and, in rhetorical theory, as reversible); and *semitriale*, in which *Urbild* and *Bild* are not identical (e.g. "a tree walks") but do involve comparisons between objects and humans. "All three types take for granted the existence of a mutuality (Gemeinsamkeit) between Thema and Urbild" (1973: 90–1; for a more detailed attempt at a typology, on the basis of single lines, see Reinert 1972; on Reinert's "mapping" see Heinrichs 1977: 8, n. 15). Cf. also Schoeler 1974, who focuses heavily on the sensory field of the metaphor (visual, acoustic, etc.) and on the combination of metaphor with other figures such as *tajnīs* and *muṭābaqa*; Ritter 1927; and compare Sells 1994.

12 Abu Deeb takes issue with the "excessive emphasis on the harmony between the images of a poem as being the *sole* embodiment of its organic unity," and argues that

"harmony ought not to be sought only on the level of the functions of the series of images used in the poem. . . . The harmony of functions within the structure of the *single* image itself is a fundamental aspect of organic unity." It is only by analyzing both "the level of the single image and that of the patterns of imagery in the poem" that one can "reveal to the fullest degree the organic unity of a poem and the emotional experience underlying its structure" (1979: 294; author's emphasis). I would argue that we are looking neither for "organic" unity (in the Coleridgean sense) nor for an "underlying emotional experience" (except insofar as the poem creates the impression of such an experience), but rather for a linkage of images (even apparently disparate ones) on the basis of their function within a coherent poetic structure.

13 Quintilian distinguished two types of allegory: one based on "an extended metaphor or a coherent series of metaphors" (exemplified by Horace's "ship of state", in which, as Williams points out, the allegory is conditional not only on the "ship" metaphor but on the poet's attitude to it: he "[stations] himself as an observer on the shore, and his dramatic anxiety is well caught by lively and emotional language . . . by the way he calls the ship's own attention to her damage, and by the advice which he offers"); the other, "allegory without metaphor", which "depends on the semantic equivalence of two distinct fields of ideas: the poet speaks of one field, but, by a sort of imaginative counterpart, he can be understood also to be speaking of the other field" (1980: 25–8). The second type is seen in what Heinrichs terms "two-layered poetry"; see also Andrews 1985, 1993. Cf. also Quintilian's remarks on *fictiones personarum*, discussed in Williams 1980: 211–12. Allegorical imagery in Arabo-Persian poetry is generally discussed in the context of mystical writing, often via the "lexical" approach whereby an image is said to stand directly for a concept (see e.g. Meisami 1979, 1983, and the references cited; and see further the last section of this chapter). As Tuve points out (1977), allegorical imagery, linked to both personification and extended metaphor, tends to be intermittent rather than consistent; Tuve's warnings against the danger of overreading are pertinent here as well.

14 When asked by a critic of his metaphor *māʾ al-malām* (cf. n. 8 above), "What is the water of blame? Can you give me a drink of it?" Abū Tammām is said to have replied, "If you bring me a feather from the 'wing of humility', I will give you a drop of the 'water of blame'" (Schippers 1981: 258, and see nn. 61–3 for various versions and comments in Ibn al-Athīr's *al-Mathal al-sāʾir* and Ibn Sinān's *Sirr al-faṣāḥa*).

15 Cf. al-Mutanabbī: "In the canyon of Bawwān my steed thus utters:/'Am I to forsake this for spears' piercing thrusts?//Your father Adam bequeathed to you rebellion/and taught you to renounce Paradise.'" J. Stetkevych comments, "Al-Mutanabbī's steed as the motif of the accusing animal (a case of pathetic fallacy or, rather, of a personified self-accusation, an allegorization) is . . . [an] adaptation . . . of the motif as it figures in ʿAntarah's *Muʿallaqah* . . . although that pre-Islamic poet avoids explicit pathetic fallacy, preferring a circumlocution. The closest model for al-Mutanabbī's talking, self-pitying horse" is found in al-Muthaqqib's verses (1993: 295 n. 78). An extended example of the "complaining steed" motif is found in the Persian poet Jawharī's comic complaint on a decrepit nag given to him by the Sultan. When the poet approaches with saddle and bridle, the horse rebukes him for disrespect towards his elders: "I'm older than you! Show me proper respect! . . . Aren't you ashamed to ride upon (the likes of) me?" The horse goes on to provide "proofs" of his ancient age: he was ridden by the pre-Islamic Persian king Tahmūras and by Alexander; he was with Noah in the Ark; he witnessed the destruction of Lot and the enthronement of Joseph, was preferred by the hero Rustam to his own horse Rakhsh, and so on; finally, he has been in the present ruler's stables for 63 years. "The Sultan gave me to you," the horse concludes; "if you don't like me, go, ask for another horse from the stables of the sultan of the world. . ." (Hidāyat 1957, 1: 507–8).

16 The poem is a *hijāʾ*, introduced by *nasīb*, in which the poet contrasts the idyllic days of the past (in which the gazelles, along with other examples of "animate nature" or of naturalized persons, are, implicitly, more human than are human beings now) with the present lack of virtue; see Ibn al-Muʿtazz 1977, 2: 449.

17 Aristotle's discussion, more fully elaborated in the *Rhetoric*, concerns *energeia*, "creating actuality" or "vivid representation" through the animation of the inanimate, which is, as Steadman notes, incorrectly translated as "personification" (1974: 210–11 n. 36).

18 Al-ʿAbbāsī considers Ibn al-Muʿtazz's line an example of "object-related metaphors" ("literal slaying and reviving are not connected with avarice and generosity") and quotes another example by al-Quṭāmī ("We give them to taste of the sharp thrusts of spearpoints, with which we pierce whatever any armorer wove to cover them"), on which he comments: "The pivot of the metaphor's context is its dependence on the verb and what is derived from it of the subject or object, as here, where the second object, the sharp spearpoints, is the context which determines that 'we give them to taste' is an *istiʿāra*" (1947, 2: 148–9).

19 In discussions by Western scholars of "phantastic etiology" (*al-taʿlīl al-takhyīlī*; *ḥusn al-taʿlīl*) it is usually the "phantastic" (i.e., the "unreal") nature of the ascription which is emphasized rather than the "etiological". The latter is, however, the more important aspect of the figure as it develops (and it is not unrelated to the development, in respect to *tajnīs*, of the belief in necessary relationships between words rather than merely fortuitous ones): such ascriptions are based on the increasing conviction of real correspondences between all aspects of creation (and the notion that man and nature are somehow both mirrors of each other and of the Plan on which such correspondences are based). The poet "discovers" (rather than "inventing", in the sense of "making up") correspondences which are latent and *in potentia* in the created world.

20 The brief poem – said to have been composed extemporaneously, on request, in the poet's youth – is as follows (al-Mutanabbī n.d.: 7): "My yearning for you has banished the pleasure of sleep; you forsook me, and it made its abode [*aqāma*] in my breast.// Nay, one could not find in the Ṣarāt (canal) more salt water than what tears I have shed into the sweet Euphrates.//I was ever labouring in anticipating of your leave-taking, until my grief hastened to bid farewell;//consolation departed with my departure; and it was as if I sent my sighs after it to escort it away." We may note the link between the last line and the first, in which the cause of the poet's sleeplessness is that longing has taken up residence in his breast – perhaps (in a *hysteron proteron* sequence) replacing departed consolation.

21 Ascribing agency is evidently a different procedure than forming a verb metaphor such as *ḍaḥika al-arḍ* "the earth laughed" – "i.e., 'had brought forth fresh vegetation and flowers'", Ibn Qutayba's first example of *istiʿāra* in his *Taʾwīl mushkil al-Qurʾān*, which, as Heinrichs points out, is identical with "Quintilian's example illustrating the metaphor," *pratum ridet*. "This is a *tamthīl*-based verb metaphor, closely related to the 'old' metaphor, except for the lack of imaginary elements" (Heinrichs 1977: 31–2). An expanded form is seen in the first line of Farrukhī's New Year *qaṣīda*: "The garden laughs like the beloved's face."

22 In his *Dalāʾil al-iʿjāz* al-Jurjānī terms this *majāz ḥukmī* (1947: 227, 231); for other terms (e.g. al-Sakkākī, *istiʿāra bil-kināya*) see Modarressi 1986: 788. Schoeler quotes from H. Ritter's note to his translation of al-Jurjānī (1959: 413 n. 2), commenting on the passage in the *Asrār*: "Ǧurǧānī's argument is interesting, because he eliminates the animation of natural phenomena through anthropomorphizing metaphors, and thus does not arrive at an understanding and recognition of the poetic technique of personification. As a good Muslim he does not believe it can be allowable that God

'should be spoken of by means of an agency [as if this were] actuality'" (1974: 63). I suggest that for al-Jurjānī (as for medieval and Renaissance rhetoricians) personification was a trope – no more and ("good Muslim" notwithstanding) no less.

23 Of Manūchihrī's seven poems of this type, the four addressed to Masʿūd are in the *musammaṭ* form (a strophic form used for panegyric), the other three are *qaṣīda*s. While we do not know what conditions determined the use of the *musammaṭ* rather than the *qaṣīda*, its popularity in this period suggests an association with earlier, or popular, Persian poetic traditions (and perhaps with song). As Hanaway notes, Mihragān is associated with the birth of Jesus; as in ancient times it fell at the winter solstice, it later became Christmas. Hence the frequent references in Manūchihrī's poems to Gabriel, Mary, Jesus, etc. (1988: 69). It seems clear that there is a strong mythopoetic element in both the grape-sacrifice narrative and the garden imagery discussed later in this chapter.

24 The figure of the world as an old woman who betrays her lovers or kills her guests is a standard one in homiletic literature, both poetry and prose; see for example Ghazzālī 1964: 33–4. R. Scheindlin, comparing "addresses to the soul" in the Hebrew poetry of Ibn Gabirol with those by Abū al-ʿAtāhiya and noting the Hebrew poet's use of personification, suggests that there are significant differences between the two: "Abū al-ʿAtāhiya has, as far as I know, no poem that is as completely focused on the soul" as are the examples by Ibn Gabirol; the Arab poet "only rarely ... [makes] use of the second person feminine suffix and verb forms in the *qāfiya* as a structural principle to reinforce the address to the soul and approach personification as [does] Ibn Gabirol;" for him "the soul is a convenient addressee ... but there is very little motion in the direction of the kind of near-personification [seen] in Ibn Gabirol. The soul is never developed into a character with an imaginary personality." Scheindlin comments further on different concepts of the soul in the two poets, Ibn Gabirol's being informed by neo-Platonic notions, Abū al-ʿAtāhiya by Islamic asceticism (1993: 232–5). While the conceptual differences are indeed notable, and while Abū al-ʿAtāhiya's poetry clearly lacks the neo-Platonic dimension seen in later poetry, both poets (each in his own way) employ similar devices: the use of "human" verbs (as well as adjectives and participles) and the attribution of human qualities. Abū al-ʿAtāhiya's *Dīwān* features more than a dozen (at a quick count) poems in which the soul, the world, or death are personified and/or addressed; in addition to the examples discussed see e.g. 1886: 23, 194–5 (a parody on the *nasīb* in which the soul is addressed as the beloved).

25 Much, of course, depends on genre. Ibn al-Muʿtazz, for example, in the *zuhdiyya* discussed in Chapter 7, admonishes his soul *à la* Abū al-ʿAtāhiya; in another poem, also classed as a *zuhdiyya* (which, says al-ʿAbbāsī, was composed when he delivered himself to his executioner [1947, 2: 45]; Ibn al-Muʿtazz's editor thinks this is fabricated) he addresses her with sympathy: "Be patient, Soul; perhaps you will be requited with good, (for) you have been betrayed by this world [*khānatki . . . dunyāki*], after long security" (1977, 2: 409). The same is true of the *khamriyya*, where there is a contrast between the feminine wine, which imbues the poet with desire, and the (soon to become conventional) male object of that desire. In this connection – and to anticipate a bit – what are we to make of Ibn al-Muʿtazz's line, "Every man I know among humankind: his garden is female, but my garden is male" (1977, 2: 182)? And what about the personified *aṭlāl*, grammatically feminine and associated with the (lost) beloved? Is there a necessary connection?

26 Because of the strong association of the *mamdūḥ* with life-giving forces I disagree with S. Stetkevych's analysis of the relationship between Imām and *umma* in Abū Tammām's *qaṣīda* to al-Maʾmūn (see Chapter 6 above). She sees the poet's intent, in the "fertility/barrenness imagery" of line 51 ("Be (ever) safe, O Commander of the

Faithful,/for the sake of a people [*li-ummati*] which/has brought your hopes to fruition/ when hopes were barren," as "to identify the Caliph with the seminal element and suggest his dependence on the female element, the *ummah* (Nation)," in an image of "ritual coitus" which creates a parallel between "the archetypal emotional element of the *nasīb*" and the "archetypal political statement in the *madīḥ*," through the implicit identification of *aṭlāl* and *umma* (1991: 133). While some of this is sound (if oversimplified; cf. Sperl 1979: 30), it seems clear that the relationship of "dependency" is precisely the reverse: it is the *umma* that depends upon the Caliph for its prosperity.

27 Partial exceptions are Umayya ibn Abī al-Ṣalt (d.c. 9/631), a poet contemporary with the Prophet, whose "somewhat awkwardly phrased descriptions of the creation, of heaven and hell, are little more than rhymed preaching with a view to moralizing: he was moved by doctrine rather than by vision;" and the elegiac poetess al-Khansāʾ (d. after 644), who "has the mountain peaks tumble down because of the death of her brother; the stars hurl down, the earth shakes, and the sun ceases to shine. . . . [She] presses the universe into service when she laments her dead in an extravagant orgy of grief. She was admired but not followed" (von Grunebaum 1945: 141–2). For a description of Paradise as a garden see Umayya ibn Abi al-Ṣalt 1980: 68. Al-Khansāʾs imagery is related to the elegiac genre, and is closely tied to that of the *qaṣīda*, in which, for example, the tribal leader, drawing on the resources of kinsfolk and ancestors, is likened to a tall mountain, its roots stretching beneath the ground – arguably a source of some of the imagery of the Koran. See also the comments on von Grunebaum by J. Stetkevych (1993) discussed later in this chapter.

28 Thus for example Schoeler (1974), who takes issue with von Grunebaum at many points, focuses largely on the development of specific motifs in Arabic nature description from pre-Islamic times to al-Ṣanawbarī (compare also de Fouchécour 1969). Cf. also Clinton's comment on the "rarity" of "examples of sympathetic nature" (as of personification) in Persian and, more generally, "Islamic" literature (1976: 158, 170 n. 11); and Hamori's suggestion that we should try to see "the Arab *waṣf*-poet's failure to delight in *the world's responsiveness to his emotions* as a refusal – this would be that failure's most profound intentionality – a refusal to plunge into pathetic fallacies," which further results in "seeking correspondences [between man and nature] by the only other available light: the intellect" (1976: 303; emphases added). Compare J. Stetkevych (1993), who stresses the "nostalgia" of Arabic nature imagery, and of garden imagery in particular, making of the pre-Islamic poets Romantics before the fact, as to some extent does Sells (1994). For a contrasting view see Bürgel 1983, especially 43–5.

29 I do not wish to suggest that a consistent "sign system" was universally and consciously employed (as is often assumed for mystical poetry); moreover, poets are also concerned with particulars (though seldom for their own sake). What I do wish to note is that the concept of natural phenomena (as of words) as "signs" is such a deeply-ingrained mode of thought that it implicitly (and perhaps unconsciously) informs many poems in which it is not explicitly expressed.

30 Cf. also ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī on al-Tanūkhī's (d. 384/994) line, "As if the stars appearing in the darkness [of the night are] religious customs (*sunan*) amongst which an innovation is glimmering": "There is no visual attribute which is common to these customs and the stars. The intended similarity . . . arises from the qualities which are pre-supposed by the attributes and which can be apprehended by . . . interpretation. . . . It is very familiar and well-known, to describe religious customs and the like as being white and bright ... and to describe innovation (*bidʿa*) conversely," he observes, citing in support several examples from Ḥadīth (1954: 207–9; trans. Abu Deeb 1979: 147).

31 This is the dominant motif of Farrukhī's elegy on Maḥmūd of Ghazna, which begins, "The city of Ghazna is not as I saw it ere," and goes on to describe its "unnatural", deserted and mournful state following the sultan's death. Farrukhī thus adapts the "ruined city" motif of homiletic poetry to elegiac purposes. On the poem see Bosworth 1991; Meisami 1998b: 81–4.

32 The "poetical 'snapshot'" implies "pure description". I would suggest that there are very few examples of "description for description's sake", except in brief, epigrammatic poems which focus on an object of some sort; and even these often involve an element of "humanization" (as Bürgel calls it; see 1983: 33), of a relationship between poet and object (cf., for example, Manūchihrī's "Candle" *qaṣīda*). Even self-standing "nature" poems (such as those discussed by Schoeler [1974]) often carry more far-reaching implications: the evocation of past or present pleasures; the invitation to contemplate the wonders of creation, and thereby its Creator. Independent descriptive poems (if they can be called that) seem to be less frequent in Persian than in Arabic poetry; with the partial exception of "riddle" poems (*lughz*), there are few examples of independent poems devoted purely to description, which usually functions within the framework of a larger poem.

33 Thus for example al-Jurjānī insists that *tamthīl* is effective "because the knowledge which is acquired through the senses, or which is fixed instinctively and by way of necessity in the soul is deeper and stronger ... than that acquired by reasoning and contemplation. ... Thus your case ... when you first hear the meaning without *tamthīl* then with *tamthīl*, is like someone who tells of an object hidden behind a veil, then unveils it and says: here it is, see it and you will realize that it is as I have described it" (1954: 108–9; trans. Abu Deeb 1979: 89). (Esoteric writers would hold that the *tamthīl* itself is the veil; see the last section of this chapter.) Nor are such statements subject to verification: "*The premises the poet relies on must be granted and accepted without proof*" (1954: 248; trans. Abu Deeb 1979: 263; translator's emphases). It is the relation to the internal circumstances of the poem, and to the poet's perception of hitherto undiscovered connections, that validates such claims. "Poetry creates out of ignoble material inventions of transcendental value; and acts in such a manner as to make you believe that alchemy is truthfully capable of performing what is claimed for it, and that the miracle of the philosopher's stone is true and credible – save that these operations are in the case of poetry operations which involve man's imagination and understanding rather than the body or the senses" (al-Jurjānī 1954: 317–18; trans. Abu Deeb 1979: 265).

34 J. Stetkevych's translation of *ʿajūz* as "procuress" (1993: 129) is both gratuitous and unconvincing. The imagery suggests the departed caliph (al-Wāthiq) ushering in (albeit reluctantly) his successor al-Mutawakkil (on whose accession see al-Ṭabarī 1989: 61–4), much as Abū Tammām represents al-Muʿtaṣim's succession of al-Maʾmūn (if my reading is correct) as spring following winter, or Farrukhī the deceased Maḥmūd by Ramaḍān, followed by the Feast. ʿAlī ibn al-Jahm's editor asks, "What did [the poet] intend by describing the raincloud? ... It is as if he meant ... the days of al-Mutawakkil, which were, in their prosperity and ease, like abundant rain, and then passed on as does the raincloud" (ʿAlī ibn al-Jahm n.d.: 56 n. 5; see also n. 19 to Chapter 3, above).

35 Clinton considers this *nasīb* "an especially attractive variation on the theme of the coming of spring which achieves an external coherence and logic by the use of a mythic narrative. ... It is interesting to speculate on what led Manūchihrī to his strong predilection for the Naw Rūz *nasīb*" (1972: 109). References to the conflict between winter and spring are seen (but not generally greatly developed) in poems for Nawrūz and for Mihragān, and occasionally also in accession or victory poems (cf. e.g. Abū Tammām on al-Muʿtaṣim's accession); but it is not heavily allegorized until

Manūchihrī's *qaṣīda* and, later, by Nāṣir-i Khusraw, where the triumph of spring is equated with that of the Fatimids. While there may indeed be a "mythic narrative" implied, Manūchihrī turns it to his own, topical-allegorical, purposes.

36 Sells asserts: "Because the original simile was directly linked to a feature of the beloved, the reasonable expectation results that the entire chain of similes will be descriptive of the beloved" (1994: 131). I would argue that contemporary audiences of such poetry, familiar with its conventions, would not have expected a description of the beloved (self-standing descriptions that are not linked to other motifs are rare in both Arabic and Persian poetry, as noted earlier), but would be attuned to other fields of signification.

37 See e.g. Sells' criticisms of Ritter (1927), "who maintained the pure subjectivity of the qaṣīdah simile," and of Jacobi (1971), "who maintains that the qaṣīdah simile is exclusively objective. The poet's vision 'insists upon objectivity'.... The result is a poetic image world [*sic*] that is missing a dimension in its relationship to reality. While the Homeric simile puts the two worlds brought together by the simile into close relationship with one another, the Arabic simile remains at the level of merely exterior analogy;" it thus "reveals a 'profound insufficiency'," it "falls short of the kernel of reality" (Sells 1994: 153; cf. Jacobi 1971: 157–67).

38 Sells evades responsibility by not treating the poems he discusses as wholes, and by lumping all the *nasīb*s together as if they were somehow interchangeable. For example: in *Mufaḍḍaliyya* 120 (al-Sukkarī 1964: 396–404) ʿAlqama's exclamation (12), "To remember Salma! to recall/time spent with her/is folly" (Sells 1994: 132), is indeed "a moment of ... *saḥw* ('waking') ... a 'coming to' from the revery of semantic overflow;" it is not, however, "overcome by another wave of reverie: 'Breast sash crossed/and falling' ..." (13), as *ṣifru l- wishāḥayni* is dependent on the preceding *min dhikri Salmā* (12), and *wa-mā dhikrī l-awāna* etc. is an intervening *iṭṭirād*. The ensuing camel passage leads to *ḥikma* (31–38) on the inevitability of death, followed by a description of wine-drinking which demonstrates the poet's liberality (39–45). The final passage of *fakhr* balances and compensates for the temporary weakness of the *nasīb* (and is of virtually the same length). – ʿAntara's *Muʿallaqa* (al-Zawzanī 1933: 172–95; trans. Arberry 1957: 179–84) keeps returning to the beloved, not with nostalgia, but to correct any wrong impression left by the *nasīb*. The poet falls in love with the lady (Sells does not tell us this) "Casually ... as I slew her folk;" the affair is one of stolen pleasures, evoked by the "untrodden meadow" – forbidden territory, belonging to an enemy tribe. Following the camel passage ("Would I indeed be brought to her dwelling by a Shadani she-camel// cursed by an udder barren of milk and withered up," suggesting the sterility of the relationship), the poet addresses the beloved: "If you should lower your veil before me, what then? Why,//I am a man skilled to seize the well-armoured knight.//Praise me therefore for the things you know of me; for I//am easy to get on with, provided I'm not wronged." After a wine scene which demonstrates the poet's reckless expenditure, he exclaims, "Whenever I have sobered up, I diminish not my bounty,//my qualities and my nobility being as you have known them.//And many's the good wife's spouse I have left on the floor//the blood whistling from his ribs.... //I could advise you, daughter of Malik, to ask the horsemen//if you should happen to be ignorant and uniformed,//for I'm never out of the saddle of a strong swimmer;" he then boasts of his prowess in battle. A final reference to the beloved (enjoyed in the absence of her menfolk) leads to a complaint of his kinsmen's ingratitude, more *fakhr* (balancing the *nasīb*), and a reference to the fear that death may intervene before he has an opportunity to take blood revenge. – The *nasīb* of Kaʿb ibn Zuhayr's "Bānat Suʿād" dwells on the beloved's perfidy; on the poem (about which we are kept in the dark) see S. Stetkevych 1994. – Ṭarafa's *Muʿallaqa* (al-Zawzanī 1933:

53–89; Arberry 1957: 83–9) revolves around the perfidy of his kinsmen. The brief description of the "gazelle of the tribe" introduces the *raḥīl* ("Ah, but when grief assails me, straightway I ride it off//mounted on my swift, lean-flanked camel, night and day racing. . . . //Along the rough slopes with the milkless shes she has pastured// in Spring, cropping the rich meadows green in the gentle rains" – is this, too, evocative of the "lost garden"?). The poet compares his bravery to his companion's cowardice, boasts of the drinking-parties in which "I sold and squandered my hoard and my patrimony//till all my family deserted me, every one of them," and of his continued pursuit of warfare and the enjoyment of life ("for I tremble at the thought of the scant draught I'll get when I'm dead"), to conclude with a brief bit of *ḥikma* and invective against his kinsmen. – Al-Mukhabbal's *Mufaḍḍaliyya* 21 (al-Sukkarī 1964: 113–18; mistranslated by Sells in several places) begins by identifying memory with sickness and lack of *ḥilm*, followed by "consolation" (21), which introduces the *raḥīl*; the comparisons of the beloved to precious objects (pearls etc.), evoking images of luxury and opulence, serve to refute the words of the blamer (that wealth should be retained rather than expended) in a passage which balances the *nasīb*.

39 Like Sells, Stetkevych, in the desire to construct a "poetics of the *nasīb*", considers it in isolation from the remainder of the poem. The same imagery can function quite differently in a polythematic *qaṣīda* and in a monothematic poem (e.g. *khamriyya*, *ghazal*).

40 As Schoeler points out, garden imagery begins to make itself felt in the poetry of poets associated with the Lakhmid court of Hira, many of whom were Christian. Al-Akhṭal (d. ca. 92/710; 1968: 548–56) has a lengthy description of a spring meadow which employs personification through verbal metaphors (see Schoeler 1974: 24–5); al-Aʿshā (1928: 200–4) has in one poem a lengthy catalogue of flowers (many of the names of which come from Persian: *banafsaj*, "violet", *sīsinbar*, "water-mint", *shāhasfaram*, "basil", etc.) in a banquet scene (Schoeler 1974: 34–5).

41 As Heinrichs notes, the poet's use of metaphors in new contexts can tell us much (cf. 1986: 11). This is certainly true in the case of Abū Nuwās' *khamriyyāt*, where the rejection of war in favour of wine is often accomplished by the adaptation of martial imagery to the wine poem. See for example the poem beginning "When the father of war. . .", quoted in part in Chapter 2 (Abū Nuwās 1982: 198), in which the weapons of war are transformed into flowers and fruits, and which concludes (15–16), "This war is not a war which fills people with enmity;//In it, we slay them, and then – in it, we restore the dead to life."

42 We should also note the many instances in which the garden is rejected: for the wineshop or, in *ghazal*, for the beloved. Abū Nuwās, we will recall, bade the "rightly guided" to leave the gardens and make for Dhāt al-Ukayrāḥ. Saʿdī writes (1976: 37–8, no. 25): "When my melancholy heart used to frequent the gardens, the scent of rose and basil would render me distraught.//Now the nightingale would cry, and now the rose would tear its robe; then I remembered you, and forgot all of that//. . . . Since the thorn of your love clung to my skirt, it would be short-sighted to go to the rosegardens." See also Meisami 1995.

43 J. Stetkevych discusses the role of the east wind (*ṣabā*; equated with the zephyr of Classical poetry) in the "erotic lyrical code" (see 1993: 123–34, and index). It should be noted that terms for "wind" or "breeze" are not always either specific or value-laden; here, al-ʿAbbās uses simply *rīḥ*.

44 In this, says Schoeler, al-Ṣanawbarī resembles Ibn al-Rūmī (cf. 1974: 221), for whom "nature is both visually fascinating in appearance and a sign of God", but not Ibn al-Muʿtazz, who is chiefly concerned with "optical-decorative" effects (ibid.: 271, and see n. 48 below).

45 Compare in this respect Ibn al-Muʿtazz's *urjūza fī dhamm al-ṣabūḥ* (1977, 2: 30–7; see also Schoeler 1974: 239–46), in which the argument in favour of the *ṣabūḥ* (the morning draught; drinking in daytime) is supported by garden imagery – e.g., "Do you not see the garden – how it has burst into bloom, how it has scattered wide a golden mantle?//The rose grins at the poppies, and embraces the branch like a lover,//In a garden like a bride's garments, its purple starworts like the peacock's crown.//Jasmine is strung on the tips of branches like fragments of native gold," etc. (beauties which can be enjoyed only by daylight) – is rebutted by a description of the vulgarities and inconveniences associated with the practice. Arguments are multi-faceted, and can be manipulated to serve opposing purposes.

46 In his treatment of Ibn al-Muʿtazz (1974: 235–72) Schoeler comments frequently on the poet's "disconnected" imagery and its "Persian" characteristics (238; he "speaks of a new topic in each new verse", is "no lover of continuous figures", 239), of his "visual", "optical-decorative", "mannerist" imagery (271), and so on. I suggest that he misses the point: as in Persian poetry (with whose beginnings Ibn al-Muʿtazz was contemporary) successive – apparently discrete, often seemingly disparate, if not discordant – images are built up to form an overarching (if not explicitly articulated) figure. Schoeler does not discuss this poem, which was perhaps unavailable to him at the time.

47 The repetition of line 20 (which, notes the editor, is absent in one ms. and differs in another) suggests that 20 itself is corrupt; the *tajnīs mizmār/zumar* (pipes/Psalms) argues for the authenticity of 27.

48 Following the deposition and imprisonment of his father, the caliph al-Muʿtazz, in 255/869, the young Ibn al-Muʿtazz (b. 247/861) spent his life in virtual exile in Samarra, devoting himself to poetry and pleasure, until, on al-Muʿtaḍid's accession in 279/892, he was invited to take up residence in Baghdad, where he composed many panegyrics to the caliph. When al-Muʿtaḍid died in 289/902 and was succeeded by al-Muktafī, Ibn al-Muʿtazz retired from public life; but following the death of al-Muktafī in 295/908 he became involved in the political intrigues which led to his own attempt to depose al-Muqtadir and claim the throne. Failing, he was arrested and executed on the spot. The poem may have been written between 289–95/902–08. See *EI²*, art. "Ibn al-Muʿtazz" (B. Lewin).

49 Crucial considerations both of genre and of circumstances are often ignored. Thus Sells (1994) fails to consider the function of the descriptive passages he discusses in the larger context of the *qaṣīda*s in which they figure (see n. 38 above); while J. Stetkevych (1993), anxious to see Arabic poetry as dominated by a nostalgia whose origins are to be found in the ancient *nasīb*, selects only those examples which appear to fit his thesis, often misreading them in the process. (See further n. 50 below.)

50 J. Stetkevych comments, "As soon as the theme of the garden appears to free itself from the symbolic context of the *nasīb* – that means as soon as the garden in the poem does not participate closely in the mood of sorrow and loss, where it would inevitably develop symbolic affinities with the abodes and the ruins – a clear lessening of symbolic intensity seems to set in. This does not mean that a poem's lyrical intensity lessens too. Indeed, the resulting concreteness and objectivity, and the unmitigated coming face to face with the image or thing, may in instances of fulfillment produce a poetry approaching modern definitions of 'imagism' or rather of 'pure poetry' as understood by George Moore: a poetry 'born of admiration of the only permanent world, a world of things'." He quotes in illustration line 13 of Abū Tammām's *qaṣīda* to al-Muʿtaṣim, in which the poet is said to reach "this poetically revealing but collected and objective conclusion": "A place of sustenance is the world to man./Then spring's veil lifts,/and all is vision." "The renewal of the object as image has set in. Its poetic essence is perceived as it were for the first time, and it is

with this apprehended newness that it will survive from here on" (1993: 183). We may perhaps cite al-Tibrīzī's comment by way of a corrective: "He says: God created the world so that its inhabitants might take nourishment therefrom, for their sustenance is what its earth produces. And when spring comes" – al-Tibrīzī clearly reads the variant *jāʾa* for *juliya* "is revealed, unveiled" – "nothing remains [*lam yakun minhā illā* ...] but to look at its [the world's, or the earth's] beauties, its flowers, and the beginnings of its fruits, which announce [*al-mubashshira*] the nourishment by which life is maintained" (Abū Tammām 1951, 2: 194–5). In other words, the coming of spring is a sign; moreover, there is no "image" or "object" to be described "as it is" (both *jāʾa* and *juliya* are very weak animating verb metaphors); and further (as both Abū Tammām and al-Tibrīzī knew), the "world of things" is not "the only permanent world" – it is not permanent at all, but transient, as the recurrent cycle of the seasons testifies. On this *qaṣīda* see also Schoeler 1974: 95–9, who comments on the consequences of Abū Tammām's "unique" experiment in substituting a nature description for the traditional *nasīb* for subsequent Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Hebrew panegyric (95), and notes the connection of spring with the *mamdūḥ* (98–9).

51 Compare al-Mutanabbī, praising the Būyid vizier Ibn al-ʿAmīd: "Our Nawrūz has come, and you are its goal; its flints have kindled fire for the one it wished. ... In the land of Fars we rejoice on the morning when we see its birth..." (n.d.: 527, lines 1, 4).

52 Reversing the order of 24–25 in Qarīb's edition, as seems required by the sense.

53 The image of discourse/poetry as a tree is of major importance for Persian poets. It may well be connected with the sacred trees of Zoroastrian tradition (see Bausani, in Pagliaro and Bausani 1960: 286–90), as well as with the Koranic verse (14: 25–26): "Do you not see how God sets forth the example [*mathal*] of a good word, (which is like) a good tree whose root is firm and whose branches in the heavens? It brings forth fruit at all times, by the Lord's command...". For Nāṣir-i Khusraw further significance is derived from the tree under which the Prophet is said to have declared ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib his successor. The tree is also a popular image with Rūmī (see Meisami 1985a: 242–5). The subject deserves a study in its own right.

54 The *ghazal* presents a number of textual problems, including significant differences in the order of the verses in various editions. Nevertheless, it appears to "make sense".

55 On the "fiction" of the *ghazal* see Meisami 1987: 251–71, Meisami 1991a. In his commentary Sūdī generally reads Ḥāfiẓ's *ghazal*s in terms of this "fiction", perhaps because (a) the chronological gap between himself and Ḥāfiẓ was considerable, but also because (b) it might not have been appropriate to call attention to the political dimensions of the *ghazal*, which was widely practiced by contemporary Ottoman poets.

56 Poetry was employed as an adjunct to both preaching and teaching. Sufi (and other) preachers used poetry (sometimes their own; sometimes that of other, often "secular", poets) in their sermons (cf. de Bruijn 1974), because of its affective impact. The same is true of the Sufi *samāʿ* ("musical performance"), which involved both the dance and the singing of poetry. Investigation of these issues is beyond the scope of this study; the reader may consult, for example, de Bruijn 1997: 16–18, 69–70; Qureshi 1988; and for a discussion of the pros and cons of the *samāʿ* (a hotly debated issue) see *EI*[2], art. "Samāʿ. 1. In music and mysticism" (J. During); de Bruijn 1997: 69. On Rūmī's imagery and its connection with dance see Keshavarz 1998.

57 Modern commentators on mystical poetry, who tend to see it as the expression of a "universal spiritualism", often ignore the Koranic and exegetical bases on which both theory and poetic practice are founded; but this stratum is fundamental both to esoteric and to mystical poets, Arabic and Persian alike. On *taʾwīl* see especially Nywia 1970.

58 There does seem to be a fundamental point of difference: while for Nāṣir-i Khusraw one image can point to a variety of intelligibles (and nothing can point to God, who is "beyond knowledge"), for Rūmī (as we shall see) a multiplicity of images points ultimately to the One Reality, ineffable and transcendent. This does not, however, pose a major hermeneutical problem in distinguishing between allegory and allegoresis. The fundamental polysemism of allegorical imagery is well noted by Keshavarz (1998: 8), who comments further: "There is, of course, no question that the verbal surface of any literary creation is pregnant with latent concepts which might be made more accessible through critical analysis.... The problem here lies in understanding the critical process as assigning the image a permanent meaning that deprives it of its diverse and dynamic function. The false assumption that an image, regardless of its varying postures in different poems, can be interpreted in terms of a single unchangeable concept (or, in some cases, concepts) is the chief error in this approach" (ibid.: 73).

59 The verse is a favourite with the mystics and has received much commentary; see e.g. al-Ghazzālī 1924.

60 Compare Proclus' distinction between *homoia*, *eikon* and *symbolon*: "when [he] says Socrates' recapitulation [of the ideal state] is a 'likeness' (*eikon*) of the structure of the universe, he clearly does not mean that it is a portrait ... of that structure, but, rather, that it is like, or analogous, to that structure and that it enjoys, as well, a relationship of likeness which is direct and obvious.... This representational relationship is essentially what Proclus means by eiconic mimesis and it is very close to the modern sense of the critical term allegory. As far as the symbolic mode of representation is concerned, it may be noted ... that although the mechanism of likeness or correspondence ... figures, and importantly so, there is no question of a one-to-one likeness between copy and model which is also direct and obvious. Indeed, it is a prime characteristic of the symbol that it seems quite 'unlike' what it represents, so much so, in fact, that Proclus is compelled to speak of it as only 'hinting secretly' at what it ultimately represents.... The symbol hints, but because it hints it also hides" (Coulter 1976: 42–3). In view of the Neoplatonic underpinnings of mystical thought, it is possible to see a connection (however indirect) between Proclus and Rūmī.

61 Stetkevych tends to apply his own predetermined reading to Ibn al-Fāriḍ's "*nasīb*" (which it is not), as his frequent references to the "Arabic lyrical code" (or to the "elegiac lexicon"; see J. Stetkevych 1994) make clear; however, his literary approach provides welcome relief from other, lexical approaches which seek to find a theosophical-mystical system in every poem.

62 Ibn al-Fāriḍ's mystical poem known as *al-tāʾiyya al-kubrā* ("the long poem rhyming in *t*") was taken over by the school of Ibn al-ʿArabī and was taught by Rūmī's master in Konya, Ṣadr al-Dīn Qunawī. The first commentary on the poem was written by a student of Qunawī's, Saʿīd al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Farghānī (d. 699/ 1300?), first in Persian, then rewritten in Arabic (see Scattolin 1993: 332–6). The story of Rūmī's encounter with the aged Ibn al-ʿArabī in Damascus clearly belongs to the *silsila* convention (that is, the establishment of a chain of "masters"); cf. Keshavarz 1998: 5.

63 Compare Ibn al-Fāriḍ 1985: 120–3, which has the same *maṭlaʿ* as this poem, and may be a companion poem (see also Sperl 1996). Note that, at the end of the "companion poem", the goal has been achieved; says the poet, addressing the "Lord of the Prophet": "Give us, with the beloved ones, your Vision towards which the hearts of the saints hasten;//For Your gate is sought out, Your grace more than sufficient, Your largesse existant, and your forgiveness wide" (Ibn al-Fāriḍ 1985: 123).

64 See, for example, the symbolism of East and West in the writings of Suhravardī (1982). The translator comments: "If we think in Avicennan terms of a 'vertical'

orientation, that is, an orientation such that 'down here' (this corporeal world) is the 'west' of this world and 'out there' (the spiritual realm beyond the senses) is the 'east' (*mashriq*, literally the point whence the dawning rays of the sun emanate) of the 'other world,' i.e., the world of the unseen from which the rays of the spiritual sun arise, then the quest of the soul to regain that original 'east' will be expressed in an external, 'vertical' pilgrimage up through the spheres and ultimately 'out' of the created universe" (1982: 9). This is only one specific usage of this imagery; it characterizes neither Ibn al-ʿArabī's poem nor the *ghazal* by Rūmī discussed at the end of the present chapter.

65 An interesting exception is Ibn al-Fāriḍ. While his *khamriyya* utilizes the imagery of drunkenness, his long *tāʾiyya* (see n. 63 above), also known as *Naẓm al-sulūk* ("Poem of the Way"), explores other images, not least that of the shadow play.

66 According to some accounts in the Legends of the Prophets, the fruit of the vine was the first food eaten by Adam in Paradise, which made it possible for Satan to tempt him; in other versions, it was cupidity for a grain of wheat that caused Adam to lose Paradise.

67 I would argue against Keshavarz's assumption (see 1998, especially Chapter 7) that the conventions of the "traditional" *ghazal* were firmly fixed by Rūmī's time. A clear factor in Rūmī's "unconventional" approach to the *ghazal* is that of his audience, which was not a courtly élite, but a much broader cross-section of society. This issue demands further investigation.

9 CONCLUSION

1 Arberry notes on line 36: "For *lam* al-Tibrīzī records *law*, and for *l-maniyyatu* ["Fate"] the variant *l-ʿawāqibu* ["the consequences"]", which would link 35–36 even more closely.

2 Al-Tibrīzī offers the variant *bi-sunnati s-sayfi wal-ḥinnāʾi*, "by the way of sword and henna," and comments that the Prophet's Companions and Followers considered it *sunna* to dye their white hair red, with henna, rather than black. But he prefers the reading *al-khaṭṭī*, and sees the line as expressing equivalence rather than contrast: "One can say that the dyeing of this unbeliever with this blood is according to the usage of religion and of Islam, since holy war is incumbent upon Muslims. . . . [But the second reading] is more eloquent in terms of sound parallelism [*ṣiḥḥat al-muqābala*], because it compares religion and Islam with two things that are not different in fact, because they are both instruments of war" (Abū Tammām 1951, 1: 57–8).

3 The correctness of the attribution has been disputed (e.g. by M. M. Qazvīnī; see Arberry 1962: 139, n. 1); but it was accepted by earlier commentators, and Ḥāfiẓ's use of this *taḍmīn* occasioned considerable dispute, especially from later Shīʿī commentators (among whom we may include Qazvīnī himself), not merely because of the line's profane content but also because of the caliph-poet's role in the defeat, or martyrdom, of Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib at the battle of Karbala.

4 The order in QG seems preferable with respect to the relation between structure and meaning. The two *bayt*s juxtapose, in reverse order with respect to the two halves of the *maṭlaʿ*, two images expressive of separation, the first (2) more typical of and more developed in Persian poetry, the second (3) far more frequent in Arabic than in Persian.

5 We might note – to inject a dose of realism into what seems a gratuitous piece of condescension – that Shiraz is not that far from the Gulf ports, and that *daryā* is also used for lakes and rivers; in the latter sense, and referring primarily to the Oxus (Jayḥūn), it provides a rich source of imagery for the "landlocked" poets of Khurasan and Transoxania. (We might also recall Khāqānī's reference to the Tigris as a "sea" in

his Madāʾin *qaṣīda*). We are dealing with a literary tradition in which sea imagery is found already in the pre-Islamic poetry of Arabia, and in which the *mamdūḥ* is customarily termed a "sea" of generosity – a field of reference which may not be without relevance to Ḥāfiẓ's *ghazal*.

6 Hilālī's verse may well be an allusion to Ḥāfiẓ (as Sūdī states); but the *topos* is certainly a well-known one amongst both Arabic and Persian poets.

7 An exception is QG142, a very different kind of *ghazal* with far more obvious mystical overtones, whose textual tradition is, moreover, highly confused.

8 In this connection we should note the recent work of Paul Losensky (1988b) on the poets of the "post-classical" period.

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Abbreviations: Periodicals

AION   *Annali de l'Istituto Orientale di Napoli*
AMEL   *Arabic and Middle Eastern Literatures.*
BEO   *Bulletin d'études orientales*, Damascus.
BSOAS   *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*,
          University of London.
CRCL   *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature.*
IJMES   *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies.*
JAL   *Journal of Arabic Literature.*
JAOS   *Journal of the American Oriental Society.*
JJCL   *Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature.*
JNES   *Journal of Near Eastern Studies.*
JSS   *Journal of Semitic Studies.*
MIDEO   *Mélanges de l'Institut Dominicain d'Études Orientales*, Cairo.
NLH   *New Literary History.*
OLZ   *Orientalische Literaturzeitung.*
SI   *Studia Islamica.*
PMLA   *Publications of the Modern Language Society of America.*
YCGL   *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature.*
ZDMG   *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.*
ZGAIW   *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaft.*

Abbreviations: Books

CHALABL   *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Abbasid Belles-Lettres.*
CHALUP   *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature to the End of the
          Umayyad Period.*
EI^1 *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (First edition).
EI^2 *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (New edition).
EIr   *Encyclopaedia Iranica.*
Lane   Lane, Edward William. *Arabic-English Lexicon.*
P   Ḥāfiẓ. *Dīvān*. Edited by Ḥusayn Pizhmān.
QG   Ḥāfiẓ. *Dīvān*. Edited by M. Qazvīnī and Q. Ghani.

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