

TEXTS AND MANUSCRIPTS: DESCRIPTION AND RESEARCH

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ARABIC LITERATURE: POETICS AND STYLISTICS. I: MEDIEVAL ARABIC GRAPHIC CULTURE (FROM PICTORIAL FIGURES TO DRAWING SCRIPT)

The search for new artistic resources in medieval poetics was often connected with intensive development of figurative speech expressive means. In classical Arabic poetry this process became distinct with the formation of a new stylistic trend *badī'*. The trend emerged at the second half of the 8th century, reached its climax by the late-10th century.

Within the new style formation, the expressive means system of the medieval Arabic poetry evolved, due to continual modification bidirectional process. A more intensive use of ancient figurative methods represents one of these directions [1].

The other way of system evolution was extensive development of new expressive means in practical artistic field with the subsequent reflection of this process in poetics. One can judge about the substantial changes in this sphere by the following facts: the founder of the theoretical study of *badī'* style Ibn al-Mu'tazz (d. 296/908) distinguishes only 18 methods of artistic expressiveness, al-'Askarī (d. after 395/1005) considers as many as 39 [2], while al-Ḥillī (d. ca. 749/1348), poet and theorist, sequentially incarnates more than 150 (!) different poetic figures in his work [3].

It seems appropriate to indicate by a number of examples the ways which helped to reach such a notable extensive development of expressive means of late medieval Arabic — and then Persian — poetry which inherited and developed the main characteristics of *badī'* style.

In a treatise *Gardens of Magic* by a Persian theorist Rašid al-Din Waṭwāt (d. 573—1177/8 or 578—1182/3) one can observe a technique called *muqaṭṭa'* ("disrupted") that lies in using in a *bayt* such words letters of which do not join together in writing" [4].

وَأَذْرِكُ إِن زُرْتُ دَارَ وَدُودٍ دَرًّا وَدَرًّا وَوَرْدًا وَوَرْدًا

Another technique called *muwaṣṣal* ("joined") is opposite to the first one and lies in "using in a *bayt* such words, the letters of which are all joined in writing". One can find an example of this technique in *maqāmāt* ("picaresque short stories" — A. K.) by al-Ḥarīrī (446—516/1054—1122) [5].

شَعَفْتَنِي بَجْفَنَ ظَلِي غَضِيضٍ غَنَجَ يَقْتَضِي لُقَيْضُ جَقْنِي

Waṭwāt also mentions another technique called *tawṣīl*, which lies in using in a verse only words with dotted letters [6].

Ḥadhf is a technique similar to *tawṣīl*, which lies in "truncation of one or several letters of alphabet in prose or poetry"; for example "al-Ḥarīrī has a *ḥuṭba* in his *maqamat* and all dotted letters are withdrawn from this *ḥuṭba*..." [7].

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A so to speak hybrid is also acceptable. There is a technique called *raqṭā*, which lies in "using in prose or poetry words in which one letter has dots and the next one does not". Waṭwāt again gives an example from al-Ḥarīrī [8].

A variation of the latter is a technique called *ḥayfā'*, which lies in using in prose or poetry such words that "all the letters of one word are dotted, while all the letters of the next one are not" (there is an example from al-Ḥarīrī's epistles) [9].

الكَرْمُ نَبْتٌ اللهُ جَيْشٌ سَعُودِكَ يَزِينُ وَاللَّوْمُ غَضُّ الدَّهْرِ جَفْنٌ حُسُودِكَ يَشِينُ

Among more complicated methods combining both graphical and semantic aspects, we should consider a technique called *muṣahḥaf* which "lies in using in a prosaic passage or in verses such words that if while preserving their [graphical] form, [the order] of dots and vocalization is changed, [the sense of the *bayt*] turns from praise and approval into abuse and reviling".

This technique has two variations: (i) "in *muḍṭarab* letters [of different words] are linked to each other. To change the order of dots and vocalization..., one should find the [new] word boundaries using his diligence and thought"; (ii) in *muntāzam* "each separate word can be read with a change in dots and vocalization while the word boundaries remain fixed and invariable and one needn't make an effort to define them" [10].