

The Development of
Tropes in Arabic Wine
Poetry up to the 12th
Century AD

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INTRODUCTION

Although most scholars would confirm the originality of the wine poets of the Abbasid period, and of Abo Nuwwas' wine poetry in particular, some cast doubt on his originality and argue that he stole metaphors from his predecessors. In order to decide on this issue one way or another, it is necessary to examine the imagery associated with wine since the pre-Islamic period and to compare it with what we find in Abo Nuwwas' works.

This is the basic motivation for our choice of topic. To this must be added the fact that ancient Arabic poetry is replete with what we believe to be excellent metaphors that induce one to study them. Indeed, tracking these metaphors across the ages has been quite a pleasurable experience, in which we were confronted with not a few curiosities that compensated for the more humdrum task of comparing lines of poetry.

In this study we did not focus only on prominent poets, or those famous for their wine poetry, but rather inquired into the wine imagery used by all poets whose works are extant, however obscure.

This study will follow the evolution of the imagery used by poets from pre-Islamic times until the days of Abo Nuwwas, including contemporaries of the latter who died slightly after him, such as Muslim b. al-Walid and Dik al-Jinn.

The study is divided into three parts. We begin with the theory of the evolution of poetic imagery as developed by Joseph Sadan, which shows how metaphors were taken over by one poet from another on the basis of existing imagery stores. Then we provide a survey of wine poetry in general and how it evolved from pre-Islamic times to the twelfth century CE. The main chapter deals with how metaphors, especially those used to describe the vessels associated with wine, such as jugs, cups, and wine skins, evolved over time, and how poets took the imagery used by their predecessors and variously copied them as they were or built on them to create new metaphors. The concluding chapter presents the results of the study.

CHAPTER I

METAPHORICAL EMBELLISHMENTS ("RHETORICAL EXPRESSIONS" OR *MA'ANI*) IN THE POETRY OF WINE

Language is an inexhaustible spring for those who know how to exploit its finer points. A lively mind and creative genius can take a figurative expression used by many others in numerous and different ways and present it in various forms so that it becomes a distinctly novel one. The question we wish to ask here is the following:

Were wine poets able to invent new rhetorical expressions with which they were able to move beyond the sensory and descriptive meanings which appeared in traditional images?

Here is what Ibn al-Athir has to say on the matter:

New metaphorical expressions will always come into being, until Judgment Day, for no one can put bounds on thought, a statement which may be taken as a call for literary inventiveness and originality.

But this call, though addressed to all, can only be taken up by those with an innate disposition to observe, memorize and make original connections. Although it is universally true that thoughts cannot be confined, in order to make thinking fertile, both the power of observation and a creative spirit of genius are needed. Sight is thus an important prerequisite for generating original poetical imagery.¹ Still, it is an incontrovertible fact that wine

¹ On the theory of poetical imagery (*ma'ani*) and how it is generated in poetry, see the following: al-Jahiz, 389; Ibn Tabatiba, *Iyar al-Shi'r*, 67, 87; Ibn Khuldon, *Muqaddima*, 570; Von Grunebaum, "The Aesthetic Foundation of Arabic Literature" *Comparative Literature* IV (1952), 323-340; Shalabi, *Dirasat fi al-Shi'r al-'Abbasi. ibn al-Mu'tazz al-'Abbasi, Suwar li'asrihi*, 183; 'Ubid, *al-Manhaj al-Balagha 'inda al-Jurjani*, 256; Liven, "Al gnevet Hashir vi'al Hmiqoriyot Bashirh Ha'ivrit isfarad biyimi Habinayim", *Mahqaru babiqorit hasifrot*, 148-149; Sadan, "Maidens' Hair and Starry Skies: Imagery System and ma'ani Guides, the Practical Side of Arabic as Demonstrated in Two Manuscripts", *IOS* 6 (1991), 55-88; Sadan (1991); Sadan, "Rabi Yihoda al-Hrizi kitzomit drkhim", *Pi'amim* 69 (1996), 16-

poets have been able to come up with original metaphors and images. As al-Safadi has rightly commented:

It cannot be denied that seeing what there is on the outside helps to formulate a metaphor; however, sight is not a necessary condition for the evocation of imagery.²

It has been said that wine poets are too imitative of their predecessors, using the very same imagery and making use of words and descriptions that have already become clichés. However, in many instances, this should not be regarded as plagiarism since influences have existed in every age and among members of any group. Wine poets must therefore not be judged differently from those who adopt a metaphor used by someone else. In the present study we will not focus on plagiarism in literature and criticism, although we shall occasionally comment on cases where influence shades into plagiarism.

It may be apt in this connection to quote the story related by 'Ubayd Allah al-Marzubani about a member of the Bano Tamim tribe who came to al-Farazdaq, and said to him:

I have composed a poem, which I would like you to look at and recite. But al-Farazdaq answered him: O my nephew, poetry used to be a wonderful camel, until Imru' al-Qays³ took its head, 'Amr b. Kulthom its hump, 'Ubayd b. al-Abras its thigh, al-A'sha its rump, Zuhaiyr its withers, Tarfa its neigh, and al-Nabighatan its two flanks, so that when it reached us all that was left were its legs and innards, which we then proceeded to divide amongst us.⁴

67; Van Gelder, *Beyond the Line: Classical Arabic Literary Critics on the Coherence and Unity of the Poem*, 1982; Trabulsi, *La critique poétique des Arabes, jusqu'au Ve siècle de l'Hégire*, 1956; Jundi, *Ilm al-Ma'ani, Matba'at nahdat Misr*, no date; al-Akhdar, *al-Lafz wal-Ma'na fi al-Tafkir al-Naqdi wal-Balaghi 'ind al-'Arab*, Manshorat ittihad al-kuttab al-'arab, Damascus 2002; Sadiq, Muhammad, *al-Ma'ani al-Mutajaddida fi al-Shi'r al-Jahili*, Cairo: Maktabat al-Nahda al-Misriyya, 1994; 'Atiq, 'Abd al-'Aziz, *fi Tarikh al-Balagha al-'Arabiyya*, Cairo: Dar Nahdat Misr, 1974.

² Al-Safadi, *al-Wafi bil-Wafiyat*, Beirut: Dar 'Ihya' al-Turath, 187.

³ Imru' al-Qays b. Hujr b. al-Harith al-Kindi. See al-Asfahani, *al-Aghani*, 9:77; Ibn Qutayba, *al-Shi'r wal-Shu'ara'*, 31; al-Baghdadi, *Khazanat al-Adab wa-Lub Lubab Lisan al-'Arab*, 1:160, 3:609-612; al-Zirikli, *al-A'lam*, 2:11-12; Kahhala, *Mu'jam al-Mu'allifin*, 2:351; Faysal, *Manahij al-Dirasa al-Adabiyya fi al-Adab al-'Arabi*, 1:22; Brock. I, 24, SI, 48-50; *EI'*, 1177-9.

⁴ Al-Marzubani, *Mu'jam al-Shu'ara'*, 553.

Although al-Marzubani rightfully claims that numerous types of poetical imagery have been used to exhaustion, this does not mean that later poetry is valueless. Repetition does not necessarily imply a lack of expressive talent. As 'Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law, said: "If utterances are not repeated, they wither away."⁵

The early poets, however, were so prolific in the formulation of metaphors and linguistic embellishments that they limited the ability of their successors to invent new ones, placing the latter at a disadvantage and attracting accusations from some critics. Other critics were more understanding and forgiving, such as Qudama b. Ja'far, who tried to judge fairly:

When I thought about it objectively I realized that the people of our age and of the age to come were to be excused rather than accused, since those who preceded us had already absorbed themselves completely in the search for metaphors, and found most of them.⁶

Ibn Tabatiba similarly believed that the time element was mainly to blame:

The poets of our days are tested more severely than their predecessors, because the latter [have] already found every admirable image, every lovely device, and every charming attraction.⁷

Some metaphors originally used by certain poets have turned into widely-used clichés with time and frequent use, as al-Jurjani explains:

My observations have shown me that comparison of the beautiful with the sun and the moon, the generous with the rain and the sea, the slow and dimwitted with the stone and the ass, the energetic and brave with the sword and the fire, ardent outpourings of love with deranged confusion, the healthy in his sleeplessness and the ill in his groans and pains, are all images which the mind evokes frequently, and are common to speakers and the dumb, to those fluent in the language and to those lacking a language, to poets and to the tongue-tied. It is my opinion that to plagiarize such images is impossible, as is the imitation of the followers. So I make a distinction between what is like it and what differs, between what goes along with it and what is distinct from it.⁸

⁵ Ibn Rashiq, *al-'Umda fi Mahasin al-Sh'ar*, 1:91.

⁶ Qudama, *Naqd al-Shi'r*, 107.

⁷ Ibn Tabatiba, *'Iyar al-Shi'r*, 8.

⁸ Al-Jurjani, *al-Wasata bayna al-Mutanabbi wa-Khusomih*, 183.

Ibn al-Athir's view is that a metaphor used by a number of successive poets becomes what he calls a "pillar" (*'amod*) from which extensions may be developed, each constituting an individual usage by a single poet. If such a metaphor cannot be used as the beginning point of a new extension, then it cannot be called a pillar, since its inventor has taken it as far as it will go. All metaphors are of either one or the other of these two types.⁹ It is the first of the two of which it can be said that one poet copied from another.¹⁰

Ibn Khuldun in his *Muqaddima* has this to say on the issue in question:

Let us mention the significance of [the word] "method" [*uslub*] as used by [poets], and what they mean by it. It should be known that they use it to express the loom on which word combinations are woven, or the mold into which they are packed. It is not used to express the basis [upon which] the meaning [of a statement rests]. That is the task of the vowel endings. It is also not used for the perfect expression of the idea resulting from the particular word combination used. That is the task of eloquence and style [*bayan*]. It is also not used in the sense of meter, as employed by the Arabs in connection with poetry. That is the task of prosody. These three sciences fall outside the craft of poetry. [Poetical method] is used to refer to a mental form for metrical word combinations, which is universal in the sense of conforming to 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. Word combinations that the Arabs consider sound, in the sense of having the [correct] vowel endings and the [proper] style, are then selected and packed by [the mind] into [that form], just as the builder does with the mold, or the weaver with the loom. Eventually, the mold is sufficiently widened to admit the word combinations that fully express what one wants to express. It takes on the form that is sound in the sense [that it corresponds to] the Arabic linguistic habit. Each branch of [poetical] speech has methods peculiar to it and existing in it in different ways.

Later on he adds:

[But] the [poetical] methods which we try to establish here have nothing to do with analogical reasoning. They are a form that is firmly rooted in

⁹ Ibn al-Athir, *al-Matal al-Sa'r fi Adab al-Katib wal-Sha'r*, 9-13.

¹⁰ For the definitions see Ibn al-Athir, 3:225-292, 4:3-4, 61-70; some of the terms in question also appear in al-Jurjani, *al-Wasata bayna al-Mutanabbi wakhusomihi*, 183. For an explanation of the terms see Ihsan 'Abbas, *Tarikh al-Naqd al-Adabi 'inda al-'Arab*, 600-615.

the soul. It is the result of the continuity of word combinations in Arabic poetry when the tongue uses them. Eventually, the form of [those word combinations] becomes firmly established. It teaches [the poet] the use of similar [word combinations]. [It teaches him] to imitate them for each word combination [that he may use] in the poetry [he produces].¹¹

It should not be thought that knowing the rules of the art of eloquence is enough, for the latter are theoretical and logical, whereas the “method” discussed by Ibn Khuldun is not a matter of logic at all, but rather consists of linguistic forms used in Arab poetry that are “rooted in the soul”, and which are frequently used in speech. This is what enables the poet to use their pattern in his poetic constructions. As Ibn Khuldun points out,

The scientific rules that govern the word endings or syntax and style [*bayān*] do not teach [poetry]. Not everything that is correct according to analogical reasoning, as used in connection with Arabic speech and the scientific [grammatical] rules, is used by [poets]. They use certain ways [of expressing themselves] which are known and studied by those who have expert knowledge of [poetical] speech and the forms of which fall [automatically] under those analogical rules. If Arabic poetry is to be studied under this aspect and under the aspect of the methods in the mind that are like molds [for poetical expression], it means studying word combinations as they are used by the [Arabs]. It does not mean studying the things required by analogical reasoning.¹²

The existence of similes has been a fundamental element of Arabic poetry from the days in which it was transmitted orally, through the period in which it was collected in volumes, and down to our own day and age. Evidence of this can be found in books of poetic criticism and books on Arabic eloquence. Numerous scholars who devoted their studies to Classical and post-Classical Arabic poetry have described and defined the foundations of poetic imagery and linguistic embellishment. In fact, some modern scholars have often merely copied what medieval authors wrote about the methods of poetic eloquence with only very slight variations.¹³

In recent times the term “rhetorical devices” (*ma’ani*) has taken on a new meaning, namely “intertextuality”. Among Arabs the subject of intertextuality has come up in the context of the issue of plagiarism, which they usually referred to as “stolen” rhetorical devices. Their conclusion was that no writer is completely innocent of copying, since any given text

¹¹ Ibn Khuldun, *Muqaddima*, V. 6, Section 54.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Al-Tha’alibi, *Sihir al-balagha wa-Sir al-Bara’a*, 2010.

interrelates with numerous others, whatever care the author might take to avoid it. However, instead of using the objective term “intertextuality”, they used the term “theft”, with all its negative connotations.¹⁴ For example, this is what the author of *al-Muwazana* says on the matter:

None of the experts on poetry in my acquaintance consider the “theft of metaphors” a serious shortcoming in a poet, especially where latter-day poets are concerned, since no one, ancient or modern, is completely free of this.¹⁵

Ibn Rashiq, in his *al-'Umda*, states that “this is a very broad topic, from which no poet can claim immunity”,¹⁶ while al-Marzubani claims that:

Poets can be excused for plagiarizing, for they help make its meaning clearer, or make it more lucid than the original utterance, or present it in a way that brings shame on their predecessor without exposing him, treating it as something they can do without rather than something they are in need of.¹⁷

Al-Marzubani here points to the function of intertextuality, which his predecessor called plagiarism. Among transmitters, this function is usually hidden quite deeply by transpositions, inversions, and changes in method and order. In addition, they set themselves the task of repairing any drawback by addition and compensation, explanation, argumentation and justification.¹⁸

From what has been said above we can understand that literary plagiarism is not forbidden, or at least that it can be excused, even though poets and writers have accused each other of plagiarizing and boasted of not having done so themselves.¹⁹ Thus Tarfa has written:

I am not so jealous of poets that I would steal from them
I can do without that, for whoever steals is the worst of men.²⁰

¹⁴ On plagiarism see Ibn Yamot, *Sariqat abo Nuwwas*, 1957; Hadara, *Mushkilat al-Sariqat fi al-Naqd al-'Arabi*, 1958; Tabana, *al-Sariqat al-Adabiyya*, 1969.

¹⁵ Al-Amadi, abo al-Qasim, *Kitab al-Muwazana bayna Shi'r abi Tammam wal-Buhturi*, 326.

¹⁶ Ibn Rashiq, *al-'Umda fi mahasin al-Sh'ar*, 2:280.

¹⁷ Al-Marzubani, *Mu'jam al-Shu'ara'*, 388.

¹⁸ Al-Jurjani, *al-Wasata bayna al-Mutanabbi wa-Khuomih*, 214.

¹⁹ Qulayqila, *al-Naqd al-Adabi 'inda al-Qadi al-JurJani*, 298.

²⁰ Tarfa, *Diwan*, verse no. 1 of poem no. 40, 131.

While Hassan has the following verse:

I will not steal from poets what they have uttered,
 In fact their poetry does not suit mine.
 Jarir accused al-Farazdaq as follows:
 He will know who his father was among us,
 And who procured for him his poems.²¹

And al-Farazdaq repaid Jarir in kind:

Jarir steals his poetry; that is his custom, to ascribe the source and also the poem to himself.²²

In al-Īariri's twenty-third *maqama*, which has poetry as its topic, the author censures acts of plagiarism and describes how the plagiarized writer must feel:

Among poets stealing verses is considered more heinous than the theft of the white and the yellow [silver and gold]; they guard the daughters of their spirits with the same jealousy with which they guard their virgin daughters.²³

Al-Jurjani states that transmitters are more liable to condone plagiarism than anyone else, because their predecessors copied almost every possible metaphor, leaving untouched only those considered of little worth or whose meaning was too abstruse.²⁴ This is indeed what seems to have happened. Acts of plagiarism evolved over time, as did the meaning of the term itself. At first they were acts of copying pure and simple, leaving both utterance and meaning unchanged. Gradually changes crept in, at first only in the choice of expressions, but later transmitters, while plagiarizing, made every effort to cover their tracks by moving segments around, inverting their order, and changing their structure, as mentioned above.²⁵

Metaphor, as a form of speech, is open to everyone, so that a poet who "is very eloquent is no more than the owner of some gemstones who takes a sapphire, an emerald and a pearl and turns them into poems and necklaces".²⁶ A poet must pick out what is most fitting for him "since

²¹ Al-Farazdaq, *Diwan*, Beirut: Dar Sadir, n.d, 2:146.

²² Al-Jurjani, *al-Wasata bayna al-Mutanabbi wa-Khusomih*, 208.

²³ Al-Hariri, *Maqamat al-Hariri*, 191-192.

²⁴ Al-Jurjani, *al-Wasata bayna al-Mutanabbi wa-Khusomih*, 208.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 207-208.

²⁶ Ibn al-Muqaffa', *al-Adab al-Saghir*, 128.

poetry is a craft". This point of view leads to a relatively lenient attitude towards the plagiarism of metaphors, since in this view those who plagiarize actually intend to produce "a singular creation of the kind which gives poets distinction, and not run-of-the-mill metaphors",²⁷ and the beauty of such singular creations lies in "characterization and portrayal".²⁸

Al-'Abdari describes the principle of generation which produces such a chain of successive loans without using the word "plagiarism" at all, and without viewing later users of the metaphor as in any way inferior to their predecessors.²⁹ Al-'Abdari follows the historical development of one metaphor from its predecessor, using as his point of departure the moment of the metaphor's first, unprecedented appearance. For the latter stage(s), al-'Abdari uses the term "invention" (*ibtikar*) as a synonym for "creation" (*ikhтира*), "innovation" (*ibda'*), "generation" (*tawlid*), or "marvel" (*badi'*), denoting something "novel" (*muhdath*), not following the pattern of something already written in the past.³⁰

Al-Jurjani in his *al-Wasata* mentions eleven different types of possible literary influence or plagiarism: accidental identity of ideas (*tawarud al-khatir*),³¹ theft (*saraq*),³² usurpation (*ghasb*),³³ incursion (*ighara*), pilferage (*ikhhtilas*),³⁴ purloining (*ilmam*),³⁵ copying (*mulahaza*),³⁶ imitation (*tanasub*),³⁷ reproduction of a model (*ihthitha' al-mithal*),³⁸ inversion (*qalb*)³⁹ and changing the order and the structure (*taghyir al-tartib wal-minhaj*).⁴⁰

It is probably inevitable that poets will be influenced by other poets. However, what would be regarded as truly disgraceful is if a poet makes a career of just imitating the verses of others. Yet, since poetry is what 'Abdullah b. 'Abbas⁴¹ has called the "treasury of the Arabs", which they

²⁷ Ibn Rashiq, *al-'Umda fi Mahasin al-Sh'ar*, 2:180.

²⁸ Mosa, *al-Sabgh al-Badi'i fi al-Lugha al-'Arabiyya*, 14.

²⁹ Al-Ghazi, *Manahig al-Naqd al-Adabi fi al-Maghrib*, 63.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 65.

³¹ Al-Jurjani, *al-Wasata bayna al-Mutanabbi wa-Khusomihi*, 2:273.

³² *Ibid*, 245.

³³ *Ibid*, 187.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 188.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 387.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 406.

³⁷ Qulayqila, *al-Naqd al-Adabi 'inda al-Qadi al-Jurjani*, 319.

³⁸ *Ibid*, 373.

³⁹ *Ibid*, 322.

⁴⁰ Al-Jurjani, *al-Wasata bayna al-Mutanabbi wa-Khusomihi*, 214, 272, 286, 293, 364.

⁴¹ Ibn Rashiq, *al-'Umda fi Mahasin al-Sh'ar*, 1:23.

memorize, retell and proudly teach their children, it is no wonder that even great poets, who have memorized hundreds of their predecessors' verses, cannot help but be affected by them.⁴²

An intertextual connection may thus consolidate a certain meaning, stressing a situation or assisting the text, whether overtly or covertly. On the other hand, it may also be used in order to dismiss an utterance or deny a belief.⁴³ The intertextual element may be just a word which alludes to the text from which it was taken, as a sentence with a meaning of its own yet evoking the text from which it was derived, or an expression or a line of verse, or part of one.

There are those who make a distinction between direct and indirect intertextuality. Direct intertextuality occurs when parts of an original text are imported for artistic or other reasons in a way appropriate to the narrative or poetic text in question. The borrowed text can be of any kind, historical, religious, or literary, which is sometimes inserted without any change, as for example in the case of Qur'anic verses, traditions, and folktales. Indirect intertextuality occurs when a writer derives an idea, a well-known passage or a historical memory, usually from a narrative text, and puts the spirit or the meaning of the idea into his own work, using his own words without ascribing it to the original text. This is what is usually meant by terms such as allusion, references, codes and hints.⁴⁴

The traditional one-step approach (of al-Jahiz and Qudama)⁴⁵

The figure below presents the theory espoused by al-Jahiz, Qudama b. Ja'far and others, who saw that rhetorical devices (*ma'ani*) were being abandoned while literal meanings (*alfaz*) were the structure that everyone desired. But some poets wanted to take elements of this structure and tried to change and polish them. To be more precise, the figure shows that the source of a rhetorical device is the original poet who used it, despite any

⁴² Daiyf, *Tarikh al-Adab al-'Arabi*, 145-146.

⁴³ 'Id, *Dirasat fi Lughat al-Shi'r*, 185; Mujahid, *Ashkal al-Tanass al-Shi'ri*, 272; Murtad, *Fikrat al-Muharrikat al-Shi'riyya wa-Nazariyyat al-Tanass*, 91.

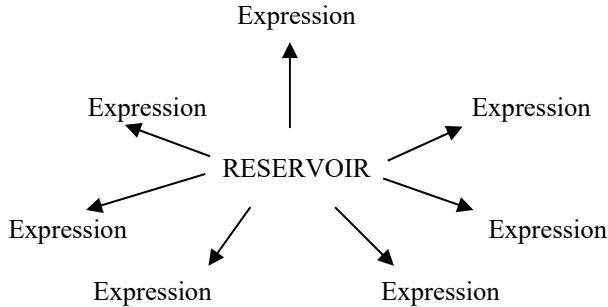
⁴⁴ Al-Zu'bi, *al-Tanass Nazariyyan wa-Tatbiqiyyan*, 9.

⁴⁵ On this theory see the following sources: Al-Bahi, *Dirasat fi al-Adab wal-Naqd wal-Balagha*, 1959; al-Akhdar, *al-Lafz wal-Ma'na fi al-Tafkir al-Naqdi wal-Balaghi 'inda al-'Arab*, 2002; Sadan, "Maidens' Hair and Starry Skies; Imagery system and ma'ani guides; the practical side of Arabic as demonstrated in two manuscripts", *IOS* 6 (1991), 55-88.

subsequent changes or additions in its meter or rhyme. This is not called literary theft, but rather plagiarism.⁴⁶

The scheme represented by the single-stage figure below (Fig. 1) is considered by Sadan to be misleading.⁴⁷

Fig. 1

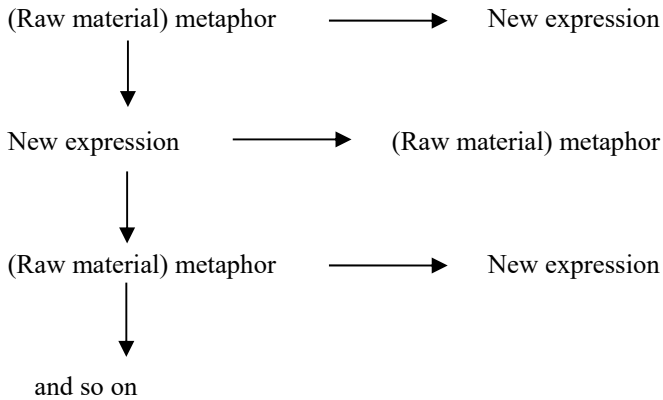


Sadan considers the second multi-stage scheme, as shown in the figure below, as being more correct, because it shows that any verbal development serves as raw material for the next poet. Such a development becomes the next poet's new expression and constitutes the relatively raw material or metaphor from which a third poet will be able to derive an expression of his own, and so on.

⁴⁶ On the differences between the two, see Von Grunebaum, "The Concept of Plagiarism in Arabic Theory", *Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* III (1944), 234-253; Hadara, *Mushkilat al-Sarqat fi al-Naqd al-'Arabi*, 1958.

⁴⁷ Sadan, 1991, 55-88; Sadan, "Rabi Yihoda al-Hrizi kitzomit drkhim", *Pi'amim*, 69 (1996), 16-76; Sadan, "Un intellectuel juif au confluent de deux cultures" in *Judíos y musulmanes en al-Andalus* (2002), 105-151.

Fig. 2



The chain of metaphors in this figure represents merely a reweaving of old rhetorical ideas in new metaphorical clothing. This is a theory that can serve both readers and modern scholars who study the theoretical aspects of the rhetorical arts. A theory of metaphorical expressions is often of a practical nature as, for example, in the case of Abo Hilal al-'Askari, who taught his disciples the foundations of rhetoric as understood in the Middle Ages. In addition he also found time to compose books on metaphor.⁴⁸ A glance through the pages of his book shows that it contains instructions to readers and poets about good taste and the way metaphors form chains of meaning, in addition to a discussion of novel methods for the generation of metaphorical expressions.

Here we should like to point out Sadan's use of this kind of scheme.⁴⁹ The term "scheme" is not one which the system's inventors would have used, but rather can be inferred from the texts of books on metaphorical expressions (*ma'ani*). What Sadan did was to find a way to present the branching chain of metaphors by using the chart-like figure above, which can indeed be called a scheme.

⁴⁸ Al-'Askari, *Diwan al-Ma'ani*, 2009.

⁴⁹ Sadan, "Maiden's Hair and Starry Skies; Imagery system and *ma'ani* guides; the practical side of Arabic as demonstrated in two manuscripts", *IOS* 6 (1991), 55-88; Sadan, "Rabi Yihoda al-Hrizi kitzomit drkhim". *Pi'amim* 69 (1996), 16-76; Sadan, "Un intellectuel juif au confluent de deux cultures", in *Judíos y musulmanes en al-Andalus* (2002), 105-151.

The theory of al-Rifa'i and al-'Askari

According to the traditional theory of al-Jahiz and Qudama, which is also reflected in the views of the scholar Joseph Sadan, all poets take their materials from a common source. This theory opens the way for a profitable comparison, especially in light of the scheme presented in Fig. 2 above, which reflects al-Rifa'i's⁵⁰ and al-'Askari's⁵¹ view that metaphors evolve in the form of a chain.

⁵⁰ Taken from al-Sirri al-Rifa'i's *al-Muhibb wal-mahbob* and Abo Hilal al-'Askari's *Diwan al-ma'ani*.

⁵¹ Beginning with al-Jahiz and al-Bayan. Others include Ibn Malik, *al-Misbah al-Munir fi al-Ma'ani wal-Bayan wal-Badi'*, 1922; al-Suyuti, *Sharh 'Uqod al-Guman fi 'Ilm al-Ma'ani wal-Bayan*, 1939; Sharaf al-Din Husaiyn, *Kitab al-Tibyan fi 'Ilm al-Ma'ani wal-Badi' wal-Bayan*, 1964.

CHAPTER II

THE GROWTH OF WINE POETRY

Wine has been drunk in many nations since antiquity,⁵² including the Arabs in pre-Islamic times. They were driven to drink by the circumstances of their lives; the nomads in the desert moved from one place to another in search of grass, where they let their flocks graze and filled the emptiness in their own lives with wine and games of chance.⁵³

The idyllic peace of the ancient Arabs' lives was broken by wars that broke out between the tribes. The wars had a close association with wine, since imbibing it gave warriors the courage and the willingness to face danger that they needed before going out to battle.⁵⁴ In fact, according to Ibn Qutayba, some Muslims even took wine with them when they set out for the raid of Badr⁵⁵ (this was before wine was forbidden to Muslims).

When the war came to an end, both victor and vanquished turned to wine, which doubled the intoxication of victory and glory just as it gave consolation for failure and helped one forget the spilled blood and the lost friends.⁵⁶

The Arabs in pre-Islamic times considered wine a manifestation of munificence. They plied their guests with alcoholic drinks (*nabith*)⁵⁷ made from honey, dates, wheat, barley, raisins and sorghum.⁵⁸ They also prepared mixtures of ripe and unripe dates, dates and colored unripe dates (*zahw*),⁵⁹ and dates and raisins.⁶⁰

⁵² Al-Qayrawani, *al-'Umda fi Mahasin al-Sh'ar*, 88.

⁵³ Sa'id, *Tatawwur al-Khamriyyat fi al-Shi'r al-'Arabi min al-Jahiliyya ila abi Nuwwas*, 28.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁵⁵ Ibn Qutayba, *Adab al-Katib*, 38.

⁵⁶ Sa'id, *al-Khamriyyat fi al-Shi'r al-'Arabi min al-Jahiliyya ila abi Nuwwas*, 31.

⁵⁷ Al-'Ali, *al-Mufasssal fi Tarikh al-'Arab qabla al-Islam*, 4:666.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 4:669.

⁵⁹ Ibn Manzor, *Lisan al-'Arab*, s.v. *zhw*.

⁶⁰ Al-'Ali, *al-Mufasssal fi Tarikh al-'Arab qabla al-Islam*, 4:666.

The acquisition of wine was a source of pride and ostentation. The Arabs were willing to spend a great deal of money in order to obtain good wine, especially famous types of wine such as *bayt ras*, *andrin* and *basri*.⁶¹

This was the situation in the desert. The circumstances of city dwellers, on the other hand, were such that it was easy for them to hold gatherings for drinking and entertainment, especially the well-to-do, who devoted themselves to such activities and competed with each other over who purchased the most expensive wines.⁶²

An important place that deserves mention in this connection is al-Hira, a Christian city and a center of entertainment which attracted wine lovers and pleasure seekers from all parts of the Arabian Peninsula.⁶³

Taverns offering wines and entertainment existed in the towns and villages, and inns offering wine were to be found throughout the land, especially along the roads. These offered travelers a place to rest and recuperate. The owners of the taverns, which were marked with special banners,⁶⁴ were mostly Christians and Jews.⁶⁵

The good life, as understood by pre-Islamic Arabs, consisted of enjoying women, wine and perfume, which were pleasures to be avoided until one had taken one's blood revenge.⁶⁶

However, although pre-Islamic Arabs took pride in drinking wine as a mark of nobility and a provider of courage, drinking to excess and intoxication were considered disgraceful. Arab tribes would banish disorderly drunkards, as happened to al-Barrad b. Qays⁶⁷ and Tarfa b. al-'Abd.⁶⁸

A number of pre-Islamic Arabs stopped drinking after they had done things in a state of inebriation that they would not have approved of had they been sober. The first person reported to have decided to refrain from drinking was al-Walid b. al-Mughira, who had killed his son Hisham under the influence of alcohol.⁶⁹ Women were strictly forbidden to drink

⁶¹ Farokh, *Tarikh al-Adab al-'Arabi*, 42.

⁶² Al-'Ali, *al-Mufassal fi Tarikh al-'Arab qabla al-Islam*, 4:662.

⁶³ Al-'Asad, *Al-Qiyan wal-Ghina' fi al-'Asr al-Jahili*, 46.

⁶⁴ Al-'Ali, *al-Mufassal fi Tarikh al-'Arab qabla al-Islam*, 4:667.

⁶⁵ Al-'Asad, *Al-Qiyan wal-Ghina' fi al-'Asr al-Jahili*, 63.

⁶⁶ Upon his victory over the Bano Sa'd Imru' al-Qays said: "Wine is permitted to me now, after I was forbidden to drink it due to pressing business. But today I shall be given to drink without incurring blame from God or intruder."

⁶⁷ Suror, *Tarikh al-Hadara al-Islamiyya fi al-Sharq min 'ahd nufoth al-Atrak ila muntasaf al-qrn al-Khamis al-Hijri*, 20.

⁶⁸ Tarfa b. al-'Abd, *Diwan*, 31.

⁶⁹ Al-'Ali, *al-Mufassal fi Tarikh al-'Arab qabla al-Islam*, 4:672.

wine,⁷⁰ while the men of those days divided their time between raids, searching for pasture, worshipping idols, flirting with women, declaiming poetry and drinking wine.⁷¹ Their favorite parables consisted of boasts about their bravery and nobility, joining the tribe's prominent members in wine taverns and drinking in the company of friends and songstresses.⁷²

Since the declamation of poetry was an activity to which pre-Islamic Arabs devoted a considerable amount of time, and since wine drinking was a source of pride to them, it is not surprising that wine was not a theme to be ignored in their poetry.

The praises of wine were sung by pre-Islamic Arabs "in the spirit of knightly chivalry, with its passion for war, wine and women".⁷³ That is why 'Aziz Fahmi said of pre-Islamic wine poetry that it was song-poetry whose purpose was to boast.⁷⁴

Wine was also deemed a sign of opulence, since it was a relatively rare commodity which had to be imported from Syria, Iraq or Persia. Good imported wines were very expensive, and could be afforded only by the well-to-do,⁷⁵ as noted by al-A'sha:⁷⁶ "How can we drink if we have no dirhams for the publican".⁷⁷ So in their poems, the Arabs boasted of the wines they bought and of the sums they expended for their acquisition.⁷⁸ Wine poetry among pre-Islamic Arabs was thus part of their boasting about their magnanimity and hospitality.

They also drank wine for entertainment and pleasure. As Tarfa b. al-'Abd noted, pre-Islamic Arab youths took pleasure in drinking wine, saving those who called for help, and the enjoyment of women.⁷⁹

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Suror, *Tarikh al-Hadara al-Islamiyya fi al-Sharq min 'ahd nufoth al-Atrak ila muntasaf al-qrn al-Khamis al-Hijri*, 62-63.

⁷² Amin, Ahmad, *Duha al-Islam*, Cairo: Maktabat al-Khanji, n.d, 1:94.

⁷³ Sidqi, *Abo Nuwwas, Qisst Hayatih wa-Shi'rih*, 406.

⁷⁴ Hawi, *Fann al-Shi'r al-Khamri wa-Ttawuruh 'inda al-'Arab*, 265.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 74

⁷⁶ Al-A'sha is Maymon b. Qays b. Jandal (d. 7/629) Abo Basir, a poet of the first rank in pre-Islamic times and one of the composers of the *Mu'allaqat* (see al-'Abbasi, *Ma'ahid al-Tansis 'ala Shawahid al-Talkhis*, 1:196; al-Baghdadi, *Khazanat al-Adab*, 1:84ff.; al-Asfahani, *al-Aghani*, 9:108; Shikho, *Shu'ara' al-Nasraniyya*, 1:357; Ibn Qutayba, *Adab al-Katib*, 79; al-Zirikali, *al-A'lam*, 7:34; Kahhala, *Mu'jam al-Mu'llifin*, 9:574).

⁷⁷ Al-A'sha, *Diwan*, 240.

⁷⁸ Labid, *Diwan*, 25; al-A'sha, *Diwan*, 99.

⁷⁹ Tarfa, *Diwan*, 32-33.

As a result, their poetry often deals with gatherings in taverns for the purpose of drinking wine, in which descriptions of songstresses and singing are included.⁸⁰

Wine for the pre-Islamic Arabs was thus a means for entertainment, and therefore does not give a true picture of the mentality of the times.

Perhaps it is for this reason that 'Umar Farokh stated that pre-Islamic descriptions concerning wine have a superficial character; they do not go beyond singing the praises of wine, its taste and aroma and its receptacle, with an occasional extension to descriptions of the cup bearer, the songstress, the gathering, and the effect the wine has on those who drink it.⁸¹ He notes further that most of the general descriptions of this kind that appear in pre-Islamic poetry are also used by the poets of succeeding ages, as we shall see below. Furthermore, it has been shown that such descriptions often appear in a concatenated, repetitive form, as if they were "numbers and scientific data".⁸²

In fact, such general depictions were used so frequently by poets that they lost all artistic value. Thus, poets came to use the metaphor of blood or red dye every time they wished to describe the wine's color, just as "we realize that the poet is about to speak about the wine's aroma whenever musk is evoked". Otherwise, to preserve the sentence structure, I would amend to "musk is immediately evoked whenever the poet is about to speak about the wine's aroma", and the jar is repeatedly described as white and sealed. And yet we cannot generalize and apply this judgment to every single bit of wine imagery used in pre-Islamic poetry, just as we cannot deny the artistic value of some descriptions, for example, al-A'sha's comparison of a black wine skin lying on the ground to a black person who lay down to sleep.⁸³ Wine as dew was a traditional metaphor in poetry⁸⁴ but served as an incidental element by which the poet arrived at his desired objective.⁸⁵ Thus, in one poem we can read a description of its dispersion, in another of its effects, and in yet another of its vessel or those who gathered to drink together, but in no case do all these elements come together in a single poem.⁸⁶

Pre-Islamic poets were not very precise in their descriptions of wine, in contrast to their depictions of horses and camels. Nor did they devote

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 147.

⁸¹ Abo Nuwwas, *Diwan*, 16.

⁸² Hawi, *Fann al-Shi'r al-Khamri wattawuruh 'inda al-'Arab*, 39.

⁸³ Tarfa, *Diwan*, 163.

⁸⁴ Hawi, *Fann al-Shi'r al-Khamri wattawuruh 'inda al-'Arab*, 11.

⁸⁵ Abo Nuwwas, *Diwan*, 20.

⁸⁶ Hawi, *Fann al-Shi'r al-Khamri wattawuruh 'inda al-'Arab*, 15.

entire poems just to wine, as they did to panegyrics and elegies.⁸⁷ The reason for this, according to Taha Husiyn, was that the Arabs of those times only rarely gathered to drink and amuse themselves; they thus boasted about such happenings in their poetry, although perhaps the poet may never have actually participated in any such event.⁸⁸ It is also possible that the poets mentioned wine because it was a way to boast about their munificence and hospitality, as well as a source of some relief in their harsh lives. This is perhaps why wine imagery is so widely dispersed in their poems, and also why the descriptions are distorted and blurred.

One of the greatest poets of that age, al-A'sha, speaks frequently about his entertainments and his love of the pleasures of life,⁸⁹ mainly wine, women and song. His home in Manfohat al-Yamama was a place where seekers of pleasure gathered for drinking and entertainment. He also possessed a wine press in Athafit.⁹⁰ Al-A'sha occupied himself considerably with wine, so much so that it has been given as the reason for his refusal to convert to Islam. He wrote so many poems about wine that they were claimed to be greater in number than the wine poems written by all other pre-Islamic poets.⁹¹ His descriptions of wine are very detailed, so much so that the wine poem can almost be said to have attained its perfection with him.⁹² However, his verses are disconnected; he writes down his ideas as they come to him, without giving any thought to design or planning, so the poem becomes a collection of independent particles whose order can be changed without doing any violence to the meaning.⁹³ And yet, although al-A'sha was known for his love of wine and his verses about wine, he did not write a single whole poem about it, but only mentioned it as one of many different themes in the same poem, in a way that was characteristic of pre-Islamic poems.⁹⁴

More precisely, we may say that al-A'sha is positioned in the middle between his pre-Islamic contemporaries who described wine in fleeting

⁸⁷ Husiyn, *Hadith al-Arbi'a'*, 75-76.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁸⁹ Al-Asad, *Al-Qiyan wal-Ghina' fi al-'Asr al-Jahili*, 221.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 221.

⁹¹ Sa'id, *Tatawwur al-Khamriyyat fi al-Shi'r al-'Arabi min al-Jahiliyya ila abi Nuwwas*, 56.

⁹² Hawi, *Fann al-Shi'r al-Khamri wattawuruh 'inda al-'Arab*, 37.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

glances, and the Abbasid poets who devoted entire, long poems to the subject.⁹⁵

We cannot demand more of al-A'sha than what he produced. Certainly, he must be recognized as having drawn the general lines of wine poetry by bringing together all the then-existing descriptions of the gleam, aroma, color, timelessness and purity of wine, and described drinking companions, cup bearers, drinking feasts and wine sellers. All these images appear very clearly in his wine poetry, and were later to become the foundations on which succeeding poets relied and to which they added from the depths of their own experiences and culture. But these additions are in reality no more than shadows of the broad strokes drawn by al-A'sha,⁹⁶ who therefore deserves his reputation as the trail blazer who showed the way to the wine poets who followed him.⁹⁷

Then came the introduction of Islam, which forbade the drinking of wine because of its harmful effects on those who imbibe it. In fact, it caused the deaths of many in pre-Islamic times.⁹⁸ However, there were Muslims for whom this prohibition was insupportable, and who complained that "God pronounced no harsher prohibition than that on wine".⁹⁹ As the Englishman Bentham said, "Muhammad's religion prohibited all intoxicating drinks, and that is one of its merits".¹⁰⁰

It is not a coincidence that the prohibition on wine was pronounced after one of the Prophet's Medinan followers (the *ansar*) cut off the nose of Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas, who had invited some of the *ansar* to eat and drink with him but showed a preference for the Meccans who had emigrated with the Prophet (the *Muhajiron*).¹⁰¹ According to another account, the verse prohibiting wine was revealed when 'Umar b. al-Khattab asked the Prophet about wine and pointed out its deleterious effects.¹⁰² The prohibition was imposed gradually, in order to allow those addicted to wine to adjust themselves to the new law.¹⁰³

⁹⁵ Sa'id, *Tatawwur al-Khamriyyat fi al-Shi'r al-'Arabi min al-Jahiliyya ila Abi Nuwwas*, 31.

⁹⁶ Hawi, *Fann al-Shi'r al-Khamri wattawuruh 'inda al-'Arab*, 39.

⁹⁷ Al-Asad, *Al-Qiyan wal-Ghina' fi al-'Asr al-Jahili*, 222.

⁹⁸ Al-'Ali, *al-Mufasssal fi Tarikh al-'Arab qabla al-Islam*, 4:665.

⁹⁹ Al-Qurtubi, Muhammad, *al-Jami' liahkam al-Qur'an*, 186.

¹⁰⁰ Husiyn, *Hadith al-Arbi'a'*, 99.

¹⁰¹ Al-Qurtubi, Muhammad, *al-Jami' liahkam al-Qur'an*, 286-287.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 286.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*. The first verse to have been revealed concerning the drinking of spirits was Q 2:219: "They ask you about wine and gambling. Say, "In them is great sin and [yet, some] benefit for people. But their sin is greater than their benefit." And they ask you what they should spend. Say, "The excess [beyond needs]". Thus

The "verse of prohibition" was revealed in al-Madina in the month of I Rabi' in the year 4 AH, and was announced a few days after the raid of the "parties" (*al-Ahzab*) in the month of Tho al-Qa'da in the year 5 AH.¹⁰⁴ The punishment for drinking wine was also established as follows: "The punishment is that he be given forty lashes on the hands and the fringes of the garments, that he be threatened with woe and torment, and warned to mend his ways ... it has also been said that he is to be whipped with a whip, in line with other punishments".¹⁰⁵ If someone still did not cease drinking, he may be punished with up to eighty lashes.¹⁰⁶ Someone who was found drunk was not to be punished unless it was proven that he drank an intoxicating drink or if there was a witness who saw him drink.¹⁰⁷

The question of which drinks are permitted and which are forbidden has given rise to sharper debate than many other issues. Differences of opinion on this matter began very early, not long after the days of the Prophet himself, despite the evidence provided by the companions and the ulema.¹⁰⁸ The dispute grew more vehement in the days of the imams, when questions arose as to the meaning of the Arabic word *khamr* ("wine"), and the amount of wine that constitutes a sin. The same dispute also raged with respect to the Arabic word *nabith*. Although the majority opinion is that God forbade drinking wine in the Qur'an, there are also those who argue

Allah makes clear to you the verses [of revelation] that you might give thought". Following this revelation some people stopped drinking in fear of committing a sin, while others refused to give it up because of its benefits, until a man who had drunk began to pray and left. Then Q 4:43 was revealed: "O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while you are intoxicated until you know what you are saying". Some did indeed stop drinking then, but others merely refrained from wine at prayer time, until verses Q 5:90-91 were revealed: "O you who have believed, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone alters [to other than Allah], and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may be successful. Satan only wants to cause between you animosity and hatred through intoxicants and gambling and to avert you from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. So will you not desist?"

¹⁰⁴ Sidqi, *Abo Nuwwas, Qisat Hayatih wa-Shi'rih*, 154.

¹⁰⁵ Abo al-Hasan, *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya wal-Wilayat al-Diniyya*, 228.

¹⁰⁶ It is said that 'Umar b. al-Khattab used to give forty lashes, but when he saw that people collapsed after such a punishment he took counsel with the Prophet's Companions. 'Ali said: "You must give him eighty lashes, because if he drinks, he will become intoxicated, and if he becomes intoxicated he will rave, and if he raves he will slander, and the punishment of the slanderer is eighty lashes". And this is indeed what 'Umar did for the rest of his life (see Abo al-Hasan, *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya*, 228).

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 229.

¹⁰⁸ Ibn Qutayba, *Adab al-Katib*, 3.

that the verses in question intend to chastise only, for if God had wanted to forbid it outright He would have revealed an explicit verse.¹⁰⁹ According to some, the term *khamr* refers only to wine made from grapes,¹¹⁰ while others rely on the Prophet's words, "[drinks made from] raisins and dates are *khamr*", as well as 'Umar b. al-Khattab's "*khamr* can be made of five things: grapes, dates, honey, wheat and barley".¹¹¹

A similar dispute exists with respect to the word *nabith*, which some take to be a drink made of raisins or dates before fermentation, while *khamr* is the fermented drink. As proof they quote *Hadiths*, according to which the companions would make *nabith* in the middle of the day and drink it at the end of the day, or make it at the beginning of the night and drink it for breakfast or supper. It is said that it was called *nabith* because they would take a handful of dates or raisins and cast them (*yanbuthona*) into their water skins.¹¹² Others defined *nabith* as a liquid made from raisins, dates or other juices and left to ferment. According to this opinion, it was not called *nabith* as long as it remained in its original state.¹¹³

One party takes the view that any amount of a strongly intoxicating drink, even of the weight of a mustard seed, is forbidden, irrespective of its size, nature, or the method by which it was produced, using as evidence the Prophet's saying that "every intoxicant is *khamr* and every intoxicant is forbidden" and that "every drink that intoxicates is forbidden".¹¹⁴

Another party only forbids wine (*khamr*), which everyone agrees should be forbidden, but *nabith*, which is not as intoxicating, is considered permitted. This party bases its opinion on a report of when the Prophet was thirsty as he circled the Ka'ba. He was given some *nabith*, which he smelled, then tilted, added some water, and drank.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* It should be stressed here that the dispute is not about the meaning of the word *khamr*, but rather about the method of legal derivation to be used. One school, headed by Malik, prefers to use sayings of the Prophet and his Companions (*hadith*) in order to decide matters of law, while another school, headed by Abo Hanofa, prefers the use of logical argumentation (see Sidqi, *Alhan al-Han*, 196).

¹¹⁰ Abo Hanifa and other Kofans (see Al-Qurtubi, 294).

¹¹¹ Al-Qurtubi, 294. On drinks it is said: "*khamr* is made from five things: wheat, barley, dates, raisins and honey. *Khamr* is whatever takes possession [*khamara*] of the mind".

¹¹² Ibn Qutayba, *Adab al-Katib*, 5.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Ibn Qutayba, *Adab al-Katib*, 6-7.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

Here we should point out that the *nabith* which the Prophet imbibed was naturally not of the forbidden kind; after all, this Arabic word can be used to denote any drink, whether alcoholic or not.¹¹⁶

Muslim scholars have also disagreed on the punishment for drinking. Some claim that anyone who drinks *khamr* or *nabith*, whether he became intoxicated or not, should be punished. According to Abo Hanifa,¹¹⁷ anyone who drinks wine should be punished, whether intoxicated or not, while anyone who drinks *nabith* should not be punished, even if they became intoxicated.¹¹⁸

Islamic scholars are also divided on how intoxicated one must be to be liable to punishment. Malik b. Ans¹¹⁹ said, "A drunkard is one who is oblivious and confused", while according to al-Shafi'i,¹²⁰ he is one who has abandoned gentleness and patience for lowliness and ignorance, and al-Thawri was of the opinion that "he is one who despite being admonished does not observe a verse of the Quran that he had been used to observing, and if asked about one thing answers about another". According to Abo Hanifa, "a drunkard is one whose mind has gone and does not know much or little".¹²¹

Islam, despite all its threats and promises, was unable to root out wine drinking, and some Muslims continued to imbibe and to write about it in their poems.¹²²

Islamic wine poems, however, are limited to verses or stanzas that reveal the poet's soul, which is torn between the commandments of his religion and his own desires. Muslim poets approach wine with a sense of sin, because by drinking he disobeys the Creator's command and arouses the censure of others, who scold him for not keeping away from what is forbidden. The wine poets responded to those who reproved them by defiantly declaring their adherence to their drink, using mostly traditional descriptions. They also criticized the initiator of the ban and quite openly

¹¹⁶ Abo al-Hasan, *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya wal-Wilayat al-Diniyya*, 23.

¹¹⁷ Abo Hanifa, Nu'man b. Thabit (d. 150/776). See al-A'lam 8:36; Ibn Khillikan, *Wafiyat al-A'yan*, 2:163; Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidaya wal-Nihaya*, 10:107.

¹¹⁸ Goldziher, *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*, 228.

¹¹⁹ Malik b. Ans al-Asbahi (d. 197/712). See al-Katbi, *Fawat al-wafayat*, 1:439; al-Zirikli, *al-A'lam* 5:258.

¹²⁰ The school of Islamic jurisprudence founded by Muhammad b. Idris al-'Abbas b. 'Uthman al-Shafi'i is one of the four orthodox schools of the Sunnis. Al-Shafi'i was born in Palestine in 150/767 and died in Egypt in 204/820 (see al-Katbi, *Fawat al-wafayat*, 1:447; al-Zirikli, 6:26; al-Thahabi, *Tathkirat al-Huffaz* 1:329).

¹²¹ Ibn Qutayba, *al-Ashriba*, 59.

¹²² Suror, *Tarikh al-Hadara al-Islamiyya fi al-Sharq min 'Ahd Nufoth al-Atrak ila Muntasaf al-Qrn al-Khamis al-Hijri*, 22.

declared their intention to continue drinking in defiance of the Creator's command.¹²³

It is therefore not surprising to find Haritha b. Badr treating wine not as an artistic theme, but rather as an intellectual matter and a religious issue which he feels compelled to defend.¹²⁴

The same is true of the poetry of Abo Mihjan, in which there is no attempt at description and no focus on wine imagery, such as one finds in the writings of other poets; rather, he fluctuates between obedience and defiance, between faith and non-belief.¹²⁵

The Islamic conquests ushered in an age of opulence, which brought to an end the policy of austerity that had been imposed by the caliphs since the days of 'Uthman. Feudal estates and other awards were granted with a liberal hand.¹²⁶ In addition, the caliphs of the Umayyad dynasty began to imitate the ostentation of the courts of the neighboring kingdoms¹²⁷ and built luxurious dwellings. Mu'awiya embellished the Prophet's mosque,¹²⁸ built a palace for himself, surrounded himself with chamberlains and made his guards march with lances in their hands.¹²⁹

Entertainment became a popular activity due to foreign influences, affluence and boredom. The Umayyad rulers showered money on the youths of Mecca and Medina in order to prevent them from seeking to obtain the caliphate for themselves.¹³⁰ Song fests became very popular,¹³¹ and a number of Umayyad caliphs drank *nabith*, with the excuse that this was not forbidden by the jurists of Iraq.¹³² Some caliphs caroused with drinking companions;¹³³ the caliph al-Walid b. Yazid¹³⁴ became notorious for his wine drinking and dissolute way of life.¹³⁵

¹²³ *Diwan*, 68.

¹²⁴ Hawi, *Fann al-Shi'r al-Khamri wattawuruh 'inda al-'Arab*, 78.

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, 87.

¹²⁶ 'Aba al-Mun'im, *Al-Tarikh al-Siyasi lil-Dawla al-'Arabiyya ('Asr al-Khulafa' al-'Umawiyyin)*, 1:254.

¹²⁷ Wellhausen, *The Arab Kingdom and its Fall*, translated by Muhammad Abo Ridh, 122.

¹²⁸ Kurd, *al-Islam wal-Hadara al-'Arabiyya*, 161.

¹²⁹ 'Abd al-Mun'im, *al-Tarikh al-Siyasi lil-Dawla al-'Arabiyya*, 2:22.

¹³⁰ Al-Asad, *al-Shi'r wal-Ghina'*, 51.

¹³¹ 'Abd al-Mun'im, *al-Tarikh al-Siyasi lil-Dawla al-'Arabiyya*, 1:254-255.

¹³² Kurd, Muhammad, *al-Islam wal-Hadara al-'Arabiyya*, 326.

¹³³ Al-Zubaydi. *Taj al-'Aros*, 76-77.

¹³⁴ Al-Walid b. Yazid b. 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan (88/744), the eleventh Umayyad caliph, agnomen Abo al-'Abbas. See al-Asfahani, *al-Aghani*, 1:7; al-Baghdadi, *Khazanat al-Adab*, 1:328; al-Zirikli, *al-'A'lam*, 8:123.

¹³⁵ Al-Zubaydi, *Taj al-'Aros*, 250.