

Arabistik und Islamwissenschaft

Aspects of Estrangement and Nostalgia  
in Classical Arabic Poetry

Inaugural-Dissertation

(Promotionsordnung 2012):  
zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades Dr. phil.  
der FB 08/09  
der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität zu Münster (Westf.)

vorgelegt von

Rana Siblani

aus Beirut/Libanon

2020

Tag der mündlichen Prüfung: 22.09.2020

Vorsitzende des Gemeinsamen beschließenden Ausschusses: Prof. Dr. Moritz Baßler

Erstgutachter: Prof. Dr. Thomas Bauer

Zweitgutachter: Prof. Dr. Syrinx von Hees

*Aspects of Estrangement and Nostalgia  
in Classical Arabic Poetry*

**Table of Contents**

1. Introduction:	p. 3
1.1 Defining the terms	p. 3
1.2 Set <i>ghurba</i> and <i>hanīn</i> as a construct	p. 5
1.3 The question of theme, genre and motif	p. 8
1.4 Anthologies	p. 14
1.5 Dimensions	p. 15
2. Geographical dimension	p. 18
2.1 The <i>hanīn</i> of the she-camel	p. 20
2.2 <i>Aḥlāl</i> : first manifestation of estrangement and nostalgia	p. 24
2.3 <i>A'rāb</i> : elements of the desert as home	p. 30
2.4 Conquests: the geographical delocalization by land and sea	p. 35
2.5 Cities: the new identity	p. 42
3. Emotional dimension	p. 51
3.1 The beloved as homeland	p. 54
3.2 <i>Najd</i> and <i>Ṣabā</i> again	p. 61
3.3 The lightning scene and the crying dove	p. 65
3.4 Other motifs: the Raven of separation and the water-wheel	p. 68
4. Social dimension	p. 72
4.1 Outcasts' poetry	p. 74
4.2 On the threshold of the new world	p. 79
4.3 Exile and Prison	p. 86
4.4 Means of livelihood	p. 91
5. Intellectual dimension	p. 95
5.1 Longing for youth	p. 96
5.2 The existential condition of poets	p. 101
5.3 Tool for the poetic	p. 111
5.4 Religious estrangement	p. 115
6. Conclusion	p. 127
7. Bibliography	p. 132

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Defining the terms

*Ghurba* in Arabic refers to the state of being away from home.<sup>1</sup> Usages of the term in literature, travel accounts, Islamic tradition, *ḥadīth* and Sufism, suggest moreover the state or feeling of alienation or not belonging to a place or a people: thus being a stranger, *gharīb ‘an makān* or *‘an qawm*.<sup>2</sup> Very often, the term *ghurba* is coupled or occurs along with another term; that of *ḥanīn*.

Etymologically, the term *ḥanīn* in Arabic refers to the sound which she-camels make when they are away from their normal pastures or separated from their newly born; in both senses it involves separation from place and people respectively and by implication yearning to be united with them or pained at being away from them or both.<sup>3</sup> In fact, another related meaning of *ḥanīn* is the sound of *ṭarab*; this being the extremes of crying in sadness or elation in joy. Going full circle to the first sense of the term *ghurba* above, the term *ḥanīn* is also used to refer to the feelings of yearning (*tawaqān*) or longing (*shawq*); both feelings induced because of being separated from place or people and hence not knowing what has become of them.<sup>4</sup>

The English equivalents used here for *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* are estrangement and nostalgia respectively. *Ḥanīn* is referred to across the relevant studies primarily as nostalgia, with substitutes such as homesickness and longing depending on the context; *ghurba* holds more possibilities for different alternatives.<sup>5</sup>

Originally it was a Swiss doctor who coined, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the compound term *Nostalgia* from Greek, where “nostos” means journey and “algia” means pain, to

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Manzur, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, “gh-r-b.”.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, “ḥ-n-n”.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Rosenthal points out the difficulty of capturing the Arabic nuances of such terms when translating them into English. See Rosenthal, Franz: The stranger in medieval Islam. *Arabica* 44, 1 (1997), p. 37 note 7. See also the distinction that R. Schacht makes between “alienation” and “Entfremdung”; also the different meanings of alienation that Hegel gives, also according to Schacht, Richard: *Alienation*. Doubleday & Company. New York. 1970, p. 5-6.

designate the disease earlier known by the German term *Heimweh*, which afflicted “Swiss soldiers in Rome who could not bear the loss of the Alpine landscape and air and could only be cured by repatriation.”<sup>6</sup> These explanations imply a correlation between the removal from the place of origin, and a state of high level discomfort, bordering on pain (*ḥanīn* or nostalgia). This is an important origin of the term, as it shows a common physical then psychological and sentimental paradigm of two distant and distinct cultures, both in time and space. *Ḥanīn* is first identified as a physiological condition of the she-camel while nostalgia came to be established as a human affliction. Interestingly, although this term did not exist originally in the Greek language and hence did not occur in the classical Greek literature, or tragedy, nevertheless, the theme itself is poignantly present in major works, especially Homer’s *Odyssey*, the archetypal epic of return.<sup>7</sup> Whereas the *Odyssey* is a clear representation of homesickness or nostalgia to the homeland, the work of Hesiod’s *Myth of the Five Ages* speaks of “nostalgia for a return to a more virtuous, harmonious, and unfailingly prosperous period, a Golden Age now irretrievably lost”,<sup>8</sup> an aspect also shared in the Arabic heritage.

Although the most commonly used terms to render the sense of Arabic *ghurba* are exile and alienation, I have deliberately chosen to use the term “estrangement”. Estrangement as a “state” implies less than the other two terms, the presence or involvement of an outside agency enforcing this “state”. The Oxford English Dictionary lists at least nine entries for estrangement including: to remove something from its familiar place; to make someone a stranger to a condition or place; to withhold from a person's perception or knowledge; to render alien; to alienate in feeling or affection; to make unlike oneself; to render strange or unfamiliar in appearance; to be astonished. All these diverse meanings present a shift of the perception and they are all included in the Arabic word *ghurba*. It is relevant here to mention that modern studies treating the topic of estrangement/alienation/exile opt to use the term “*ightirāb*”, making the distinction

---

<sup>6</sup> Illbruck, Helmut: *Nostalgia. Origins and Ends of an Unenlightened Disease*. Northwestern University Press. Illinois. 2012, p. 5-6. The author discusses thoroughly the genesis of the term as well as its historical development and the complete journey of its transfer from the discovery and classification as a disease in the early enlightenment into the intellectual discourse of post-modernism. The Greek physician Hippocrates (d. ca. 377 B.C.) had already mentioned that homesickness is due to an imbalance in the black bile humor.

<sup>7</sup> Stanford, William Bedell: *Greek Tragedy and the Emotions*. An Introductory Study. Routledge & Keagan Paul. New York. 1988, p. 43.

<sup>8</sup> Meltzer, Gary: *Euripides and the Poetics of Nostalgia*. Cambridge University Press. 2006, p. 35.

whereby *ghurba* refers more to the geographical aspect (physical distance) while *ightirāb* refers more to the social and psychological distance.<sup>9</sup> However, in major Arabic lexica this differentiation is almost non-existent; instead the two meanings are interchangeable.<sup>10</sup> Another important factor taken into consideration here for preferring *ghurba* over *ightirāb* is our observation that the former term is more frequently deployed in the poetry under study than the latter. When defining the status of being a stranger, another kind of distinction is made between an objective and subjective “strangeness”, as Bauer maintains: the objective one emanates from a person or community who/that labels another person as stranger, whereas the subjective one emanates from the person himself/herself to describe how he/she feels about himself/herself.<sup>11</sup> The latter is the poetic case we are concerned with here.

## 1.2 Set *ghurba* and *hanīn* as a construct

The themes of *ghurba* and *hanīn* can conceivably be treated as separate and distinct ones. But even modern studies that attempt to do so, end up, inevitably, addressing both by virtue of the high affinity and interplay between them.<sup>12</sup> This interplay between *ghurba* and *hanīn* is abundantly clear in classical Arabic treatises and

<sup>9</sup> See for example: Jabbūrī, Yahyā: *Al-Ḥanīn wa l-Ghurba fī sh-Shi‘r al-‘Arabī. Al-Ḥanīn ilā l-Awṭān*. Dār Majdalāwī. Jordan. 2008, p. 16-17; See also the additional connotation of treason that Larcher gives to *ightirāb*: Larcher, Pierre: L’Expression de l’Autre et de l’Ailleurs en Arabe Classique”, *Arabica* 49, 4 (2002), p. 501.

<sup>10</sup> Some other meanings will be mentioned and discussed further on where relevant in the study.

<sup>11</sup> Bauer, Thomas: Fremdeheit in der klassischen arabischen Kultur und Sprache. In: Jostes, Brigitte and Trabant, Jürgen (ed.): *Fremdes in fremden Sprachen*. Wilhelm Fink Verlag. München. 2001, p. 85.

<sup>12</sup> On estrangement, see for example: Kharshūm, ‘Abdalrazzāq: *al-Ghurba fī sh-Shi‘r al-Jāhili. Dirāsa. Ittihād al-Kuttāb al-‘Arab*. Damascus, 1982; Khulayf, May: *Zāhirat al-Ightirāb ‘inda Shu‘arā’ al-Mu‘allaqāt*. Dār ath-Thaqāfa. Cairo. 1991; Suwaydi, Fatima al-: *al-Ightirāb fīl sh-Shi‘r al-Umawī. Maktabat Madbulī*. Cairo. 1997; Salāmī, Samīra: *al-Ightirāb fī sh-Shi‘r al-‘Abbāsī: al-qarn ar-Rābi’ al-Hijrī*. Dār al-Yanābī’. Damascus. 2000; Murād, Barakāt: *Abū-Ḥayyān at-Tahwīdī Mughtariban*. Jāmi‘at al-Kuwait. Kuwait. 2001; Zāmil, Sāliḥ: *Taḥawwul al-Mithāl. Dirāsa li-Zāhirat al-Ightirāb fī Shi‘r al-Mutanabbī*. al-Mu‘assasa al-‘Arabiyya li-l-Dirasāt wa-l-Nashr. Beirut. 2003. On nostalgia, see for example: Ḥuwwar, Ibrahīm: *al-Ḥanīn ilā l-Awṭān fī l-Adab al-‘Arabī ḥattā Nihāyat al-‘Aṣr al-Umawī*. Cairo. 1973. On estrangement and nostalgia, see for example: Rajabī, ‘Abdulmun‘im Ḥāfiz al-: *al-Ghurba wa-l-Ḥanīn ilā ad-Diyār fī sh-Shi‘r al-Jāhili*. Damascus. 2012.

<sup>12</sup> For a complete list of these works, see the introduction of Jalāl ‘Aṭīyyah to his edition of Ibn al-Marzubān’s *al-Ḥanīn ilā l-Awṭān*: Ibn al-Marzubān: *Kitāb al-Ḥanīn ilā l-Awṭān*. Ed. ‘Aṭīyyah, Jalāl. ‘Ālam al-Kutub. Beirut. 1987, p. 9-10

<sup>12</sup> For the discussion on the authorship of the book, see: Ibn al-Marzubān, p. 11; Crone, Patricia and Moreh, Shmuel: *The Book of Strangers. Medieval Arabic Graffiti on the Theme of Nostalgia*. Markus Wiener Publishers. Princeton. 1999, p. 149; Rosenthal, p. 47.

<sup>12</sup> Ibn Munqidh, Usāma: *al-Manāzil wa d-Diyār*. Ed. Ḥijāzī, Muṣṭafā. Cairo. 1992, p. 4; the last chapter of this work being also dedicated to “crying over family and friends”.

chapters in multi-thematic works, as well as in studies in modern scholarship. In fact, the interest in the subject of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* appeared in pre-modern Arabic sources with a number of works dedicated to one of the two subjects; however their content includes both at the same time. These works took primarily the form of treatises on or compilations of relevant poetry and prose material. In such works, the theme which appeared to be the major tag was *al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān* or nostalgia to the homelands. It is lamentable that the vast majority of these works are no longer extant;<sup>13</sup> but fortunately three major specimen of this genre, thus far, survive: *Risāla fī l-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān* by al-Kisrawī (d. 330/941-2), for a long time ascribed to al-Jāḥiẓ;<sup>14</sup> *Al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān* by Ibn al-Marzubān (d. 4th/11th c.) and *Kitāb adab al-ghurabā'* by al-Iṣfahānī (d. ±360/982). It is perhaps in order to add a fourth work here: *al-Manāzil wa-d-diyār* by Usāma b. Munqidh (d. 584/1188). Although the title of this work is less explicit in its relevance to the subject, the fact remains that the theme is subsumed in the terms “*al-manāzil wa-d-diyār*” and then explicitly made in the major bulk of its selections which are poetry samples on the theme of *al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān*. Actually, Ibn Munqidh himself states in his introduction that he composed this book to express the suffering inflicted upon him because of the long time he had to spend away from family and relatives, and in exile from his country and homeland.<sup>15</sup>

This research work intends to expound the interplay between the two concepts of estrangement and nostalgia in order to establish them as two organic ends of a continuum —a psychological-sentimental construct. The work attempts thus at highlighting those instances where a close correlation, namely that of cause-effect between *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*, can be discerned in poetry. Several scholars have already discussed the causal relation between *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*. Rosenthal finds that the common denominator for the different categories of being a stranger, and the underlying spiritual cause for this state, is “homesickness” (*ḥanīn*) which is the cause of the misery

---

<sup>13</sup> For a complete list of these works, see the introduction of Jalāl ‘Aṭīyyah to his edition of Ibn al-Marzubān’s *al-Ḥanīn ilā l-Awṭān*: Ibn al-Marzubān: *Kitāb al-Ḥanīn ilā l-Awṭān*. Ed. ‘Aṭīyyah, Jalāl. ‘Ālam al-Kutub. Beirut. 1987, p. 9-10.

<sup>14</sup> For the discussion on the authorship of the book, see: Ibn al-Marzubān, p. 11; Crone, Patricia and Moreh, Shmuel: *The Book of Strangers. Medieval Arabic Graffiti on the Theme of Nostalgia*. Markus Wiener Publishers. Princeton. 1999, p. 149; Rosenthal, p. 47.

<sup>15</sup> Ibn Munqidh, Usāma: *al-Manāzil wa d-Diyār*. Ed. Ḥijāzī, Muṣṭafā. Cairo. 1992, p. 4; the last chapter of this work being also dedicated to “crying over family and friends”.

for all strangers.<sup>16</sup> Wadad Qadi, specifically drawing on literature, observes that “alienation” (*ghurba*) gave rise to the *ḥanīn* literary genre, but only after the material was collected in monographs dedicated to it.<sup>17</sup> Arazi claims that “Le ḥanin est ombilicalement lié au thème du gharib (étranger, exilé)”, and elaborates on this statement by saying that “seule la personne qui a quitté son pays ressent de la nostalgie”.<sup>18</sup> This phenomenon can be partially traced in the core of works which however claim to be restricted to one of the two themes, for example in *Kitāb al- ḥanīn ilā al-awṭān* and *Kitāb adab al-ghurabā*. Crone and Moreh in their study of the latter, a work mainly on the theme of strangers and estrangement, state that “it is to the literary genre dealing with homesickness that Pseudo-Iṣfahānī’s work is most obviously related”<sup>19</sup> This is yet another testimony on the close relationship between the two components of the motif. Ibn al-Marzubān in his work *al-Ḥanīn ilā al-awṭān* includes chapters on *ghurba*, which evoke, at many instances, the inevitable bond between both themes. This can be due to the fact that these two themes are intrinsically and tightly connected one to the other, which makes it difficult, in most instances, to refer to one of them without the other.

In many modern Arabic literary works on *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* we see the intention of authors to establish a continuity of literary practices, and poetic imagination. In studies of modern Arabic literature, authors mention the theme in earlier literature as a way of giving it roots or time depth and hence more authenticity by establishing precedents in the classical (i.e. the original) literature of the Arabs.<sup>20</sup> Of course, this retrospective kind of analysis runs the risk of projecting the contemporary understanding of such concepts and applying it *ipso facto* on the literature of other times. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* have increasingly become over time, especially in the contemporary mentality of Arabs, a sort of a binomial expression; virtually turning it into one theme.

---

<sup>16</sup> Rosenthal: *Stranger*, p. 46.

<sup>17</sup> Qadi, Wadad: *Dislocation and nostalgia: al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān. Expression of alienation in early Arabic literature. Myths, Historical Archetypes and Symbolic Figures in Arabic Literature. Towards a New Hermeneutic Approach.* Ed. Neuwirth, Angelika, et al. Beirut. 1999. = *Beiruter Texte und Studien*, Vol. 64, p. 19.

<sup>18</sup> Arazi, Albert: *al-Ḥanīn ilā al-Awṭān entre la Ġāhiliyya et l’Islam. Le Bedouin et le Citadin Reconciliés. Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.* 143, 2 (1993), p. 319.

<sup>19</sup> Crone, Patricia and Moreh, Shmuel: *The Book of Strangers*, p. 148.

<sup>20</sup> For instance: Shumīrī, Abdalwālī al-. *Ḥanīn min ash-Shi’r al-‘Arabī.* Dār al-Bashīr. Cairo. 2007; Zubaydī, Su’ād al-. *Al-Ḥanīn ilā l-waṭan.* Dār al-Ḥikma. London. 2009.

It is important to point out that this study is based on the literary output of the Arab East to the complete exclusion of the poetry of the Arab West, namely al-Andalus. The methodological justification for this is that the experience connected with al-Andalus constitutes an independent and unique encounter regarding estrangement and nostalgia resulting in different and particular characteristics and that could be better understood only after establishing a comprehensive understanding of the Eastern case. Hence it should be treated separately as has been indeed the case in several works.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, al-Andalus constitutes in the collective memory of Arabs, in their imagined legacy and their romantic identity, another archetype of nostalgia, even until the present day, just as Najd once was.

Building on this interplay between *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*, the main quest in this dissertation is to trace the course this thematic complex took in Arabic poetry across the commonly known “classical period”, roughly stretching from the pre-Islamic times up to the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century. I will try to follow-up the different directions or dimensions this topic took and the relative development or regression of the poetic expression of its two constituent elements, *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*. Throughout, I will show which poetic and extra-poetic elements contribute to the survival of this compound motif in literature, which elements lead to its decay and which ones are factors in its development.

### 1.3 The question of theme, genre and motif

When treating estrangement and nostalgia in Arabic poetry, one is undoubtedly faced with the concern of how to categorize this subject: a genre, a theme or a motif? The answer to this question is far from being a straightforward one; as well one can hardly expect to end up with only one answer. In this connection, it is important to keep in mind that Arabic literary criticism has originally developed as a subsidiary of the need of philologists to classify the material of their study, which is mainly poetry, and

---

<sup>21</sup> Ṭaḥṭāḥ, Fāṭima: *Al-Ghurba wa l-Ḥanīn fī sh-Shi'r al-Andalusī*, Rabat, 1993; Rabī'ī, Aḥmad al-. *Al-Ghurba wa l-Ḥanīn fī sh-Shi'r al-Andalusī*. Beirut. 2013; Tarabieh, Abdallah. *Nostalgia and Elegy for Cities in the Andalusian Arabic and Hebrew Poetry*. 2015. Elinson, Alexander: *Looking Back at al-Andalus: The Poetics of Loss and Nostalgia in Medieval Arabic and Hebrew Literature*. Leiden. Brill. 2009; Salem, Rafik M.: *Exile and Nostalgia in Arabic and Hebrew Poetry in al-Andalus (Muslim Spain)*. Phd Diss. School of Oriental and African Studies. 1987; Stearns, Justin: Representing and Remembering al-Andalus: Some Historical Considerations Regarding the End of Time and the Making of Nostalgia. *Medieval Encounters* 15, 2-4 (2009), p. 355-374.



subsequently from the preoccupation of theologians with the question of inimitability (*i'jāz*) of the Qur'ān, on the levels of content and stylistics.<sup>22</sup>

For most of the classical scholars, neither *ghurba* nor *ḥanīn* (*ilā l-awṭān*) was classified as a genre, similar to *madīh*, *rithā'* or *hijā'* and *nasīb* for example.<sup>23</sup> There is one instance where we find an exception to this, namely in the introduction to the commentary on the poetic anthology of Abū Tammām *Sharḥ Dīwān al-Ḥamāsa* by al-Marzūqī (d. 421/1030) who states that one of the major aims (*aghrād*, *ghāyāt*) of poets is a form of nostalgia, namely the “*ḥanīn ilā ad-diyār*” or nostalgia to home(s). He puts it along other genres, such as eulogy and lampoon.<sup>24</sup> Apart from that, nostalgia in the general sense of longing is in one instance, as far as I found, listed as one of the stimulating emotions for composing poetry, which is another way of categorizing poetry by few literary critics.<sup>25</sup> Here the term used to express longing is “*ṭarab*” and not *ḥanīn*, but *ḥanīn* is one of the undoubtedly principal meanings of *ṭarab* as already pointed out above. Abu Hilāl al-‘Askarī (d. after 400/1010) appears to have been the one who most aptly classified *al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān* under motif, in very much the same way it will be later on understood in compendia and anthologies along with concomitant motifs, like separation, travel and estrangement. However, it occurs in the last section of his catalogue of motifs, *Dīwān al-Ma‘ānī*, entitled “miscellanea”, and hence seems to be regarded, perhaps, as lesser in importance to the author.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Von Grunebaum, Gustave. E., Arabic literary criticism. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 61, 1 (1941), p. 51; Heinrichs, Wolfhart: Literary Theory. The Problem of its Efficiency. *Arabic Poetry. Theory and Development*. Ed. Grunebaum, Gustave. E. Otto Harrassowitz. Wiesbaden. 1973, p. 30-31.

<sup>23</sup> Van Gelder, Geert Jan: Some brave attempts at generic classification in Pre-Modern Arabic Literature. *Aspects of Genre and Type in Pre-Modern Literary Cultures*. Ed. Roest, Bert and Vanstiphout, Herman. Styx Publications. Groningen. 1999, p. 19. Greundler, “*al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān*”, p. 6.

<sup>24</sup> Al-Marzūqī: *Sharḥ Dīwān al-Ḥamāsa*. Ed. Amīn, Aḥmad and Hārūn, ‘Abdalsalām. Dār al-Jīl. Beirut. 1991. His formulation is very close to the one that appears in an epistle of Ibrāhīm aṣ-Ṣābī (d.384/994) on the difference between poetry and prose. See the text of this epistle and the discussion of Arazi, who confirms its attribution to aṣ-Ṣābī despite the numerous citations that are also found in the introduction of al-Marzūqī: Arazi, Albert: Une épître d’Ibrāhīm b. Hilāl al-Ṣābī sur les genres littéraires. *Studies in Islamic history and civilization in honour of David Ayalon*. Ed. Sharon, Moshe, et al.Brill. Leiden. 1986, p. 473-506. Also interesting is that al-Marzūqī in his dictionary of natural phenomena *al-Azmina wa-l-Amkina* (Book of Times and Places), dedicates a chapter entitled: في تذكر طيب الزمان والتلهف عليه والحنين إلى الألف والأوطان (Remembering the good time, yearning for it and longing for friends and countries), 2/248-258.

<sup>25</sup> Ibn Qutayba: *ash-Shi‘r wa sh-Shu‘arā’*. Shākīr, Aḥmad Muḥammad. Dār al-Ma‘ārif. Cairo. p. 80; Ibn Rashīq: *Al-‘Umdah fī Ṣinā‘at ash-Shi‘r wa Naqdih*. Ed. Sha‘lān, an-Nabawī. Maktabat al-Khānjī. Cairo. 2000, 1/194; Heinrichs, Wolfhart: Literary Theory, p. 38.

<sup>26</sup> See also Greundler, Beatrice : *al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān. Representations and Visions of Homeland in Modern Arabic Literature*. Ed. Günther, Sebasatian and Milich, Stephan. Georg Olms. Hildsheim, Zürich, New York. 2016, p. 9-10.

The issue of categorization I intended to pursue here has to do first, and perhaps foremost, with the terminology; an issue that has not been treated uniformly by the traditional literary critics.<sup>27</sup> In their typology, we can identify three different groups of terms which they used in addressing the issue of the classification of poetry: *gharaḍ* (aim),<sup>28</sup> *ḍarb/naw 'lṣanflfann*<sup>29</sup> (kind/sort) and *ma 'nā* (meaning).<sup>30</sup>

Transferring these terms into the modern Western paradigm of literary classification has been attempted by several scholars including three leading ones: Blachère, Heinrichs and van Gelder.<sup>31</sup> Based on the different analyses of these foundational studies, the approximate equivalence of terms is set as follows: theme for *gharaḍ*, genre for *ḍarb* or *fann* and motif for *ma 'nā*. However, we need to note that the *aghrāḍ* of: *madīḥ*, *hijā'* and *rithā'* do constitute, in the final analysis, independent genres. Eksell, on the other hand, refers in her study to these originally identified aims as genre and not theme, based on the definition of Anders Pettersson where he refers to a special type or sort of text as “traditional and established”. She considers that such poetry as *nasīb*, *madīḥ*, *hijā'* and *rithā'* are traditional and established texts and therefore fulfill the definition of genre.<sup>32</sup> In our modest opinion, a combination of these two different senses might be more useful for our understanding: some original *aghrāḍ* which may be identified as themes and other single motifs which are identified as *ma 'ānī*, were ultimately elaborated into independent genres, *naw'* or *fann*; a conclusion that has been arrived at by Heinrichs.<sup>33</sup> It

<sup>27</sup> For a concise presentation of the distinctions made by the major traditional authors on this subject until the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.H., see Bonebakker, Seeger Adrianus: Poets and critics. *Logic in classical Islamic culture*. Ed. Von Grunebaum, Gustave E. Otto Harrassowitz. Wiesbaden. 1970, p. 97-98.

<sup>28</sup> Qudāma b. Ja'far: *Nadq ash-Shi'r*. Ed. Muṣṭafā, Kamāl. Maktabat al-Khānjī. Cairo. 1963, p. 61; Ibn Rashīq 2/773; al-'Askarī: *Kitāb aṣ-Ṣinā'atayn*. Bejjāwī, Alī Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm, Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl. Dār alFikr al-'Arabī. Cairo. 1971, p. 137.

<sup>29</sup> Ibn Khaldūn: *al-Muqaddima*. Ed. Darwīsh, 'Abdallah, Muḥammad al-. Dār Y'rub. Damascus. 2004, 2/396-397. Ibn Rashīq: *al-'Umda* 2/773; he also reports on another scholar using the term “*arkān*” (pillars): 2/193.

<sup>30</sup> Ibn Ṭabāṭibā: *'Iyār ash-Shi'r*. Ed. Abulsattār, 'Abbās. Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya. Beirut. 2005, p. 11; Qudāma, p. 17-18; Al-'Askarī: *Diwān al-ma 'āni*. Ed. Krenkow, Fritz. Maktabat al-Qudsī. Cairo. 1933, 1/7.

<sup>31</sup> Blachère, Régis: *Histoire de la Littérature Arabe des Origins a la Fin du XVe Siècle de J.-C.* Vol. 2. Paris. 1964; Heinrichs: *Literary theory: the problem of its efficiency*; Van Gelder: *Some brave attempts at generic classification in Pre-Modern Arabic Literature*.

<sup>32</sup> Eksell, Kerstin: *Genre in early Arabic poetry. Literary History. Towards a Global Perspective*. Ed. Lindberg-Wada, Gunilla. Vol. 2. Walter de Gruyter. Berlin. New York. 2006, p. 160-161.

<sup>33</sup> Heinrichs: *Literary Theory*, p. 36.

is in this way, by way of example, that *nasīb* transferred to *ghazal*, the wine motif developed into *khamriyyāt* and the hunt into *ṭardiyyāt*.

It is worth presenting here some of Blachère's contribution: he adopted a classification based on theme rather than genre, which he defines as "a cluster of concepts, a series of images or evocations which combine with several others in order to constitute a more general theme which forms an axis of some sort."<sup>34</sup> He favors theme over genre because unlike the latter, themes "constituent une sorte de modulation, ou, si l'on préfère, un ensemble de variations qui valent par leur enchaînement et leur tonalité".<sup>35</sup> This understanding of the theme can pretty much be applied to estrangement and nostalgia in many instances, being a prevailing atmosphere conveyed through a variation of elements and motifs. Following Blachère's division, *nasīb* for instance is a theme constituted of sub-themes like *aṭlāl*, and sub-motifs like questioning the abodes or departure of the beloved, but *nasīb* and the motifs are a manifestation of nostalgia. Yet, the latter is not recognized as a theme probably since it is not seen to be "soumis [...] à des contraintes formelles, à des clichés, à des formules"<sup>36</sup> as Blachère adds to his definition of a theme. However, in the course of this study, we will demonstrate that estrangement and nostalgia (as a theme) is manifested by recurrent motifs and some poetic structures.

The attention that *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* received in modern literary scholarship relates to the question of whether it formed a genre or not. While in another set of studies, the main observation is concerned specifically with the thought that nostalgia dominated the *nasīb* opening of the *qaṣīda*. The *nasīb* itself has been regarded as a genre by the traditional critics. The fact that in this case nostalgia prevails over *nasīb*, mainly through the motif of *aṭlāl*, does not nonetheless render it as another genre. It rather remains a lyrical mood that is conveyed through the assembly of different elements together; an idea that shall be elaborated in chapter 2. That *nasīb*, in its different motifs and elements, is essentially an archetype of nostalgia, has been the major thesis that Jaroslav Stetkevych advanced.<sup>37</sup> Later on, nostalgia developed in the Umayyad period into what may be considered the closest to a "genre" of *ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān*, especially in the corpus

---

<sup>34</sup> Blachère: *Histoire de la Littérature Arabe*, p. 387. The English translation of this quotation is from Heinrichs.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 388.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 388.

<sup>37</sup> Jaroslav Stetkevych, *The Zephyrs of Najd. The Poetics of Nostalgia in the Classical Arabic Nasīb*. The University of Chicago Press. Chicago and London. 1993.

of short pieces focused on Najd. Arazi suggests that the gradual disappearance of the brigandage and the life style that went with it and the repression of its practitioners inspired poetry of aching nostalgia,<sup>38</sup> and it is actually the second wave of Islamic conquests in this period, namely that of Khurasān, that is behind the resurgence of this type of poetry. It is this phase or period which, according to him, is the golden age *par excellence* of this theme.<sup>39</sup> It is also this nostalgia that helped inspire the *‘udhrī* love poetry with its birthplace of Najd. This will be discussed further in chapter 2 on the geographical dimension of estrangement and nostalgia, as well as in chapter 3 on the emotional dimension of the same. Bayyud, on the other hand, argues that it is the modernist poets of that period, the *muḥdathūn*, with their contestation of the old Arabic tradition in poetry, who stimulated the reaction of a nostalgic return to Bedouin life.<sup>40</sup>

Ar-Rajabī exerted serious efforts at establishing *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* as an independent genre.<sup>41</sup> Since this is the single endeavor made in this direction, it calls for closer examination to determine its validity. The author differentiates between two categories of poems where verses on *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* are found: the first is within the multi-thematic *qaṣīda*, where various motifs are found; the second includes poems and fragments dedicated to the one theme itself. He argues that the latter are so large in terms of volume to such an extent that warrants considering them as constituting an “independent literary and artistic phenomenon” and “an original genre of Arabic poetry”.<sup>42</sup> Ar-Rajabī is aware that the classical critics did not mention explicitly *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* as an independent genre but that they instead subsumed it within other genres. For him, the formal categorization is not of greater importance than the actual poetic material upon which these categories are assigned, and this material, he argues, speaks a lot of elements related to nostalgia to the homeland.<sup>43</sup> Although the title of this section in his book reads “establishing the phenomenon of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* to the homeland as a poetic genre”, all his evidence and illustrative examples are from *nasīb*. Rather than supporting his argument, this fact unfortunately renders it untenable.

---

<sup>38</sup> Arazi, p. 289.

<sup>39</sup> Arazi, 300.

<sup>40</sup> Bayyud, Hussein: *Die Stadt in der arabischen Poesie, bis 1258 n. Chr.* Klaus Schwarz Verlag. Berlin. 1988, p. 197-198.

<sup>41</sup> Rajabī, Abdulmun‘im Ḥāfīz al-, *al-Ghurba wa l-Ḥanīn ilā d-Diyār fi sh-Shi‘r al-Jahīlī*.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, p. 101-102.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, p. 98-99.

It may be the case that estrangement and nostalgia have not acquired the canonized form of genre or genres in Arabic poetry, in view of the way the literary criticism tradition of the Arabs evolved. The fact remains, however, that it was a dominant motif influencing other and omnipresent genres, especially *nasīb*, *ghazal* and lampoon and later on city panegyrics.<sup>44</sup>

Chronologically, the signs of a new genre, or at least a shift in the traditional *qaṣīda*, with its main element being the dual theme of estrangement and nostalgia made their appearance in the early Islamic period. More concretely, a focus on *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* originated largely in the milieus of the newly conquered lands. Many of this poetry was composed or recited according to the sources by participants in these conquests. Because the state of mobility and instability entailed in conquest did not endure for long as the conquerors were settled rather swiftly in the new lands, this accounts for the emotional and psychological stability, familiarity and adaptation thus precluding most probably the elaboration of nostalgia and estrangement into a mature genre like *madḥ* and *hijā'*. Both motifs were rather preserved as a tradition beside new motifs, but have nonetheless continued the propensity of acquiring different dimensions in different time frames. Estrangement and nostalgia have been applied to serve other poetic genres, and have been used as an emotional pressure and as such instrumentalized,<sup>45</sup> as we shall see more in chapter 5.

Throughout the present work, we try as much as possible to make and maintain the distinction between the usages of the terms theme and motif depending on the cases: theme is used when *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* are expressed through the intermediary of other motifs; motif is used when *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* are the medium of expressing a further theme or meaning.

As briefly mentioned earlier, Wadad Qadi, makes a very insightful observation that “alienation” (*ghurba*) gave rise to the *ḥanīn* literary genre, but that this genre took form after the material had been collected in compendia devoted to this general topic. Before that happened, Qadi observes that each sample of *ḥanīn* poetry had stood on its own, and not as an example of a genre.<sup>46</sup> The first part of this observation is confirmed by the

---

<sup>44</sup> Gruendler: Al- ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān, p. 6.

<sup>45</sup> Gruendler: al- ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān, p. 8.

<sup>46</sup> Qadi: Dislocation and nostalgia, p. 19.

gradual appearance of chapters dedicated to estrangement and nostalgia and related topics, such as the homeland, travelling, separation, in multi-thematic anthologies.

## 1.4 Anthologies

Literary anthologies are an important source to study any theme in Arabic poetry. What these compilations could tell us on *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* is related to the importance and value of the theme for the authors as well as the audiences of different periods. It also makes it possible to see the context in which nostalgia was placed and the other themes or concepts with which it was associated. This would be helpful in understanding this intertwined concept and knowing its dimensions in the Arabic literary and intellectual milieu. As Leder and Kilpatrick put it: “The texts in compilations, as in other prose work, only acquire their full meaning when they are read in relation to the other passages which they undoubtedly conjured up in the minds of their medieval public”.<sup>47</sup>

*Ghurba* and *ḥanīn* are usually included in chapters of multi-thematic anthologies and *adab* books. They started to gain more currency in works of the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century, along with chapters on closely related concepts, such as travel, homeland or separation. In these works, we find both prose and poetry material —most of it anonymous— some of which found in the different works while others are exclusive to certain works.<sup>48</sup> Gruendler made a careful comparison between anthologies containing chapters related to *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*. Her main focus in the study she undertook centered on the concept of home and its changing meaning over time. Her conclusion that the concept of home had by the Abbasid period acquired a larger understanding and was open to more variables is also aligned with the development of the two concepts of estrangement and nostalgia as we shall see in chapter 5 on the intellectual dimension of these motifs.<sup>49</sup>

Of these anthologies, K. Müller in her study “*al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān* in early *adab* literature” takes a closer look at the motifs which medieval *adab* authors regarded as

---

<sup>47</sup> Leder, Stefan and Kilpatrick, Hilary: Classical Arabic prose literature: a reserachers’ sketchmap. *Journal of Arabic Literature* 23, 1 (1992), p. 24.

<sup>48</sup> For example, *al-Manāzil wa d-Diyār* by Usama b. Muṣṭafā contains poetry verses that are not included in other anthologies, among which is the poetry of the author himself.

<sup>49</sup> Gruendler: *Al- ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān*, p. 13-14.

worthy of being collected in their works.<sup>50</sup> She chose to present and analyze *al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān* material in four of the oldest *adab* works dealing with the subject: two of them are the monothematic anthologies *Risāla fī l-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān* by al-Kisrawī and *Kitāb al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān* by Ibn al-Marzubān; the other two belong to the “merits and demerits” genre of anthologies: two chapters of al-Bayhaqī’s (d. 458/1066) *al-Maḥāsin wa-l-masāwi*’ entitled “*maḥāsin al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān*” and “*masāwi*’ *man kariha l-waṭan*”; and two chapters from the book *al-Maḥāsin wa-l-aḍād* ascribed to al-Jāḥiẓ, entitled “*maḥāsin ḥubb al-waṭan*”, and “*masāwi*’ *ḥubb al-waṭan*”. Müller classifies the entire material of all four works above, based on their content, into four groups, in her words: (1) “positive statements about homeland”; (2) “negative statements about foreign land”; (3) “negative statements about homeland”; (4) “positive statements about foreign land”. Next, she presents the various motifs that she could discern in each group, providing statistics relating to each. Al-Bayhaqī’s chapters on “merits of yearning to the homeland” and “demerits of those who despise the homeland”, are rather remarkable in that the latter’s title implies the same positive attitude towards the homeland, when it is expected to read something like “demerits of yearning to the homeland” or “demerits of those who stay in the homeland”, following the conventional structure of the book in pair-chapters of merits/demerits of the same topic. Indeed, this chapter commences with verses on the advantages of travel as if advocating departure from homeland; soon after, however, it shifts and true to its title starts citing verses on demerits of abandoning the homeland, with many instances of nostalgia and estrangement.<sup>51</sup>

Apart from the material listed in these anthologies, there is a great deal of poetry verses in the poetry collections of poets (*diwāns*) and in a miscellany of other sources. The main corpus for this study has been collected from these (*diwāns*) and classified into dimensions.

## 1.5 Dimensions

Themes and motifs in Arabic poetry are expressed through poetic images. Most of the time they can be easily discerned by explicit vocabulary but some other times the

---

<sup>50</sup> Müller, Kathrin: *Al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān* in early *adab* literature. *Myths, Historical Archetypes and Symbolic Figures in Arabic Literature: Towards a New Hermeneutic Approach*. Ed. Angelika Neuwirth, Birgit Embalo, Sebastian Günther, et al. Beirut, 1999, 33-58.

<sup>51</sup> Bayhaqī, Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-: *al-Maḥāsin wa-l-Masāwi*’. Dār Ṣādir. Beirut, p. 304-315.

meanings are implicit and the reader is tasked with deducing the meanings behind the images. *Ghurba* and *ḥanīn* is one of the themes where meanings are often implicit. This can be seen for instance in the material selected in anthologies, where terms of estrangement and nostalgia are not explicitly stated but compilers have included them under this motif. Moreover, estrangement and nostalgia appear in different contexts and have therefore different interpretations.

In modern scholarship, some attempts have been made, especially in Arabic, at studying poetry and prose material on the subject of estrangement and nostalgia, and offered a wide array of examples. Although they all present rich original material, some fall short of offering critical observations.<sup>52</sup>

In surveying and sorting a large part of the corpus of Arabic poetry available to me, I strived to rely on evidence where the terminology of the motif is explicit while simultaneously keeping my eyes open for the rather vague allusions or insinuations that, in my view, belong also to the material included. Since the main perspective of looking at *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* was focused on the geographical aspect, both in pre-modern works as well as in most of the modern scholarship, I tried to categorize the material I collected in additional categories to the geographical one, based on what the material itself suggested. The intention behind this exercise was to find out what else could estrangement and nostalgia stand for in the Arabic poetic expression, beyond the obvious spatial facet and across a determined timeframe. By implementing the categorization task, I was thus able to determine four major dimensions of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*: geographical, emotional, social and intellectual which I will define and delineate at length in the respective chapters of the study. These dimensions, however, are not strictly distinct from one another but rather closely connected and constitute different combinations depending on the variables they correspond to. For instance, a poetic selection on *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* could have the four dimensions at the same time, or geographic and emotional dimensions, or geographic and social and emotional, and so on according to the various elements influencing each of them. It is further important to state that tracing the development of this motif, illustrates the important role that chronology plays in this context. Although the whole structure of this study is not based on the classical historical divisions of the Arab/Islamic ages, but rather on the four

---

<sup>52</sup> See for example: Ḥuwwar, Ibrāhīm. *al-Ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān fī l-adab al-‘arabī ḥattā nihāyat al-‘aṣr al-Umawī*; Jabbūrī, Yahyā al-. *al-Ḥanīn wa al-ghurba fī l-shi‘r al-‘arabī: al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān*.



dimensions of the motif, it, nevertheless, takes into consideration the chronological aspect to a substantial extent. This is primarily important in as much as it highlights points of growth or regression of the mentioned motifs and relating them to their context. We shall see that the two constituents of this composite motif grew, at times, jointly in the same direction, while at other times they tended to grow separately and in different, opposed directions.

Note on translation:

Regarding translation, except where otherwise mentioned, all translations of poetry are mine. It is important to address the issue of translating the key terms in this work, mainly the terms of *ighṭaraba*, *gharīb*, *ghurba* and their derivatives and the terms *ḥanna*, *ḥanīn* and any derivatives. For the latter, the two commonly used terms in English are longing and yearning, in the different forms: verb, noun and adjective. In certain cases, when the word *ḥanīn* is used in its original meaning, i.e. the sound of the she-camel, it has been elaborately translated to better convey the poetic image. The term nostalgia is used as the umbrella term to identify the concept treated here as a poetic motif. For the former term, its translation is more complex: it can have different meanings in English depending on the context. The most common and direct translations are stranger for *gharīb*, alienation for *ighṭirāb* and estrangement for *ghurba*, as we have explained the choice of using the last term above. Nonetheless, in the poetry verses, the same Arabic terms can express different meanings when used in a metaphorical way. For instance, *ighṭaraba* means sometimes to depart, and *gharīb* can mean unfamiliar. Every occurrence of these main terms has been given the most appropriate translation depending on the context and to the best of my capacity.

## 2. Geographical dimension

The geographical dimension of estrangement and nostalgia is the most obvious one and the one which interested pre-modern Arab authors the most. This is clear from their compositions on the subject of *al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān* (estrangement to the homelands) in essays and anthologies, as mentioned earlier.<sup>53</sup> It is clear that some of the authors of early works on the subject, namely al-Kisrawī (pseudo al-Jāḥiz) and Ibn al-Marzubān, observed that the state of discontent and estrangement felt by people was as a consequence of leaving their original living places and a precondition for their expression of nostalgia. This observation seems to be the direct reason to dedicate special works highlighting the value of homeland and other elements or feelings related to it, such as *dhamm as-safar* or *al-wadā'*.<sup>54</sup> In this chapter, the geographical dimension will be treated in three ways: first, discuss the different modes of expressing the estrangement and longing for a geographical space; second, display the connection between the two components of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* in these modes; and third, highlight the different forms of geographical spaces that are the subject of estrangement and nostalgia. The purpose is to show the evolution of this motif in association with the poetic context.

Another way to understand the value of geography is to understand what is home or homeland for the Arabs. This concept is actually referred to with different terms, such as: *manāzil*, *diyār*, *rab'*, *diman*. In the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, Usāma b. Munqidh (d. 584/1206) composed his work *al-Manāzil wa d-Diyār* where he distinguishes between these various sets of Arabic nouns expressing the concept of home.<sup>55</sup>

The idea of home was also expressed through another term, *waṭan* which succeeded in becoming later the modern official term for homeland. But before that, the understanding of the homeland and of this term was different. The idea of *waṭan* in the classical Arab–Islamic culture seems to be complex and rather ambiguous. This might be due to the fact that, since their early history, the Arabs were given to continuous wandering in and around the desert, where their places of residence were only temporary

---

<sup>53</sup> See “Introduction” above.

<sup>54</sup> Al-Jāḥiz: *al-Ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān*, p. 6; Ibn al-Marzubān: *Kitāb al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān*, p. 138-139.

<sup>55</sup> See also the distinction between the different terms made by Ibn Sīda in his *al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ* 5/119.

for a good part of the year. Even following their urbanization, many Arabs remained geographically mobile while the empire of Islam continued to expand. Before Islam, tribal affiliations based on real or presumed blood ties were the main mark of identity for the Arabs. After Islam, the religious bond came to be an additional one, further defining identity. In both cases, before and after Islam, the geographical dimension appears only to be a weaker constituent element of identity.<sup>56</sup>

Moreover, the increased Arab mobility that followed the Islamic conquests introduced new concepts that further complicate the definition of *waṭan*, or homeland. Among these are the concepts of *hijra* (immigration), *amṣār* (settlements), *thughūr* (frontiers), *tajmīr* (the quartering of the troops close to war fronts for periods longer than usual). However, even if mobility was part of their habituated way of life, whether as Bedouins or later as expansionists, they were affected when leaving their homes, “even those who went away for positions of wealth and honor, were prone to homesickness”.<sup>57</sup> What is interesting to see is that in pre-Islamic Arabic poetry, places of residence are frequently mentioned in association with expressions of longing and nostalgia. This suggests that the feelings of belonging to particular geographical locations were not unknown to Arabs in those times. Bernard Lewis, in an article entitled “*waṭan*,” remarks that this Arabic term had a different evolution than its equivalent words in other cultures such as Greek and Latin, where it had a paternal and ancestral connotation.<sup>58</sup> He concludes that in Arabic culture *waṭan* was conceived of “as a focus of sentiment, of affection, of nostalgia, but not of loyalty, and only to a limited extent of identity.”<sup>59</sup> A. Arazi in his turn posed an interesting question that complements the observation made

---

<sup>56</sup> This is in contrast to the demarcation which emerged later, for example between the regions of *Kūfa* and *Baṣra*, and the two schools related to them, the *kūfī* and *baṣrī*, and their proponents, and which became gradually an intellectual identity. To take a small example, if we make a survey of the names of poets from the pre-Islamic period to the Umayyad (see: *Muʿjam ash-shuʿarāʾ al-jahiliyyīn*, ‘Azīza Fawwāl Bābī; *Muʿjam ash-shuʿarāʾ al-jahiliyyīn wa l-islāmiyyīn wa l-umawiyyīn*, ‘Afīf ‘Abdalraḥmān), we barely find any association to a geographic area. Whereas in the Abbasid era, it is a common and wide practice that poets are known by a place they are associated to (see: *Muʿjam ash-shuʿarāʾ al-abbāsiyyīn*, ‘Afīf ‘Abdalraḥmān). It is certainly clear that this phenomenon is explained through the non-Arab individuals who joined the Islamic empire from new conquered lands in the East and West. It is therefore noteworthy that this association is a designation that this person is somehow a foreigner. The geographic identification is thus a mark of estrangement. Nevertheless, a deeper investigation of the poetry may reveal the attachment of the Arab Bedouins to specific geographic localities as we will see below in section 2.3.

<sup>57</sup> Crone and Moreh, p. 147.

<sup>58</sup> Lewis, Bernard: *Watan*. *Journal of Comparative History* 26: 3/4 (1991), p. 524.

<sup>59</sup> Lewis, p. 525. The Umayyad poet Jamīl Buthayna (d.82) says: “*waṭṭanta qalban bi ḥubbiha*”. He uses this metaphor to imply that his heart has a home which is her love, giving the term an emotional dimension. See: Jamīl, p. 90.

by Lewis: why is the plural form *awṭān* (homelands), rather than the singular *waṭan*, used when referring to this theme?<sup>60</sup> He suggests that, as an Arabic word, *waṭan* did not sound to the poets sufficiently expressive but rather abstract. In fact, it is not only *waṭan* that is used in the plural form, but rather almost all of the terms referring to home.

Apart from these different terms, we notice that poets resorted instead to designating places they occupied each by their individual names.<sup>61</sup> This is an indication that they were nevertheless attached to specific geographic locations as a form of home rather than to a wider concept of homeland. If we look at the different modes of the geographic *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* in literary material, we can discern the nuances of relation the poets have with different locations.

## 2.1 The *ḥanīn* of the she-camel

The most obvious poetic mention of nostalgia in its original primary meaning is that of the she-camel. The camel, as it is well-known, is an omnipresent character in the Arabic pre-Islamic poetry, and to a certain extent in later poetry, holding different functions in the *qaṣīda* or other poetic forms. Among these is the traditional *takhalluṣ* or *raḥīl* (journey) section, where the camel functions as transition from the *nasīb* to *fakhr* or *madḥ*; another function is the double or equivalent of the poet, which he uses as a representation of himself, his feelings and state.<sup>62</sup> Within the latter function, the she-camel, known as the companion of the poet, is employed to different degrees in constructing meanings and images related to estrangement and nostalgia. The first degree is a direct mention and description of the longing of the she-camel to its pastors, as states the original definition of the term *ḥanīn*.<sup>63</sup>

Here is a representative illustration on a poetic image, referring directly to a geographical space that the camel is longing for. The pre-Islamic poet Tha‘laba b. Ghaylān says: (*tawīl*)<sup>64</sup>

وَمِنْ دُونِهَا ظَهْرُ الْجَرِيبِ فَرَاكِسُ      تَحَنُّنٌ إِلَى أَرْضِ الْمُعَمَّسِ نَاقَتِي

My camel longs for the land of *Mughammas*  
And beyond it is *Zahr al-Jarīb* and then *Farākis*.

<sup>60</sup> Arazi: *al-ḥanīn ilā al-awṭān*, p. 289.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, p. 295.

<sup>62</sup> See: Jacobi, Renate: The camel-section of the panegyric ode. *Journal of Arabic Literature* XIII, vol. 13 (1982), p. 1-22.

<sup>63</sup> See in the Introduction: 1.1 “Defining the terms”.

<sup>64</sup> al-Bakrī: *Mu‘jam mā sta‘jam* 1/76; al-Ḥamwī: *Mu‘jam al-buldān* 5/162.

However, Tha‘laba —as per the common practice of poets— is not only talking about his camel, but he is also referring to himself. This poetic method shows an assimilation of the poet with the state of the animal. It is in fact Tha‘laba who is longing to this land, but his camel plays the role of his protagonist. It is then this relationship between the poet and the camel that is interesting to explore with regard to verses on estrangement and nostalgia within the geographical dimension.

A second type of images includes both characters, the poet and the camel, to express longing for their homeland, the mountains of Ṭayyi’. Ḥātim aṭ-Ṭā’ī says: (*tawīl*)<sup>65</sup>

وَحَنَّتْ قَلُوصِي أَنْ رَأْتُ سَوَاطِ أَحْمَرَا      حَنَّتْ إِلَى الْأَجْبَالِ أَجْبَالِ طِيءِ  
وَأَنَا لَمُحْيٍو رِبْعَنَا إِنْ تَبَسَّرَا      فَقَلْتُ لَهَا إِنَّ الطَّرِيقَ أَمَامَنَا

I longed for the mountains, mountains of *Tay’*  
and my camel moaned as she saw the whip of *Aḥmar*  
I told it the way is ahead of us  
And we shall meet our home if it went smoothly

In a form of metonymy, Ḥātim is describing the longing of the camel to the homeland without stating explicitly the place it is longing for. Instead, just by seeing the whip, it realized that they are heading to the homeland and thus made the *ḥanīn* sound as a sign of yearning. In this image, the poet is juxtaposing himself side by side with his camel in the nostalgic state, presenting more clearly the interplay. This parallelism is a different method of assimilation between the poet and his companion: *ḥanantu... wa-ḥannat*.<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, we see here the features of a certain dialogue going on between the poet and the she-camel regarding these nostalgic moments, where the poet takes different positions as a responder. Ḥātim formulates his response by assuring his she-camel and giving it hope that their way is still ahead and they will hopefully be able to reach home and greet their people. This dialogue can be further discerned in other illustrations.

A variation in the position of the poet already emerges with the pre-Islamic ‘Abīd b. al-Abraṣ who says: (*tawīl*)<sup>67</sup>

مَعَ الشُّوقِ يَوْمًا بِالْحِجَازِ وَمِیْضُنْ      وَحَنَّتْ قَلُوصِي بَعْدَ وَهْنٍ وَهَاجَهَا  
نَأْتَنِي بِهِ هِنْدُ الْبَيْ بَغِيضُنْ      فَقَلْتُ لَهَا لَا تُضْجِرِي إِنْ مَنَزَلًا

My young camel uttered its yearning cry when a third of the night was spent:  
Its longing was stirred by the distant gleam of lightening in the *Hijāz*  
I said to it: Grumble not thus for verily an abode  
where Hind is far away is nought but hateful to me.

<sup>65</sup> Ḥātim aṭ-Ṭā’ī: *Dīwān*, p. 266.

<sup>66</sup> See the suggestion of the *Dīwān*’s editor to read *jannat* instead of *ḥannat*: *Dīwān*, p. 254 no.1.

<sup>67</sup> al-Khurshūm: *Al-ghurba fī ash-shi’r al-jāhili*, p. 53; ‘Abīd b. al-Abraṣ, p. 34. The translation is by Lyall.

Explicitly it is the she-camel who is longing to *Hijāz* and the poet is contesting it, but indeed he is reflecting his feelings through her. His ambiguous situation is revealed through telling the camel that it needs not complain and long to *Hijāz* because this place became hateful to him. The poet is thus not responsive to the yearning of the camel and it is not succeeding in awakening the feeling in him. However, this apparent divergence in feeling between the poet and his she-camel in these verses is not genuine. Being the double of the poet, the camel represents here the struggle which the poet is suffering, he is namely missing his home and beloved but he does not want to admit and wants to fight it. From there he tries to shut off the voice of longing, the *ḥanīn*, of the camel as a symbolic way to shut his inner voice of longing.

In a more elaborate descriptive passage, al-Farazdaq (d. ≈114/732) says: (*tawīl*)<sup>68</sup>

هُجُودًا وَعَيْسًا كَالْحَسَبِيَّاتِ ضُمَّرَا	وَلَيْلَةً بِنْتَا دَيْرٍ حَسَّانَ نَبَّهْتُ
فُوَادًا إِلَى أَهْلِ الْوَرِيْعَةِ أَصَوَّرَا	بَكَتْ نَاقَتِي لَيْلًا فَهَاجَ بُكَاءُهَا
عَلَى ذِي هَوًى مِنْ شَوْقِهِ مَا تَنَكَّرَا	وَحَنَّتْ حَنِينًا مُنْكَرًا هَيَّجَتْ بِهِ
وَنَاهِي جُمَانَ الْعَيْنِ أَنْ يَتَحَدَّرَا	فَقِيْنَا فُعُودًا بَيْنَ مُلْتَزِمِ الْهَوَى
وَإِنْ هِيَ حَنَّتْ كُنْتُ بِالسُّوقِ أَعْدَرَا	تَرَوْمُ عَلَى نَعْمَانَ فِي الْفَجْرِ نَاقَتِي

Many a night we passed at the monastery of Ḥassān  
it awaked the sleeping and reddish-white camels which are slender as the bows;  
My she-camel wept at night and its crying roused  
a heart prone to longing for the people of *Warī'a*  
It uttered a yearning cry of disapproval with which it roused  
the yearning of a man in love who does not deny it  
We remained sitting, one bonded to his passion  
and the other forbidding the tears from his eyes to fall down  
My she-camel desires [to return to] *Na mān* at dawn  
So if it moans, I am then for the longing more forgiven

Al-Farazdaq conveys a more sophisticated poetic image: first, through the repetition of the verb *ḥannat* (it longed) with the use of the emphatic object (*maf'ūl mutlaq*) in the third verse; second, the interaction or interplay between the poet and the camel, shows a more visible cause-effect relationship:

It wept at night → its crying roused the longing of my heart  
It uttered a yearning cry of disapproval → it roused the longing of a man in love  
If it is yearning → I deserve to be excused for my longing

The poet seems to be on one hand recipient of the she-camel's longing and on the other hand actively responsive to it in total assimilation of the nostalgic state.

In contrast, another attitude of opposition between the two characters is increased in the poem of al-Mutalammis: (*basīl*)<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Al-Farazdaq: *Dīwān*, p. 298-299; Suwaydi, Fatima al-: *al-Ightirāb fī sh-shi'r al-Umawī*, p. 9-10.

بَعْدَ الْهُدُودِ وَشَاقَّتْهَا التَّوَاقِيصُ  
كَأَنَّهَا مِنْ هَوَىِّ لِلرَّمْلِ مَسْلُوسُ  
كَأَنَّهُ ضَرَمٌ بِالْكَفِّ مَقْبُوسُ  
وَدُونَ إِيَّاكَ أُمْرَاتُ أَمَالِيصُ  
بَسَلٌ عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا لَكَ الدَّهَارِيصُ  
قَوْمًا نَوْدُهُمْ إِذْ قَوْمُنَا شُوسُ  
مَا عَاشَ عَمْرُو وَمَا عَمِرَتْ قَابُوسُ

حَنَّتْ قَلُوصِي بِهَا وَاللَّيْلُ مُطَّرِقُ  
مَعْقُولَةٌ يَنْظُرُ التَّشْرِيقُ رَاكِبُهَا  
وَقَدْ أَلَاخَ سَهَيْلٌ بَعْدَمَا هَجَعُوا  
أَنِّي طَرِبْتُ وَلَمْ أَحْيَ عَلَى طَرِبِ  
حَنَّتْ إِلَى نَخْلَةِ الْقُصُوصِ فَقَلْتُ لَهَا  
أُمِّي شَامِيَّةٌ إِذْ لَا عِرَاقَ لَنَا  
لَنْ سَلْكَ سَبِيلَ الْبُوبَةِ مُنْجِدَةً

My she-camel uttered a cry after a short rest as the night became disposed,  
one layer above the other, and the bells rendered her longing  
Legs bound to its thighs, as its riders awaits the sun rise,  
it is as if mad of a passion to the sand  
Canopus shined after they slumbered,  
as if it were a live coal burning in the palm  
The time has come for you to rejoice, and you are not to be blamed for rejoicing  
Whilst bare smooth land interpose your mates;  
She yearned towards *Nakhlāt al-Quṣwa*, so I told her:  
This is forbidden to you, for this is a place of calamity/misfortune  
Direct your way towards *Shām* —as we have no ‘*Irāq* [anymore]—  
Where people we cherish are, while our people are haughty  
You shall not take the curved road of *Bawbāt* through *Najd*  
As long as ‘Amr and Qābūs shall live

The she-camel is longing for home but the poet is reproaching its feeling as if telling it: how can you long for a place that is deadly [for me]? As the other examples, a conversation is going on between al-Mutalammis and his she-camel. The camel initiates the conversation through the *hanīn* sound, and then the poet answers it in words. Just like ‘Abīd, the conversation of al-Mutalammis with the camel reflects a sort of dilemma where the latter is longing for a place but the poet is contesting this longing. In ‘Abīd’s case, his answer to his camel uses just an assuring tone, simply explaining that this place she is longing for is repulsive to him because Hind left him, whereas for al-Mutalammis, the tone is considerably more firm, since the response of the poet to his camel’s longing to home comes in a form of a forbidding command *baslun ‘alayki*. This place she is missing, he forbids it as it is a place of misfortune to him.

A further instance of correspondence between the poet and the she-camel, yet in a different way, are the following verses of a Bedouin from *Kilāb*: (*tawīl*)<sup>70</sup>

بَجَجِرْ إِلَى أَهْلِ الْجِمَى غَرَضَانُ  
وَأَخْفِي الَّذِي لَوْلَا الْأَسَى لَقَضَانِي  
وَإِنِّي وَإِيَّاهَا لَمُخْتَلِفَانُ  
بِأَهْلِ الْجِمَى مَا لَمْ يَجِدْ كَبِدَانُ  
فَمَنْ يَكُ لَمْ يَغْرَضْ فَإِنِّي وَنَاقَتِي  
تَحْنُ فَنَبِيدِي مَا بِهَا مِنْ صَبَابَةٍ  
هَوَى نَاقَتِي خَلْفِي وَقُدَامِي الْهَوَى  
فِيَا كَبِيدِنَا أَجْمَلًا قَدْ وَجِدْنَا مَا

Who had not [ever] yearned? I and my she-camel  
in *al-Hijr* are yearning for our companions

<sup>69</sup> al-Mutalammis: *Dīwān*, p. 82-93. al-Khurshūm: *al-ghurba fī ash-shi‘r al-jāhilī*, p. 81-90.

<sup>70</sup> ‘Urwa b. Ḥizām: *Dīwān*, p. 37-38; al-Khurshūm: *al-ghurba fī ash-shi‘r al-jāhilī*, p. 67-68.

She utters a cry of yearning revealing its deep affection  
while I hide what would have otherwise terminated me,  
The longing of my she-camel is behind me, and my own longing is before me,  
and we are both different from each other.  
Oh both our hearts! Be patient [in your passion], for you found  
in our companions what no other heart has found.

Here too, there is a continuous dialogue between the two, but unlike the previous verses where it is a dialogue with actual words, it is here just a communication through their feelings and reactions. The she-camel expresses openly its feelings of longing through emitting the sound of the *ḥanīn* whereas the poet can only hide his. The inner struggle of the poet is more evident, since he is unable to reveal his true feelings, but his she-camel can do this on his behalf.

So far, these illustrations demonstrate the motif of *ḥanīn* openly stated whereas *ghurba* is not yet clearly present. Still, even in these early poems we can distinguish some other elements related to estrangement, namely loneliness as the Ḥamāsa poet says: *fa innī mithlamā tajidīna waḥdī* and long distance separation in the statement of ‘Abīd: *inna manzilan na’atnī bihi Hindu ilayya baghīdu*.

The more visible appearance of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* together takes shape in the context of evoking and describing the deserted abodes, *aṭlāl*.

## **2.2 *Aṭlāl*: first manifestation of estrangement and nostalgia**

*Aṭlāl* or the deserted abodes, as a poetic motif but also as a structural section in the traditional opening of the long Arabic *qaṣīda*, has been frequently highlighted as being in association with the *ḥanīn* theme. Verses with the motif of deserted abodes are frequently listed as nostalgia in compendia as well as studies on *ḥanīn*. This motif is a point of variation between the openings of poems by Bedouins and that by sedentary poets. Ibn Rashīq for instance states that Bedouins launch their poem with describing the *aṭlāl* and mention their longing using the *ḥanīn* of camels, whereas the sedentary poets mention homes/abodes (*diyār*) only as trope (*majāz*).<sup>71</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup> Ibn Rashīq: *al-‘Umda* 1/225-226. See also: Ḥuwwar, p. 45. In his analysis of *aṭlāl*, in what he calls “poetry of *aṭlāl*”, as a major source of expression on *ḥanīn*, Ḥuwwar restricts his material to the Bedouin poetry or the pre-Islamic poetry. His argument for this is that later poetry with the *aṭlāl* motif is only an imitation of the *jāhilī* tradition, and only the poetry of Bedouins reflects a true fact of their way of living, namely the constant dislocation and therefore translate the authentic experience and feeling of nostalgia (see p. 47). However, to treat the motif of nostalgia, or any other poetic motif for that matter, it should not necessarily be reflecting an authentic element in the real life of the composers. It is true that knowing



The major relevance of *aṭlāl* to *ḥanīn* is the fact that they are the remains of the poet's beloved who left the place with her tribe. This site has been considered an archetype of the nostalgic mood through the remembrance of the abodes.<sup>72</sup> By addressing or evoking the ruins of the beloved's encampment or home (in most of the times) the poet expresses a longing to the original state of these ruins, as they were inhabited and full of life. There are various elements that are connected with nostalgia, mainly the remembrance which develops into memory, and the tears representing the pain or sickness of the poet.

In comparison with the she-camel, and as we will see later in the context of conquests, nostalgia, and eventually estrangement, revealed in the *aṭlāl* is different from the one related to distance.

Nostalgia is not just a motif or a feeling, but it is a whole poetic image which is constructed through a process involving a set of constituents. We suggest that these can be defined as the following: the activating factor(s), surrounding factor(s), catalyst(s), and critical stage. The result or output of this process is the whole episode of nostalgia and estrangement.

If we look at the opening of the commonly most renowned *qaṣīda* of the entire Arabic poetic tradition, the *Mu'allaqa* of Imru' al-Qays, considered as the ultimate representation of *aṭlāl*, we can see how the nostalgic atmosphere is built up, although there is no direct lexical reference of *ḥanīn*. He says: (*tawīl*)<sup>73</sup>

بِسْقَطِ اللَّوَى بَيْنَ الدَّخُولِ فَحَوْمَلْ	1- قفا نبكي من ذكرى حبيبٍ ومنزل
لدى سمرات الحيِّ ناقفُ حنظلْ	4- كأنِّي غداةَ البينِ يومَ تحمّلوا
فهلْ عندَ رسمِ دارِسٍ من مُعَوَّلْ	6- وإنَّ شيفانِي عِبْرَةٌ مَهْرَاقَةٌ

Halt, friends both! Let us weep, recalling a love and a lodging  
By the rim of the twisted sands between al-Dakhūl and Ḥawmal

...

Upon the morn of separation, the day they loaded to part,  
By the tribe's acacias it was like I was splitting a colocynth;

...

Yet the true and only cure of my grief is tears outpoured:  
What is there left to lean on where the trace is obliterated?

---

certain extra-poetic facts about the poet or his time may help understand or analyze poetry but they are not exclusive variables to do so. The analysis is based and emanates rather from the poetic text itself in the first place. On the other hand, whether the description of *aṭlāl* in later poetry was original or a mere imitation is irrelevant for the current study. What is sufficient here for the study of the development of *ḥanīn*, is the simple presence of *aṭlāl* to show, as starting point, the continuity of the motif, at least in this form. Also the description of "authentic experience and true feelings" can be misleading, as this value is determined relatively to the recipients/audience and not the poet himself.

<sup>72</sup> Jaroslav Stetkevych: *The Zephyrs of Najd*, p. 181.

<sup>73</sup> az-Zawzanī: *Sharḥ al-Mu'allaqāt al-'Ashr*, p. 33. Imru' al-Qays: *Dīwān* 1/8. Translation by: A. J. Arberry: *The Seven Odes*. London and New York. 1957, p. 61.

The activating factor here is the stopping by the ruins of the beloved at the designated specific place; the surrounding factors are his two companions; the catalyst is actually not present but sought for and it is the supporter “*mu‘awwil*” whom the poet is asking for; the critical stage is the “*‘abratun mihrāqa*” or the running tear he is shedding on his beloved because it is his only relief and savior from the pain he is suffering.

If we look again at many of these openings, we see that the theme of estrangement is significantly present. Among the pre-Islamic seven odes, *Mu‘allaqāt*, we find the meaning of estrangement vis-à-vis the abodes clearly stated in three major ones:

‘Antara b. Shaddād says: (*kāmil*)<sup>74</sup>

هَلْ غَادَرَ الشُّعْرَاءُ مِنْ مُتَرَدِّمٍ      أَمْ هَلْ عَرَفْتَ الدَّارَ بَعْدَ تَوَهُُّمٍ  
أَعْيَاكَ رَسْمُ الدَّارِ لَمْ يَتَكَلَّمْ      حَتَّى تَكَلَّمَ كَالأَصَمِّ الأَعْجَمِ

Have the poets left in the garment a place for a patch to be patched by me;  
and did you know the abode of your beloved after reflection?  
The vestige of the house, which did not speak, confounded thee,  
until it spoke by means of signs, like one deaf and dumb.

Zuhayr b. Abī Sulma says: (*tawīl*)<sup>75</sup>

مِنْ أُمِّ أَوْفَى دِمْنَةٌ لَمْ تَكَلِّمْ      بِخَوْمَانَةِ الدُّرَّاجِ فَالْمُنْتَلَمِ  
وَدَارٌ لَهَا بِالرَّقَمَتَيْنِ كَأَنَّهَا      مَرَاجِعُ وَشَمِّ فِي نَوَاشِرِ مِعْصَمِ  
بِهَا الْعَيْنُ وَالْأَرَامُ يَمْشِينَ خِلْفَةً      وَأَطْلَاؤُهَا يَنْهَضْنَ مِنْ كُلِّ مَجْتَمِ  
وَقَفْتُ بِهَا مِنْ بَعْدِ عَشْرِينَ جَعَةً      فَلَايَا عَرَفْتُ الدَّارَ بَعْدَ التَّوَهُُّمِ

Are there still blackened orts in the stone-waste of *Durraj* and *Mutathallam*, mute witnesses to where Umm Awfa once dwelt?  
A lodging where she abode in *ar-Raqmatayn*, that appears like criss-cross tattooing upon the sinews of a wrist—there the wild cows and white antelopes wander, herd upon herd,  
And their young ones spring up out of their several couches.  
There it was I stood after twenty livelong years,  
hard put to it to recognize the lodging, deeply as I meditated

Labīd b. Rabī‘a says in his *Mu‘allaqa*: (*kāmil*)<sup>76</sup>

عَفَّتِ الدِّيَارُ مَحَلُّهَا فَمَقَامُهَا      بِيَمْنَى تَأَبَّدَ غَوْلُهَا فَرَجَامُهَا  
فَوَقَفْتُ أَسْأَلُهَا وَكَيْفَ سَأَلْنَا      صُمًّا خَوَالِدًا مَا يَبِينُ كَلَامُهَا

The abodes are desolate, halting-place and encampment too,  
at Mina; deserted lies Ghaul, deserted alike Rijām

...  
So I stood and questioned that site; yet how should we question rocks  
set immovable, whose speech is nothing significant?

<sup>74</sup> Translation by: Johnson, F. E.: The Hanged Poems. *The Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East*. Vol. V. Ancient Arabia. Ed. Charles F. Horne, Parke, Austin, and Lipscomb; New York and London, 1917.

<sup>75</sup> Translation by: A. J. Arberry, *The Seven Odes*, p. 114.

<sup>76</sup> Translation by: A. J. Arberry, *The Seven Odes*, p. 142.

We notice through these examples and others, that names of places and localities in the desert are extensive in the poetry revealing estrangement and nostalgia, especially in the opening sections. Poets were thus very much keen on allocating space in their verses to specify a micro-location where a certain significant memory has happened, as we can see for example in the first two verses of the *Mu'allaqa* of Imru' al-Qays cited above.<sup>77</sup> Nostalgia is thus linked to these specific names. On the other hand, in all three cases, it is not only about nostalgia but also about a state of estrangement between the poet and the abodes. There is also here an intertextuality where both Zuhayr and 'Antara use the same expressions or meanings: *'araftu ad-dāra ba'da tawahhumi* and *lam yatakallamillam takallami* and *a'yākalla'yan*. The key idea that the three poets are translating is the difficulty which the poet faces in recognizing the place he is standing before, because its features changed and therefore became unrecognizable to him. 'Antara uses explicitly the word *a'jam*, a clear statement that this place makes him feel like a stranger, foreigner, or outsider after it was deserted. In contrast to nostalgia, estrangement is associated not with specific names but with the general terms of home, to convey better this anonymity. Therefore in all three illustrations of *aṭlāl*, we see the existing connection between *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* as one theme.

What is also worth noting here is that these *manāzil* (dwellings) and *diyār* (abodes) are revealed as “resting places for memories”.<sup>78</sup> Spaces as these are the symbol of “the ultimate desirability of something first possessed, something by cultural habit referred to as [lost] Paradise.”<sup>79</sup> This recalls what Svetlana Boym argues about the nostalgic desire for origins. What she says is that it is at “the very core of the modern condition.”<sup>80</sup> This is also true in fact not only to the modern condition but to the pre-modern condition, as it appears in the Arabic context, making of it a feeling at the very core of the human condition.<sup>81</sup>

---

<sup>77</sup> Stetkevych: *The Zephyrs of Najd*, p. 110-111 where he also discusses, among other medieval Arab literary critics, the superficial interpretation of Baqillāni of this phenomenon, reducing it to just a lexical indication. See also Agha, Salih Said and Khalidi, Tarif: *Poetry and Identity in the Umayyad Age. Al-Abhath*, 50-51 (2003), p. 104.

<sup>78</sup> Stetkevych, 180.

<sup>79</sup> Stetkevych, 181.

<sup>80</sup> Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*. Basic Books. New York. 2001.

<sup>81</sup> See chapter 5 below.

The motif of *ghurba* and *hanīn* as we propose here played a major role in the *aṭlāl* opening and shaped the evolvement of this section in the *qaṣīda*.

There was one pattern in evoking and describing the ruins which remained faithful to the original motif of *aṭlāl* in all its constituents and tradition, but we can perceive here a new pattern that developed. It is in fact one which transposed *aṭlāl* to a new environment revealing to be more realistic and showing that such poets tried to claim the transfer of this motif to their ownership.

This is for example what Yazīd b. Mufarrigh al-Ḥimyarī (d. ≈68/688) does in transferring his *aṭlāl* from its origin in the desert to an agrarian setting (*wāfir*)<sup>82</sup>

لعلَّ البرقَ ذاكَ يحورُ ناراً	سَمَا بَرَقَ الْجُمَانَةُ فَاسْتَطَارَا
وذكرني المنزلَ والديارا	فَعَدْتُ لَهُ الْعِشَاءَ فَهَاجَ شَوْقِي
بَلِينٍ وَهَجْنٍ لِلْقَلْبِ إِكْرَارَا	دِيَارًا لِلْجُمَانَةِ مُقْفَرَاتٍ
وَلَا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي جَاشَتْ مِرَارَا	فَلَمْ أَمْلِكْ دُمُوعَ الْعَيْنِ مَتِي
فَدَيَّرَ الرَّاهِبِ الطَّلَلِ الْقَفَارَا	فَسَرَّقَ فَالْقُرَى فِي صَهْرَتَاجٍ

The lightening of Jumana rose in the sky...

Perhaps the lightening would transform into fire  
I stayed the night up for it so my longing was excited  
And it reminded of home and dwellings  
The dwellings of Jumana are deserted  
They wore out and incited the memory  
I could not halt my tears  
Nor my over and over agitated soul  
Surraq, the towns in Sahrataj  
The monk's monastery and the desolated abodes

A bit further in time, al-Buḥturī (d. 284/897) says: (*basīṭ*)<sup>83</sup>

لَمْ يُشْفِ مِنْ بُرْحَاءِ الشَّوْقِ ذَا الشَّجَنِ	كَمْ مِنْ وُقُوفٍ عَلَى الْأَطْلَالِ وَالذَّمَنِ
--	--

How many standing at the abodes and the remnants  
had they not healed the fierce burnings of longing of the griever

Ibn ar-Rūmī (d. ≈283/896) also says: (*majzū' kāmīl*)<sup>84</sup>

المقفرات بل الأواهل	حيّ المعاهد والمنازل
ذل بعد آرام خواذل	بدلن آرامًا خوا
ل وما أحرن جواب سائل	حركن شجوك للسوا

Salute the abandoned dwellings and homes,  
or rather the inhabited ones  
They were replaced with exhausted white antelopes  
after exhausted white antelopes

<sup>82</sup> Yazīd b. Mufarrigh: *Diwān*, p. 131; Agha and Khalidi, p. 100 note 143.

<sup>83</sup> Al-Buḥturī 5/2158; Qabāja, Muḥammad 'Abdalmun'im Muḥammad: *al-ghurba wa l-hanīn ilā ad-diyār fī shi'r al-'aṣr al-'Abbāsī ath-thānī*, MA thesis, al-Khalil University, April 2008, p. 38-39.

<sup>84</sup> Ibn ar-Rūmī: *Dīwān* 5/2031-2032.

They stimulated your affectedness to asking,  
while they never gave an answer to an asker

He also says: (*sarī*)<sup>85</sup>

تهيج أطرابي وأذكاري  
تسري إذا ما عرس الساري

ألا اسلمي يا دار من دار  
حيثك عنا شمال سهوة

Be safe oh dwelling  
That moves my sadness and my memories  
A soft north winds salutes you on our behalf  
Which circulates as the night traveler alights for a rest

In these examples, we see that although the *aṭlāl* became void from their initial purpose, they remained in fact in the same position and their *raison d'être* and function in the opening of the poem became the main concern of the poet. The poet mentions their rejection, or mentions them to say that there is no point of standing there, addressing them and weeping. In all cases, the idea is that the *aṭlāl* are not fulfilling the poet's need when he is longing to these homes as they were inhabited, and mentioning them in poetry is not serving anymore as a poetic compensation for the departure and loss he is suffering from. The poets are distancing themselves gradually from the ruins.

The second phase of evolution is characterized by a re-questioning and contestation of the *aṭlāl* opening in later times. Some signs of the discontent of some poets with the tradition or their questioning of the purpose of crying at the ruins can be found in the verses of al-Muhalhil or 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'a or Ḍābi' b. al-Ḥārith al-Burjūmī and others.<sup>86</sup> The culmination of this trend is to be seen especially in the Abbasid period with Abū Nuwās in his famous verse (*ramal*):

فُلْ لِمَنْ يَبْكِي عَلَى رَسْمِ دَرَسٍ      واقفاً ما ضرَّ لو كانَ جلسن

Tell him who weeps standing over effaced ruins  
What harm would it be, if he sat down?

This attitude was discussed by many scholars and Abū Nuwās was even considered by some as a *shu'ūbī* poet,<sup>87</sup> standing against everything and anything that is Arab, among which is of course the *aṭlāl*, as a symbol of the Arabic poetic tradition. Although this accusation might be exaggerated, Abū Nuwās' announced rupture with *aṭlāl*, not

<sup>85</sup> Ibid 3/1036.

<sup>86</sup> Rajabī, p. 540-542.

<sup>87</sup> See: Hussein, Taha: *Ḥadīth al-arbu 'ā'* and Wagner: *EI2*. See also the discussion of Fakhreddine, Huda J.: *Metapoesis in the Arabic Tradition. From Modernists to Muḥdathūn. in Arabic Tradition*. Brill. Leiden. 2015, p. 109-113.

complete however, is only relevant to us here inasmuch as it is also a departure from the nostalgic attitude to the past and not revealing a sort of estrangement with the current situation or the face of the ruined abodes as a signifier of moving on and changing. This said, we see that Abū Nuwās replaced the traditional longing with a sort of longing to the trivial elements of his present, namely in his elaborate *mujūn* poetry.<sup>88</sup> One could say that through this shift in the nostalgic feeling to the past, he contributed to the break with the *aṭlāl*. Just like other features in his poetry, this one is yet another evidence that “[h]is work only reflects the cultural background of the Abbasid epoch.”<sup>89</sup> Perhaps Abū Nuwās was the extreme case of challenging the *aṭlāl* but other poets certainly showed similar position but to different degrees.

### 2.3 A *ʿrāb*: elements of the desert as home

In the poetry of estrangement and nostalgia, there are two main geographical elements or motifs that are, along *aṭlāl*, of major presence and importance: the desert of *Najd* and the Arabian East wind *Ṣabā*. These two elements acquired through the pre-Islamic times until it developed further in the love poetry of the Umayyad times a symbolic value, and *Najd* became “the aim and the road of all yearning,”<sup>90</sup> whereas the *ṣabā* became “the wind of love’s promise —or remembrance— and of good tidings.”<sup>91</sup> The toponymy of *Najd* in relation to its poetic implication shows that it was a “magical keyword” and that it “evoke[s] the entire existential experience of the Bedouin Arabs in their desert, and their attachment to it.”<sup>92</sup>

Scholars spotted the tight connection between these two elements and the *A ʿrāb*, the group of Arabs who preserved the Bedouin life style and who were still living as continuity to the *jāhiliyya*, in the middle of the desert. They did not engage in the process of urbanization which developed starting the 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> century. Overall, they are known to be a reference for poetry and for lexicography in Arabic language to a certain extent, and the sayings reported from them are all from oral sources. In the sources they

---

<sup>88</sup> Wagner, Abū Nuwās, *EI2*: “instead of the former dwelling-place of the beloved he weeps for the taverns that have disappeared and bewails the boon-companions dispersed far and wide.”

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> Stetkevych, 118.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>92</sup> Salih Agha and Tarif Khalidi, p. 105.

are referred to most of the times almost anonymously, only as *A‘rāb* or sometimes by their tribal affiliation.

The *A‘rāb*, Bedouins, as they are portrayed in the sources, represent the *jāhili* desert way of life although they are not restricted to the pre-Islamic times.

Since many narratives (*akhbār*) on *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* are about *A‘rāb*, it is noteworthy to discuss some characteristics of their image as it appears in literature. At a first look, it may seem strange that estrangement and nostalgia is expressed abundantly by Bedouins for what is commonly known about their lifestyle of a periodical change in locations in the desert and that Bedouins don't have a fixed place which could be called their home. At once, one can hastily not expect from those *A‘rāb* to have and express feelings of estrangement and nostalgia, at least in its geographical sense. But if we have a closer look at the poetry attributed to them, we find a sense of an attachment to places in the desert which they referred to as *diyār* (homes), although for a foreigner to this environment, these places might all seem just a desert without any particular characteristics differentiating them from each other. We can even say that through the motif of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* specifically, the poetry ascribed to Bedouins shows that, unlike the common belief, the geographical constituent was at times even a more representative sign of identity than the tribal one.<sup>93</sup>

*Najd* in particular constitutes a world that captures the imagination of Bedouins as well as poets in general, even when they were away from it. The motif of *Najd* is composed of a series of sub-motifs. These include elements of nature like the wind, mainly the East wind *Ṣabā*, the plant of *ghaḍā* (euphorbia), the plant of *‘arār* and lightening. At times, *Najd* was not meant exactly for its physical self but was elevated to be a symbol or more an archetype of “the entire existential experience of the Bedouin Arabs in their desert, and their attachment to it”.<sup>94</sup> There is a high feeling of nostalgia to a romantically poecized world of *Najd* which emerges as a consequence to the state of estrangement felt by those Bedouin when they find themselves in unfamiliar environments. If this unfamiliarity is to be assigned a concrete motivation, then it would be due to the new geographical elements defining the conquered spaces and which are repulsive to the Bedouins, such as the wind, the heat, the snow and some animals. In the following are selected pieces from the poetry of *A‘rāb* with the major theme of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*.

---

<sup>93</sup> Agha and Khalidi, p. 96-97; Arazi, p. 312, 315; Antrim, p. 11-13.

<sup>94</sup> Agha and Khalidi, p. 105. See also: Stetkevych, p. 107

An A 'rābī says: (ṭawīl)<sup>95</sup>

وكلُّ □ جازيٍّ له البرقُ سائقٌ  
إذا جنَّ الفُكُّ أو تألَّق □ ارقُّ

سرى البرقُ من أرضِ الحجازِ فشافقني  
فواكبدي ممَّا ألقى من الهوى

The lightning travelled through the land of *Hijāz* excited my longing  
For every person from *Hijāz* is driven by the lightning  
Oh what pain from what I am suffering out of love  
Whenever a lover gets infuriated or a lightning sparks

The traditional motif of lightening is the stimulator of nostalgia here but the contribution of this verse to it is the universality which the poet gives by saying that each one from *Hijāz* is commanded by the lightening.

Another A 'rābī says: (ṭawīl)<sup>96</sup>

إذا ما جرَّت □ عدَّ العشيَّ جنوبٌ  
له □ ينَّ يبدو في السماء نسيبٌ  
إليه كأني للغريب قَريبٌ

وإني ليحبييني الصَّبَا ويُميئني  
وأرتاحُ للبرقِ اليمَانِ كأنني  
وأرتاحُ أن ألقى غريبًا صَبَاةً

The wind of *Ṣabā* would give me life or take it away  
When the south wind blows after the evening  
I feel comforted by the Yemeni lightening  
As if I am related to it when it appears in the sky  
I feel comfort too when I meet a stranger  
Out of fervent longing, as if I am a relative to him

In the above illustration, the activating factors are both the lightening and the wind of *Ṣabā*. The poet feels close to a stranger so much he is longing to Yemen and feeling estranged where he is. This recalls the poetic meaning which the pre-Islamic ash-Shanfarā expressed about feeling a certain familiarity with the beasts in the desert in the case of being oppressed by their tribe or excluded, in the famous *lāmiyya* (poem ending with letter *lām*).<sup>97</sup>

Another A 'rābī says: (ṭawīl)

فبشَّرتُ نفسي أن □ جدًّا أشيئها  
وآشَّرتُ نفسي أن □ جدًّا أقيئها  
إذا طاب □ من □ ريد العشيَّ نسيئها  
عياطلُ دنيا قد تولى نعيئها

رأيتُ بروقًا داعياتٍ إلى الهوى  
إذا ذُكرَ الأوطانُ عندي ذكرتهُ  
ألا □ بد □ جد □ ومجرى جنوبه  
أجدك لا يُنسبك □ جدًّا وأهله

I have seen lightning calling for desire  
So I rejoiced, telling myself that *Najd* is most deserving of desire  
If homelands are mentioned in front of me, I mention it  
And I rejoice telling myself that *Najd* is most fitting as a homeland  
Oh how lovely is *Najd* and its southern stream  
When its breeze feels pleasant in the chill of the evening  
I find that [nothing] can make you forget *Najd*

<sup>95</sup> Yāqūt 2/220.

<sup>96</sup> Yāqūt 5/263.

<sup>97</sup> Ash-Shanfarā: *Dīwān*, p. 58-73.



Not women with long necks in this life with a vanished grace

This piece brings together the lightening and the north wind this time, but the important aspect about it is the explicit statement of *Najd* as the homeland.

The following verses are also from an *A 'rābī* longing for *Hazwā* in *Najd*: (*tawīl*)<sup>98</sup>

بجمهور حُزوى حيث رَبَّتني أهلي  
ألاءٌ وأسباطاً وأرطى من الحبلِ  
وديكِ وصوت الرِّيحِ في سَعفِ النَّخلِ

ألا ليت شعري هل أبيننَّ ليلةً  
وصوتُ شمالي زَعزَعْتُ بعد هَجَعَةٍ  
أحبُّ إلينا من صياح دجاجةٍ

I wish I knew, would I spend one more night

In the vast sand of *Huzwā* where my family raised me  
The sound of the south wind agitating, after a short sleep,  
The *Ālā*, *Asbāt* and *Artā* trees in the extended sands  
[All this] is more dear to us than the cry of a chicken  
and a rooster, and the sound of the wind in the palm leaves

This appears to be an intertextuality/*taḍmīn* of the famous refrain (أحبب إلي من) constituting a fixed second hemistich of the poem attributed to Maysūn al-Kalbiyya, the wife of Mu'āwiya, which she addressed to her husband as she left a desert to live in his castle. The opening goes: (*wāfir*)<sup>99</sup>

أحبُّ إلي من قصرٍ منيفٍ  
ليبتُ تخفُّقُ الأرواحِ فيه

Yea, a tent that the winds whip buffeting through  
Far more would I love than a place on high

Another clear example is *Asmā'* al-Mariyya, the lover of the famous poet 'Amir b. aṭ-Ṭufayl who expresses in her verses her longing for her home and her suffering from being away from her people. *Asmā'* addresses the mountains of the valley '*Uray'ira* which are standing between her and her tribe. She asks them to make some space for the northern wind to reach her, maybe it can help healing her sufferance. She tells them to carry a message to the travelling tribe that there is a stranger woman —referring to herself— in *al-Righām* who is missing them: (*tawīl*)

نأثُ عن نوى قومي وحقَّ قَدومُها  
يُداوي فؤادي من جواه نسيُمُها  
وعيناً طويلاً بالدموع سَجومُها  
إلى البيتِ ترجو أن تَحطَّ جُرمُها  
مُولهُةً تُكلى طويلاً نئيُمُها

ألا يا جبلي وادي عُريعة التي  
ألا خَلِيَا مَجري الجنوبِ لعلهُ  
وكيف تُداوي الرِّيحُ شوقاً مُماطلاً  
وقولا لركبانِ تَمِيمِيَّةٍ غدتْ  
بأنْ بأكنافِ الرِّغامِ غُريبةً

Oh mountains of the valley of '*Uray'ira*

<sup>98</sup> Yāqūt 2/256.

<sup>99</sup> See a more elaborate discussion of this poem in chapter 4. The translation is by Zwettler, Michael: Desert yearning or partisan polemic?: on the lines ascribed to Maysun, wife of Mu'awiya. *Asiatische Studien: Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft*. 47 (1993), p. 300-301.

Which has become far away from my people and earned its return  
Keep the stream of the south wind, perhaps  
its breeze cures the passion of my heart  
How would the wind cure a lingering longing  
And an eye with flowing tears  
Tell the riders from Tamīm who are heading home  
Hoping to rest their bodies  
That in the flanks of the sands, a stranger woman  
Confounded and bereft of her child with an extensive moaning

These verses show that the poetess is geographically far from her tribe. She is in a place where she feels a stranger. In fact, she uses explicitly the term “*gharība*” (stranger) to identify herself. The nostalgic moment appears when she asks the mountains to allow some wind coming from the direction of her home to heal this state of estrangement she is in. The motif of wind is a common element used by poets in the context of expressing nostalgia. It holds a symbolic value in representing home and is at the same time a means to feel this home when they are far away. Poets were mentioning specific elements from the desert and expressing their nostalgia towards them, without necessarily naming home as such. These elements, like the wind, trees, or stars which could be seen from a specific place, summarize the idea of home for them.

Asmā’ brings up the motif of the wind at the beginning of this quotation then she describes her estrangement. Although, chronologically, the feeling of being a stranger is a cause and the nostalgia is a response to it, one can clearly see here that the order is reversed. This might be explained by the process of remembrance which most of the times in the context of estrangement and nostalgia is triggered by one of these elements mentioned above and thus functions as a stimulus or an activating factor as seen in the *aṭlāl* episode above. Moreover, the explicit statement on the condition of estrangement is not always forehand. One has mostly to deduce it from other motifs. In the present example, the poetess concluded by openly classifying herself as stranger. This can be seen as a culmination of her state, perhaps as a final confession.

“As a strictly literary phenomenon, however, *Najd* enters its mytho-poetic stage rather suddenly during the Umayyad period. What takes place at that point is *Najd*’s explicit idealization not as a region but as a state of mind—all this accompanying, it is important to note, the birth of the idea of an Arab-Islamic dynastic state, which under the Umayyads still defines itself by its peninsular autochthony. An ideological paradox during this period is nevertheless provided by the fact that *Najd* as the old hub of Arab

identity and legitimization, together with its adjacent ideologically no less important region, the Ḥijāz, had to yield before the “outlying” Damascus, which had assumed its position as the hub of the newly emerged imperial authority. A state of tension between periphery claiming centrality and centrality reduced to periphery is the result of this displacement of positions and inversion of roles. In the realm of archetypal yearning, however, *Najd* withstood not only the primacy of Damascus but also that of Baghdad, and even the ultimate centrifugality of al-Andalus.’’<sup>100</sup>

This was the result of the chief venture of the conquests spreading in the early Islamic period and especially during the Umayyad rule which also had an influence on the development of the motif of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*.

## 2.4 Conquests: geographical delocalization by land and sea

The period of the conquests stretches over a large period of time, if we want to consider the first instances of mobilization for this purpose with the Prophet Muḥammad. Around these conquests, and especially among the poets participating in them, grew the expression on estrangement and nostalgia and branched out into sub-motifs related to the specific newly established locations of *thughūr* (frontiers), *ajnād* and *amṣār* (settlements). It is at that time that the earliest poetry on *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* in this context has been reported by the companion of the Prophet Bilāl b. Rabāḥ.<sup>101</sup> This movement is an entire transposition of the individuals in a new environment calling for the necessity to adapt to it. The expression of estrangement of nostalgia in this case, ranges from facing unfamiliar obstacles all through the failure to realize this adaptation. The way of externalizing these attitudes vis-à-vis the new acquired environment versus the old familiar ones takes also different turns and tones: from sarcasm, to discontent, sadness, lamentation and others.

The bulk of this material is to be found in the geographical catalogue of Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu‘jam al-buldān*,<sup>102</sup> and has been cited in the studies which dealt with either estrangement and nostalgia or the poetry of conquests.<sup>103</sup> In the present study however, this material is not considered as one entity, instead it will be dealt with in the respective

---

<sup>100</sup> Stetkevych, p.121-122.

<sup>101</sup> See section 1.5 “Cities” below.

<sup>102</sup> A study relying especially on this collection was conducted by Al-Nu‘mān ‘Abd al-Muta‘ālī al-Qāḍī in his *Shi‘r al-futūḥ al-islāmiyya fī ṣadr al-Islām*, Cairo, 1385/1965.

<sup>103</sup> Agha and Khalidi, Arazi, al-Qāḍī.

dimensions of *ghurba* and *hanīn* it refers to. In fact, all of these pieces are referring to a common context or situation but each one of them was concerned with a different aspect of it. The change of environment had a greater impact on the dislocated individuals, calling to mind the European context of *Heimweh* as disease. A soldier complaining to a dove which he thought is also a stranger like him in Marw al-Shāhijān says: (*tawīl*)<sup>104</sup>

أَقْمَرِيَّةُ الْوَادِي الَّتِي خَانَ الْفَهَا  
تَعَالَى أَطْلًا حُكَّ الْبُكَاءِ فَإِنَّا  
مِنْ الدَّهْرِ أَحْدَاثٌ أَتَتْ وَخُطُوبٌ  
كِلَانَا بَمَرَوِ الشَّاهِجَانِ غَرِيبٌ

Oh turtledove of the valley, deceived  
in her fate by incidents and misfortunes  
Come let me weep with you, for we are both  
In *Marw al-Shahijān* strangers

We see here that the initial interlocutor, the she-camel is replaced with the dove, which becomes the double of the poet. He wants to share with it his tears for they are both assimilated in the state of being strangers.

Another poet is cursing the weather in *Marw* and pities the weather of Iraq in land and water: (*tawīl*)<sup>105</sup>

وَأَيُّ بَمَرَوِ الشَّاهِجَانِ تَنَكَّرَتْ  
أَسْفَى عَلَى بَرِّ الْعِرَاقِ وَبِحَرِّهِ  
أَضُّ تَتَابَعِ تَلْجُهَا الْمَدْوُ  
إِنَّ الْفَوَادَ بِشَجْوِهِ مَعْدُو

In *Marw al-Shah* I see a land in disguise  
With continuous sprinkled snow  
I regret the land of Iraq and its river  
The heart with its grief is excused

He criticizes the cold weather in *Marw* and looks surprised from the snow. The poet is referring to this environment because it is strange to him and unfriendly as it appears.

Although we find a positive description of the new places, it is still much less than the more spread negative impression.<sup>106</sup> As if the new is always less good than the old, which is familiar and expected and constitutes a comfort zone. This attitude will gradually change, when the conquests expand even more and the mobility becomes a more accepted practice in the life style. Later on, this estrangement with the acquired places will disappear and even when the individuals have to move to the bigger cities these *thughūr* and *amṣār* become like home, after being seen as complete strangers. “D’un autre côté, nous sommes en présence d’une nostalgie au deuxième degré; on ne

<sup>104</sup> Yāqūt 2/510.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid 2/510.

<sup>106</sup> al-Qāḍī, p. 259.

se souvient plus du désert; maintenant, le coeur n'arrive plus a oublier le misr, son second pays.<sup>107</sup>

On the other side, a poet who could not bear the extreme hot weather in the faraway lands from his home recalls the sweet chill of the wind in *Najd* and the coolness of its climate. He is also complaining about his estrangement among people who are neither from his nor from his tribe nor speak his language: (*tawīl*)<sup>108</sup>

أتبكي على نجدٍ وربّيا ولن ترى  
ولا مشرقاً ما عشتَ أقدارَ وجرةٍ  
ولا واجداً ريح الخزامي تسوقها  
بعينيك ربّيا ما حبيتَ ولا نجدا  
ولا واطناً من تُربهنّ ثرى جعدا  
رياح الصبا تعلو دكادك أو وهذا

Are you weeping over *Najd* and *Rayyā*, for you will not see  
With your eyes neither *Rayyā* nor *Najd* as long as you live  
You shall not overlook, as long as you live, the lands of *Wajra*  
And you shall not set foot on the soil of *Ja'dā*  
You shall not find the fragrance of Hyacinth driven  
By the wind of *Ṣabā* hovering above the hills and the low lands

Another poet describes the misfortune of being a soldier because of this state of estrangement: (*tawīl*)<sup>109</sup>

تبدلتُ من نجدٍ وممن يحلُّهُ  
وأصبحت في أرض الجنود وقد أرى  
محلّة جندي ما الأعراب والجنود  
زماني بأرضٍ لا يُقال لها بندُ

You have changed from *Najd* and those who are replaced  
by soldiers, how different are Bedouins and soldiers  
I became in the land of the soldiers, and I could see  
my time in a land that is not called a *band* (district)

The only resort for these displaced individuals is to look in the direction of *Najd* calling out for it and looking out for any possible signal from there. This look is in this case an activating factor for the nostalgic moment and from there starts the longing to a series of elements connected to *Najd*: the soil, the flora, the meteorological elements and even the tents as a symbol of the entire home longed for. The critical stage ends the process once again with the weeping as a way of compensation for the hopeless wish in seeing *Najd* again: (*tawīl*)<sup>110</sup>

أكرزُ طرفي نحو نجدٍ وإنني  
حنيناً إلى أرض كأنّ ثرابها  
بلادٌ كأنّ الأقبان بروضه  
أحنّ إلى أرض الحجاز وحاجتي  
وما نظري في نحو نجدٍ ينافع  
برغمي وإن لم يُدرك الطرف أنظر  
إذا أمطرت عودٌ ومسكٌ وعنبر  
ونور الأقاحي وشي برِدٍ مُجبر  
خيامِ نجدٍ دونها الطرف يقصر  
أجل لا ولكني إلى ذلك أنظر

<sup>107</sup> Arazi, p. 302.

<sup>108</sup> Yāqūt 4/906.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid 4/729.

<sup>110</sup> Yāqūt 5/262-263.

أفي كلِّ يومٍ نظرةٌ ثمَّ عبْرَةٌ  
متى يستريحُ القلبُ إما مجاوزٌ

لعيذكِ مَجْرَى مايبها يتحدَّرُ  
بحربٍ وإما نازحٌ يتدكَّرُ

I turn my sight towards *Najd* and I am  
Reluctantly looking [there] even if my sight does not reach  
Longing for a land that has a soil,  
when it rains, it smells like 'ūd, musk and amber  
A country where the daisies in its meadows  
and the daisy blossoms, are like ornaments of an embellished garment  
I yearn for the land of *Hijāz* and my need  
Is for tents in *Najd*, that my sight is falling short of  
My gaze towards *Najd* is of no use,  
Certainly not! Yet I look [there]  
Every day a look then a tear  
From your eye, dropping down along your face  
When would the heart rest, either by conducting  
A battle or as a displaced remembering

In the difficult unfamiliar conditions where these soldiers are living, they find themselves in need to resort to nature to communicate their pain and sadness.

Besides, the development of this genre of poetry has contributed to the gradual disappearance of the *atlāl* opening of poems. Since the main theme is entirely on the estrangement and nostalgia, there is no more need for such a preface. The following verses are another piece by someone who was part of the conquests, starting just like the traditional opening by calling out the two companions, however not to stop at the abodes but to share the longing to *Najd*: (*ṭawīl*)<sup>111</sup>

خليلي هل بالشَّامِ عينٌ حزينةٌ  
وهل بائعٌ نفساً بنفسٍ أو الأسي  
وأسلمتهاً الباكون إلا حمامةً  
□ جاوبها أخرى على خبْزِ رانَةٍ  
نظرتُ بعيني مؤنسين فلم أكد  
فكذبت نفسي ثم راجعت نظرة

□ بكي على نجدٍ لعلِّي أعينها  
إليها فأخلاها بذاك حنينها  
مُطَوِّقَةٌ قد بانَ عنها قريبها  
يكادُ يُدنيها من الأرض ليئها  
أرى من سهيل نظرة أستبينها  
فهيج لي شوقاً لنجد يقينها

Oh my two friends, is there a sad eye in *Shām*  
That is crying over *Najd*, I would then aid it in that  
Is there someone replacing a soul by another one, or sadness  
Got hold of it and let it to its yearning  
The weepers let it down, except a dove  
With a necklace that its mate abandoned  
Another one replying from a cane,  
So tender that it would reach the ground  
I looked with my familiar eyes but I hardly  
Saw a glimpse of [the constellation] of Suhayl that I would recognize  
I did not believe myself and took another look  
Its certitude aroused my longing

<sup>111</sup> Ibid 5/263; al-Qāḍī, 257-258.

Obviously, he has been relocated in *Shām* and he is longing to *Najd*. We find here all the factors of the nostalgic process which were also described in the *aṭlāl*.<sup>112</sup> Once again, the difference though is that, whereas the activating factor in the *aṭlāl* is present and concrete namely the ruins themselves as the poet stops by them, here the distance and separation from *Najd* is the stimulator. This is why we mentioned earlier that “nostalgia, and eventually estrangement, revealed in the *aṭlāl* is different from the one related to distance.”<sup>113</sup> The catalysts or the surrounding factors are otherwise the same. Here the dove and Canopus are present. The critical stage is the moment the poet thought he saw the star of *Suhayl* and then he looked again to make sure. This is where his yearning grew as it was confirmed to him that what he saw is real and that it is *Suhayl* indeed. *Suhayl*, just like *Ṣabā*, came to be a symbol of the desert of *Najd*, since it is a Yemenite star that appears in the northern part of the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>114</sup>

Another notable motif which emerged from the sphere of frontiers and settlements is the *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* from the sea. Like the other geographical components which were strange to the Arabs who expressed this attitude in their poetry, the sea and its related environment received no less attention in their verses. It is also important to note here that the environment of the sea, before the start of the conquests and the expansions of the Arabs, was considered stranger to Arabs. This is certainly understandable given the fact that their home was the desert, but the interesting point is the attitude towards the sea revealed in different sources from different branches of knowledge. The image of the sea as a stranger can thus be traced in Qur’an, *ḥadīth*, history, geography, poetry and modern studies were later concerned with studying the relationship of the Arabs with the sea through this image.<sup>115</sup> What this image conveys is an attitude of estrangement with the maritime environment as a place to perish, where feelings of fear, anxiety and insecurity reign.

In addition to the spread of the short pieces of poetry on *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*, longer poems with this motif as a major theme also developed. Yet, one can still not speak of a genre since the motif was elaborated within other already recognized genres such as

---

<sup>112</sup> See above.

<sup>113</sup> See above 1.2 on *aṭlāl*.

<sup>114</sup> When referring to this piece, Arazi labels it as “nostalgie pour la Syrie” but in fact the poet is in Sham [Syrie] and he is looking for someone weeping over Najd to share with him his yearning. See Arazi, p. 302 note 53. See also Agha and Khalidi for the adequate translation: p. 103.

<sup>115</sup> See for example the poem by an A‘rābī who was forced to ride the sea during the conquests: al-Ḥamwī 3/333.

*ghazal* (love poetry) and *rithā'* (elegy). In this respect, we will discuss the opening of a poem by Mālik b. al-Rayb (d. 56/676) which is a key-poem on *ghurba-ḥanīn* in the framework of *rithā'* where he appears to be mourning his own death. He says: (*tawīl*)<sup>116</sup>

<p>بَجَنْبِ الْغَضَا أُرِي الْقَلَاصِنَ النَّوَابِي          وَلَيْتَ الْغَضَا مَاشَى الرَّكَا لِيَالِيَا          مَزَارٌ وَلَكِنَّ الْغَضَا لَيْسَ دَانِيَا          وَأَصْبَحْتُ فِي بَيْتِ ابْنِ عَقْلَا غَازِيَا          أُرَانِي عَنِ أَرْضِ الْأَعَادِي قَاصِيَا</p>	<p>أَلَا لَيْتَ شِعْرِي هَلْ أَبَيَّنَّ لَيْلَةً          فَلَيْتَ الْغَضَا لَمْ يَفْطَعْ الرَّكْبُ عَرْضَهُ          لَقَدْ كَلَا فِي أَهْلِ الْغَضَا لَوْ دَنَا الْغَضَا          أَلَمْ تَرْنِي بَعَثْتُ الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَى          وَأَصْبَحْتُ فِي أَرْضِ الْأَعَادِي بَعْدَمَا</p>
--	--

I wish I knew, would I spend a night  
 By the *Ghadā* trees and drive the racing camels  
 I wish the caravans did not leave *Ghadā* behind  
 And I wish the *Ghadā* could walk side by side with the caravans at night  
 Had only the *Ghadā* been near, I would pay the people of *Ghadā*  
 A visit, but [alas!] the *Ghadā* would not come near  
 Haven't you seen how I picked right over wrong,  
 And I joined the conquering army of Ibn 'Affān  
 I turned out thus to be in the land of enemies  
 After I've been far away from it

This poem can be considered as one exemplary piece of *ghurba-ḥanīn* poetry.<sup>117</sup> Mālik opens his piece with the marking expression “*alā layta shi'rī hal abītanna laylatan*” (I wish I know will I ever spend a night), which is composed of two parts. The first part *alā layta shi'rī* is an expression of a wish (*tamannī*) to know something or know the feeling of something; the second part, (*hal abītanna*) is an interrogative form using the particle (*hal*) meaning again a wish to spend the night, where the meaning of the verb (*abīt*) is reinforced by using the grammatical form (*abītanna*). Whereas the first part is a common introduction to a wish in Arabic poetry, the combination with the second part to form the whole expression is particularly remarkable in a lot of poetry on estrangement and nostalgia. Poets and poetesses mainly long for being in a different place than the one they are currently at and resort to this opening line as ignition to list all the other elements in this place which they also long for. It is a cross-spatial and cross-temporal expression. It is loaded with wondering about and wishing at the same time, but it is an almost hopeless wish (suggested by the use of *layta*), to just know of the possibility of spending one night, or just one more night. The fact that the rest of the sentence that completes the meaning describing what kind of night it is, is in the second hemistich, leaves a brief lingering moment of an open-end to be filled with the imagination of the

<sup>116</sup> Qaysī, Nūrī Ḥammūdī: *Dīwān Mālik b. Al-Rayb ḥayātuhu wa shi'ruhu. Majallat Ma'had al-Makhḥūḥāt*, Vol. 15 part 1.

<sup>117</sup> Arazi, p. 301.



poet —or audience— and announcing the beginning of a memory. This first-hemistich is therefore a signal-pattern for the motif of nostalgia. Beside the content of this opening, the stylistic means used by Mālik, especially the repetition (*ghaḍā*, *rakb*, *a'ādī*), reinforce the lyrical nature of the poem and emphasize the nostalgic feeling.

This opening hemistich figures in many other pieces<sup>118</sup> and can be considered as a “formula” enunciating the motif of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*.<sup>119</sup> The expression does not necessarily occur in the opening of the section but could also, less frequently, be found in the middle<sup>120</sup> or exceptionally at the end like in the verses of Riyāḥ al-Asdī: (*ṭawīl*)<sup>121</sup>

تطاول بالفسطاط ليلي ولم يكن  
بحنو الغضا ليلي علي يطول  
ألا ليت شعري هل أبيتن ليلةً  
وليس ليرغوث علي سبيل

My night in *al-Fuṣṭāṭ* became long  
But I did not feel it as long in the bosom of *Ghaḍā*

....  
I wish I knew, would I only spend a night  
With the flea not finding my way

Actually this last piece stands out as it appears to be a parody of Mālik b. al-Rayb's famous opening section to his long elegy. The poet manipulates systematically the motif of *ghaḍā* and army which Mālik evokes to express his discontentment from the flea attacking him at night in *al-Fuṣṭāṭ*. Whereas Mālik's verses seem to express a deep emotional state of estrangement in the land of the enemies, and even a re-questioning of his conversion to the right Islamic path and joining the conquests (v.4-5), al-Asdī's version reduces the situation to a very trivial issue especially with the punch-line at the end.

In the same manner in which the motif of estrangement of nostalgia progressed from specific locations in the desert to the desert of *Najd* as archetype then to the frontiers and settlements, it has also developed to reach the *ḥawāḍir* or cities.

<sup>118</sup> These include verses from the following poets: Ma'n b. Zā'ida al-Shībānī in al-Iṣfahānī: *ad-Diyārāt*, p. 166; Al-Khaṭīm al-Muḥriz in Ibn Maymūn: *Muntahā aṭ-Ṭalab* 3/248-249; Qays b. al-Mulawwiḥ: *Dīwān*, p. 35; Ibn Mayyāda: *Dīwān*, p. 199-200; Abū Firās: *Dīwān*, p. 43; Ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī: *Dīwān*, 2/337.

<sup>119</sup> On the concept of formula in Arabic poetry see the definition and study of Bauer, Thomas: *Wie fängt man eine Qaside an? Formelhafte und nichtformelhafte Nasīb-Einleitungsverse. Zeitschrift für Arabische Linguistik*, No. 25 (1993), especially p. 51-52; Zwettler, p. 317 footnote 56.

<sup>120</sup> Jamīl, p. 65.

<sup>121</sup> Ibn Ḥamdūn: *at-Tadhkira al-ḥamdūniyya* 5/298.

## 2.5 Cities: the new identity

It is with the urbanization and growth of the cities that we see the openings of the poems also changing from the traditional *nasīb* to a “*nasīb* -like”, where also place-names are introduced. The difference is that the nostalgic feeling in these poems seems to aim at praise rather than to mourning.<sup>122</sup> This is for instance visible for such places as Baghdad, Qutrubbul and Karkh which appear in the poetry exactly where earlier location names were mentioned in the *nasīb*.<sup>123</sup> On the other hand, the mention of *Najd* continued, only further as a distant symbol, and as a signal of the *nasīb*.<sup>124</sup>

In light of urbanization and expansions grew also new centers of power and culture which gradually started taking the place of the traditional ones. This has been translated in the poetry as well and could be seen in the geographic lexicon that increased to incorporate new place names. These centers are major cities such as Mecca, Medina, Baghdād and Shām.

This fact has obviously affected the expression on estrangement and nostalgia in different ways. One is the emergence of locations that were listed in the poetry, especially replacing those appearing in the opening of the *qaṣīdas* but preserving the conventional style in which they are cited. This practice could be used in two ways: either to formulate the longing to a city or to describe the estrangement from one, in the manner of describing the *aṭlāl*.

‘Ubaydallah b. Qays al-Ruqiyāt (d. 85/704) who left Mecca, has a poem with a total of 38 verses that has a longer section on estrangement and nostalgia, where he uses a very similar formulation of designating the names of specific places just like Umru’ l-Qays in the opening of *Mu‘allaqa*. He says: (*khafīf*)<sup>125</sup>

طَةُ ذَاتُ الْقَرْيِ □ ذَاتُ الظَّلَالِ	أَقْفَرَتْ مِنْهُمُ الْقَرَادِيسُ فَالْغَوِ
نُ قَفَارٌ بِسَابِيسُ الْأَطْلَالِ	فَضْمُيْرٌ فَالْمَاطِرِ □ نَ فَحَوْرَا

*Devoid of them is al-Farādīs then al-Ghūṭa*

Where towns and sun shades

*Dumayr, Māṭirūn and Hawrān*

are [also] desolated with uninhabited encampments

<sup>122</sup> Stetkevych, p. 105.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid, p. 106.

<sup>125</sup> Ibn Qays ar-Ruqiyāt: *Dīwān*, p.114.

He resorts to the connector (*fa*) in enumerating all areas in Shām and expand on the emptiness of this place where he uses three equivalent words to emphasize it: *qifār*, *basābis*, *aṭlāl*.

The section preceding these two verses is the following:

قطنتُ مكةَ الحرامَ فشطّْتُ  
وعدتني نوائبُ الأغال

...  
واغترابي من عامر بن لؤي  
كلّ يومٍ ألقى ابنَ □ ابنةً لي  
□ وله قومُهُ وقومي بأرضِ □  
ببلادٍ كثيرةٍ الأقتال  
سَ عَن الشَّرِّ ما استطاعَ بالي  
□ رَمَ دونهم حنينُ الشمالِ

I inhabited the holy [city of] Mecca but it became far  
And I was inflicted by misfortunes of deeds  
My exile from ‘Amr b. Wā’il  
In lands of many similar [deeds]  
[Where] I encounter someone vile,  
Who would not evade doing evil  
His people are surrounding him and my people are in a land  
Holy but the nostalgic sound of the north wind separates us

The structure of the poem is also worth discussing: the poet does not start with an *aṭlāl* opening but instead with a wine verse. Then he proceeds to a usual *nasīb*, describing his beloved who used to live in Mecca and from there he starts the stimulation of nostalgia. The poet brings in the motif of old age through the description of grey hair<sup>126</sup> (a practice that evolved gradually within the theme of estrangement and nostalgia, and which al-Buḥturī used more than others) caused by the battles but also by his exile in foreign lands. The estrangement he is suffering from is due to his tribe being far away from him, and he uses the expression of *ḥanīn ash-shamāl* to show the distance that separates them from each others. This is a remarkable use of the word *ḥanīn*, playing both on the meaning of nostalgia and on the original meaning, the sound of the she-camel, but attributing it this time to the wind of the north. As if the wind is making this sound and carrying his longing to his people. This exile is also his weak point in comparison to his enemy who, unlike Ibn Qays al-Ruqiyāt, is present among his people. He describes then the void places in the absence of his hires that became ruins. It is only here where he mentions the *aṭlāl* in two meanings: the first one is *al-aṭlāl* as a descriptive term whereas the second one *aṭ-ṭulūl* is used as a referential notion of the poetic motif. This becomes

<sup>126</sup> See section 5.1 below.

clear since in the latter instance the poet combines the motif of tears, or in fact the absence of tears, to the abodes which don't answer him or dramatize his situation.<sup>127</sup>

Another remarkable feature of estrangement and nostalgia at this stage is the elaboration on the motif within longer poems. The motif appears to have besides a structural function where it takes over at times the *aṭlāl* opening and at other times it serves to dramatize the situation of the poet who is seeking to praise a patron.

Gradually, the themes of estrangement and nostalgia gave rise to the genre of city panegyrics.<sup>128</sup> The early beginnings of this genre can be traced in poetry of the Abbasid period. It also developed into entire works gathering poetry and prose that came to be known as the *faḍā'il* (merits or virtues).<sup>129</sup>

Mecca is obviously the first city that could have acquired the status of a prominent place after *Najd*. It is needless to re-tell the major importance of Mecca as a center in every aspect, in the pre-Islamic period as well as in the early Islamic one, since this is a well know premise in this field of studies.<sup>130</sup> But it would be useful to highlight the importance of Mecca in the framework of estrangement and nostalgia. Considering the exceptional pagan as well as religious history and position of Mecca, it cannot be treated like the other geographical locations. This can be seen as early as the several confrontations and wars that occurred between tribes in the pre-Islamic times as a result of fighting over gaining Mecca. The loss and expulsion of the one or other tribe resulted in expressing a form of estrangement away from the place. It has therefore, as expected, provoked certain nostalgia as well. In this context, a poet from the tribe of Jurhum comments on their defeat against Khuzā'a who sent them away from Mecca. 'Amr b. al-Ḥārith b. 'Amr b. Madād al-Aṣghar says: (*tawīl*)<sup>131</sup>

أنيسٌ ولم يسمُرْ بمكةَ □□رُ	كأن لم يكن بين الحجون إلى الصفا
صروف الليالي والجدود العوائِرُ	بلى نحن كنا أهلها فأبادنا
بها الجوغ بادٍ والعدوُ المحاصِرُ	وأبدلنا ربي بها دارَ غربةٍ

<sup>127</sup> See further examples: al-Ḥārith b. Khālid al-Makhzūmī (d. 85), 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'a (d. 93), al-Ṭirimmāḥ (d. 125), Umayya b. Abī 'Ā'idh al-'Umarī (d. 75).

<sup>128</sup> See: *EI3*, "City panegyric in classical Arabic".

<sup>129</sup> Grunebaum, Gustave E.: *Zum Lob der Stadt in der arabischen Prosa. Kritik und Dichtkunst. Studien zur arabischen Literaturgeschichte*. Wiesbaden 1955, 80-6; Antrim, Zayde: *Routes and Realms. The Power of Place in the Early Islamic World*. Oxford University Press. 2016, p. 33-34; see also on the different categories of this genre: Enderwitz, *EI 3*, "faḍā'il".

<sup>130</sup> For details on the centrality of Mecca, see for example: Crone, Patricia: *Meccan Trade and the Evolution of Islam*.

<sup>131</sup> al-Ḥamwī: *Mu'jam al-Buldān, Makka*.

نظوف بباب البيت والخير ظاهرُ

وكننا ولاة البيت من بعد نابت

بها الذنب يعوي والعدو المكاثر

وبذلنا كعبُ بها دار غربة

As if there was between *al-Hujūn* and *aṣ-Ṣafā*  
No friend and that no companion had spent entertaining nights in *Makka*  
Indeed! We were its people but were destroyed  
By the misfortunes and hardships  
God gave us instead a place of exile  
With hunger prevailing and the enemy besieging [us]  
We were the rulers of the house  
Going around the house in clear prosperity  
K'b [took it away] and gave us instead a place of exile  
Where the wolf howls and the enemy having more

The poet laments the good old days of his tribe and their legacy in Mecca. He appears to be in a state of surprise or rather disbelief of the situation. He starts by using the formulation: “as if there was no...” which denies all what he and his people were used to do when they still resided Mecca. He lists the specific places where they used to have presence and what they used to do there, but all this appears as if it never existed. To wake himself up from this disbelief he affirms using “*bala*”, confirming to himself in the first place and to the listener that they used to be the inhabitants of Mecca and its governors. He continues to alternate between their glorious past in the place versus the dreadful present in a tough unfamiliar place “*dār ghurba*” which he cites twice and concludes with shedding tears in what could be a sign of recognizing the harsh reality. Another marking event for Mecca is the communal migration which took place in the Islamic history, when the prophet Muhammad left Mecca and moved with his supporters and companions to Yathrib, which came to be know later as al-Madīna (the city), being the first urban city for Muslims.<sup>132</sup>

A narrative mentions that the Prophet Muhammad once heard one of the companions, Bilāl b. Rabāḥ reciting: (*tawīl*)<sup>133</sup>

بوادٍ وحَوْلِي إِذْخِرُ<sup>134</sup> وَجَلِيلُ<sup>135</sup>  
وَهَلْ يَبْدُونَ لِي شَامَةً وَطَفِيلُ<sup>137</sup>

أَلَا لَيْتَ شِعْرِي هَلْ أَبِينَنَّ لَيْلَةً  
وَهَلْ أَرْدَنُ يَوْمًا مِيَاهَ مَجَنَّةٍ<sup>136</sup>

<sup>132</sup> For an elaborate account of this event see:

<sup>133</sup> *Lisān l-‘Arab*, (*dhakhar*). The authentic version of this *ḥadīth* states that ‘Aisha is the one who heard Bilāl recite these verses and she informed the Prophet about it. See the full *ḥadīth* in: Bukhari: no. 5530 in *Bāb ‘iyādat an-nisā’ li-l-rijāl* (chapter on women visiting men when they are sick)

<sup>134</sup> *Lisān l-‘Arab*, (*dhakhar*).

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid*, (*jalal*).

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid*, (*jumun*).

I wish I knew would I spend one night  
 In a valley surrounded with *Idhkkhir* and *Jalīl*  
 Would I attain the waters of *Majanna*  
 And would the mountains of *Shāma* and *Ṭafīl* come into my sight

This is another instance of nostalgia to a geographical space, which can be considered home or the least, an old familiar place in contrast with a new one which is still strange.<sup>138</sup> The components of this space are: a valley (*wādin*) which is said to be the valley of Mecca,<sup>139</sup> the plants of *Idhkkhir* and *Jalīl*, the water of *Majanna*, and the two mountains of *Shāma* and *Ṭafīl*.

What is of further interest here is the comment on Bilāl's verses attributed to the Prophet in an interrogative form: "Are you longing, thou son of the black [woman]?" This is most probably a forged addition to the *ḥadīth* which appears only in some sources. Whether it is a comment from the Prophet or someone else, one author of these sources or one copyist, the mere fact of it being mentioned as such is quiet revealing. Using this expression which underlines the black skin color of Bilāl, puts him in a category of pre-Islamic poets know as "*aghribat al-'Arab*" which are those who have a black skin in reference to the color of the crow (*ghurāb*). The most famous were the *sa'ālīk* poets (brigand poets), but also the famous ones like 'Antara. But this label drawn upon Bilāl by the Prophet is a demarcation of his difference from others and sets him in a separate category which is 'other' or foreign to a 'rest'.

This demarcation is a dramatization of the first part of the sentence: the verb "*ḥananta*" (you longed/you are longing), which gives the complete sentence its meaning: "are you nostalgic?" The context of these verses is during the migration of the Prophet and his companions from Mecca to Medina and the fever which attacked some of them. Reasons of this fever are the new elements of the environment of Medina which the companions were not used to. Normally a fever can lead to a certain state of hallucination and the poetry verses here are a manifestation of its symptoms. This looks equivalent to the state

---

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, (*shayam*).

<sup>138</sup> See also: Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāya wa n-Nihāya* 3/221, the chapter on the fevers that inflicted the first immigrants entitled: فصل فيما أصاب المهاجرين من حمى المدينة where the *ḥadīth* is mentioned.

<sup>139</sup> In another version, it is *fakhkha*: *Lisān l-'Arab* 'Fakhkha'; al-Ḥamwī: *Mu'jam al-Buldān* 3:854, 618. Could also be *fajja*, *Lisān l-'Arab*, 'Jalal'; *Fajj* could be *Fajj ar-Rawḥā'*, a place between Mecca and Medina which was on the trajectory of the Prophet to Badr and Mecca in the conquest year and pilgrimage year; see: al-Ḥamwī: *Mu'jam al-Buldān* 3:851.

of the disease identified as nostalgia by the Swiss doctor.<sup>140</sup> In addition to these connotations, these two verses belong to the particular *ḥanīn* formulation identified above with Mālik ibn ar-Rayb, with the formulaic opening of “*alā layta shi‘rī*”. The present example sets clear that poetry of estrangement and nostalgia is deduced from certain motifs and is not explicitly stated. If not later on forged, perhaps it is these verses of Bilāl which were at the origin of spreading the use of this significant formulation for the poetry of estrangement and nostalgia. We notice again here that words such as “*ghurba*” and “*ḥanīn*” should not necessarily be explicitly stated. Furthermore, the magnitude of these verses, is that when reading them, at any time in history, it is this nostalgic mood, motif, theme or genre that is immediately communicated, and *ghurba* is also assumed as an “*a priori*-state” prevailing and stimulating the feelings of *ḥanīn*.

To conclude on Mecca, we cite a particular evidence of estrangement and nostalgia by Abu Qatīfa (d.70/689), who was sent to exile by ‘Abdallah b. az-Zubayr from Mecca to Shām, where he spent a long time and wrote the following longing verses to his place of origin: (*tawīl*)<sup>141</sup>

قِبَاءٌ وَهَلْ زَالَ الْعَقِيقُ وَحَاضِرُهُ أَرَاهُ طُغْرًا مِنْ قُرَيْشٍ تُبَاكِرُهُ وَمَحْضُ الْهَوَى مِثِّي وَلِلنَّاسِ سَائِرُهُ	أَلَا لَيْتَ شِعْرِي هَلْ تَغَيَّرَ بَعْدُنَا وَهَلْ بَرَحَتْ بَطْحَاءُ قَبْرِ مُحَمَّدٍ لَهُمْ مُنْتَهَى حُبِّي وَصَفْوُ مَوَاتِي
--	--

I wish I knew, had the mosque of *Qibā’*  
 Changed after we left, and did the carnelian disappear  
 Did the place of Muhammad’s grave remain  
 With the noble people of *Quraysh* visiting it  
 They have my utmost love and pure affection  
 My pure fondness and the rest of it for the people

They represent the religious implication of this place, but interesting too is the first hemistich, which is yet another formulation to be found with other poets, introducing a longing to what they left behind.<sup>142</sup>

Certain places of estrangement became eventually places of nostalgia. This is the case of Medina which was a destination of exile, as seen above in the central event of migration of the Prophet and his companions from Mecca. However, Medina turned to be later for

<sup>140</sup>Enderwitz, Susanne: Homesickness and love in Arabic poetry, p. 59-60. Review also the introduction.

<sup>141</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī: *al-Aghānī* 1/41.

<sup>142</sup> See for example: Ibn Mayyāda: *Dīwān*, p. 72; al-Farazdaq: *Dīwān*, p. 553; Kuthayyir ‘Azza: *Dīwān*, p. 153; Ibn ad-Dumayna: *Dīwān*, p. 60.

some poets a place of origin that they left and longed for. As al-Aḥwaṣ (d. 105/723), was in Shām and specifically in the city of ‘Ammān, he says: (*tawīl*)<sup>143</sup>

أقولُ بعمانٍ وهل طرّبي به  
أصاح ألم تحزنك ريحٌ مريضةٌ  
فإنّ غريبَ الدارِ ممّا يشوقُهُ  
إلى أهلِ سلْعٍ إنّ تنسوّفتُ نافعٌ  
ويرقُّ تلالاً بالعقّيقين لامعٌ  
نسيمُ الرّياحِ والبرقُ اللوامعُ

I say while in ‘Ammān, but does my crying for  
the people of the mountain *Sil* ‘ as I yearn, have any gain  
Oh friend, were you not pained by a strong wind  
And a glowing lightening striking in al-‘Aqīqayn  
Every stranger not in his land is moved  
By the breeze of the wind and the glowing lightening

The stimulators of this longing are the traditional breeze and lightning. Al-Aḥwaṣ mentions explicitly his feeling of being a stranger “*gharīb ad-dār*”. Again, these verses have the function of opening to a longer poem of 45 verses. It is a panegyric *qaṣīda*, where al-Aḥwaṣ praises Yazīd b. ‘Abdalmalik. The longing part actually runs further over the next verses describing the poet looking towards the place of the beloved and feeling the pain. Al-Aḥwaṣ however admits that he left his home seeking recompense and referring to his panegyric poem.

Another destination of departure from Medina was to Iraq and here too some poets expressed the feeling of estrangement in this place and longed for their original city. This is the case of the Abbasid poet Ibn al-Mawlā (d. 170/787) who goes as far as not considering Iraq a place of estrangement but rather of misguidance, establishing a contrast with the religious significance of Medina in his verses: (*kāmil*)<sup>144</sup>

ذهب الرجالُ فلا سُرّ رجالاً  
وأرى الإقامةَ بالعراقِ □ لال  
وطرّبتُ أن ذكّرَ المدينةَ ذاكرٌ  
وجعلتُ أنظرُ في السماءِ كأنّني  
أبكي بدمعٍ مُسبِلٍ إسبالاً  
أبغى بنا □يةَ السماءِ هلالاً  
يومَ الخميسِ فهاج لي بلبالاً

All men are gone and I do not see any  
I believe staying in Iraq is an error  
I cried as I heard someone mentioning Medina  
On Thursday, and I was tempted  
I started looking in the sky as if  
Searching for a crescent in it  
Yearning to the people of *Hijāz*, at times  
I cry with running tears

<sup>143</sup> al-Aḥwaṣ: *Dīwān*, p. 183-184; Jabbūrī, p. 93.

<sup>144</sup> Ibn Munqidh: *al-Manāzil wa-d-Diyār*, p. 244-245.



Two new centers, Sham and Baghdad, which once were places of estrangement during the Islamic conquests,<sup>145</sup> gradually converted into places of belonging, as these areas witnessed urbanization and especially after each one becoming the seat of governance, Shām for the Umayyads then Baghdad for the Abbasids. From there, the inhabitants travelled to other destinations of the Islamic empire and there were new accounts of their experiences. Shām appears in poetry to be an affected subject of *ghurba* and *hanīn*. Baghdād also became in the Abbasid period the model of the flourishing city. This is why we find it mentioned in a lot of poetry, especially in panegyrics and also being included, together with Damascus, as one of the major cities in the genre of *faḍā'il* (merits) literature, after Mecca and Jerusalem. The shift did not only occur from the old place of residence, or the Bedouin homes to the urban ones, but it was also visible among the urban cities themselves. Abū l-‘Alā’ al-Ma‘arrī referred frequently to the dislocation from Shām to Baghdad contrasting the two places, and continuously longing for his home *al-Ma‘arra*. The following verses are part of a longer poem on this subject: (*tawīl*)<sup>146</sup>

رَمَانِي إِلَيْهِ الدَّهْرُ مُنذُ لَيْلٍ      فَيَا بَرْقُ لَيْسَ الْكَرْخُ دَارِي وَإِنَّمَا  
تُغِيثُ بِهِ ظَمَانٌ لَيْسَ بِسَالٍ      فَهَلْ فِيكَ مِنْ مَاءِ الْمَعْرَةِ قَطْرَةٌ

Oh lightening, *Karkh* is not my home  
But fate has thrown me there nights ago  
Do you have a drop from *al-Ma‘arra*'s water  
To save a thirsty one who would not ask  
The lightening which is usually a stimulator of nostalgia appears here at a later stage where the poet uses it as an interlocutor sharing with it his estrangement and hoping it could help him to leave this place on a fast cloud. He is asking for rain to come after the lightening, perhaps it can ease his thirsty longing for his home.

Longing for Baghdad is to be found in the poetry of Ibn ar-Rūmī. He says: (*tawīl*)<sup>147</sup>

وما راقدٌ لم يرع نجمًا كساهدٍ      رقدتُ وما ليلٌ الغريب براقدٍ  
حنينٌ عميد القلب حزانٌ فاقدٍ      أحنُّ إلى بغدادٍ والبيدُ دونها  
وقلبي إليها بالهوى جدُّ فاقدٍ      وأتركها قصدًا لأمد طانعًا  
بها عودةٌ أم ليسَ دهرٌ يعاندُ      ألا هل لأيامٍ تعللتُ عيشها

I slept but the night of a stranger sees no sleep  
One who sleeps without seeing a star is not like he who doesn't sleep  
I long for *Baghdād*, and the deserts stand between us

<sup>145</sup> For an overview on the circumstances and details of the conquests in these two area, see: Donner, Fred: *The Early Islamic Conquests*. Princeton University Press. New Jersey. 1981, p. 91-220.

<sup>146</sup> Al-Ma‘arrī: *Ṣaqt az-Zand*, p. 247. See also: p. 232.

<sup>147</sup> Ibn ar-Rūmī: *Dīwān* 2/789

The longing of a passionate heart, in pain and helpless  
I willingly leave it to go to *Āmid* in compliance  
My heart strongly longing towards it  
Would the days I spent joyfully there  
return or are those times forever gone

The motif of estrangement in places and longing for others were incorporated further in the city lamentation genre. However, the geographical dimension of this motif is only one part of this experience that poets constantly either inaugurated their poems with or composed special poetry for. Love relationship and the role of the beloved are the other components that complement this experience. This is going to be discussed in the next chapter on the emotional dimension of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*.

### 3. Emotional dimension

The other aspect of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* to be discussed in this chapter is the emotional dimension. Both constituent subjects of this study, estrangement and nostalgia, are indeed emotions, but what is meant in this section is how these are reflected in another emotional context, namely the affectionate emotion of love.

Love, just like other emotions, is “unbounded, existing only through cultural meaning, culturally specific, and subject to transformation or disappearance through time.”<sup>148</sup> A short definition of the understanding of emotions in general, and love in particular, as it appears in some pre-modern Arabic literary works, particularly citing poetry which we are mainly concerned with here, seems relevant as an introduction to this dimension.

Researchers of emotions have been trying to evaluate the meanings and importance of emotions to different communities, and their forms of expression.<sup>149</sup> One major manner of expressing love in pre-modern Arabic history is poetry, and we shall see that estrangement and nostalgia are two dominant themes in the poetry on love. It is also important to underline here that the emotion of love is not in itself the issue of concern, but rather the way in which it is communicated, namely through the poetry and more specifically through the use of motifs.<sup>150</sup> Besides, when thinking of the function of poetry, we see that “Arabic poetry... is always a communication with the past”<sup>151</sup> through the many references to other past poetry and the intertextuality that can be spotted. In addition, certain themes are by themselves carriers of this function, such as nostalgia which is in its definition an emotion in communication with the past.

Emotions and feelings are also divided into positive and negative.<sup>152</sup> Regarding *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*, we can see from many anthologies that they were treated both positively and

---

<sup>148</sup> Tarlow, Sarah: *Emotions in Archeology*, p. 713.

<sup>149</sup> Rosenwein, Barbara: *Problems and methods in the history of emotions*, p. 11.

<sup>150</sup> Bauer, Thomas: *Communication and Emotion: The case of Ibn Nubātah’s Kindertotenlieder*. *Mamlūk Studies Review*. 7 (2003), p. 74-75; Rosenwein, p. 21.

<sup>151</sup> Bauer (2003), p. 52.

<sup>152</sup> In the Arabic literary tradition, feelings are included in general *adab* works, some of which belong to the category of books on merits and demises (*al-maḥāsin wa al-masāwi’*), sorting thus the feelings into negative and positive. Kathrin Müller studied nostalgia to the homeland in such works: *al-Ḥanīn ilā l-Awṭān in Early Adab Literature*.

negatively. This is particularly demonstrable in the genre of merits and demerits (*maḥāsin* and *masāwi*) in compendia works. In love poetry however, we shall see that the two themes are cited in the context of rather negative feelings, or that they function as a framework for a negative feeling, a suffering love in this case, and could serve herein as a catharsis.<sup>153</sup>

We see through the titles of chapters in literary anthologies that *ḥanīn* and *shawq*, which both mean longing,<sup>154</sup> are associated together most of the times. However, we notice that *ḥanīn* is mostly used when referring to longing to the homeland (*waṭan/lawṭān*) whereas *shawq* is more generic or when referring mostly to the affect of love. The commentator of *al-Ḥamāsa* makes a distinction by explaining *ḥanīn* in the context of love as being a suffering and painful *shawq*.<sup>155</sup>

We present here the example of two cases of anthologies referring specifically to *ḥanīn* that are worth careful attention. The first one is the poetry anthology *Kitāb az-Zahra* by the *ẓāhirī* jurist Ibn Dāwūd al-Iṣbahānī (d.294/909), considered for its first half to be an early code of courtly love<sup>156</sup>, where the author includes two chapters about *ḥanīn* not related to the homeland. The first one is number 27 entitled “he whose partner departed, his longing increased” (*man ghāba qarīnuh zāda ḥanīnuh*); the second is number 35 entitled “on the longing of the departing camel” (*fī ḥanīn al-ba’īr al-mufāriq*). Most of the verses that Ibn Dāwūd cites are anonymous. He lists 34 selections in chapter 27, many of which evoke the meaning of remembrance. In chapter 35, there are 25 selections, 4 of them are interesting pieces on the belief or superstition that camels are a source of separation between the beloved. Many of the other pieces represent an assimilation between the nostalgic state of the camel and the poet, what reminds the reader of the *aṭlāl* section discussed earlier.<sup>157</sup> One can recognize from the titles of the

---

<sup>153</sup> Bauer (2003), p. 86-87. Arazī remarks that when nostalgia was expressed in love poetry, it started having more of a sad and negative connotation: Arazī, p. 303.

<sup>154</sup> If we look under the entry *ḥ.n.n* in *Lisān al-‘Arab* we find stated at one point that it is “close” to *shawq*, whereas we don’t find a similar kind of reference to *ḥanīn* when we look under the entry *sh.w.q*. It is then obvious that *shawq* is the more general equivalent to the meaning of longing or missing and *ḥanīn* is only a specific type of this longing.

<sup>155</sup> *al-Ḥamāsa*, 2/1215.

<sup>156</sup> The anthology includes a hundred chapters, fifty of which are on different subjects related to love and the rest on different subjects: see the introduction of the author p. 40. See: Ibn Dāwūd, *EI2*; Mesisami, Julie Scott: Courtly Love. *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*. Ed. Meisami, Julie Scott and Strakey, Paul. Routledge. London and New York, 1998, 1/176-177.

<sup>157</sup> Cf. chapter 2.1.

chapters and the material included, that this work presents a manual for courtly love, eventually known as ‘*udhrī*, where the author mentions in his introduction that he listed chapters of *ghazal* for the benefit of the soul and more related to piety (*taqwā*).<sup>158</sup> This is probably what made Vadet say that “its greatest originality was to have attempted to define a code of courtly behaviour independent of both religion and mysticism”.<sup>159</sup>

In this regard, some aspects of ‘*udhrī* poetry characterized by “passionate desire for an unattainable beloved, chastity and faithfulness until death”, were shared by religious scholars who treated the topic of love. The Islamic jurist Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1350) for instance, has written a literary work where he “gives the Ḥanbalī doctrine of sacred and profane love its most eloquent and definite presentation”, and includes a chapter on *ḥanīn* as an integral cause and consequence of love.<sup>160</sup>

The second work is a later one, *Muḥāḍarāt al-Udabā’* by ar-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (d. 502/1109) which has one interesting chapter in the 12<sup>th</sup> section of the book “On *ghazal* and what’s related to it” entitled “on longing, nostalgia and emaciation” (*mimmā jā’a fī ash-shawq wa-l-ḥanīn wa-n-nuḥūl*). The author cites here verses from different poets, the three most referred to are the *ghazal* poets Dīk al-Jinn, al-Khubzaruzzī and al-‘Abbās b. al-Aḥnaf. The motifs found here are the common ones related to the sufferance suffering of the beloved, such as the lack of sleep, the pain of separation and the physical weakness as suggested in the title. As for the longing component, it is restricted in fact to very few verses on the motif of longing in the case of the lovers’ separation and their reunion. Therefore, the theme of nostalgia is used in a generic sense as equivalent of longing, but we cannot discern any differentiation between the two feelings or meanings.

As previously discussed, estrangement and nostalgia was a prevailing theme in the *nasīb*, through the *aṭlāl* motif and it gradually developed into a substitute to the traditional opening of the *qaṣīda* through other motifs. This is also true for the poems on love. In fact, the theme of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* contributed in the emergence of one of the two major *ghazal* genres, characterized by “a melancholic longing” and born in the

---

<sup>158</sup> Ibn Dāwūd: *Kitāb az-Zahra*. Ed. As-Sāmīrrā’ī, Ibrāhīm and al-Qaysī, Nūrī Ḥammūdī. 2 Vols. Maktabat al-Manār. Jordan. 1985, 1/482.

<sup>159</sup> Ibn Dāwūd, *EI2*.

<sup>160</sup> Ibn Qayyim: *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbīn*. Ed. ‘Azīr Shams, Muḥammad. Dār ‘Ālam al-Fawā’id. 2010, p. 64-65.

Bedouin milieu, which will eventually be known as ‘*udhrī ghazal*.<sup>161</sup> The common feature between this kind of love poetry and nostalgia is the pain and agony of the poetic voice. Even more, just as nostalgia was classified as a sickness or disease, the emotional condition of the most famous ‘*udhrī* poets was also seen as some kind of illness, a madness.

### 3.1 The beloved as homeland

Estrangement and nostalgia related to love is closely connected to the geographical dimension discussed in the previous chapter, both structurally and content-wise. From a structural point of view, this dimension is present on one hand through the motif of *nasīb*-opening in longer poems, where the motif of *aṭlāl* is also present. There is actually a superposition of these two motifs which is in many times revealed as overlapping, making of the geographical and emotional two interchangeable meanings. On the other hand, estrangement and nostalgia flourished further in the longer poems on love, *ghazal*.<sup>162</sup> The emotion of love is represented as home in poetry. It is the beloved who made the poet love certain locations she inhabits, while his homeland is somewhere else: (*tawīl*)<sup>163</sup>

وَأَنْتِ الَّتِي حَبَبْتِ شَغْبًا إِلَى بَدَا  
حَلَلْتِ بِهَذَا حَلَّةً ثُمَّ حَلَّةً

إِلَيَّ وَأَوْطَانِي بِلَادِ سَوَاهِمَا  
بِهَذَا فَطَابِ الْوَادِيَانِ كِلَاهِمَا

You are the one who made Shaghb to Bada close to my heart  
When my own homeland is another place  
You descended once in this place and once in the other  
Both valleys were thus delightful

The point of reference of the poet has shifted eventually from the geographical location to the person of the beloved. When he is away from the beloved, it means he is away from home and he is therefore a stranger: (*basīl*)<sup>164</sup>

<sup>161</sup> Bauer, Thomas and Neuwirth, Angelika: Introduction. *Ghazal as World Literature I. Transformation of a Literary Genre*. Ed. Bauer, Thomas and Neuwirth, Angelika. Orient-Institut Beirut. Beirut. 2005, p. 11, 13.

<sup>162</sup> See the discussion on the differentiation between the two terms and “genres” of *nasīb* and *ghazal* in Bauer, Thomas: *Liebe und Liebesdichtung in der arabischen Welt des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts. Eine literatur- und mentalitätsgeschichtliche Studie des arabischen Ġazal*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1998 (Diskurse der Arabistik Bd. 2), p. 185-197. See also: Bauer, Thomas: al-‘Abbās ibn al-Aḥnaf: ein literaturgeschichtlicher Sonderfall und seine Rezeption. Wien: *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*. Band 88, p. 65-107.

<sup>163</sup> Jamīl: *Dīwān*, p. 198.

<sup>164</sup> Jamīl: *Dīwān*, p. 123.

قد كنتُ عنكم بعيدَ الدَّارِ مُعْتَرِبًا

حَتَّى عَانِي لِجِنِيي مِنْكُمْ □ اع

I was far away from you in exile

Until a caller from your side called to my death

The lovers are furthermore portrayed in a state of unity in this feeling of estrangement.

Those who are separated from each others' life are strangers in this world. This is why love is similar to the home, a place or entity of belonging: (*tawīl*)<sup>165</sup>

أَلَا يَا عَيْلًا اللهُ قَوْمُوا لِتَسْمَعُوا  
وَفِي كُلِّ عَامٍ يَسْتَجِدَّانِ مَرَّةً  
يَعِيشَانِ فِي الدُّنْيَا غَرِيبَيْنِ أَيْنَمَا

خُصُومَةً مَعْشُوقَيْنِ يَخْتَصِمَانِ  
عِتَابًا وَهَجْرًا ثُمَّ يَصْطَلِحَانِ  
أَقَامًا وَفِي الْأَعْوَامِ يَلْتَقِيَانِ

Oh people, come and hear

The dispute of two lovers struggling

Every year, they would renew this once

Blame and separation then they reconcile

They live in this life as two strangers

Wherever they reside, and they meet once a year

The homeland acquires thus its importance and meaning only because the beloved is present there. In the verses of another poet who is far away from his home, he describes his state of estrangement in Rāmahurmuz but stresses that if he doesn't visit his beloved then there is no good in life: (*tawīl*)<sup>166</sup>

أَمْعْتَرِبًا أ □ بَحْثٌ فِي رَامَهْرَمَزِ  
إِذَا رَاحَ رَكْبٌ مُصْعَدُونَ فَقَلْبُهُ  
وَإِنَّ الْقَلْبَ الْفَرَّ □ مِنْ أَيْمَنِ الْجَمَى  
وَلَا خَيْرَ فِي الدُّنْيَا إِذَا لَمْ تَزُرْ بِهَا

أَلَا كُلُّ كَعْبِي هُنَاكَ غَرِيبٌ  
مَعَ الْمُصْعَدِينَ الرَّائِحِينَ □ نَيْبٌ  
إِلَيَّ، وَإِنْ لَمْ تَرَهُ، أَحَبِيبٌ  
حَبِيبًا وَلَمْ يَطْرُبْ إِلَيْكَ حَبِيبٌ

Have I become an exiled in Rāmahurmuz

Verily, every man from Ka'b is here a stranger

When the conveyance sets off, his heart

Goes along with the departing troop

The lonely well at the right side of the pastures

is a beloved even if I don't visit it

There is no good in life if you don't visit

A beloved and if no beloved longs for you

The first observation when looking at the evolution of the motifs of *ghurba* and *hanīn* is that they evolved with the evolution of the *ghazal* poetry. In fact, estrangement and nostalgia as emotions related to love, reached their culmination with the *ghazal* of the Umayyad period. As Jaroslav Stetkevych observed: "The revival of Bedouin lyricism which culminated in the passionate sentimental, and idealizing poetry known as 'Udhri,

<sup>165</sup> Ibid, p.203.

<sup>166</sup> al-Ḥamwī: *Mu jam al-Buldān* 3/17-18 "rāmahurmuz".

named after the tribe of the poet Jamīl, the beloved of Buthaynah.”<sup>167</sup> As for Arazi, he sees that nostalgia is integrated in love poetry only as an auxiliary element, as a conventional practice.<sup>168</sup>

Obviously the connection point of estrangement and nostalgia and ‘*udhrī*’ love poetry is the characteristic of the latter being an unattainable love depicted essentially by separation, sufferance and chastity. On one hand, we see that to express the feeling of longing, the poet uses mostly *hanīn*, since this is a longing where there is no hope of reunion, in contrast with the more promising *shawq*, as suggested earlier. On the other hand, estrangement is a feeling always haunting the ‘*udhrī*’ lover-poets and it acquires several sub-layers related to the beloved. This is especially true for the controversial but also symbolic character of Qays b. al-Mulawwah (d. ≈68/688), known as Majnūn Laylā or simply al-Majnūn, who used the motifs of *ghurba* and *hanīn* quite elaborately when speaking of his love to Laylā his beloved. He says: (*tawīl*)<sup>169</sup>

وَمُسْتَوْحِشٌ لَمْ يُمَسِّ فِي دَارِ غُرْبَةٍ      وَلَكِنْ مِّنْ يُّودُ غَرِيبٌ

Feeling estranged but without being in a foreign land  
Rather feeling a stranger to his beloved

Being a stranger becomes like an identity to those poets and a point of reference that others identify them with. Usually when one visits a place, he/she often becomes familiar to the people there, and feels this familiarity too. In the following verse, the contrast between *mushtahir* (famous) and *gharīb* (stranger) shows, on one side, that the poet became famous in this place that he likes to frequent because his beloved is there, but this love did not prevent him from being a stranger; he could have gained this fame in particular because he is a stranger-lover and not simply a lover. On the other side, although he is regarded as a stranger, and known for it, he still likes to visit the place of the beloved. Ibn ad-Dumayna says: (*tawīl*)<sup>170</sup>

أَحَبُّ هُبُوطِ الْوَادِيَيْنِ وَإِنِّي      لَمُسْتَهْرٌ بِالْوَادِيَيْنِ غَرِيبٌ

I like to rest in the two valleys  
As I am famous as a stranger there

<sup>167</sup> Stetkevych, p. 115.

<sup>168</sup> Arazi, p. 303-304.

<sup>169</sup> Qays: *Dīwān*, p. 46

<sup>170</sup> Qays: *Dīwān*, p. 45. Also attributed to Ibn ad-Dumayna in *al-Ḥamāsa*.



The state of estrangement for the *'udhrī* poet-lover is a perpetual one; we can even say an existential one. He constantly feels himself a stranger wherever he goes as he cannot find a person to share love with. In the following verses, Qays addresses a female character who appears to be an outsider to his neighborhood, a stranger, who came to settle there. He creates a sort of association with her through this situation of being strangers, and turns it into a common sphere where estrangement becomes a sort of a bond or even belonging: (*tawīl*)<sup>171</sup>

وكلُّ غريبٍ للغريبِ نَسِيبُ  
وليسَ له في العالمينِ حَبِيبُ

أجارتنا إنا غريبانِ هاهنا  
غريبٌ يُقاسي الذلَّ في كلِّ بلدةٍ

Oh neighbor, we are here two strangers  
And every stranger to his fellow stranger is related  
A stranger who endures humiliation in every town  
He has no beloved in the whole world

Unlike the state of estrangement presented in the geographical context, where the poet is separated from his homeland and expresses a nostalgia to that place, in the *'udhrī* love poetry of Qays the stranger is not the one who departed and left his homeland, but rather the one who was left behind after Laylā departed. The concept of belonging is turned then from the geographical place to the person, and once this person who is the beloved is not present anymore then the poet feels as stranger in the same place where he used to feel familiar: (*tawīl*)<sup>172</sup>

وَفِي الْجَبْرِ الْغَادِيْنَ □ ن بَطْنِ وَجْرَةَ  
فَلَا تَحْسَبِي أَنَّ الْغَرِيبَ الَّذِي نَأَى

عَزَالٌ عَضِيضُ الْمُقْلَتَيْنِ رَبِيبُ  
وَلَكِنْ □ ن تَنَأَيْنَ عَنْهُ غَرِيبُ

Among the departing neighbors of Wajra  
A well brought up gazelle with tender eyes  
Do not deem stranger he who moved away  
Stranger is rather the one you've moved away from

In the last verse, Qays speaks in general terms about anyone whom Laylā turns away from, making a universal state and a new definition or understanding of the concept of stranger. In the following example, he mentions more explicitly himself and the fact that he is a stranger in his own homeland, the land of his tribe *'Āmir*, since each man left behind is a stranger: (*tawīl*)<sup>173</sup>

أظَلُّ غَرِيبَ الدَّارِ فِي أَرْضِ عَمْرِ  
أَلَا كُلُّ □ هَجُورٍ هُنَاكَ غَرِيبُ

I remain a stranger in the land of *'Āmir*

<sup>171</sup> Ibid, p. 50.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid, p. 51.

<sup>173</sup> Qays: *Dīwān*, p. 44

Every abandoned man is a stranger there

To express the emotional estrangement apart from the beloved, the poet portrays how this feeling reached a deep layer within his self, making his heart stranger to the rest of his body: (*wāfir*)<sup>174</sup>

فُوَادِي بَيْنَ أَضْلَاعِي غَرِيبٌ  
أَحَاطَ بِهِ الْبَلَاءُ فَكُلَّ يَوْمٍ  
يُنَادِي مَنْ يَحِبُّ فَلَا بُجِيبُ  
تُقَارِعُهُ الصَّبَابَةُ وَالتَّحِيْبُ

My heart is a stranger in my chest  
It is calling its beloved with no answer  
It is bounded by distress, as each day  
Fervent longing and sobbing attack it

At one particular instance, Qays uses “*ightirāb*” to describe Laylā’s state, in the sense of her departure.<sup>175</sup> Here, he is putting himself in a unique state where he is the only one afflicted by Laylā’s departure: (*tawīl*)<sup>176</sup>

فَأُفْسِمُ لَوْ أَنِّي أَرَى نَسَبًا لَهَا  
لَعَمْرُ أَبِي لَيْلَى لَيْنٌ هِيَ أَصْبَحَتْ  
دُبَابَ الْفَلَاحِ حَنْتٌ إِلَيَّ ذُبَابُهَا  
بُوَادِي الْفُرَى مَا ضَرَّ غَيْرِي اغْتِرَابُهَا

I swear, if I see a relative of hers  
The desert flies, they would long for me  
Upon the life of Laylā’s father! If she became  
In the Qurā valley, no one is afflicted by her departure but me

Also unique in these verses is the attribution of the longing to the flies, those related to his beloved, that are longing to the poet and not the other way around.

In another poem he says: (*tawīl*)<sup>177</sup>

أَحْبَابُ بَيْتِ اللَّهِ فِي أَيِّ هَوْدَجٍ  
أَبْقَى □ يَزُ الْحَدَبِ فِي أَرْضِ عَرَبِيَّةٍ  
وَمَغْتَرِبٍ بِالْمَرْجِ يَبْكِي بِشَجْوِهِ  
إِذَا مَا أَتَاهُ الرَّكْبُ مِنْ نَحْوِ أَرْضِهِ  
وَفِي أَيِّ خَدْرٍ مِنْ خُدُورِكُمْ قَلْبِي  
وَحَادِيكُمْ يَجِدُو بِقَلْبِي فِي الرَّكْبِ  
وَقَدْ غَابَ عَنْهُ الْمُسْعِدُونَ عَلَى الْحَبِّ  
تَنْفَسَ يَسْتَشْفِي بِرَأْسِ حَةِ الرَّكْبِ

Oh pilgrims to the house of God, in which howdah  
And in which tent of your tents is my heart  
Shall I stay a captive of love in a land where I am a stranger,  
While your camels’ driver steers my heart among the conveyance  
How many a stranger in the meadow weeping of grief,  
While those who would make him happy of love are absent  
When the caravans arrive from his land,  
He would breath to heal from their scent

<sup>174</sup> Ibid, p. 52.

<sup>175</sup> We go back here to the differentiation between “*ghurba*” and “*ightirāb*”. As mentioned before, the two terms have a similar meaning, but we see that at certain instances, like the one in this verse, *ightirāb* could only describe the physical state and not the emotional one, although this distinction cannot be generalized to all its occurrences in poetry. This is one of the reasons for opting to use “*ghurba*” in this study.

<sup>176</sup> Qays: *Dīwān*, p. 54-55.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid, p. 62.

Speaking of Laylā (*tawīl*)<sup>178</sup>

وَأَتِي إِذَا حَنَنْتُ إِلَى الْإِلْفِ إِلْفَهَا      هَهَا بِفُؤَادِي حَيْثُ حَنَنْتُ سُحُورُهَا  
If her heart longed for the beloved      Her charms flutter my affected heart

By describing some aspects of the life Qays was living away from Laylā, he transmits a deep sense of estrangement. In fact, he uses an archetypal image which the pre-Islamic *ṣu‘lūk* (brigand) poet ash-Shanfarā introduced in his *lāmiyyat al-‘Arab*.<sup>179</sup> While ash-Shanfarā was describing his fate after he had been exiled from his tribe, as is the fate of all brigand poets, we find Qays using the same image of living among the beasts who become his companions to express his exile from love. This is one of the examples that show interchangeability between the social and emotional situation. So far, we can see how some same poetic motifs and images of estrangement and nostalgia can have a geographical dimension or a sentimental one, and as we will see in the next chapter, a social dimension too.<sup>180</sup> The elements of this estrangement-environment consists of a waste desert where beasts are breeding, as a sign of the long time Qays has been spending among them: (*tawīl*)<sup>181</sup>

أَلَا أَيُّهَا الْقُصَاذُ نَحْوِي لَتَعْلَمُوا      أَلَمْ عَلِمُوا أَنَّ الْقَطَا قَدْ أَلْفَتْهُ  
وَعَيْشُكَ مَا لِي حَبْلَةٌ غَيْرَ أَنْتِي      وَأَنَّ وَحُوشَ الْبَرِّ يَا أَلْفُونَ بِي  
وَدُونَ مُقَامِي فِي الْفَلَاةِ وَوَحْدِي      بِحَالِي وَمَا أَصْبَحْتُ فِي الْقَفْرِ أَصْنَعُ  
وَأَنَّ وَحُوشَ الْقَفْرِ حَوْلِي      بَلْفُظِ الْحَصَا وَالْخَطِّ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَوْلَعُ  
ذِكُورٌ إِنْأْتُ نَمَّ      وَعَشْقِي لِلَيْلَى لِلْهَمِيمِ جَمْعُ  
وَمَرْضَعُ

Oh you heading towards me to know  
How I've become and what I am doing in the desert  
Haven't you known that I became familiar with the sandgrouse  
And the desert beasts are grazing around me  
Upon your life! I can do nothing but  
To throw pebbles and inscribes in the sand avidly  
I keep company to the wild animals  
Males, females, unweaned and new born  
Beside my dwelling in the wilderness, my loneliness  
And my love to Laylā all my worries assemble

The original and primary motif of the she-camel within the theme of *hanān* acquires here a new framework, the emotion of love. Here too, it is an instigator, specifically its

<sup>178</sup> Ibid, p. 113.

<sup>179</sup> Cf. chapter 2.3.

<sup>180</sup> See chapter 3.

<sup>181</sup> Qays: *Dīwān*, p. 174.

sound, for the nostalgic feeling, this time as a longing to the neighbors, among whom is his beloved: (*tawīl*)<sup>182</sup>

وتفرّقا بعدَ الجميعِ بِغِبْطَةٍ  
لا بدَّ أن يتفرّقَ الجيرانُ  
حتى تَحَنُّ ويصبرُ الإنسانُ

They separated after reunion in joy  
Neighbors shall necessarily separate  
Camels that lost their young don't bare the separation  
Until they make the *hanīn* sound and humans shall bear

There is here another instance of juxtaposition and correspondence between the poet and his she-camel regarding their nostalgic feelings as seen earlier in chapter 2 within the geographical dimension of longing.<sup>183</sup> Yet, in the love context, the poet or human being in general is ordained to endure a longer pain, whereas the camel is relieved by expressing its pain through the *hanīn* sound.

All the spatial elements are now referring to the beloved instead of the homeland, including the fundamental motifs that have now a new dimension. The verses of a man from the tribe of Kulayb cited by Abū Tammām in his *Ḥamāsa* demonstrates the transmission of the camel figure from the geographic dimension to the beloved:

(*wāfir*)<sup>184</sup>

وَنَتْ نَاقَتِي طَرِبًا وَشَوْقًا  
إلى مَنْ بِالْحَنِينِ تُشَوِّقِينِي  
فإنِّي مثلُ ما تُجَدِّينَ وِـادي  
ولكنُ أصحَبْتُ عنهم قَروني

My she-camel uttered a yearning cry, by reason of lively emotion, and desire;  
whereupon I said, For whom, by the yearning cry, you render me desirous?  
My sufferance is, indeed, like your suffering,  
but my mind was led away from them

Here the words *ṭaraban* (affection) and *shawqan* (longing) are the two relevant meanings of *hanīn*. An interesting interplay between the poet and the camel can be seen here, where the camel is portrayed as the initiator of the nostalgic mood and tries further to transmit it to the poet. This interchangeability between the two characters is often used by poets, at times indirectly. We can compare here two examples to see this phenomenon.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid, p. 204.

<sup>183</sup> See chapter 2.1.

<sup>184</sup> Al-Marzūqī: *Sharḥ dīwān al-ḥamasa* 1/294-295; al-Khurshūm, p. 68.

### 3.2. *Najd* and *Ṣabā* again

Apart from the direct references to the state of estrangement and nostalgia in space, the homeland acquires a symbolic image when speaking of love. The main two motifs denoting it are once more *Najd* and *Ṣabā*. In this case, *Najd* is the archetype of the homeland, where the latter is not necessarily a place, but we see that with the *ghazal* poets, especially the *‘udhrī* poets, the place is only a symbol of the beloved. In the case of *ḥanīn*, it is a lost beloved that cannot be regained, in contrast with the emotion of *shawq*, where the object of longing is not completely lost but there is a hope of re-union. As Stetkevych explains

“The concentration of the idyllic-elegiac effusion in Arabic poetry on such regions, easily observable toward the end of the Umayyad period, may have had various causes”. There is an “air of melancholy and yearning for the idealized *Najd* among the poets of the *‘Udhrī* school”, as Taha Husayn observes. Those poets, who turned into Islamized Bedouin poets, had only been affected by the spiritual and idealistic aspect of the new faith but not the sedentary process that came along it, and “did not join the new civilization and its benefits”. Instead, they had a state of estrangement and “turned inward, complaining and idealizing, their complaint being aimed at the present conditions and their idealizing at the past, presumably before Islam, when life was better or when those new expectations did not exist. [...] The staunchly parochial Bedouin, in spite of his seasonal restlessness, had been only marginally aware of the world outside the region of his pendular nomadic movement. Within that region he knew every stretch of desert, every abandoned and possible campground, every marking of the trail. The region as a whole however he saw only from within. Only the inner discrete space had strong objective contours and imaginative validity. The whole was not yet visible, at least not from the outside, where it would offer a surface to the imagination and, as a rounded poetic entity with its own name, would conjure all the symbolic magic of possession. The Bedouin poet thus began possessing *Tihamah*, the *Hijaz*, and, above all, *Najd* when he stepped out of them; and when he had lost these regions in the dispersion of the empire, these places, these names, then possessed him. Such possession implied the awareness of loss through the great paradox of the nostalgic seizing of time-of time one once had and also of that much larger time to which one’s soul feels a compelling affinity, to which it must return because it itself is possessed. The end of the nostalgic process is always the return of all the waters to the sea.”<sup>185</sup>

Poets in this way were still trying to hold on to an identity they now became more aware of and more attached to, because they started feeling a sort of estrangement towards the new form of life that was taking shape at that time. “What is of specific importance to the proper grasping of the full poetic identity of *aṣ-ṣabā* is that, beginning with the Umayyad period, it will necessarily —explicitly or implicitly— be understood as having arisen in or come from *Najd*, as that region, too, acquires its full poetic identity only at that time.”<sup>186</sup> As Stetkevych rightly observes, *aṣ-ṣabā* also appears in the pre-Islamic

---

<sup>185</sup> Stetkevych: *The Zephyrs of Najd*, p. 115-116.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid*, p. 128.

poetry, as a harsh wind, reflecting the relentlessness of the time,<sup>187</sup> whereas later on, it acquired a more nostalgic and melancholic aspect in poetry.

One clear manifestation of this motif can be read in the verses of Qays b. al-Mulawwah, where in addition to the *ṣabā* other elements from the Najdi universe, like the north wind and the *ghaḍā* tree are loading the image with nostalgic environment, to conclude with the tragic reality of being a stranger in a bitter land away from the beloved. At the end of this typical imagery of the wind, as an instigator element, is coming from where his beloved is, provoking the emotions and aches in his heart, he says: (*tawīl*)<sup>188</sup>

وَحَسْبُ اللَّيَالِي أَنْ طَرَحْنَاكَ مَطْرَحًا      بَدَلًا قَلِيٍّ تُمْسِي وَأَنْتَ غَرِيبُهَا

It is enough that the nights have tossed you in a land

Where you remain in this place of abhorrence as a stranger

Many of the love verses evoking *Najd* and nostalgia are attributed to more than one of the *‘udhrī* poets, considering their similarity and the common motifs and images they share. This is an interesting fact reflecting the collective character of this poetry and the emotions behind it, so that at many times, it is irrelevant who the poet is who composed the verses. Actually, it is these common features, whether the instigator motifs or the poetic formulations or the recurrent meanings seen so far, that bring this poetry closer to being a genre. The following two verses attributed to both aṣ-Ṣimma al-Qushayrī (d. 95/714) and Majnūn, are an example to this, where a desperate longing to *Najd* and Laylā leave the poet hopelessly abandoned until the end of time: (*tawīl*)<sup>189</sup>

أَحْنُ إِلَى جَدِّ وَأَيُّ لَيَانِسُ      طَوَالَ اللَّيْلِ مِنْ جُوعٍ إِلَى جَدِّ  
فَبَاكَ لَا لَيْلَى وَلَا جَدِّ فَاَعْتَرَفْتُ      يَهْجُرُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَالْوَعْدِ

I long for Najd and I feel desperate

All night from returning to Najd

You are no Laylā and no Najd, I shall then admit

That this desertion shall remain until doomsday

A major longer poem (63 verses) has been also attributed, partially, to three poets, Majnūn, Yazīd b. al-Ṭathriyya and aṣ-Ṣimma.<sup>190</sup> The whole text of this poem is a longing of the poet to his hometown, his beloved and the times there. It represents in fact

<sup>187</sup> Ibid, p. 126.

<sup>188</sup> Qays: *Dīwān*, p. 57. As a major *‘udhrī* poet, Majnūn has many verses on the topics of Najd, where the place and beloved, Laylā, become one. See for example the verses under n. 93 in p. 89 and n. 96 in p. 92.

<sup>189</sup> aṣ-Ṣimma: *Dīwān*, p. 83.

<sup>190</sup> Abū Tammām opens the nasib chapter of his *Ḥamāsa* with some verses of this poem, in a slightly different version: *al-Ḥamāsa* 2/1215-1222. We refer here to the version by aṣ-Ṣimma.

a double-departure: one is the earlier departure of his beloved, Rayyā, and the other one is his own, yet to come, leaving Najd to join the army in Shām, as it seem.<sup>191</sup> Nostalgia is explicitly stated in several verses, each time initiating a new cycle of longing: (*tawīl*)

192

حننت إلى ريا وفسك باعد □ مزارك من ريا وشغباكما معا

...  
فَرَحْتُ ولو أسمعُ ما بي من الجوى  
ألا يا غرابي بينها لا ترفعا

You longed for Rayyā and you yourself are  
distant from Rayyā, while your people are together

...

I left, had I made heard the fervent love inside of me  
[Like] a chain of feeble camels making the sound of *hanīm* and longing  
Oh ravens of separation, don't be too proud  
And fly all in love and fall together

ولما رأيت النير أعرض دونا  
تلقُ حو الحي حتى وجدني  
وجالنت بنا الشوق يخنن أزععا  
وجعت من الإصغاء ليئا وأخذعا

When I saw the mountain of Nīr fades away  
And the pains of desire yearning in plea  
I turned to where the tribe is, until  
I had pain in my neck and vein so much I turned and looked

فما وجد غلوي الهوى حن واجتوى  
بوادي الشرى والغور ماء ومرتعا

The passion of the great love is yearning  
And would not settle in the flattened valley of Sharā

...  
ولا بكرة بكر رأ □ من حوارها  
إذا رجعت في آخر الليل حنة  
مجرأ حديثاً ومستبيناً ومصرعا  
لذكر حديث أبكت البزل أجمعا

Not a youthful camel that has seen its offspring  
Getting weak and suffering to death  
The camel would send deep in the night a moaning cry  
For the memory of its young, and all camels would cry

He also uses the same descriptive technique in other poems.<sup>193</sup>

Kuthayyir ‘Azza (d. 105/723) is another love poet among those attributed to their beloved, as his name reveals. Both estrangement and nostalgia are emotions explicitly present in his verses. Love and the memory of the beloved stand out as being a force-

<sup>191</sup> See the introduction of the *Dīwān*'s editor, p. 35-37. The poet also mentions his departure in another poem: aṣ-Ṣimma: *Dīwān*, p. 87, and see chapter 3.

<sup>192</sup> aṣ-Ṣimma: *Dīwān*, p 109, 111, 112, 113.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid, p. 69-70.

majeure for him: although the poet is located in the vicinage of his homeland, he lost his reason and became a stranger: (*tawīl*)<sup>194</sup>

وما زلتُ من ذكراكِ حتّى كأنّي  
وحتّى كأنّي من جوى الحبّ منكم  
أميمٌ بأكنافِ الديارِ سَلِيبٌ  
سَلِيبٌ بصحراءِ البُرَيْحِ غَرِيبٌ

I am still [attached] to your memory as if  
I am wounded and delirious in the land's sides  
My fervent love to you has made me like  
A divested stranger in the desert of Burayh

This state of estrangement is complemented constantly by an image expressing nostalgia. The narrative or cycle that one can construct from these recurrent images, is the departure of the beloved, the state of estrangement the poet feels himself in as a consequence, the moment of longing provoked by different elements, then pains of love that seem to be everlasting. Kuthayyir says: (*wāfir*)<sup>195</sup>

تحنُّ بها الدُّبُورُ إذا أربّتْ  
تعلّقُ ناشئاً من حبِّ سلمى  
كما حنّتْ مؤلّهةٌ عجولُ  
هوَى سكنَ الفؤادَ فما يزولُ

The west wind made a sound as it blew continuously  
Like the longing sound of the camel that lost her young  
A growing love for Salmā got captivated  
If settled in my heart and would not leave

Again, the poet affirms the correlation between the state of being a stranger in place and the state of being a stranger because he is away from his beloved: (*tawīl*)<sup>196</sup>

ألا تتقينَ اللهَ في حبِّ عاشقٍ  
غريبٌ مشوقٌ مولعٌ بذكركم  
له كيدٌ حرّى عليكِ تصدّعُ  
وكلُّ غريبِ الدارِ بالشوقِ مولعٌ

Would you not fear God with regard to a passionate lover,  
With a fervent heart breaking for you  
A longing stranger, madly fond of your memory  
For every stranger is madly longing

From the stylistic perspective, we notice that many Poetic images representing emotions of love are based on senses, so that estrangement and nostalgia often have a sound and an image. This is particularly due to the fact that the main component of this theme, the *hanīn*, is based on the sense of hearing. This interplay between the senses, mainly the audible and the visual, can be well seen in the verses of Qays, where the sight of his camels makes him feel nostalgic, and the *hanīn* of the camels makes him cry: (*wāfir*)<sup>197</sup>

أحنُّ إذا رأيتُ جمالَ قومي  
وأبكي إن سمعتُ لها حنيناً

<sup>194</sup> Kuthayyir, p. 165.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid, p. 118.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid, p. 409.

<sup>197</sup> Qays: *Dīwān*, p. 220.



□ إنْ خَلَّتْ الدِّيَارُ □ إنْ بَلِينَا  
□ تَحِيًّا □ يَرُؤُنْ □ يَغْتَدِينَا

سقى الغيثُ المَجِيدُ بلادَ قوِي  
على نجدٍ □ ساكنِ أرضِ نجدٍ

I yearn if I see my people's camels  
And I cry if I hear their *hanīn* sound  
May God water gloriously the lands of my people  
Even if homes are deserted and we depleted  
Upon Najd and the inhabitant of its land  
Salutations that go and come back

Apart from the traditional image of the camels' sound, he compares his longing to the sound of the instrument similar to a flute: (*tawīl*)<sup>198</sup>

بَلِيلِي كَمَا حَنَّ الْبِرَاغُ الْمُتَّقَبُّ

أَحْنُ إِلَى لَيْلَى □ إنْ شَطَّتْ النَّوَى

I long [painfully] for Layla if distance to her exceeded  
Just like the aching sound of the rohrflute

As discussed in the previous chapter, the episode of nostalgia is constituted of several stages, the first one being an activating factor. In the earlier geographic context, we have seen that the she-camel functions as the primary initiator of the nostalgic mood.<sup>199</sup> In the emotional context revolving about love, there are two elements that keep occurring as activating factors of the estrangement and nostalgia: the dove and the lightning. These two motifs have been recognized as major elements in love poetry of the Arabic poetic tradition.<sup>200</sup>

### 3.3 The lightning scene and the crying dove

Each of these motifs is constituted of a main element and associated with other auxiliary or complementing elements, or it is being emphasized by a specific feature, such as the color, location, the sound or the movement. Moreover, it is most of the times formulated in a similar expression, using the same verbs. In the case of the lightning, it is the flashing or sparkling in the sky. Al-Aḥwaṣ (d. 105/723) says: (*tawīl*)<sup>201</sup>

وَبِرْقٌ تَلَالَا بِالْعَقِيقِينَ لِأَعْ  
نَسِيمُ الرِّيحِ □ النُّرِّ □ قِ اللُّوَالِغِ

أَصَاحَ أَلَمْ تَحْزُنْكَ رِيحٌ □ رِيضَةٌ  
فَإِنَّ غَرِيبَ الدَّارِ □ مَا يَشِوْفُهُ

Oh my friend, did a soft wind not sadden you  
And a lightning shining in al-'Aqīqayn  
The stranger is provoked for longing  
By the breeze of winds and the shining lightning

<sup>198</sup> Ibid, p. 40

<sup>199</sup> Review chapter 2.1.

<sup>200</sup> See also the different interpretations of the lightning scene in the work of Hussein Ali: *The Lightning-Scene in Ancient Arabic Poetry: Function, Narration, and Idiosyncrasy in Pre-Islamic and Early Islamic Poetry*.

<sup>201</sup> c, p. 184.

The two main verbs used in reference to the effect of the lightning on the poet are (hāja) and (shāqa) both meaning to excite and arouse: (*tawīl*)<sup>202</sup>

أريد لكي يعودَ فلا يعودُ فأما غير ذلك فلا أريدُ	أرقتُ وهاجني البرق البعيد أريد لكي أزور بلاد ليلي
I became sleepless and the distant lightning awakened me I want it to return but it does not I want to visit the homeland of Laylā Other than that I want naught	

Jamīl Buthayna (d. 82/701) can only see the light caused by the lightning (*sanā*) and not the lightning itself as an expression of the separation. The lightning motif as a trigger for longing to the beloved seem not to have been much often composed in earlier Arabic poetry of the pre-Islamic period: (*tawīl*)<sup>203</sup>

سنّا بارقٍ من حو أرضك يلمحُ	وليلةً بتنا بالجنية هاجني
In the night we spent in the garden, I was incited By the sparkling flash of a lightning [coming] from your homeland	

Ibn Mayyāda (d. 149/766) mentions the lightning in several verses, creating metaphors that instigate the nostalgic feeling: (*tawīl*)<sup>204</sup>

بشهبِ الرّبي والليل قدّام هاجعه وأعجبني ايماضه وتابغه هجا أرت للحنين وأرازعه	أرقت لبرق لا يُقنر لامغه أرقت له من بعد ما أم صحتي يضيء صبيراً من سحا كآه
I became sleepless from a lightning that its sparkle would not lessen Amid the shooting stars in the hills at night when [everyone] is sleeping I became sleepless after my companions slept And I liked [the lightning's] glance and succession Illuminating heavy clouds, as if [the sound of] camels wailing of longing	

The other motif functioning as instigator element of estrangement and nostalgia mainly related to love is the dove. The dove in Arabic poetry is traditionally associated with sadness and complaint. This motif is present mostly in elegies but also in love poetry. The voice of the dove brings back to Ḥumayd b. Thawr al-Hilālī (d. ≈ 30/651) his love, its singing blows his lusts and tears, listening to it with his heart wounded as a result of the separation with his beloved: (*tawīl*)<sup>205</sup>

<sup>202</sup> Ibn Dāwūd: *Kitāb az-Zahra*, p. 314. Also on lightning: Yazīd b. Mufarrigh al-Ḥimyārī: *Dīwān*, p. 131

<sup>203</sup> Jamīl: *Dīwān*, p. 48.

<sup>204</sup> Ibn Mayyāda: *Dīwān*, p. 167. See also p 163. Also Yazīd b. Mufarrigh: *Dīwān*, p. 131.

<sup>205</sup> Ḥumayd b. Thawr: *Dīwān*, p. 24.

وما هاج هذا الشوق إلا حمامةً  
دَعَتْ ساقَ حِرٍّ تَرْحَهُ وتَرْتُمَا

Nothing provoked my longing except a dove  
Calling its male in a grieving chant

The feature element of the dove is its distinctive cooing, referred to as mourning. The associated elements are the bush, in particular the ghaf tree, where these dove live: (*tawīl*)<sup>206</sup>

وهاج لي الشوق القديم حمامةً  
على الأيك بين القرينتين تفجّع

A dove provoked my old longing  
Suffering on the ghaf between the two towns [of Ṭā'if and Mecca]

Poets address the dove at many times, in a sort of reproach and comparison between their states. (*tawīl*)<sup>207</sup>

وأرقتني بالحيّ نوح حمامةٍ  
ففتح ذو البتّ الغريب بنوح  
ألا يا حمام الأيك إلفك حاضرٌ  
وغصنك مياذ ففيما تنوح

The dove's cooing in the neighborhood kept me sleepless  
Then I wept, for a stranger in sorrow shall weep  
Oh ghaf dove, your beloved is here  
And your branch is swaying, why then are you weeping?

There is also a comparison between the modes of explicit expression of nostalgia of the dove and the implicit one of the poet: (*wāfir*)<sup>208</sup>

أراد الله مَحَلِّكَ في السّلامى  
إلى مَنْ بِالْحَنِينِ تَشْتَوِّقِينَا  
ولكّتي أسبرٌ وتُعلّنينَا  
وَأَسْنَبْتُ وَإِنْ حَنَنْتُ أَشَدَّ وَ□ دَا

God wanted to make your bones solid  
Against the one you are longing for with your *ḥanīn*  
You are not more in love, even if you yearn,  
The difference between is that I reveal it whereas you conceal  
For both the lightning and the dove, the verb “*hāj*” and “*arraqa*” that keep recurring, highlight the role of these two elements is initiating the feelings of estrangement and/or nostalgia: (*tawīl*)<sup>209</sup>

بِهَيْجٍ عَلَيَّ الشُّوقَ بَعْدَ انْدِمَالِهِ  
حَمَائِمٌ قَدْ مَالَتْ بِهِنَّ فُنُونُ  
فَأ□ بَحْتُ مِثْلَ الْوَالِيهِ النَّازِعِ الَّذِي  
له كَلِمَا مَدَّ الْخُدَاةُ حَنِينُ

My longing is provoked after recovery  
By doves swinging on the branches  
I became like the bewildered longing lover who  
Would make the *ḥanīn* sound every time the camel drivers stretch the rope

<sup>206</sup> Al-Aḥwaṣ: *Dīwān*, p. 171.

<sup>207</sup> Abū Dihbil al-Jumahlī: *Dīwān*, p. 76. See also: Jamīl: *Dīwān*, p. 102.

<sup>208</sup> Qays: *Dīwān*, p. 220

<sup>209</sup> Jamīl : *Dīwān*, p. 199.

The cooing of the dove is coupled with the *hanīn* of the camel to give a more intense meaning of the poet's love. In fact, to articulate his eternal love declaration in a persuasive manner, he resorts to these two images, proving once more that the camel and now the dove are epitomes of nostalgia: the poet will forever love his woman as long as the camel and dove are longing, which they will do forever: (*tawīl*)<sup>210</sup>

أُحِبُّكَ مَا حَنَّتْ بَغُورُ تِهَامَةَ  
وَمَا سَجَعَتْ مِنْ بَطْنِ وَادِ حَمَامَةَ

إِلَى الْبَوِّ مَفْلَاثُ الْبَتَّاجِ سَلُوبُ  
يُجَاوِبُهَا صَاثُ الْعَشِيِّ طَرُوبُ

I shall love you as long as, in the valley of Tihāma,  
The camel who lost its young, would yearn for its remains  
And as long as a dove would coo in the valley's heart,  
With the echo of the night answering it in merrily

Apart from these dominant motifs there are other ones that have less elaborate images in poetry in general, and have a different function within the episodes of estrangement and nostalgia.

### 3.4 Other motifs

#### 3.4 (a) *The Raven of Separation*

A very common element in *ghazal* poetry is the black raven of separation or *ghurāb al-bayn* which is a negative signal announcing the departure of the beloved, or just spreading a sad mood to intensify the sufferance of the poet. As such, it also serves as a motif within the scope of estrangement and nostalgia, in different ways. First, the raven is in general, and specifically in the Arabic culture, a symbol of pessimism,<sup>211</sup> and more so when associated with separation. Second, etymologically, *ghurāb* and *ghurba* come from the same root, it is even stated in lexicons that *ghurba* and *ightirāb* have been derived from *ghurāb*, making it the source of all the deception and misery. Third, the black raven appears in the scenes of nostalgia, as supporting instigator of *hanīn* to complete the nostalgic episode in love poems. We can also say that the raven is contrasted with the dove: the former represents *ghurba* and the latter *hanīn*, the one announces separation and the other suffers from it, and as previously said, estrangement engenders nostalgia. In the following verse, the main agent in this episode is the lightning, but not in its conventional visible image, rather in an imagined presence, amplifying the nostalgic atmosphere. The lightning is followed then by the wind

<sup>210</sup> Kuthayyir: *Dīwān*, p. 165.

<sup>211</sup> See: Ibn Manzūr: *Lisān al-ʿArab*, *gh.r.b*

blowing from the side of Shām, which is the same as the north cold wind,<sup>212</sup> and finally the raven of separation is introduced in the next verse to conclude the scene: (*tawīl*)<sup>213</sup>

على أنني بالبرق من حو أرضها  
إذ قصرت عنه العيون بصير  
إني إذا ما الريح يوماً تنسمت  
شامية عاد العظام فنور  
ألا يا غراب البين لؤئك شاجب  
أنت بر عاب الفراق جدير

Although the lightning from the direction of her land  
Is invisible to the eyes, I can still see it  
Whenever the wind brings a breeze from Shām,  
My bones become weak  
Oh raven o separation! Your complexion is pale  
Although you are fit for the anxieties of severance

In the previous example, it is the color of the bird that is underlined as a sign of misery, whereas in other places we find its sound as the marking element for sorrow, showing further the importance of the hearing as sense in creating emotions relevant to nostalgia: (*tawīl*)<sup>214</sup>

رَمَّ أجمالاً فارقَ جيرة  
صاح غراب البين أنت حزين  
كانك لم تسمع لم تر قبلها  
تفرق آلاف لهن حنين  
حنين إلى الأفهن قد بدا  
لهن من الشك الغداة يقين

If camels were set up with a bridle and the neighbors departed,  
The raven of separation would cry, then you are sad  
As if you haven't heard or seen before her  
The sound of longing of separated lovers  
A longing to their beloved, as if  
Their doubt in the early morning is a certitude

### 3.4 (b) The water-wheel:

A minor but unique image on *hanīn* of the lover is by Yazīd b. Mufarrigh al-Ḥimyarī (≈69/689), where the sad sound of the water-wheel, especially at night when it can be better heard, is the instigator of the lover's longing: (*khafīf*)<sup>215</sup>

إذا المُنْجَنوُ بالليل حنت  
حن قلب المتيم المحزن

If the sound of the water-wheel is to be heard at night  
Then the heart of the saddened infatuated lover is longing

He might be in this verse the first one to initiate an image and start a tradition of using the motif of the water-wheel in compositions about nostalgia which will expand in the

<sup>212</sup> Ibn Qutayba: *Kitāb al-Anwā'*, p. 163.

<sup>213</sup> Jamīl: *Dīwān*, p.94. Also attributed to Qays b. Dharrīh.

<sup>214</sup> Kuthayyir: *Dīwān*, p. 170.

<sup>215</sup> Yazīd b. Mufarrigh al-Ḥimyarī: *Dīwān*, p. 236.

poetry of later centuries. In fact, two verses are attributed to Majnūn where he doesn't state the water-wheel explicitly but makes a comparison and contrast between its *hanīn*, referring in this case to its movement that irrigates the land with water, and his own *hanīn* that causes his tears to burn his cheeks (*kāmīl*):<sup>216</sup>

وَأَنْ مِنْ وَجِدٍ إِلَى نَجْدٍ وَدَمُوعَ عَيْنِي أَفْرَحَتْ خَدِي	بَاتَتْ تَحَنُّنٌ وَمَا بَهَا وَجْدٌ فَدَمُوعَهَا تَسْقِي الرِّيَاضَ بِهَا
It started making the <i>hanīn</i> sound without passion And I long of passion to Najd It irrigates the fields with its tears And the tears of my eyes ulcerate my cheeks	

Another verse by as-Sariyy ar-Raffā' (d. 362/973) presents clearly the tight connection between *ghurba* and *hanīn* using this time the newly introduced motif of the water-wheel (*basīṭ*):<sup>217</sup>

مُخْضِرَّةٌ النُّبْطِ سَلَّوْا فَوْقَهَا الْقَضْبَا نَأَى فَحْنٌ إِلَى أَوْطَانِهِ طَرَبَا	وَمِنْ سَوَاقٍ عَلَى خَضْرَاءٍ تَحْسَبُهَا كَأَنَّ دَوْلَابَهَا إِذْ نَنْ مَغْتَرِبٌ
The rivulets on greenery, you would think Green carpets with constructed bars When its wheel makes the <i>hanīn</i> sound it is like an exiled Who went far away and longed for his homeland and wept	

For the *'udhrī* poet-lover the distinction between home and the beloved becomes insignificant, as these two are emotionally too interconnected to the extent that being a stranger in place necessarily means a longing to the beloved. The verses of Khuthayyir above express this.<sup>218</sup>

In this context, the role of poetry in the emotional state of estrangement and nostalgia of the poet appears to be significant. Jamīl remembers his beloved and addresses her with the following: (*tawīl*)<sup>219</sup>

وَلَوْلَا الْهَوَى مَا □□ نَّ لِلنِّبْنِ الْآفِ	لَعَمْرُكَ لَوْلَا الذِّكْرُ لَا نَقَطَعَ الْهَوَى
By your life! Had it not been for the memory, love would cease Had not been for love, the lover would not long for reunion	

Love is the source of longing, but this love would not last had it not been declared and the beloved referred to, meaning in his poetry verses.

<sup>216</sup> ash-Shimshāṭī: *al-anwār wa mahḥāin al-ash'ār* 2/3-4.

<sup>217</sup> As-Sariyy ar-Raffā': *Dīwān*, p. 58.

<sup>218</sup> Cf. p. 14.

<sup>219</sup> Jamīl: *Dīwān*, p. 128.

In the anthologies on *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*, or including chapters on them, there is often a categorization according to the reason of these feelings. For example, there are sections in these works on leaving home for financial reasons, or to look for better life opportunities, or for knowledge.<sup>220</sup> We can also add to these, as in the following verse, that leaving one's homeland and being a stranger somewhere else could be for the sake of the beloved. The beloved as a reason for exile: (*khafīf*)<sup>221</sup>

طال ليلي وبتّ كالمجنون	واعترتني الهموم بالماطرون
فَلْتَأْتِكَ اعْتَرِبْتُ فِي الشَّامِ حَتَّى	ظَنَّ أَهْلِي مُرَمِّمَاتِ الظُّنُونِ

My night prolonged and I became like a madman  
As concerns haunted me in al-Māṭirūn

...

For the sake o that [woman] I departed and became a stranger in Shām,  
Until my family surmised all sorts of speculations [about my fate]

As seen, the poetic theme of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* in the love context is not detached from the geographical one. The home and the beloved exchange at many instances their position and role in the poem when it comes to this theme. Estrangement and nostalgia moved gradually from being mainly present in the openings of the traditional *qaṣīda* in the motifs of *aḥlāl* and *nasīb*, to being more elaborately discussed in independent short and long poems of *ghazal*, of which estrangement and nostalgia occupy a great part. The symbolic interpretation of the geographical place as being the beloved, more specifically the lost beloved, has increased in later poetry of the Abbasid period. The most important illustration to this development can be found in the poetry of al-ʿAbbās b. al-Aḥnaf (d. 192/808). In her extensive study on *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* in his love poetry, Susanne Enderwitz well observes that he uses this “twin-motive” in many verses.<sup>222</sup>

<sup>220</sup> See for example: *Zuhr al-Ādāb, al-Maḥāsīn wa l-masāwiʿ*.

<sup>221</sup> Abū Dihbil: *Dīwān*, p. 68-69.

<sup>222</sup> Enderwitz, Susanne: Homesickness and love in Arabic poetry. *Myths, Historical Archetypes and Symbolic Figures in Arabic Literature. Towards a New Hermeneutic Approach*. Ed. Neuwirth, Angelika, et al. Beirut. 1999. = Beiruter Texte und Studien, Vol. 64, p. 66.

## 4. Social Dimension

The social estrangement and/or nostalgia do not presume necessarily a change in the location, but could be related to a geographical element. Instead, a certain alteration in the social conditions, environment or structure is characteristic of these feelings. To see the scope of each element in the social context, it is relevant to make here some distinction between nostalgia on one hand and estrangement on the other. As seen in the previous chapter, nostalgia is more connected to the psychological-emotional side,<sup>223</sup> whereas estrangement, though being a subjective feeling, is directly related to a socially characterized status of being a stranger.

The concept of *ghurba* or *ightirāb* is thus more present in the social dimension as *ḥanīn*. In the course of history, it took different turns, and the modern philosophical interest in the concept of alienation/exile or Fremdheit/Entfremdung could be compared to a moment of a much earlier interest in *ghurba* and *ightirāb*, within the Arabic/Islamic culture. But the main idea is that this ambiguous notion drove thinkers at particular moments in different cultural zones, to try and define and study it.<sup>224</sup> The Arab-Islamic discussion of the subject can be found in the various treatises mentioned earlier on *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*,<sup>225</sup> but also in later works especially those of Abū Ḥayyān at-Tawḥīdī (d. 414/1023) marked by a philosophical character, and more religious works like those of al-Ājurī (d. 360/971) to be treated in the next chapter

In the pre-modern Arab context, a look at the status of a stranger helps understand the literary expression of the social dimension of estrangement. In the body of literature of that period, including the Islamic religious sources, the main perception of a stranger is a rather subjective standing felt by an individual or a group.<sup>226</sup> In pre-Islamic poetry, the

---

<sup>223</sup> After being identified as a physiological disease, nostalgia or homesickness has been treated in the field of psychology. See for example: Illbruck, Helmut: *Nostalgia: origins and ends of an unenlightened disease*, 2012; Routledge Clay: *Nostalgia, a Psychological Resource*, 2016. Cf. Introduction.

<sup>224</sup> Of interest is also the ample field of studies on nostalgia as a modern social phenomenon, especially related to political manipulation and market consumerism, a line of interpretation that started with the philosophers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Europe (Hegel, Marx, Weber), but continues to gain large interest in post-modern studies. See the major work of Svetlana Boym, *Future of Nostalgia*.

<sup>225</sup> See Introduction 1.4 on “Anthologies”.

<sup>226</sup> Cf. Introduction. Both Rosenthal and Bauer reached this conclusion through a different set of sources. See: Bauer: *Fremdheit in der klassischen arabischen Kultur und Sprache*, p. 91; Rosenthal: *The stranger in medieval Islam*, p. 69; Rosenthal indicates instances where there is a linguistic designation of a place or a behaviour related to strangers such “*ma`wā al-gharīb*” or “*murfid al-ghurbā*”, but the definition of who is



term does not appear generally to designate the “other” but rather the self in an emotional state of estrangement, in particular a feeling of social estrangement often connected to instances of exclusion from a social circle, normally the tribe, and then reinforced by a longing to that original circle. This is mostly seen among the *ṣa‘ālīk* poets discussed below.

In the confrontation with foreign people or social groups we hardly find the perception of “strangeness”, but instead it is part of the perception of the own person. And in this context, strangeness is now the subject of a well-informed social and literary discourse and, of course, finds a distinct linguistic expression here.<sup>227</sup>

To be a stranger was among the members of pre-modern Islamic urban culture one of the emotionally most disturbing, traumatic experiences. Precisely because it was a very common experience in this very mobile society, it finds correspondingly strong mirroring in the literature.

In *adab* anthologies, *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* were associated with social activities, like travelling but also with matters of livelihood. Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr in his *Bahjat al-Majālis* has an interesting sequence of chapters: he starts with money, its pros and cons, then poverty and wealth, then loan, then “gentleness/graciousness and leanness, and then travel and exile, and diverting from places of degradation. After that, he would obviously include a chapter on departure and farewell. It is all a social context.

On a structural level, some scholars made the observation that the poetry that took rise during the conquests’ period, is characterized by absence of the *aṭlāl* opening in its traditional form, which was replaced instead by a nostalgic opening with a longing to the homeland.

---

the stranger in these cases remains a subjective matter. Bauer accurately excludes from this perspective the notion of *gharīb* in philology, Qur’ān and *Ḥadīth* fields of knowledge: p. 101-102. *Gharīb* in these cases is a term that refers to the words that are unfamiliar to the users, and it was used at first in the early Islamic times, to designate certain vocabulary of the Bedouins, foreign to the more sedentary Arabs and Muslims. In poetry, most literary critics use the term –also *wahshī*– to refer to the ambiguous vocabulary used by a poet but that does not belong to his time. Some critics included also the meaning of novelty or creativity without a value judgment, as Qudāma b. Ja‘far states: *Nadq ash-shi‘r*, p. 152. Also interesting is the term *gharīb*, *ghurabā*’ occurring quiet later in the Ottoman Empire, to designate “the two lowest of the six cavalry regiments” of the sultan’s servants. Those were recruited from different sources, among which “young Muslims from other Muslim lands who had come to fight the *ghazā* in the Ottoman army and distinguished themselves”, highlighting once again the subjective dimension of the status of a stranger. See: *EI2*, “ghurabā’”.

<sup>227</sup> Bauer: *Fremdheit in der klassischen arabischen Kultur und Sprache*, p. 86.

## 4.1 Outcasts' Poetry

The *ṣa'ālīk* are a group of poets commonly referred to as brigand-poets who were part of the social structure mainly in the pre-Islamic period, but who continued to exist in later times, namely during the Umayyad period.<sup>228</sup> Generally, they are characterized by being outcast and poor.<sup>229</sup> In some works treating *ghurba*, the *ṣa'ālīk* are referred to with regard to the term *aghriba* or *aghriba-t al-'Arab* as being synonymous to *ṣa'ālīk* poets. Through the etymological connection of this term with *ghurba*, there is an association inferred about the significance of estrangement to these poets. However, those *aghriba-t al-'Arab* constitute only one group of poets among others in the community of the *ṣa'ālīk*, those whose mothers were of black color. Nevertheless, the expression of *ghurba* in their poetry has to do with their social status and not this attribute, noting that there existed many sub-groups or similar ones to *ṣa'ālīk* and different titles for them. Another term used for *ṣa'ālīk* is *khula'ā'* (≈disowned/excluded) that may reflect better their social condition.

The literary expression of *ṣa'ālīk*, namely their poetry, presents a distinct category as to the meanings evoked and it is related to their condition as brigand poets, often expelled from their tribes due to crime leading to dishonor or choosing to dissociate themselves from their kinsmen for social or moral reasons.

The social isolation that was a reality imposed on them was always accompanied by a state of separation from that society, which made these poets as if they did not belong to his reality, the reality that he uttered, resulting from this state of non-affiliation. The brigand or outcast poet was alienated even from himself, and this type of alienation is a form of self-loss within society, loss of the human social essence, and crushing under the ideological weight that contradicts the reality of an individual, which is the physical presence of a person in his society but to be an excluded stranger.

The *ṣu'lūk* is a human model of self-estrangement, and this is evident through the traumatic poetic text, which shows the extent of the human suffering that he lived in. The poet's position on society is that of a sensitive person in the face of a whole system and community driving him to revolt and depart from it and prefer a wild life of solitude. Among meanings that are distinct to this group of poets are estrangement and nostalgia.

---

<sup>228</sup> See the discussion of their historical existence as well as the different terms related to this group by Arazi in: *EI2* "ṣu'lūk".

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*

The space has a great importance for them as it is used as a means of refuge from their rejection and at the same time for liberation from social constraints inflicted by the tribal norms. This is realized through their desert travels accounted for in their poetry. As Arazi accurately puts it: “[t]he desert takes on an ambivalent aspect. In the work of some poets, it is described as a dreadful place infested with injurious creatures [...]; others insist on the irresistible appeal of its vast spaces”.<sup>230</sup> *Ṣa‘ālīk* have chosen to live in freedom in the wide desert even if they had to suffer from poverty, a motif often mentioned in their poetry, and to survive by attacking other tribes or caravans instead of living in humiliation among their tribes. ‘Urwa b. al-Ward summarizes their philosophy of life if one might say, in the following verses: (*tawīl*)<sup>231</sup>

وسائلةً أين رحيل سائلٍ  
مذاهبه أن فجاج عريضةً  
ومن يسألني صعلوك أين مذاهبه  
إذا ن عن فعل أقاله

They ask me where the destination of your departure is  
But who would ask a *su‘lūk* about his intentions  
His aims are to the spacious tracks of the desert  
When his kinsmen hold back their deeds from him

These travels, actually being mostly escapes, constitute another bonding element to the communal identity to the brigand-poets, replacing and compensating the failed sense of belonging to the tribe. Mu‘āwiya b. ‘Ādiyā al-Fazārī says about this: (*tawīl*)<sup>232</sup>

ألم ترأي ولان يضن قد فت  
طريدن من حيين شتى أشدا  
بنا الأرو إلا أن أو فإفيا  
مخافتنا حتى خلنا تصافيا

Have you not seen that all land dried out for me and Ibn Abyad  
Until we betake the desert  
Two evicted from two different tribes, united  
By our fear, thus we became true friends

One dominant characteristic of this community is their feeling of being strangers among the rest of their society. They could belong to different tribes and come from different homelands, but they are bonded by this shared condition and, paradoxically, acquainted in estrangement: (*tawīl*)<sup>233</sup>

ولبي ولا عيسي في أر مذحج  
غريبان مجفوان أكثر همنا  
غريبان شتى دار مختلفان  
وبف مطايا كل مكان

The man of ‘Abs and I are in the land of Madhḥij  
Two strangers coming from many homes and different  
Two rough strangers, our worry

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> ‘Urwa: *Dīwān*, p. 48.

<sup>232</sup> Ṭarīfī, Muḥammad Nabīl: *Dīwān al-Luṣūṣ fī l-‘Aṣrayn al-Jāhīlī wa-l-Islāmī*. Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya. Beirut. 2004, 1/286.

<sup>233</sup> Tahmān al-Kilābī: *Dīwān*, p. 59.

is the trembling of our riding animal everywhere

Moreover, the pre-Islamic brigand-poet ash-Shanfarā in one of the most pre-eminent *qaṣīda* in the corpus of Arabic poetry, his *Lāmiyya*,<sup>234</sup> talks about the horrors he witnesses in the desert where he travels when abandoning his people. Yet, the expression of estrangement is not derived from the desert; on the contrary, it is the desert and specifically its inhabitants that became a familiar milieu when his own tribe has disappointed him: (*tawīl*)<sup>235</sup>

أَقِيمُوا بَنِي أُمِّي صُدُورَ مَطِيئِكُمْ      قَائِي إِلَى قَوْمِ سِوَاكُمْ لَأَمِيلُ  
...  
وَلِي دُونَكُمْ أَهْلُونَ سَبِيْدٌ عَمَلَسُ      وَأَرْقَطُ زُهْلُولٌ وَعَرْفَاءُ جِيَالُ  
هُمُ الْأَهْلُ لَا مُسْتَوْدِعَ السِّرِّ ذَانِعٌ      لَدَيْهِمْ وَلَا الْجَائِي بِمَا جَرَّ يُخْدَلُ

Get up the chests of your camels and leave, sons  
Of my mother, for I lean to a people other than you  
I have, in place of you, other kin: the wolf, unwearying runner,  
The sleek desert-leopard, the bristle-necked hyena  
These are my clan. They don't reveal a secret given in trust,  
And they don't abandon a man for his crimes

The opening is not a traditional one since the poet omits the *nasīb* and focuses instead on the idea of departure. He manipulates the traditional motif of “*rihla*”, or the desert journey: asking his tribe to prepare themselves for leaving because he is abandoning them for others. The reason for this is mentioned in the verses (2-3, 6) and is his deep sense that he is not appreciated among his people. It is a kind of self-alienation. The whole poem is in fact a response to this emotion of estrangement towards the social unit, an element of major importance for the pre-Islamic individuals and among them poets. The rest of the poem describes all the atrocities ash-Shanfarā suffers during his journey in the desert. As in the traditional journey of poets, he expresses his struggle and refuses to be defeated by the harsh conditions he is facing, which is a way of claiming victory over his condition. *Lāmiyyat al-'Arab*, is an enduring sample of estrangement and its negative effects. The poem ends with ash-Shanfarā picturing himself as a deer among female deer, a scene that can be understood as a longing for a return into his secure social sphere, it is a catharsis to the traumatic experience he went through.

<sup>234</sup> Cf. reference to the significance of his verses to the geographical dimension 2.3.

<sup>235</sup> Translation is by Sells, Micheal: Shanfara's lamiyya: a new version. *Al-'Arabiyya*. vol. 16. No. 1/2 (Spring & Autumn 1983), pp. 9-10.

Therefore, if the geographical space gained a symbolism of love in the emotional dimension of estrangement and nostalgia, the desert may be interpreted here in the social context of *ṣa‘ālīk* as a way for salvation and compensation for the loss of the community. Estrangement is at many times revealed indirectly, through this uncanny attitude towards the desert’s beasts that transform into familiar companions, compensating for the treachery of the poet’s kinsmen. The bitterness in the poetic voice is conveyed through the subtle insinuation to the moral behavior of the beasts and the poet on one side, in comparison to the deceitful acts of his blood relatives. In this regard, al-Uḥaymir as-Sa‘dī describes his journey with the wolf saying: (*tawīl*)<sup>236</sup>

أَرَانِي وَذُنْبَ الْقَفْرِ الْفَقِيرِ بَعْدَمَا  
تَأَلَّفَنِي لَمَّا آتَانَا وَالْفَتْنَةَ  
وَلَكِنِّي لَمْ يَأْتِمْنِي صَاحِبٌ  
بَدَأْنَا كِلَانَا بِشَمْنٍ وَيُدْعُرُ  
وَأَمَكْنِي لِلرَّمِي لَوْ كُنْتُ أَغْدُرُ  
فَقِيرَتَابِ بِي مَا لِي لَا يَتَغَيَّرُ

I see myself and the wolf in the desert two friends,  
After we have been repulsive and scared of each other at first  
He felt familiar towards me when it got closer, and I felt familiar too,  
I could shoot had I been traitorous  
But a friend who puts confidence in me  
Is never deceived, as long as he does not change [his behavior towards me]

Al-Qaṭṭāl al-Kilābī speaks for his part of the tiger that became his faithful friend like no other, although they are supposed to be enemies, competing for resources of survival in a place called ‘Amāya,<sup>237</sup> which he describes somewhere else as being the “mother of every fugitive”: (*tawīl*)<sup>238</sup>

جزى الله عنا والجزاء بكفه  
عمية خيرا لك كل طريد  
May God, whose sentence is but good, compensate  
‘Amāya for [protecting] me, for it is the guardian of every fugitive

The motif of beasts is recurrent in the poetry of *ṣa‘ālīk* especially that the term referring to it *waḥsh* (plural *wuḥūsh*) is derived from *waḥsha*, meaning what is unfamiliar and repulsive to human beings, hence another equivalent of *ghurba*. It also implies the feeling of loneliness, a typical motif present in the *ṣa‘ālīk*’s poetry expressing their state of rejection from their original tribal community. Ta’abbata Sharran is one the famous brigand poets who used this motif extensively, enumerating several types of beasts and

<sup>236</sup> Mallūhī, ‘Abdalmu‘īn al-: *Ash‘ār al-Luṣūṣ wa Akhbāruhum*. Dār Usāma, p. 107. The same meaning is also found in another image of his, p. 108.

<sup>237</sup> Al-Qaṭṭāl al-Kilābī: *Dīwān*, p 77-78.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid, p. 45. See more on the context of these verses under ‘Amāya in: al-Ḥamwī: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān* 4/152-153.

dangerous animals of the desert who became his companions when he could not feel part of the humans' society. He says speaking of himself: (*tawīl*)<sup>239</sup>

يببئ بمغنى الوحش حتى ألفتُهُ      ويصبح لا يحمي لها الدهر مرتعا

He lives in the beasts' habitation until they are acquainted to him  
so he no longer guards against them ever

Although Imru' al-Qays is not typically a *ṣu'lūk* but he was known as (*al-malik aḍ-ḍillīl*) or the wandering or errant King. He earned this sobriquet being a rebel against his social status, leading a lifestyle close to that of *ṣa'ālīk*. In different narratives of his biographies, it is said that being a king has expelled him because Imru' al-Qays liked to compose erotic poetry.<sup>240</sup> In his poetry, there are verses expressing a social aspect of estrangement and a longing to his abandoned home and community, in a sort of remorse. A famous account about him reports that he travelled to the emperor Justinian who promised to help him avenge his father who's been killed and restore his kingdom which he lost. But instead, he poisoned him after the poet tried to seduce his daughter.<sup>241</sup> In the poem he composed before he dies, he expresses meanings of estrangement, being alone in a foreign land and not having any support from his people: (*tawīl*)<sup>242</sup>

بأرض الرّوم لا نسب قريب      ولا شاف فيسند أو يعودا

In the land of Romans, no family member  
And no healer who would support or console

As a result of their particular social situation, the *ṣa'ālīk* poets lived as strangers first towards their tribes' members and traditions, and they experienced a life of fear, danger and alienation roaming the wasteland, at least as is reflected in their portrait drawn through the reports about them and the poetry that survived. Sometimes they cherished this independence they enjoyed, but other times they were nostalgic to their traditional and original communities.

Within the social framework, there are major factors and changes that influenced the expression of poets on estrangement and nostalgia, not exclusive to a specific group.

<sup>239</sup> Ta'abbata Sharran: *Dīwān*, p. 115. See also other verses with a similar meaning: p. 150, 156, 164. The motif is also found in verses of 'Ubayd b. Ayyūb al-'Anbarī in: Ṭarīfī: *Dīwān al-Luṣūṣ* 1/391; al-Uḥaymr as-Sa'dī in: Ṭarīfī: *Dīwān al-Luṣūṣ* 1/57, 58.

<sup>240</sup> Ibn Qutayba: *ash-Shi'r wa sh-Shu'arā'*, p. 107.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid, p. 108-109.

<sup>242</sup> Imru' al-Qays : *Dīwān*, 213-214.

## 4.2 On the threshold of the new world

Periods of transition are usually marked by a character of unsettlement. “The appearance of the Islamic state in western Arabia was an event unparalleled in the history of the peninsula, and it had unparalleled consequences. It was the integrative power of the new state, acting on the raw material of Arabian society, that unleashed the expansive military potential of the peninsula and generated the Islamic conquest—a phenomenon that transformed the face of the ancient world profoundly and irrevocably”.<sup>243</sup> In addition to the geographical bouleversement, the emergence of this new concept of state had several repercussions on the social interaction of people which challenged their long-established tribal system: “a relatively high degree of centralization, a concept of primacy of law or centralized higher authority in the settlements of disputes, and institutions to perform administrative functions for the state existing independent of particular incumbents”.<sup>244</sup>

On the literary level, this transformation finds also the way to be poetically thematized in various ways, one of which develops as a corpus that became now commonly known as *shi‘r l-futūḥ* (conquests’ poetry).<sup>245</sup> It was the period of the conquests that constituted the major vague of mobility for the Arabs.<sup>246</sup> This poetry is often interpreted based on the historical narratives, or studied as a witness for historical events, rarely for its artistic value. Moreover, its mostly studied feature is how the Islamic religion has influenced poetry and how much evidence of Islamic motifs is documented in this poetry.<sup>247</sup> However, in the present context, I try to look somehow to the opposite, namely how the socio-political dimension of estrangement towards the newly introduced culture left its trace and how nostalgia to the earlier and familiar system of living is depicted in some poetry of this period.

Beside the heroic poetry growing around these events and the poetry endorsing perceptions advocated in the discourse of the new religion, there is an attitude, often subtly conveyed, of a malaise regarding certain restrains or obligations now imposed.

---

<sup>243</sup> Donner, p. 55.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid, p. 54.

<sup>245</sup> See for example: al-Qādī, an-Nu‘mān: *Shi‘r l-Futūḥ l-Islīmiyya fī Ṣadr l-Islām*. Dār al-Manāra li-n-Nashr wa-t-Tawzī‘. 1998.

<sup>246</sup> Of course there were the early migration movements of the Arab tribes but we don’t find any relevant references to them in the poetry.

<sup>247</sup> Mourad, Suleiman: Poetry, History, and the Early Arab-Islamic Conquests of al-Shām (Greater Syria). *Poetry and History. The Value of Poetry in Reconstructing Arab History*. Ed. Ramzi Baalbaki, Saleh Agha and Tarif Khalidi. AUB Press. Beirut, p. 175.

One source for examining the effect of changes at the threshold of the new world is the literary articulation of the *mukhaḍramūn*, those poets who lived during the pre-Islamic period and witnessed the transition into the early Islamic period.<sup>248</sup> Although pre-modern as well as modern scholars share the common view of considering the poetry of the *mukhaḍramūn* a continuation of the *jāhili* practice, some critics pointed out more recently to the distinctions and innovations that those poets introduced, on both the thematic level and the stylistic one.<sup>249</sup> The changes may be partly seen as repercussions of changes on the socio-cultural level of the Arabs' life during that period. Of concern to us here is the relationship of these to the motifs of estrangement and nostalgia. Indeed, “[l]es Bédouins qui se sont sédentarisés à l'époque moderne n'arrive pas à oublier aisément leur ancien genre de vie, la nostalgie les consume”.<sup>250</sup> Those Bedouins were feeling an estrangement vis-à-vis the new Islamic culture and they expressed in poetry this feeling in addition to a nostalgia to their old life style, dominated by the values of the *jāhiliyya*.

Although the Islamic culture presented an alternative to the Bedouins' way of life and values as well as a new identity and belonging, it was not internalized fully by some. Since the *mukhaḍramūn* could mostly experience the weight of change, some poetic voices among them uttered a feeling of estrangement towards the new norms that the new religion introduced. Among these is Umayya b. al-Askar, himself a companion of the prophet Muḥammad, who had two sons and when he became old they left him to join the conquests: (*basīf*)<sup>251</sup>

ربُّ المنون وهذان الجديدان	يا أمَّ هيثم ماذا قلتُ أبلاني
قد كنتُ أهدي بها نفسي وصُحباني	لستُ أهدى بلادًا كنتُ أسكنُها
وما الغنى غير آتي مرعشُ فاني	يا ابني أمية إنني عنكما غانٍ
فإنَّ نايكما والتكل مَثَلان	يا ابني أمية إن لا تشهدا كِبَري

Oh Um Haytham! I said I am worn out  
From misfortune and those two new [young men]

...  
I don't recognize a homeland I used to live in  
There was a time when I guided myself and my companions there  
Oh sons of Umayya! I am in no need of you

<sup>248</sup> See the original meaning of the term and its designations in different contexts in: *EI2*, *mukhaḍram*.

<sup>249</sup> Jacobi, Renate: *Altarabische Dichtung. Grundriss der arabischen Philologie*, II. Ed. Gätje, Helmut. Wiesbaden. 1987, 28-31; Montgomery, James: *Sundry Observations on the Fate of Poetry in the Early Islamic Period. Tradition and Modernity in Arabic Language and Literature*. Ed. Smart, Jack. Routledge. London and New York. 1996, p. 49-60.

<sup>250</sup> Arazi, p. 300.

<sup>251</sup> al-Qālī: *Dhayl al-Amālī* 3/121.



Except that I am trembling and [soon] dead  
 Oh sons of Umayya! If you don't witness my aging  
 Your remoteness and mourning are the same [for me]

In these verses, he designates his sons as “new” to underline that he does not recognize them anymore, they've become different than how he used to know them and unfamiliar, strangers. His sons are now the reason for his suffering, beside bad fate, because they abandoned him to join the religious battles, the Jihād, as the narrative relates. Umayya is indirectly complaining and criticizing this new practice, and the doctrine behind it, that is depriving him of his sons while he is at the end of his life and in dire need of their presence near him. The consequences extend further to the point where the poet feels estrangement in his own homeland, as he can't find his way there without his sons, because of his age. In saying this, one feels the sense of nostalgia when he compares his weak situation today in need of guidance with the past as he was young guiding others.

We read a similar meaning in a poem that Abū Khirāsh al-Hudhalī composed about his son when he departed to join the army of conquests: (*wāfir*)<sup>252</sup>

وَقَدْ يَأْتِيكَ بِالنَّبَاِ الْبَعِيدُ	أَلَا مَنْ مَبْلُغٌ عَنِّي خِرَاشًا
مُهَاجِرٌ بَعْدَ هِجْرَتِهِ زَاهِدٌ	أَلَا فَاعْلَمْ خِرَاشُ بَأْسًا خَيْرَ الـ
كَمَخْصُوبِ اللَّبْلِ وَلَا يَصِيدُ	فَأَنْتَكَ وَابْتِغَاءَ الْبِرِّ بَعْدِي

Who would tell Khirash on my behalf  
 For the message would come from a distance

...  
 You shall know Khirash that the good  
 For the *muhājir* is very little after he leaves  
 If you seek then reverence after [I die]  
 You would come away empty-handed

In the first few verses of the poem, the poet reiterates a nostalgic call for his son to return to him, sending his slave after him but failing to find him. In one of the following verses, he uses the verb “*safiha*”, to be impudent, in describing his act of leaving him, as a sign of breaching social codes of behavior towards the blood-parents. In the last two verses cited here, Abū Khirāsh warns his son of the consequence of abandonment, using the term “*muhājir*” loaded with a religious connotation in reference to the Islamic concept of “*hijra*”, in a severe tone threatening him that if he as his father dies, he would not find reverence anymore.

<sup>252</sup> As-Sukkarī: *Sharḥ Ash‘ār al-Hudhaliyyīn* 3/1242-1243.

The two poetic examples show the discontent of two *mukhadram* poets as fathers, enduring the abandonment of their sons because the latter have chosen to depart from their family circle and join the call to conquer new lands to spread the new religion of Islam. Although both poets had been converted, we see the reservation they have towards this foreign practice that is changing their ties to the family. There is a sort of refusal of this new order dictated to them, due to their social estrangement.

In fact Abū Khirāsh al-Hudhalī expresses a strong and clear attitude of social estrangement to the values entailed by Islamic instruction and replacing the *jahilī* ones. In an elegy to a companion of his who was captured and killed during one of the major early Islamic battles, *Hunayn*, according to the narrative, the poet mentions the following towards the end: (*tawīl*)<sup>253</sup>

بِحَلِيَّةٍ إِذْ نَلَقَى بِهَا مَنْ نُحَاوِلُ وَلَكِنْ أَحَاطَتْ بِالرَّقَابِ السَّلَاحُ □ وَى الْعَدْلِ شَيْئًا فَتَرَاحَ الْعَوَازِلُ	وَلَمْ أَنْسَ أَيَّامًا لَنَا وَلِيَالِيَا فَلَيْسَ كَعَهْدِ الدَّارِ يَا أُمَّ مَالِكٍ وَعَتَا الْفَتَى كَالْكَهْلِ لَيْسَ بِقَائِلِ
---	---

I have not forgotten our days and nights  
 In Ḥālya, where we meet whom we seek  
 Oh Umm Malik! There is naught like the good old times  
 Alas! We have caught it in the neck  
 The youngster became like the mature man, seeking nothing  
 But to follow justice, so the rebukers rest

The memory of the old days initiates the nostalgic feeling to a past situated in the *jāhiliyya* context. This is where home (*dār*) is and nothing is like it or can replace it. Back then, when a friend or relative is killed, one should take revenge for him; but the poet regrets that at his present time, revenge is restricted by the Islamic law and thus the image of chains bounding the necks. Instead, one should seek the new code of justice, a concept that the tribal mentality does not acknowledge.

Such painful experience, provoked by the uprooting of the individual from his familiar surroundings, became the metaphorical expression of a much more profound rupture, the separation of man from an ideal code of laws and values that prevailed until that time, and therefore the gradual development of a nostalgic lyricism that influenced later on elegiac and *ghazal* poetry.

This attitude of uncertainty persisted in some cases beyond the *mukhadram* phase. Moments of re-questioning the real meaning or value of taking part in the conquests are

<sup>253</sup> Ibid, 3/1222-1223. See also a long poem by Tamīm b. Muqbil revealing the reluctant submission to the new norms and an estrangement leading to despair and grief, with longing to the past way of life: Ibn Muqbil: *Dīwān*, p. 178-186.

combined with longing to the homeland. An example of this is a poem by the Bedouin poet aṣ-Ṣimma al-Qushayrī (d. 96/714), depicting his situation away from his hometown on the way to Sham to join the army: (*tawīl*)<sup>254</sup>

فما من هواي اليوم ريبًا ولا نجدُ ولكنني غادِ إذا ما غدا الجندُ	كنت أرى نجدًا وريبًا من الهوى فدعني من ريبًا ونجدٍ كليهما
فحنُّ ولم يملكه ذو القوة الجندُ	أصاب جهولَ القومِ تنبيهُ ما به

I used to think of Rayya and Najd as beloved  
But today they are away from my heart  
Forget about both Rayya and Najd  
I am joining the army when they leave

...

The stranger has been inflicted with his love  
He longed and could not have patience.

The first four verses preceding the citation are a typical opening of *hanīn* poetry, starting with the formulation: (*alā layta shi 'rī hal abūtanna laylatan*). The statement of the poet about his disinterest in his beloved Rayyā and Najd is but a false claim; it indicates the attempt of the poet to be patient, and distract himself and his longing with engaging in the invasions. He is trying to concentrate now on this endeavor, but he will not succeed as he is not completely convinced about its importance. Aṣ-Ṣimma is a lover-poet known especially for his ghazal in the Umayyad period and conquests could hardly substitute passion for him.

Some scholars claim that given the duration of the conquests in the west, namely in Shām, was short and the people involved in them quickly settled down, and that this has contributed to the gradual disappearance of meanings of estrangement and nostalgia in poetry.<sup>255</sup>

The whole poem of aṣ-Ṣimma resonates with the elegy of Mālik b. ar-Rayb previously cited, especially the second verse in the selection above recalls the sense of remorse that Mālik expresses while telling what joining the army of the “right” path drove him to: (*tawīl*)<sup>256</sup>

وأصبحت في جيش ابن عفان غازيا أراني عن أرض الأعداي قاصيا	ألم ترني بعث الضلالة بالهدى وأصبحت في أرض الأعداي بعدما
--	--

Haven't you seen how I picked right over wrong,  
And I joined the conquering army of Ibn 'Affān  
I turned out thus to be in the land of enemies

<sup>254</sup> aṣ-Ṣimma: *Dīwān*, p. 87-88.

<sup>255</sup> *Shi 'r al-Futūḥ al-Islāmiyya*, p. 154.

<sup>256</sup> “Dīwān Mālik b. Al-Rayb ḥayātuhu wa shi'ruhu”, ed. Nūrī Ḥammūdī Qaysī, *Majallat Ma'had al-Makhtūṭāt*, Vol. 15 part 1. See chapter 2, section 2.4.

After I've been far away from it

He succumbed to the requisite of the community and attempted to fulfill his duty of participating in the invasions at the expense of giving up the life he had, referred to here as “*ḍalāla*”, but that only lead to his eventual capture by the enemies. Interestingly, it is reported that Mālik composed this poem at his death, which gives his statement an apologetic undertone which is highlighted further in the poem by a pledge not to pursue again the invasions.

Around this period of the Umayyad reign, numerous short passages of poetry emerged expressing attitudes of nostalgia and estrangement, highlighting a sense of discontentment affecting the familiarity of the social life, just as similar passages related to the geographical changes discussed earlier.<sup>257</sup> The excerpts compiled in *Mu'jam al-Buldān* under place names related to the conquests, illustrate a geographical dimension of estrangement and nostalgia. Some other verses reflect social and political aspects of estrangement and nostalgia. Some of this poetry witnessed great popularity, as we can see from its circulation in the works of later periods and the different variations they acquired along the way. One of these passages, are verses attributed to Maysūn bint Bahḥal al-Kalbiyya, wife of Mu'āwiya: (*wāfir*)<sup>258</sup>

أحب إلي من قصر منيف	لبيبت تخفق الأرواح فيه
أحب إلي من بغل زفوف	وبكر يتبع الأظعان سقباً
أحب إلي من قط أوف	وكلب ينبح الطراق عني
أحب إلي من ليس الشفوف	ولبس عباءة وتقر عيني
أحب إلي من أكل الرغيف	□ أكل كسيرة في كسر بيتي
أحب إلي من نقر الدفوف	□ وأت الرياح بكل فج
أحب إلي من علج عليف	وخرق من بني عمي نحيف
إلى نفسي من العيش الطريف	خشونه عيشتي في البدو أشهى

Yea, a tent that the winds whip buffeting through  
Far more would I love than a palace on high  
And a camel-colt trailing closed litters, untamed,  
Far more would I love than a brisk-paced (bride's) mule  
And a dog that bays off from me comers by night  
Far more would I love than a genial pet cat  
And to wear coarse wool garb, my eye joy-refreshed  
Far more would I love than to wear sheer chiffon  
And eating a scrap at the flap of my tent  
Far more would I love than eating baked bread  
And sounds of the winds gusting down every pass  
Far more would I love than the tambourine's beat

<sup>257</sup> See chapter 2.3 above.

<sup>258</sup> This is the sequence of verses in *Khizānat al-Adab*, Translation is by Zwettler except the last verse which is not included in the version he adopts which also has a different sequence: Zwettler: “Desert yearning or partisan polemic?: on the lines ascribed to Maysun, wife of Mu'awiya”, p. 300-301.

And a freehearted man from my own tribe and lean,  
Far more would I love than a fat foreign brute!  
The rough life that I live among Bedouins is  
Far more alluring to myself than the exquisite living

Through a close study of the different versions of this passage in the sources and a thorough reading of the verses, Michael Zwettler presents a notable interpretation of its meaning and function. He suggests that this poem is about the *shu'ūbiyya* movement, from a pro-Arab standpoint. After clarifying his rejection of the widespread —yet disputed— attribution of the poem to Maysūn, he goes as far as to conclude that the persona's figure in these lines “can be reasonably construed to signify the Arab *xilāfa* ‘caliphate’ or *imāma* ‘imamate’ and the sorry state to which it had been reduced by the end of the third/ninth century.”<sup>259</sup>

Whether this interpretation is accurate or not, it remains very obvious that this passage holds a loaded social significance. Even if merely read in a literal way we understand that it belongs to the theme of estrangement and nostalgia. Through with the repetition of the formulaic “*aḥabu ilayya min*”, it presents a juxtaposition and comparison of a nostalgia to the Bedouin elements versus a discontent and estrangement from the components of the urban life, the poetic voice favoring the earlier. The closing verse, probably a later addition, recapitulates all previous verses in a straightforward statement leaving no doubt that it is about the dichotomy between Bedouin and sedentary communities, and that some who were compelled to adopt the sedentary life were in estrangement.

In this context Zwettler noted that “during the first century of Islam - when *ḥanīn*-verse was flourishing - and perhaps somewhat later as well, if a nomadic tribesman who had settled in a city or one of the *amṣār* were to leave and return to the desert (i.e., to perform *ta'arrub*), ‘he would be subject to punishment as if he was *murtadd*, who committed the crime of apostasy’. Thus, we might suspect that early poetic longings for the desert homeland may at times have shared some of the disrepute and sense of impropriety that attached to *xamr*- and *ḡazal*-verse, though to a much lesser degree and for a much shorter period of Arabic literary history”.<sup>260</sup> This observation might be a

---

<sup>259</sup> Zwettler: “Desert yearning or partisan polemic?: on the lines ascribed to Maysun, wife of Mu'wiya”, p. 358.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid, p. 310 note 27. Also interesting is that leaving one's homeland (*hijra*) to Medina was imposed on the Bedouins who converted to Islam in the time of the prophet, with the purpose of strengthening the

valid reason to the disruption of the motif and another explanation why it did not develop into a mature genre.

Many of the new administrative categories such as *amṣār*, and *thughūr*, the rules and regulations related to them, such as *tajmīr*, coupled with the new environment of the battles' setting generated for most of the soldiers, feelings of estrangement coupled with menace and fear of death. Much later, al-Buḥturī depicts the image of these soldiers in an image nicely representing their estrangement even after their death: (*tawīl*)<sup>261</sup>

فَمِنْ مُنْجِدٍ نَائِي الضَّرِيحِ وَمَتَّهِمْ      فَكُلُّ لَهُ قَبْرٌ غَرِيبٌ بِلَدَةٍ  
مَوَاقِعُهَا مِنْهَا مَوَاقِعُ أَنْجُمٍ      قُبُورٌ أَطْرَافِ الثُّغُورِ كَأَنَّما

Each one has a stranger grave in a town  
Whether someone from Najd or Tihāma his grave is distant  
Grave at the edge of *thughūr*, as if  
They were far away as the stars in the sky

The experience of unpleasantly joining the invasions and its effect on the social ties, in addition to the punishments imposed in case of return to the desert after emigrating, and all the administrative foreign rules that now make the political and social life of the tribesmen conform to the new state, increased the feeling of estrangement and refutation among some. Other sorts of constraints were also translated in the poetry and made way to motifs of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*.

### 4.3 Exile and prison

Exile as a punishment was established in the ancient world,<sup>262</sup> and was also practiced in the Bedouin society in pre-Islamic times. During the period of the conquests, there were many prisoners of war and when the state of Islam was formed and the structure of the political system started taking shape in the form of governorates and governors, exile and prison were widely adopted as forms of punishment.<sup>263</sup>

---

community of Muslims there and their military force to use against Mecca. This regulation was discontinued when the goal was reached and re-introduced at the time of the apostasy wars (*ridḍa*), but this time the Bedouin could emigrate to one of the settlements (*amṣār*). See more on this in: Athamina, Khalil: A'rāb and Muhājirūn in the Environment of Amṣār. *Studia Islamica*. No. 66. (1987), p. 5-25.

<sup>261</sup> al-Buḥturī: *Dīwān*, 3/1945.

<sup>262</sup> See for example in the Greek and Roman Empires: Smith, William: *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, p. 513-517.

<sup>263</sup> On the origins of prison and its development especially during the period of the conquests, see: Sean, Anthony: The Domestic Origins of Imprisonment: An Inquiry into an Early Islamic Institution. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. Vol. 129, No. 4 (October-December 2009), p. 571-596. See also: Schneider, Irene: Prison and Imprisonment: Islamic Law. *The Oxford International Encyclopaedia of Legal History*. Ed. Stanley N. Katz. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, IV, S. 383-385.

Although the concept of imprisonment was familiar to the Arabs in cities such as Mecca and Medina since pre-Islamic times, “[h]owever, in the Bedouin environment, imprisonment was a highly impractical and almost impossible procedure”.<sup>264</sup> It is therefore likely to see how the prison as a new experience which has its own impact, is reflected in poetry. Indeed, poems depicting scenes in prisons, witness an articulation of deprivation and a sense of failure, that prove the poet’s inability to confront and harmonize the meanings of torture and conflict. This context then is naturally susceptible to feelings of estrangement and nostalgia, which we can find in the poetry of *ṣa‘ālīk* among others.

Jaḥḍar al-‘Aklī was a brigand who was captured in Kūfa by the Umayyad governor of Iraq al-Ḥajjāj. In few of his poetry he describes his sojourn in the prison, where he refers to the place in a similar way as to *aṭlāl: (basīf)*<sup>265</sup>

بَيْتٌ بِكَوْفَانَ مِنْهُ أُشْعِلْتُ سَقْرُ شَتَّى الْأُمُورِ فَلَا وَرْءَ وَلَا صَنْدَرُ مِنْ كُلِّ أَسِّسٍ وَفِيهَا الْبَدُو وَالْحَضَرُ	يَا رَبِّ أَبْغَضُ بَيْتٍ عِنْدَ خَالِقِهِ مَثْوَى تَجْمَعُ فِيهِ النَّاسُ كُلُّهُمْ □ إِنْ عَلَيْهَا عَفَاءُ الدَّهْرِ مَوْحِشَةٌ
--	--

Oh God! The worst house to his creator  
 Is a house in Kufa where hell started burning  
 A place where all people gathered  
 Of all sorts but without any deeds  
 A place desolate and emptied by time  
 Of all companionship, although crowded by Bedouins and sedentaries

In another poem, he recounts his sojourn in the prison of Dawwār,<sup>266</sup> where he mentions again the motif of the prison as a place of unification in fear and estrangement. In both the two illustrations of the poet, he identifies the space of detention with terms like *dār*, *manzil*, *bayt*. He shows the prison as one homeland versus the concept of many homelands of the Arabs, where as a *ṣu‘lūk*, he was also feeling a stranger. In this place, he reunites with different people in the same situation, creating some kind of social equality between them: (*kāmīl*)<sup>267</sup>

شَتَّى وَأَلْفٌ بَيْنَنَا وَأَوَارُ أَزْلاً وَيُمنَعُ مِنْهُمْ الزُّوَارُ	كَمَا تْ مَنْزِلُنَا الَّتِي كَتَا بِهَا سِجْنٌ يَلَاقِي أَهْلَهُ مِنْ خَوْفِهِ
--	--

Our homes where we were before are many  
 And different, now [the prison of] ad-Dawwār has brought us close to each others  
 A prison where the inhabitants find fear as eternity

<sup>264</sup> Rosenthal, Franz: The Muslim Concept of Freedom Prior to the Nineteenth Century. *Man Versus Society*. Ed. Dimitri Gutas. Brill. Leiden. 2015, p. 56-57.

<sup>265</sup> Jaḥḍar b. Mu‘awiya al-Akli in: *Diwān al-Luṣuṣ* 1/157.

<sup>266</sup> Al-Ḥamwī: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān* 2/479: Dawwār.

<sup>267</sup> Jaḥḍar b. Mu‘awiya al-Akli in: *Diwān al-Luṣuṣ* 1/158. See also his longer poem on the same subject: 1/158-160.

And they are forbidden of visitors

The experience of Hadba b. Al-Khashram in prison deserves some consideration. He describes the bitterness of waiting and deprivation, overflowed with distressed deep pains. In his poem, he could capture the prisoners' state of amazement, anticipation, and depression, together with that weak line of hope that his soul clings to in order to launch to freedom and exit the state of estrangement: (*wafīr*)<sup>268</sup>

وكيف وقد تعلقك المشيبُ

طربْتُ وأنتَ أحيانًا طروبُ

يكونُ وراءَهُ فرَجٌ قريبُ  
ويأتي أهلهُ النَّائيَ الغريبُ

عسى الكَرْبُ الذي أَسَيَّتَ فيه  
فيأمنَ خائفٌ ويُفكَّ عانٍ

You were moved for you are sometimes emotional  
how then when white hair has crowned you

...

Shall your present sorrow  
Have soon after a relief  
The frightened would then feel secure and the captive would be released  
And the distant foreigner would return to his people

The nostalgic denotation is communicated in the first verse through the verb *ṭaribtu* and its active participle *ṭarīb*, combined with the grief of the old age to make the atmosphere of the prison even heavier on the poet.

These and many poems with similar images may constitute a “genre” of poetry revealing the motif of prison which can be called *ḥabisiyyāt*, derived from the word *ḥabs* (prison), and is borrowed from the more known Persian poetic genre. However, Schoeler for instance in his catalogue of poetic genres doubts whether this poetry can be classified as genre of its own, opting for classifying it as a theme since “it rather concerns a theme which, as a rule, is linked with other (mostly subordinate) themes”.<sup>269</sup> One of these themes are as is being demonstrated here, estrangement and nostalgia.

Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630/1233) mentions one account in his *al-Kāmil fī at-Tārīkh* about Ziyād b. Abīh, governor of Basra in the mid of the 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> century, and ‘Abdallah b. Khalīfa aṭ-

<sup>268</sup> Hudba b. al-Khashram: *Dīwān*, p. 57-59.

<sup>269</sup> Schoeler, Gregor: The genres of classical arabic poetry: classifications of poetic themes and poems by pre-modern critics and redactors of *dīwāns*. *Quaderni di Studi Arabi, nuova serie*, Vol. 7, Arabic, Literature and Music (2012), pp. 242-243. Nevertheless, Aḥmad al-Bizra presents extensively the different types of *ḥabisiyyāt*, especially ones part of panegyric poems and the independent ones: Bizra, Aḥmad al-: *al-Asr wa s-Sijn fī Shi‘r l-‘Arab*. Mu‘assasat ‘Ulūm al-Qur‘ān. Damascus. 1985, p. 582-636. The term applied to pre-modern Arabic poetry is not yet widely used and poetry belonging to this genre is worth further investigation. See for example a study on the prison experience in the poetry of the pre-Islamic poet Zayd b. ‘Adī al-‘Ibādī: Jamāl, Milād ‘Ādil: *as-Sijn wa l-Ākhar al-Mutakhayyal fī Shi‘r Zayd b. ‘Adī al-‘Ibādī*. *Majallat Jāmi‘at Karkūk li d-Dirāsāt al-Insāniyya*. 11-2 (2016), p. 153-173.



Ṭā'ī and his cousin 'Adī b. Ḥātim at-Ṭā'ī. After an initial resistance, 'Adī succumbed to the order of Ziyād in exiling 'Abdallah b. Khalifa from Kūfa to the mountains of Ṭayyi'. In this regard, the latter has recurrently written to 'Adī trying to persuade him to bring him back to Kūfa, among which a longer poem lamenting his companion Ḥujr b. 'Adī al-Kindī and blaming his cousin for not responding to his wish. After a traditional *nasīb* opening where he remembers Laylā and his youth, 'Abdallah appeals to his tribe with remorse that they would not stand by him. However, he concludes with a nostalgic tone affirming his attachment to his people despite his separation from them and their deceit. Some of the most illustrative verses from this longer poem (56 verses) are the following: (*tawīl*)<sup>270</sup>

كَأَنِّي غَرِيبٌ مِنْ إِيَادٍ وَأَعَصْرَا	تَفَرَّجْتُ عَنِّي فَعَوِدْتُ مُسَلِّمًا
طَرِيدًا فَلَوْ شَاءَ إِلَهِمُ غَيَّرَا	فَهَا أَنَا ذَا أَوْيٍ بِأَجْبَالِ طَيِّءٍ
□ ضَيْبٌ بِمَا شَاءَ إِلَهِهِ وَقَدِ	نَفَانِي عَدُوِي ظَانِمًا عَنْ مَهَاجِرِي
	....
	...

You flew away from me so I was left submitted  
Like a stranger among Iyād and A'sar

...  
Here I am seeking refuge in the mountains of Ṭayyi'  
A fugitive and if Gd wishes otherwise he would change that  
My enemy have exiled me from my home  
I have accepted God's will

The importance of this narrative and the verses associated with it is in reflecting how the political has conquered the tribal and how the shift in the social affiliation, which does not give priority to the tribe anymore but rather to the politico-religious power, has left its mark on the soul of the individuals.

Exile and imprisonment of brigand poets continued along their journey in the Umayyad period, perhaps now with the punitive system more institutionalized, they became more subject to restrictions and pursuit. Not only were they outcast from their tribal affiliations but they also suffered from recurrent arrest and the distress of estrangement in captivity more reflected in their poetry. As-Samharī al-'Aklī for example was a *ṣu'lik* who got imprisoned by al-Ḥajjāj and managed to escape, however got detained again. He appeals for his fellows in the *ṣa'ālik* community to rescue him from chains that make him feel a stranger. The imprisonment of brigand poets is different than other freemen, because they cherish their freedom more than others, since it is the only thing they possess after losing their tribal belonging and that is what keeps them pursuing their

<sup>270</sup> Ibn al-Athir: *al-Kāmil fī t-Tārīkh*, 3/331-333.

acts. Their freedom is their identity and their captures turn them into strangers to themselves: (*tawīl*)<sup>271</sup>

فمن مبلغ عني خليلي مالكا  
رسالةً مَشْدُودِ الوثاقِ غريبِ  
Who would convey my companion Mālik  
A message from a tightly chained stranger

While As-Samharī al-‘Aklī reaches out to his friends for help, he regrets that his tribe deceived him and in such a situation he is not able to rely on them, neither their young nor their old men would support him. It is also a feeling of estrangement towards them to the point that he wishes he did not originally belong to them: (*tawīl*)<sup>272</sup>

ألا ليتني من غير عكلٍ قبيلتي  
ولم أدر ما شبَّانُ عكلٍ وشيبيها  
I wish my tribe was not from ‘Akl  
I don’t know what kind of people are their young and old men

Later in the Abbasid time, Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī (d.357/968) composed a number of poems during his four-year imprisonment in Byzantium, famous as *Rūmiyyāt*.<sup>273</sup> Besides their historical value, these poems elaborate the motif of prison where the poet describes his condition and the place of his detention, his illness and his nostalgia to his people and beloved ones.<sup>274</sup> He addresses many of his poems to his cousin Sayf ad-Dawla, *amīr* of Aleppo and of northern Syria, also of Mayyāfāriḳīn and of western Jazīra, reproaching him for being reluctant in paying his ransom and neglecting him, in a tone that “alternates between elegiac resignation and truculent petulance”.<sup>275</sup> Among the meanings that he invokes in his poems is his longing to his glorious past as a means of catharsis. Abū Firās also directs some of his *Rūmiyyāt* to his mother and friends in a manner that mixes with emotions of longing, sadness, solemnity, and complaint, and states that the prison did not affect him but increased his courage. What appears in these poems to be most painful for him, is the deceitful abandonment of his social circle on

<sup>271</sup> Ash ‘ār al-Luṣūṣ, p. 47.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid, p. 49.

<sup>273</sup> Schoeler: Genres, p. 243.

<sup>274</sup> Tha‘ālibī: *Yatimat ad-Dahr* 1/85-108; Hermes, Nizar: The Byzantines in Medieval Arabic Poetry: Abu Firās’ “Al-Rumiyyat” and the Poetic Responses of al-Qaffal and Ibn Hazm to Nicephore Phocas’ “Al-Qasida al-Arminiyya al-Mal’una” (The Armenian Cursed Ode). *Byzantina Symmeikta*. Vol. 19 (2009), p. 44.

<sup>275</sup> Montgomery, James: Abu Firās al-Hamdani. *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*. Ed. Meisami, Julie Scott and Starkey, Paul. Routledge. New York. 1998, 1/33.

one side and the gloat of his enemies on the other side, demeanors that intensify his estrangement. He says: (*tawīl*)<sup>276</sup>

ولكنني في ذا الزمان وأهله  
غريبٌ وأفعالي لديه غرائب

I am in this time and among its people  
A stranger and my actions are odd to it

Abū Firās succeeded in combining this estrangement and nostalgia with the panegyric mood in these poems to serve his purpose of persuading Sayf ad-Dawla to rescue him, where the patron becomes the point of belonging and being away of him means being a stranger: (*mutaqārib*)<sup>277</sup>

فلا تنسينَّ إليَّ الخمولَ  
أقمثُ عليك فلم أعترب

Don't accuse me of drowsiness  
I have stayed beside you and did not go astray

His longing is therefore only to his patron, because he is his aim and only he can shelter him: (*majzū' al-kāmil*)<sup>278</sup>

ولئن حننْتُ إلى ذرا  
أملِي من الدنيا وسولي  
ه لقد حننْتُ إلى وصول

God knows that he is  
My hope and call in this life  
If I am longing to his shelter  
I am then longing to my ambition

Prison and exile were not the only social contexts where poets implicated estrangement and nostalgia in addressing the patron and seeking his salvation. Another state of living reveals connected with the two motifs, which is the economic situation.

#### 4.4 Means of livelihood

“One of the main motives for which the Arab poet has been alienated in various eras is his journey towards the better than he is, seeking to live and seek livelihood. Most strangers left their homes in search of income, driven by need rather than a desire to go, and most had to ensure what was generally regarded as the worst misfortune of all, that of being poor in a foreign land”.<sup>279</sup> Among the most important effects of alienation is frustration with circumstances of life, which poets have communicated in their verses and served as a therapeutic process. Especially this kind of estrangement

<sup>276</sup> Abū Firās: *Dīwān*, p.43. See also p. 97.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid, p.25.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid, 273-274.

<sup>279</sup> Crone, p.148.

related to financial predicament has been more developed into the complaint genre of poetry (*shakwā*).<sup>280</sup>

This was the case for *ṣa‘ālīk* as a regular occupation to survive. Among these, ‘Urwa b. al-Ward represents a particular figure of a “noble” *ṣu‘lūk* who allowed himself to take from the rich to feed the poor and protect the community of brigand poets.<sup>281</sup> He did not belong to the outcasts, *aghribat al-‘Arab* “ravens of the Arabs”, nor was he one of the *khula‘ā* “outlaws”,<sup>282</sup> but in his poetry we encounter the pain and alienation he suffered and caused by the reproach of his tribe. It seems that his mother has always been a reason for bringing shame on him, as he was called “son of the stranger”: (*ṭawīl*)<sup>283</sup>

وَهَلْ فِي كَرِيمٍ مَا يَعِيرُ      هُمَ عَيْرُونِي أَنْ أُمِّي غَرِيبَةٌ  
وَقَدْ عَيْرُونِي الْفَقْرُ إِذْ أَنَا مَقْتَرٌ      وَقَدْ عَيْرُونِي الْمَالِ حِينَ جَمَعْتَهُ

They shamed me that my mother is a stranger

Would a noble and generous man feel ashamed?

They shamed me for the money I collected

And they shamed me with poverty when I was saving

Estrangement related to poverty appears as a recurrent motif in his verses, it is another pretext that his people use against him by accusing him that the money he collects for helping the outcast community is stolen money. The constant condemnation comes also from ‘Urwa’s wife as he reports in his verses, but her voice reflects actually the inner voice of the poet himself in response to his harsh circumstances. This voice urges him to leave and travel as a way out from poverty: (*kāmīl*)<sup>284</sup>

وَجَفَا الْأَقْرَابُ فَالْفَوَادُ قَرِيحُ      قَالَتْ مَاضِرُ إِذْ رَأَى مَالِي خَوَى  
وَصَبَّأَ كَأَنَّكَ فِي النَّدَى نَطِيحُ      مَالِي رَأَيْتُكَ فِي النَّدَى مُنْكَسًا  
إِنْ الْقَعُودَ مَعَ الْعِيَالِ قَبِيحُ      خَاطِرُ نَفْسِكَ كِي صَبِيبَ غَنِيمَةٍ  
الْفَقْرُ فِيهِ مَذَلَّةٌ وَفَضُوحُ      الْمَالِ فِيهِ مَهَابَةٌ وَجَلَّةٌ

Tumāḍīr said as she saw my money reduce

And my kinsmen turned away thus my sick heart

Why do I see you retracted from giving,

Sick as if kicking away generosity

Take a risk to gain loot

Sitting around with the children is awful

Money has esteem and honor

And poverty has humiliation and disgracing

<sup>280</sup> Papoutsakis, Nefeli: *Classical Arabic Begging Poetry and Šakwā, 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Centuries*. Harrassowitz Verlag. Arabische Studien 14. Wiesbaden. 2017, p. 8-9.

<sup>281</sup> al-Iṣfahānī: *al-Aghānī* 3/55.

<sup>282</sup> *EI2*, “‘Urwa b. Al-Ward”.

<sup>283</sup> ‘Urwa: *Dīwān*, p. 71-72. See also p. 85.

<sup>284</sup> ‘Urwa: *Dīwān*, p. 54.

The response of ‘Urwa to this social burden of becoming unwarranted and needless through his wife’s invitation to leave, but also through his own perception of himself, translates into his will to abandon her to get rid of this infertile life: (*tawīl*)<sup>285</sup>

ذريني أطوفُ في البلادِ لعَلَّني      أُخْلِيكَ أوْ أُغْنِيكَ عنْ سوءِ مَحْضَرِي  
فإنْ فازَ سَهْمُ المَنِيَّةِ لمْ أكنْ      جَزوعًا وُهَلْ عنْ ذا □ مِن مُتَأَخَّرِ

Let me roam in the lands, maybe

[I die] and I leave you for another man or I spear you witnessing trouble

If an arrow hits me and I die, I would not

Be frightened, there shall not be a delay of this [fate]

There is a complex image of estrangement that comes into sight in the experience of ‘Urwa: on one hand, it is the initial state of exile inflicted on him by his tribal community and binding him to the *ṣa‘ālīk* identity; this estrangement is a perpetual agony of this community of poets as discussed above. On the other hand, an urge for exile emerges from the difficulty of bearing the living condition in poverty and humiliation. This perception represents new paradigms for a person who rejects humiliation and shame, and these paradigms undoubtedly have a far-reaching effect on society as it provides a framework of human behavior in the face of social paradoxes. It is explicitly stated in his verse: (*tawīl*)<sup>286</sup>

فَسِرْ في بلادِ اللهِ والتمسِ العِني      عَشْ ذا يَسارِ أوْ موتَ فتَعَدَّرِ

Stroll in God’s lands and seek wealth

You shall live in ease or die and be forgiven

In fact, even if this attitude is boldly testified in the poetry of outcasts and especially ‘Urwa b. al-Ward, it is a motif that we come across by other poets. Moreover, it is a pattern that is included in anthologies and *adab* compendia within proximity of chapters on *ghurba* and *hanīn*. In chapters on travel, we find the benefits of leaving one’s homeland particularly connected with finding a better livelihood. These works suggest that there has been a changing attitude from the initial *hanīn ilā l-awṭān* motif occupying a larger space and therefore more interest for compilers and readers, to a more open approach towards travels, seeking new experience and exploring more options for life.<sup>287</sup>

In addition, the idea of trekking in the application of livelihood was mentioned and explained in a number of sayings and poetry verses. Exile and alienation became a tool for poets in praising their patrons in order to gain money. Al-Buḥturī calls out to leave

<sup>285</sup> ‘Ibid, p. 67.

<sup>286</sup> ‘Ibid, p. 77

<sup>287</sup> Gruendler: *hanīn ilā l-awṭān*, p. 13-14.

one country to escape humiliation and this is what he did through travelling to patrons and praising them as a means for *takassub*: (*kāmil*)<sup>288</sup>

إذا الزمان كساك حُلَّةَ مُعَدِّمٍ      فاليس له حُلَّلَ النوى وتَعَرَّبِ

The instrumentalization of *ghurba* and *hanīn* in the context of praise poetry is another aspect of the intellectual dimension of the motifs which is discussed in the next chapter.

---

<sup>288</sup> al-Buḥturī: *Dīwān*, 1/79.

## 5. Intellectual Dimension

Long before the issue of estrangement and nostalgia becomes a condition of the modern intellectual,<sup>289</sup> it was also a preoccupying idea for the early Arab poets and continued to be through the centuries.

Accordingly, and since it is likely that with the dynamic of chronological development, the intellectual depth is also strengthened, the intellectual aspect of estrangement and nostalgia was more accentuated in a later time than the former one. The intellectual dimension addressed in this chapter is how estrangement and nostalgia in poetry is associated with the poets' consciousness of their being, as poets, and of their literary work. The previously presented dimensions were more obvious or tangible, if one might say. What is termed here as intellectual is not as evident, but the different poetic instances from different poets reveal that there is a common correspondence between them that imply an attitude of the intellect and not a more direct reaction to instantaneous factors. On one hand it is the result of deeper contemplations into existence and the accumulation of cultural history, and on the other hand it suggests the poet's total awareness and intentional performance of the motifs of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*.

The general observation made is a diversion between the two motifs: within the intellectual dimension, the motif of *ḥanīn* preserved its traditional images but it acquires with time new functions within longer poems; whereas the motif of *ghurba* starts to gain an independent field of connotations, more associated with the philosophical sphere, as we shall see.

That said, one can make the distinction between two lines in poetry dealing with this theme: one is the profane, building on previous tradition of images and tailored into poetic genres; the other, is a contemplation of estrangement from the religious and spiritual perspective that acquired new modes of expressions, mainly as wisdom poetry of *zuhd* and in Sufi literature.

---

<sup>289</sup> We find the concepts treated especially in the intellectual dimension in the writings of Hegel and Marx, see: Wood, Allen: *Alienation. Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Ed. Graig, Edward. Routledge. London and New York. 1998.

## 5.1 Longing for youth

There is a wide understanding among early as well as modern scholars that the theme of time, mostly referred to as *dahr* or *zamān/zaman*, was a central issue in pre-Islamic poetic tradition which is omnipresent in the poetry of that period, but which also persisted to a certain extent in later periods.<sup>290</sup> One of the heaviest manifestations of time on human being is the changes in his body and the effects of old-age on him marking his transfer from youth to old age, and from strength to weakness. Gray hair is one of the main signs of this change, and therefore, individuals feel an estrangement alienated towards this figure of time, with the sense of loss, defeat and surrender.

The experience of leaving the young age and going through old-age has been documented in poetry as a powerful and widespread motif throughout ages.<sup>291</sup> In fact “quite often poems of *ḥanīn ilā ’l-awṭān* (“nostalgia for the homeland”) opt for the same treatment, linking the *ḥanīn ilā ’l-awṭān* to the *ḥanīn ilā ’l-shabāb*.”<sup>292</sup> By surveying the anthologies of poetry and *adab* in general, we find that the two components of *shayb* and *shabāb* or old-age (literally white hair) and youth often come together,<sup>293</sup> and what is relevant for us regarding estrangement and nostalgia, is that certain times, these two sets of motifs are grouped at proximity, implying the semantic relationship for the compiler. To cite one example, we see in *Rabi’ al-Abrār* by az-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/ 1144) in the opening of the third volume, a chapter on “travel, separation, on departure, return, farewell, distance, proximity, going, coming and such”, directly followed by a chapter on “teeth, on youth and young age, old age and decrepitude, and such”; then comes a chapter on “longing and nostalgia to the homelands, describing yearning and passion towards family and loved ones”.<sup>294</sup>

Beside this proximity detected in anthologies, the theme of youth and old-age is presented here as one form of estrangement and nostalgia. Poets who spoke of the phase of aging and grey-hair, were mainly mourning the time of their youth. In this time of old-age, feebleness crystallizes in two actions: reproach grey-hair, weep over the bygone youth and yearn for the past. We try therefore to discuss verses that are most

---

<sup>290</sup> See for example al-Buḥturī: *al-Ḥamāsa*, chapters 116-122 in,;

<sup>291</sup> See for example the following chapters in poetic and general *adab* anthologies: Also the monothematic anthology of as-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā entitled *ash-Shihāb fī ash-Shayb wa sh-Shabāb*.

<sup>292</sup> *EI2*, “al-Shayb wa ’l-Shabāb”.

<sup>293</sup> Sometimes under other terms with similar meaning, such as *ṣibā* and *shaykhūkha*.

<sup>294</sup> See tables of content of vol.3. See also: *Diwān al-Ma’ānī* chapter 11-12;



representative of these modes of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*, as well as examine the functions of this motif where relevant.

The traditional opening verses of the *qaṣīda* typically consisting of the *aṭlāl* motif, inaugurated with the image either of the camel or home,<sup>295</sup> are substituted, or complemented, in some cases with the alternative element of *al-shayb wa-l-shabāb*.<sup>296</sup>

Just as the dove, the raven, the wind and other elements discussed previously, the two parts of this element, old-age and youth, illustrate a lamentation from the present old age with a longing to the past youth, thus another expression of estrangement and nostalgia.

The pre-Islamic poet an-Nābigha adh-Dhubyanī introduces this motif at the beginning of a poem as a metaphor of the irrevocable loss of time, and the hopeless attempt to regain the wiped campsites just as it is impossible to behave as young when old-age has very visibly affected him. He says: (*tawīl*)<sup>297</sup>

وكيف تصابي المرء والشيب شامل  
معالمه والساريات الهراطل

دعاك الهوى واستجهلتك المنازل  
وقفتُ بربع الدار قد غير البلى

Love has called upon you but the dwellings denied you -  
How could man claim youth, when white hair has totally taken over [his head]  
I stood at the site that was home, its features  
effaced by decay and the raining clouds

Another verse shows the complete replacement of the abodes-motif with youth and old-age. Using the same conventional opening image of departure, Ka‘b b. Zuhayr personifies *shabāb* and *shayb* to describe how the first has left and how the latter is drawing near, in a remorseful and helpless declaration: (*basīt*)<sup>298</sup>

وَلَا أَرَى لِشَبَابٍ ذَاهِبٍ خَلْفًا      بَانَ الشَّبَابُ وَأَمْسَى الشَّيْبُ قَدْ أَزْفَا

Youth has departed and white-hair has approached  
And I don't see a successor to the lost youth

The motif of *shayb* and *shabāb* occurs in other cases to replace the camel section of the *qaṣīda*. Especially in the pre-Islamic genre of *qaṣīda*, following the *aṭlāl-nasīb* opening,

<sup>295</sup> See the distinction in section 1.2 above. Although *manāzil* are mentioned in the first hemistich of the first verse, the emblematic image of standing at the abodes and describing its obliterated condition is clearly stated in the second verse. For the variations on the opening of the *qaṣīda* in the Abbasid period, see: Gibb, “Arab poet and Arabic philologist”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol.12, No. 3/4, Oriental and African Studies Presented to Lionel David Barnett by His Colleagues, Past and Present (1948), p. 4.

<sup>296</sup> Gruendler, *Medieval Arabic Praise Poetry*, p. xvii; Susanne Enderwitz, “Die grauen Haare. Zu Alter, Zeit und Schicksal in der arabischen Liebesdichtung”, *Die Welt des Islams*, New Series, Bd. 28, Nr. 1/4 (1988), pp. 126-Brill

<sup>297</sup> An-Nābigha, *Dīwān*, ed. Abdulsattar, 152.

<sup>298</sup> Ka‘b b. Zuhayr, p. 45. In fact, the entire verse belongs to one of the formulaic construction of *qaṣīda*-openings but through the motif of *shayb* and *shabāb*: review Bauer, “wie fängt man eine Qaṣīde an?”

the camel section is mostly a prologue to a journey into the poet's self-praise.<sup>299</sup> This is where a variation is presented through the nostalgic lamentation of the lost youth when he used to enjoy fully all aspects of life, and at the same time the complaint from the invading old-age. We see these images in verses of 'Abīd b. al-Abras: (*khafīf*)<sup>300</sup>

هَيْجَ الشُّوقِ لِي مَعَارِفُ مِنْهَا      حِينَ حَلَّ الْمَشِيبُ دَارَ الشَّبَابِ  
Her memories provoked a longing desire to her  
As old-age settled down in the place of youth

He says also: (*wāfir*)<sup>301</sup>

فَإِنْ يَكُ لَمَاتَنِي أَسْفًا شَبَابِي      وَأَضْحَى الرَّأْسُ مِثِّي كَاللَّجِينِ  
وَكَلَّانَ اللَّهُ حَالَفَنِي زَمَانًا      فَأَضْحَى الْيَوْمَ مُنْقَطِعَ الْفَرِينِ  
Alas! My youth has abandoned me  
And my hair has become like the camel's white froth  
I had been amused for some time  
Now I became cut from amusement

In addition to these images, many of the verses on youth, although not containing an explicit term of *hanīn*, articulate nevertheless clear instances of nostalgia through the use of recurrent expressions such as "if only" (*layta*), the interrogative (*hal li-*). Abū al-'Atāhiya mentions a verse that has become a trope on the motif of longing to youth: (*wāfir*)<sup>302</sup>

فِيَا لَيْتَ الشَّبَابَ يَعُودُ يَوْمًا      فَأُخْبِرُهُ بِمَا فَعَلَ الْمَشِيبُ  
If only youth would return one day  
I would tell him of what old-age has done

It is important to mention that most poetry treating of youth and old-age, since these two motifs are not separable and should be treated together, is a combination of lamentation (*shakwā*) and nostalgia, which give it most of the times a negative connotation.<sup>303</sup>

Just like the elements of dove and raven used by poets as intermediaries to evoke the nostalgic mood in the geographical dimension of *ghurba* and *hanīn*, *shayb* and *shabāb* are also elements to instigate the memories and the (good) old days that the poet is longing for in other forms of poetry. The motif has on one hand continued in the same images throughout later poetry, in the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, but the tendency

<sup>299</sup> See Jacobi, "camel section", p.4-5.

<sup>300</sup> 'Abīd b. al-Abras, p. 36.

<sup>301</sup> 'Abīd b. al-Abras, p 123.

<sup>302</sup> Abū al-'Atāhiya, p. 46.

<sup>303</sup> In the *adab* anthologies concerned with the virtues and vices, the motif is illustrated with verses from both points of view, see for example Tha'ālibī; al-Buḥturī, *al-Ḥamasa*.

of having the *aṭlāl* opening of panegyrics has now acquired a larger share. Albert Arazi justifies this by saying:

“the patrons, the sole recipients of poems of eulogy and occasional verses, had no wish to hear more about, or see themselves associated with, the destruction, disappearance and desolation which rule the theme of *bukā’ alā’ l-aṭlāl*. A different elegiac opening was required, and *al-shabāb wa ’l-shayb* was eminently suitable. With the sophisticated play of oppositions and the high literary tone of comparisons and metaphors, it was possible to dabble in sentimentality without dwelling on the theme of the death which was feared, with justification, by members of the aristocracy only too aware of the precariousness of their situation.”<sup>304</sup>

Again, since *shayb* and *shabāb* interest us here in as much as it is related to estrangement and nostalgia, we will discuss here some verses of Ibn ar-Rūmī who is considered to have extensively treated the motif in his poetry.<sup>305</sup> We find in fact long passages, whether in his panegyrics or as independent poems. He says: (*tawīl*)<sup>306</sup>

زماً طوى شراً الشباب فودعا	بكيت فلم تترك لعينك مدمعاً
You wept and spent all the tears of your eyes	
For a time that has folded away its youthful prime and bid farewell	

He also says: (*munsariḥ*)<sup>307</sup>

ما عاش أو ينقضي مع الوطر	ليت شباب الفتى يدوم له
سوداء سحماء جئلة العدر	يا لمة قد عهدتها زمناً
يوماً ولو بعد طول منتظر	هل صبغة الله فيك عاندة
If only man’s youth would last	
as long as he lives; or until he reaches his aim	
Oh you hair-curl that I’ve always seen	
Deeply black with thick braids	
Would your God given color return one day	
Even if after a long wait	

A very long introduction (25 verses) to a political poem, lamenting old-age and longing for youth, where he says in the last verse: (*basīṭ*)<sup>308</sup>

والشيء مستوٍ شئ منه إذا اغتربا	والشيب مستوٍ شئ منه لغربته
One is wary of grey-hair because it is stranger	
And all strange things make one wary	

<sup>304</sup> EI2, “al-Shayb wa ’l-Shabāb”.

<sup>305</sup> Also al-Buḥturī has treated this motif considerably in his *Dīwān* and in his *Ḥamāsa*, but he tried at many times to portray the positive side of it, so to praise it rather than lament it. This being the case, it does not relate to estrangement and nostalgia. See: al-Buḥturī, *Ḥamāsa*, p. 286-307; *Ash-Shayb wa sh-Shabāb fī shi’r al-Buḥturī*, Ibrahīm Ḥilmī, Master Thesis, Jām’ at al-Iskandaria, 2014.

<sup>306</sup> Ibn ar-Rūmī 4/1473.

<sup>307</sup> Ibn ar-Rūmī 3/1034.

<sup>308</sup> Ibn ar-Rūmī 1/338.

The last illustration from Ibn ar-Rūmī is an extensive prelude of 69 verses on *shayb* and *shabāb*, to a praise poem of 175 verses. In the first part, the poet is addressing grey-hair in a mixed attitude of reproach, grief and submission (verses 1-30). The second part opens with a formulaic structure: يذكرني الشباب [Reminding me of youth is...] which is reiterated eight times with a different element that brings back memories of the youth period, to create each time an episode of nostalgia. These elements range from encounters with women, visions of spaces and nature, to heroic achievement. The thematic structure of this poem shows that after the long gloomy episode on old-age, comes this equally long cyclic episode as a form of compensation for the lost age and a boast for the poet, who has once in his youth had a brighter life. Yet, the cyclic feature of this episode, with the leitmotiv-character of the formulaic structure, emphasizes the nostalgic mood which reminds the audience of the tragic state of the poet: it is but a past and lost youth. This aligns with the other formulaic structures identified earlier in the poetry of estrangement and nostalgia, making it a remarkable aspect of this poetry.<sup>309</sup>

The most pertinent for us here is indeed the last cycle with the opening in the formulaic structure: (*basīl*)<sup>310</sup>

يُذَكِّرُنِي الشَّبَابَ وَمِیْضُنْ بَرَقِ  
فِيَا أَسْفَا وَيَا □ زَعَا عَلَيْهِ  
وَسَجْعُ حَمَامَةٍ وَحَنِينُ نَابِ  
وَيَا حَزَنًا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ

I am reminded of youth by a flash of lightning,  
a pigeon cooing and an old she-camel's yearning of for its young  
Alas! What a distress  
And what a lasting sadness until Judgment Day

Particularly in these verses, we find gather in one verse the same fundamental elements instigator of nostalgia, discussed in the geographical dimension and here being applied to youth: the lightening, the dove and the archetypal *hanīn* of the she-camel. Not any camel though, but specifically an old one, just like the poet himself.

Images of estrangement and nostalgia related to *shayb* and *shabāb* is one expression of the intellectual and contemplative engagement of poets with the issue of time. Another mode of expression is poetry enunciating directly the issue of *dahr*.

<sup>309</sup> Review Chapter 2, the formulaic structure of “*ala layta shi rī hal abūtanma*”; below 4.

<sup>310</sup> Ibn ar-Rūmī 1/258.

## 5.2 The existential condition of poets

The recurrent images revealing the theme of *dahr* revolve around a struggle between man, often the poet himself or a protagonist such as the hunter or knight, and an antagonist who could be an animal, a blamer or explicitly fate. Perhaps the most illustrative case of this idea is the masterpiece ‘*ayniyya* of Abū Dhu’ayb al-Hudhalī:

وَالدَّهْرُ لَيْسَ بِمُعْتَبَرٍ مَنْ يَجْرَعُ      أَمَّنَ الْمَنُونَ وَرَيْبِهَا تَتَوَجَّعُ

Is thy heart distrest, at the spite of fate and the stroke of doom?  
Nay, fortune pays no heed to him who bemoans his lot<sup>311</sup>

Where the formulaic construction of the half-verse: *والدهر لا يبقى على حدثانه*: [Time sweeps away all things on earth in its changeful stream]<sup>312</sup> established the greatest challenge of man with time.

Towards the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, a new aspect of the existential predicament can be traced in the poetry of this period, mainly in the poetry of Abū l-‘Atāhiya (d. ≈ 210/825) which develops later on to reach its apogee in the poetry of Abū l-‘Alā’ al-Ma‘arrī (d. 449/1058). The motif of fate appears mainly in the poetic genre of *shakwā* or complaint.

While the pre-Islamic perspective on the agency of time is a realistic one, the Abbasid view is more poetic, and this is why the poet's relationship with time or eternity appears, in the Abbasid text more poetic than in the pre-Islamic text. The motif of fate turns into a poetical agency to create certain poetical intensity.

There has always been a sort of rivalry between man and time, which Arab poets have documented in their works. The image of time in poetry is frequently a dark one, representing affliction and deprivation. This is notably applied to the past time that constitutes the setting of nostalgia, which poets identify as a prey of fate. It is because of this time stream that the pleasant present turns into an elapsed lost past.

Estrangement appears to be an attitude towards life and existence. Many poets feel that they are strangers in this life and as we move in time, we notice that the movement of the intellectual adaptation of estrangement in different forms, as we shall see, was more adopted in the poetry of specific poets than others. Therefore, we shall in this chapter focus more on the works of individual poets which constitute the main material.

<sup>311</sup> The translation is that of Charles Lyall, *Mufaḍḍaliyyāt* 3/356.

<sup>312</sup> Lyall, *Mufaḍḍaliyyāt* 3/256-359.

The reason for this estrangement is that they feel they are different from the rest of the people, especially their society, where the majority is not able to understand their feelings. Poets, especially in the *jāhiliyya*, were faced with a main tragedy which is fate and death.

The existential aspect of estrangement and nostalgia is distinctly articulated across the poetry of Abū al-‘Alā’ al-Ma‘arrī (d. 449/1058), who repeatedly evokes the idea of being stranger in one’s own homeland or among one’s people. Al-Ma‘arrī was considered a philosopher-poet and many factors in his life most likely have played a role in shaping this characteristic and could explain it, the major being the fact that he lost his sight at an early age. But only from examining the corpus of his poetry, one can recognize the philosophical ideas and the formulation and style which are closer to the wisdom poetry (*ḥikma*). The poetry of al-Ma‘arrī, especially this aspect of it, with a rather pessimistic view of the world and existence, is almost unique and it did not continue in such an imposing manner with other poets later on.

The motif of *ghurba* appears quiet often in poetry of al-Ma‘arrī through the figure of the stranger and the condition of estrangement. It is a totally different perspective of estrangement than discerned in the geographical, emotional and social dimensions discussed so far. The poetic voice suffered generally an estrangement caused by a separation from home, loved ones or community and responded accordingly through a longing to these loss. In the case of al-Ma‘arrī it is the opposite, as being in a land and among individuals, or being part of the society of his times was his actual estrangement. Therefore, there is rare evidence in his poetry of nostalgia as an expression of longing to a familiar past, whether place, person or time, but instead it is a longing for a desired end, which is the detachment of the place, people and time to embrace death. Al-Ma‘arrī represents in this poetic attitude towards existence and life an archetype of *ghurba* in the intellectual sense.<sup>313</sup>

In reading his poetry, we could rearrange the sequence of images in such a way to recognize a certain escalating perception of belonging and alienation as the condition of

---

<sup>313</sup> Another prose author around the same period of al- Ma‘arrī whose writing is also considered an elaborate representation of estrangement is Abū Ḥayyān at-Tawḥīdī. On this aspect, see: Wadad al-Qadi, *al-gharīb fī ishārāt at-tawḥīdī*, Mélanges de l’Université Saint-Joseph v. 50 (2), 1984, p. 127- 139. See below 4.4

man. On a fundamental level, his home, or the idea of home for him, is a faraway place, too far that no one would be able to find it and therefore find him: (*mujtathth*)<sup>314</sup>

مَنْ رَامَنِي لَمْ يَجِدْنِي                      إِنَّ الْمَنَازِلَ غُرْبِيَّةٌ

He who seeks me shall not find me  
Far-off are my dwellings

There is even an invitation from his part to depart from home and never come back. In an image accounting for his creative manipulation of language, he compares the separation from home to the grammatical rule of omitting the weak vowel “*wāw*” at the beginning of the verb to promise “*wa‘ada*” when conjugated in another tense. Al-Ma‘arrī appears to be not very keen of the classical longing for the homeland motif, calling to abandon it, again just as the “*wāw*” leaves the verb and never joins it again when “departing” from the past-tense to the present tense: (*basīl*)<sup>315</sup>

إِذَا غَدَوْتَ عَنِ الْأَوْطَانِ مَرْتَحِلاً                      فَضَاهِ فِي الْبَيْنِ □ ذَفَّ الْوَاوُ مِنْ يَعِدِ  
كَانَتْ فَبَانَتْ وَمَا حُنَّتْ إِلَى وَطَنِ                      وَعَادَ غَادٍ إِلَى وَكْرٍ وَلَمْ تَعِدِ

If you set to leave the homelands  
Be as far as [the letter] *wāw* when deleted from [the verb] *ya‘id*  
It was there then it left and it did not long for home  
A returning man arrived back to the nest while it did not return

The conception of home and the homeland acquires throughout his verses the image of an alien place. In the first place, home is not anymore a place of belonging to which one longs, it is on the contrary a place of alienation and estrangement. The status of estrangement is nonetheless not that of the place itself but of the person. Here are two instances where this shows: (*kāmil*)<sup>316</sup>

وَالْحُرُّ فِي أَوْطَانِهِ مُغْتَرِبٌ                      فَتَطَنَّهَ فِي مِصْرِهِ بِؤُبَارِ

The free-man is estranged in his homeland  
While he is in his own city, you would think he is in Ubār

And: (*tawīl*)<sup>317</sup>

أُولُو الْفَضْلِ فِي أَوْطَانِهِمْ غُرْبَاءُ                      تَشَدُّ وَتَنَآى عَنْهُمْ الْقُرْبَاءُ

The virtuous are strangers in their own homelands  
Outcast and avoided by their relatives

<sup>314</sup> Al-Ma‘arrī, *Luzūmiyyāt* 1/109. We notice here the use of the term “*gharba*” which is very similar to “*ghurba*” and implies an embedded significance to this sort of definition to what home represents for the poet.

<sup>315</sup> Al-Ma‘arrī, *Luzūmiyyāt* 1/275.

<sup>316</sup> Al-Ma‘arrī, *Luzūmiyyāt* 1/420.

<sup>317</sup> *Ibid* 1/32.

But it is not each and every person, or the human being in the absolute sense, who is estranged in his own home. We notice in both verses the use of “*hurr*” and “*ulū al-faḍl*”, reflecting the category of people intended by the poet: it is the free man, most probably the free in his mind who is not controlled by the commandments of those claiming knowledge, as the context of the verses suggest; it is the category of men who still have virtues despite the miserable and corrupt times, and who are rejected by their surrounding for holding on these virtues. With no doubt al-Ma‘arrī is implicitly speaking of himself as part of this estranged category.

In fact, the character of the stranger is often the double of the poet and he establishes recurrently two fronts: one of knowledge, where he belongs, and the other is ignorance. He says for example: (*sarī*)<sup>318</sup>

وَالْعَاقِلُ الْحَازِمُ فِينَا غَرِيبٌ      قَدْ كَثُرَتْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جُهَالُنَا  
فَالْفَرَجُ الْوَارِدُ مِنَّا قَرِيبٌ      وَإِنْ يَكُنْ فِي مَوْتِنَا رَاحَةٌ

Many have become ignorant on this earth  
The rational and judicious among us is thus a stranger  
If in our death shall be comfort  
Then the approaching relief is near

We depict here that feeling of being different among the rest of the people, which is the existential condition, if not to sat tragedy of the poets and men of knowledge. Yet, al-Ma‘arrī goes beyond this view to the point of contesting it. Being a poet or learned man, thus an intellectual, is not a distinctive characteristic among other human beings. In fact, learned and unlearned people are pretty much identical when it comes to human relationships. For the poet in his pessimistic look to life, did not have much faith in his fellow men, and this where he developed this attitude of estrangement that is depicted in his poetry. Thus, we find this appeal to the stranger in many of his verses, of course a persona that is not defined as stranger to any other counterpart, but rather it fulfills a variety of characters. The stranger in al-Ma‘arrī’s poetry symbolizes the opposite of all the known familiar humans who are supposed to be his equal and becomes, paradoxically, rather the more familiar to him, his protagonist. If we like to borrow a Freudian terminology to describe the conversion of this persona, —of course in a

<sup>318</sup> Ibid 1/147.



different context as the original Freudian—, we can say that it is the “unheimlich” that becomes “heimlich”.<sup>319</sup> Al-Ma‘arrī says: (*wāfir*)<sup>320</sup>

وما العلماء والجهال إلا  
متى ما يأتي أجلي بأرضي  
قريبٌ حين تنظر من قريب  
فنادِ على الجنازة للغريب

The wise and the ignorant are  
similar when you observe them closely  
When my fate shall come to me in my homeland  
Call upon the stranger [that is me] for the funeral

This attribution reaches a crescendo in an image where even an estrangement vis-à-vis his own category of men of reason is perceived: (*kāmīl*)<sup>321</sup>

هي عُربتان فُغربةٌ من عاقلٍ  
ثمَّ إغترابٌ من مُحكِّمٍ عقله

Two estrangements it is; one from a rational person  
Then an alienation from the one who practices his reason

This can also be seen in instances where the poet advocates the stranger, and in his wisdom verses he issues a plea to esteem the stranger for his integrity and kindness. We see this for example in his appeal to listen to the advice of the stranger and that a stranger can sometimes be dearer than a relative, with a sort of bitterness towards the closer community, such as friends or family.<sup>322</sup> He says: (*tawīl*)<sup>323</sup>

متى يُورك المرءُ الغريبُ نصيحةً  
فلا تُقصِه وأحبُّ الرفيقَ وإن ذمَّ

If a stranger gives you an advice  
Do not reject him, and do love a friend even if he disparages you

And also: (*tawīl*)<sup>324</sup>

متى يُورك المرءُ الغريبُ نصيحةً  
أعزُّ عليك من خالٍ وعمِّ

A strange-man can turn out to be at the core  
Dearer to you than a maternal or paternal uncle

The perception of being a stranger in one’s own home or society has been expressed, as seen, throughout the times and in different contexts. Yet, al-Ma‘arrī depicts himself specifically and the human being in general, as being a stranger in life as a whole. This is where the image of home in some instances is similar to the religious simile of life and

<sup>319</sup> See Freud’s essay “Das Unheimliche”, *Imago. Zeitschrift für Anwendung der Psychoanalyse auf die Geisteswissenschaften* V, 1919, p. 297–324. In explaining the term heimlich, Freud mentions that in Arabic, and Hebrew, the equivalent meaning is related with demonic and scary. He probably had in mind *wahshī*.

<sup>320</sup> Al-Ma‘arrī: *Luzūmiyyāt* 1/141.

<sup>321</sup> *Ibid* 2/243.

<sup>322</sup> This reminds of the perception of Ṭarafa in his famous verse: وظلم ذوي القربى أشد مضاضة على المرء من وقع الحسبي المهند

<sup>323</sup> Al-Ma‘arrī: *Luzūmiyyāt* 2/290.

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid* 2/320.

death presented in the Islamic tradition, making the distinction between *dār al-baqā'* and *dār al-fanā'*. Al-Ma'arrī refers to the former as the restful or the comfortable home, and to the later as the home of distress: (*tawīl*)<sup>325</sup>

متى أنا للدار المريحة طاعنٌ  
وقد ذقتها ما بين شهيدٍ وعلقم  
فقد طال في دار العناء مقامي  
وجربتُها من صحة وسقام

When will I depart to the land of restfulness  
For my stay has been prolonged in the land of distress  
I have tasted both its sweet and bitter sides  
In sickness and health have I also

It is not only life in the sense of existence which is the stranger atmosphere for him, but rather also the other human beings. In his poetry, al-Ma'arrī criticized profoundly the society of his time, depicting the decay of politics and rule. He speaks also of specific qualities that are known in the Arab culture especially since the pre-Islamic times, which have now disappeared. For this he uses the image of stranger to express the rupture with these values. He says: (*basīf*)<sup>326</sup>

وَالشُّحُّ لَيْسَ غَرِيبًا عِنْدَ أَنْفُسِنَا  
بَلِ الْغَرِيبُ وَإِنْ لَمْ يُرْحَمِ الْجُودُ

Scarcity is not a stranger among us but rather  
Generosity is the stranger we do not pity

He also condemns the lack of morality in the societal interaction of individuals. In this sense, virtues and good manners unfamiliar and uncommon, strange things. His verses recall the social aspect of estrangement, but whereas we have seen that the response to this agony caused by communal abandonment is at times expressed through nostalgia and at other times by resorting to alternative source of approval, al-Ma'arrī is constantly seeking salvation in death. He says: (*tawīl*)<sup>327</sup>

وجدتُ سجايا الفضل في الناس غرابة  
وأعدم هذا الدهر مغتريبه

ووالدنا هذا التراب ولم يزل  
أبرَّ يداً من كلِّ منتسبيه

I have found the disposition for virtue among people a strange thing  
Fate has wiped out all its strange ones

...  
Our father is this dust and he remains more benevolent than all his affiliates.

Indeed, longing to death could be considered as a revised form of nostalgia that suits the poetic mood of al-Ma'arrī. One can observe several occurrences of longing to death as

<sup>325</sup> Ibid 2/310.

<sup>326</sup> Ibid 1/242.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid 2/430.

liberation from the captivity in the earthly life.<sup>328</sup> It is prevailing theme in many verses of al-Ma‘arrī, although the term *ḥanīn* is not explicitly used. It is expressed in conjunction with his attitude of estrangement in life. Indeed, heading towards this ultimate end is a common fate for all people, and this is where they are all equal. Al-Ma‘arrī in his poetry very often complained about all sort of aspects of life, from existence itself to socio-political issues, and a sense of remorse can depicted in these complaints: (*tawīl*)<sup>329</sup>

تودُّ البقاء النفسُ من خيفة الردى      وطولُ بقاء المرءِ سُمٌّ مجرَّبٌ  
على الموتِ يجتازُ المعاشِرُ كلهم      مقيمٌ بأهليه ومن يتغرَّبُ

The soul wants to stay [alive] fearing perishing  
Nay, the prolonged stay of man is [but] proven venom  
All people are subject to death  
Those settled among their kin and those estranged

In an image of a double-entendre (*tawriya*) he describes the corpses in the soil in a state of suspicion and uncertainty once life comes to an end, in what he terms as alienation. This is yet another image that falls within the philosophical or religious idea that the human being is only on a journey in this life, therefore it is a life of estrangement, until he returns to the original place. The real belonging is thus to the soil, as per the religious belief mentioned several times in the Qur‘ān.<sup>330</sup> He says: (*wāfir*)<sup>331</sup>

ثرابُ جُسومنا وهي الترابُ      إذا ولَّى عن الآلِ اغترابُ

Our bodies of dust are in fret and they are [themselves] dust  
when separation keeps the loved ones away

On the other hand, new and unique context where *ḥanīn* has been projected: death. The hero whom Abu Tammām is describing in an elegy is longing for death but for those who ignore him, they would think he is as longing for home: (*basīf*)<sup>332</sup>

حنٌّ إلى الموتِ حتَّى ظنَّ جاهلُهُ      بأنَّهُ حنٌّ مُشتاقًا إلى وطنِ

He is longing for death, [so much] that those who don't know him thought  
He is yearning for a homeland

Al-Ma‘arrī has certainly occupied an important place in promoting the sense of estrangement as a philosophical contemplation to life and as a result of an intellectual

<sup>328</sup> Although the themes of death and fate are the immediate subject of this work here, but they are relevant in the extent to which they are connected to the motifs of estrangement and nostalgia. Further on al-Ma‘arrī's poetry on life and death, see: Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Poetry*, p. 59-94.

<sup>329</sup> Al-Ma‘arrī: *Luzūmiyyāt* 1/72.

<sup>330</sup> See for example: Ḥajj,5; Rūm 20; Fāṭir 11.

<sup>331</sup> Al-Ma‘arrī: *Luzūmiyyāt* 1/81.

<sup>332</sup> Abū Tammām: *Dīwān* 4/305.

labor. It is also evident that his personal condition dictated his attitude and poetic production, and vice-versa. This is also understood from his words as he refers to himself as “captive of a double prison” (*rahīn al-mahbisayn*).<sup>333</sup>

The implication of al-Ma‘arrī’s estrangement as a human being and as intellectual, is more detectable in his poetry than for his status as a poet. As seen, he speaks of reflections on life and existence more in the voice of the wise-man and the man of knowledge than the poet. We find, on the other hand, by others that the distinctive feature of being poets is considered a reason for a sort of estrangement. It is not related to the distance, neither in place nor in time, but this comes from the feeling of uniqueness and the absence of people who are similar in their intellectual eminence. It is however not a theme restricted to Arabic poetry, as we find it as a trope in different literature across ages, whether classical such as the Greek in works of Virgil or Homer, or the European Romanticism epoch with poets like Beaudelaire, Apollinaire or Schlegel. In the poetry under study, this dimension of estrangement is expressed through somehow the common picture that the poet, or the speaking voice in the poem, is feeling estranged among his family or peers, thus his own familiar place, because he is different. Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī did not only experience alienation while he was imprisoned.<sup>334</sup> In his poetry he reiterates the sense of estrangement vis-à-vis the people of his community inflicted with corruption until it became hard to find a friend among them, although he is within his familiar circle: (*tawīl*)<sup>335</sup>

وحيثُ وحولي من رجالي عصاب                      غريب وأهلي حيث ما كرت ناظري

My people are everywhere my sight falls, yet I am a stranger  
My men assemble around me and yet I stand alone

Al-Buḥturī, who was designated by literary critics to be *maṭbū‘* [naturally talented],<sup>336</sup> seems in his lamentation to be still faithful to the old poets, by making fate responsible for his exile and chronic feeling of estrangement wherever he goes: (*wāfir*)<sup>337</sup>

تقاذف بي بلادٌ عن بلادي                      كأنني بينها خبيرٌ شرودُ

<sup>333</sup> Al-Ḥamwī: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’* 1/303; he himself even says that he is captive of three prisons: the first being losing his sight, the second his isolation in his house and the imprisonment of his soul in his body, see: *Luzūmiyyāt* 1/188.

<sup>334</sup> Review Chapter 4 (social dimension).

<sup>335</sup> Abū Firās: *Dīwān*, p. 44.

<sup>336</sup> al-Āmidī: *al-Muwāzana* 1/4.

<sup>337</sup> Al-Buḥturī: *Dīwān* 3/580-581.

...  
إذا سجع الحمامُ هناك قالوا  
وأين يكون مُرتَهِنٌ بدهرٍ

لُفِرط الشوق أين ثوى الوليد  
شريدٌ في حوادته طريدٌ

These lands throw me away from my homeland  
As if I were between them a stray thought

...  
If the dove prolonged its cry there, they would say,  
out of extreme longing, where has al-Walid landed  
Where would someone bound to fate be?  
Scattered in [fate's] misfortunes, expelled

Al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965) one of the greatest poets of all times, has several verses related specifically to estrangement. His surname shows the character of individuality he felt among his people and community, a distinctiveness that made him feel a stranger in his own milieu. In fact, it is said that he has been given this surname “he who professes to be a prophet” after a verse he said stating his feeling of alienation: (*khafīf*)<sup>338</sup>

ما مقامي بأرض نخلة إلا  
كمقام المسيح بين اليهود

...  
أنا في أمة تداركها الله  
ه غريب كصالح في ثمود<sup>339</sup>

My staying in the land of Nakhla is similar  
To the staying of Jesus among the Jews  
I am amongst a people —may God overtake them—  
A stranger, like Ṣāliḥ amongst Thamūd

The sense of estrangement in the poetry of al-Mutanabbī is actually closely related to an expression of poetic superiority over other poets and a lack of appreciation by the audience due to their fail of understanding the meanings in his poetry. This kind of *fakhr*, or self-praise, is found in many places in his poetry collection, using different images. Using the image of the stranger in self-praise is of relevance in the present context. In the two previous verses, he compares himself one time to Jesus among the Jews and another time to Ṣāliḥ among the people of Thamūd, who were both prophets in their communities and times, but their prophecy was not recognized by their surroundings.

A similar meaning is expressed also in the verse: (*basīf*)<sup>340</sup>

إنّ النفيس غريبٌ حيثما كانا

وهكذا كنت في أهلي وفي وطني

So was I amongst my people and in my land  
For the precious one is a stranger wherever he lands

<sup>338</sup> al-Matanabbī: *al-ʿArfaṭ-Ṭayyib*, p. 16, 18.

<sup>339</sup> al-Matanabbī: *Dīwān*, p. 14, 16.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid*, p. 168.

Self-praise for the poets was not directed only towards their person being great poets, but it also applauds their poetry. Abū Tammām (d. 231/845 or 232/846) plays with the motif of the stranger and the strange in language as a merit of his poetry. In the course of describing his poetry, he speaks of the *qaṣīda*: (*basīṭ*)<sup>341</sup>

بكلّ فهمٍ غريبٍ حين تغربُ      خُذها مُعْرَبَةً في الأرضِ آيسَةً

Have it [a poem] setting out in foreign places, pleased  
With every exotic understanding while in exile

This is a rare use of the motif both personifying poetry and using three terms from the same root *gh.r.b* to highlight the image and give more importance to this quality of strangeness. The *qaṣīda* should include more of the *gharīb* as termed in literary criticism, and the different interpretation it acquires makes it better poetry. This meaning is reiterated in another verse of his: (*kāmil*)<sup>342</sup>

غُرِبَتْ خَلَاتِقُهُ وَأَغْرَبَ شَاعِرٌ      فيه فأحسنَ مُعْرَبٍ في مُعْرَبٍ

His manners are uncommon, and the poet also composes rare meaning about him;  
How well suited they are: a composer-of-rare-meanings and a man-of-good-deeds

In the following lines of al-Buḥturī, we see the distinction between two currents of poetry: *muḥdath* (modernist) and *maṭbūʿ* (naturally talented): al-Buḥturī uses *gharīb as-shiʿr* in a negative sense, this may be due to the fact that his own poetry is closer to the old traditional poets, and he is considered *maṭbūʿ*, by the literary critics, whereas Abū Tammām has used it in a positive sense as demonstrated: (*tawīl*)<sup>343</sup>

تَدَارَكَ شَمَلَ الشَّعْرِ وَالشَّعْرُ شَارِدٌ الـ      شَوَارِدٌ رَدُولٌ غَرِيبٌ الْغَرَابِيبِ  
فَضَمَّ قَوَاصِيَهُ إِلَيْهِ تَيْفَانًا      بَأَنَّ قَوَافِيَهُ سَلُوكُ الْمَنَاقِبِ

He anticipated the whole of poetry, for poetry is most deceitful of all,  
A vile and the strangest of strangers  
So he gathered his distant people to him, convinced  
That his verses are following virtues

This self-praise, both with al-Mutanabbī and Abū Tammām, is in fact part of their panegyrics, and is a poetic maneuver used often, based on raising their esteem in the first place then pleading the patron, what gives him even more glorification.<sup>344</sup>

<sup>341</sup> Abū Tammām, *Dīwān* 1/258.

<sup>342</sup> Ibid 1/107.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid 1/183.

<sup>344</sup> A similar maneuver was used particularly by some pre-Islamic poets, such as ʿAntara, in describing his epics where he praises his adversary then he depicts how he bravely defeats him in order to increase his own prominence.

Apart from involving the artistic side and linguistic terminology of *ghurba* and *gharīb* in verses of praise and self-praise, the motif witnessed other developments due to the intellectual endeavor of the poets and came to be incorporated in other contexts.

### 5.3 Instrument for the poetic profession

The motifs of estrangement and nostalgia in poetry were part of the overall intellectual sophistication that culminated in the Abbasid age. Many images carried from the tradition survived just as conformity to the poetical convention, and others acquired new elements and new functions. Their classical dimensions were now maneuvered in new genres, especially panegyrics.

A complex imagery by Abū Tammām is perhaps the best illustration of this literary craftsmanship attained in this period. The original angst from time is wrought together with the conventional motif of separation and an overview of major places that constitute the new world. Using an image of perpetual feeling of estrangement and nostalgia, the poet describes his state apart from the *mamdūh*: (*basīl*)<sup>345</sup>

<p>البيئُ أكثرُ من شوقي وأحزاني فصارَ أمْلَكُ من رُوحِي بجِثماني في بلدةٍ فظهور العيسِ أوطاني بالرَّقَتينِ وبالفسطاطِ إخواني.</p>	<p>ما اليومُ أولُ توديعٍ ولا الثاني دع الفراقَ فإنَّ الدَّهْرَ ساعدُهُ خليفةُ الخضرِ من يَرْبِغُ على وطني بالشامِ أهلي وبغدادِ الهوى وأنا</p>
---	---

This day is neither the first nor the second farewell

Departures are many more than my longing and grieves

Forget about separation, for fate is its aid

It now holds my soul more than my body does

Successor of *Khidr*, is he who abides by a home in a town,  
the backs of camels are my homes

In *Shām* are my people, *Baghdād* is the aspiration, [while] I

Am in *Riqqatayn* and my companions in *Fustat*.

The poet uses the figure of *Khidr* as a symbol of the perpetual wanderer. Although not mentioned by name, the majority of commentators and *ḥadīth* scholars associate *Khidr* with the Qur'ānic parable of *Musa* in *sūrat al-Kahf*.<sup>346</sup> But the persona of *Khidr* in the Islamic tradition as well as in other cultures holds further implications. He acquires a

<sup>345</sup> Abū Tammām: *Dīwān* 3/308-310.

<sup>346</sup> In *Sūra XVIII*, *al-Kahf*, 59-81; "God's servant" mentioned in the story of *Musa* is being identified as *Khidr*. *Mūsā* asks to follow him if he will teach him the right path (*ushd*), to which he agrees on the condition that *Musa* doesn't ask for the explanation of any act he sees. However, during the journey, the servant of God does a number of irrational things in the eyes of *Musa*, which causes the latter to lose patience so that he cannot refrain from asking for an explanation, whereupon the servant of God finally leaves him and on departing gives him the explanation of his actions, which had their good reasons. See: *al-Khidr*, *EI2*.

major importance in the Sufi tradition, where “he embodies the eternal youth of the eternal pilgrim.”<sup>347</sup> The allusion to the Qur’ānic Khidr narrative is accentuated by starting with the separation/departure “*firāq*”, echoing the decision of “Khidr” to leave Mūsa at the end of the journey. He said to him: “this is the parting of our ways” هذا فراق بيني وبينك.<sup>348</sup>

Abū Tammām’s fate is to have as home the back of camels, thus to keep wandering and not to settle in any place. His life and the important elements in it are scattered in different places. In a nostalgic tone, he reveals that he is torn between *Shām* where his people are, *Baghdād* where his heart is, *Riqqatayn* where he physically is and *Fuṣṭāṭ* where his companions are. The poet continues to describe the dissatisfaction of the distance with what it’s done to him so far, until it threw him to his peril in a remote place in *Khurasān*, underlining its ruthless character. He says:

وما أظنّ النوى ترضى بما صنعتُ      حتى تُطَوِّحَ بي أقصى خراسان  
 خلّفتُ بالأفق الغربيّ لي سكناً      قد كان عيشي به حلواً بخُلوان

I do not believe that separation would be content with what it has done [so far] to me  
 Until it throws me to my peril in the furthest Place of Khurasan  
 I have left behind in the western horizon a home  
 Where my living was pleasant there in *Hulwān*

Fate, separation and distance appear in this passage as one kinship, all plotting against Abū Tammām to keep him alienated and in this perpetual state of estrangement, where he can’t settle in one place and where he is destined to longing to the different places that he was once attached to.<sup>349</sup>

As much as these verses represent a deep expression of estrangement and nostalgia, when considering that they are opening verses to a panegyric, they acquire a different evaluation. In fact, this is an illustration of a development of the *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* motif itself and its function especially in the Abbasid *madīḥ* poetry, where it started to shift from a traditional *aṭlāl* scene towards an urban *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*.<sup>350</sup> More revealing here is that this nostalgia and estrangement is now instrumentalized by poets mainly to draw the attention of the *mamdūḥ* to their miserable state and represent him as their

<sup>347</sup> Oliver Leaman, *The Qur’an: an Encyclopedia*, p. 344.

<sup>348</sup> Kahf, 78.

<sup>349</sup> This appears further in this poem, verse 12:

إذا نوى الدهر أن يودي بتالده      لم يستعن غير كفيه بأعوان

This is to complete the image of fate being the aid (literally arm) of separation, then we see here that fate is the arm and the hands are separation (*firāq*) and distance (*nawā*).

<sup>350</sup> See “City panegyric” in *EI3*.



savior or pursued aim, thus achieving their goal of obtaining an award. In light of this interpretation, the verses of Abū Tammām can now be better understood as a fated alienation because he has to keep travelling from one patron to the other in order to seek grants, which did not allow him to settle in one home.

Another common adaptation of the stranger for the purpose of praise, is describing the *mamdūh* as a stranger in the positive sense, equivalent to unique and of rare existence. This attribute can also open up the way to exaggeration or specification, as to define the reason of this exclusivity: here the poet excels in finding qualities for his patron. We find this poetic tool naturally in the verses of the major court poets of the Abbasid period. Establishing a comparison between his *mamdūh* and rain, Abū Tammām introduces the motif of stranger and says: (*khafīf*)<sup>351</sup>

لأبي جعفر خلأئقُ تحكبُ  
هن قد يُشْبهُ النجيبَ النجيبُ  
أنت فينا في ذا الأوان غريبُ  
وهو فينا في كلِّ وقتٍ غريبُ

Abū Jaafar has manners that resemble your showers  
Those of noble character are comparable  
You are this once as a stranger amongst us  
He is amongst us at every time a stranger

The status of *gharīb* (stranger) and the condition of estrangement was hence not only applied to the poet himself, but we see that it was used for the *mamdūh* as a manner of praising him of being distinguished, being different than the rest of the people.<sup>352</sup> Again, Abū Tammām says about one of his patrons: (*khafīf*)<sup>353</sup>

غَرَبَتْه العلى على كثرة النا  
س فأضحى في الأقربين جنيبا  
فليطُل عمره فلو مات في مر  
وَ مقيماً بها لمات غريبا

Hi sublimity distinguished him from the masses  
He thus became distant to his surrounding  
May his life be long! Would he die in *Marw*  
Where he lives, he would die as a stranger

Ibn ar-Rūmī also uses the stranger in a similar way as Abū Tammām, making glory the distinctive character earning the *mamdūh* the status of stranger. He says: (*tawīl*)<sup>354</sup>

أعاذك أنسُ المجدِ من كلِّ وحشةٍ  
فإنك في هذا الأنامِ غريبُ

May the companionship of glory spare you any loneliness  
For you are a stranger amongst mankind

<sup>351</sup> Abū Tammām: *Dīwān* 1/293.

<sup>352</sup> See also, Bauer, *Fremdheit*, p. 98.

<sup>353</sup> Abū Tammām: *Dīwān* 1/162.

<sup>354</sup> Ibn ar-Rūmī: *Dīwān* 1/158.

This new connotation of estrangement seems to be appropriate for serving this genre of poetry, since the poet can flexibly customize it to the meaning he wishes. The motif is actually undefined: *gharīb* can hold many meaning as shown,<sup>355</sup> therefore it can be interpreted in several ways depending on the context, and represents different qualities which make the *mamdūh* exceptional. This is an instance where Ibn ar-Rūmī does use both *gharīb* and *ghurba* without a specific attribute of his *mamdūh*: (*khafīf*)<sup>356</sup>

وَعَرِيبٍ مَسْتَبِثٍ النَّفْسِ بِالْعَزْ  
بَةِ فَرْدٍ مَسْتَأْسٍ بِأَفْرَادِهِ

Many a stranger rejoicing himself in estrangement  
By himself enjoying his singularity

This verse is indeed remarkable as it may suggest that the image of the motif of *ghurba* and *gharīb* has been now established in the panegyric genre with a common understanding of its implication. Many images in Arabic poetry, describing different elements like the camel or wine, using especially metonymies, are familiar to the hearers because of the common cultural referential context and the poetical practice. In praise poetry, comparing the *mamdūh* to the sea for instance is a common means to praise his perpetual generosity. Likewise, stranger and estrangement signify here de facto a person of incomparable qualities among all others.

The poetic artistry with this motif is also manifested in using its double meaning. Al-Buḥturī in a panegyric says: (*wāfir*)<sup>357</sup>

عَرِيبٍ جِيَّةٍ وَعَرِيبٍ أَضٍ  
يُنَوِّلُنَا حَمُولَةً مِنْ عِيْدٍ  
فَمَا أَكْدَى الْعَرِيبُ عَلَى الْعَرِيبِ  
وَيَحْرُمُنَا جَالٌ مِنْ قَرِيبِ

Stranger by nature and stranger by land  
Never was the first ungenerous to the second  
Ḥamūla would donate for us and he is far-away  
Whereas some men deprive us while they are close-by

Of course the stranger by nature is the praised one, since his nature is not like any other, and the stranger by land is the poet who left his home to seek reward in exchange of his praise poems. In light of the interpretations of *ghurba* analysed until here, we see in this example that al-Buḥturī combines the two meanings together: a first negative one, that of the stranger away from his homeland, and the positive one denoted as an undeniable quality. At the same time, he is trying to establish a sort of connection and resemblance

<sup>355</sup> Review “Introduction: Defining the terms”.

<sup>356</sup> Ibn ar-Rūmī: *Dīwān* 2/709.

<sup>357</sup> Al-Buḥturī: *Dīwān* 1/262.

between him and his *mamdūh*, of course to serve the purpose of his poem and convince his recipient to compensate him for his words.

One unique poetic occurrence is interesting to mention here. The motif of *hanīn* is used in a very peculiar instance of lampoon/invective (*hijā'*), in two verses of Ibn ar-Rūmī (d. ≈283/296). It is probably one of the sole context where the term is being used in a defaming sexual context. In a poem denigrating al-Akhfash aṣ-Ṣaghīr, he says about his mother: (*mutaqārib*)<sup>358</sup>

لها كل يوم إلى فاسق  
حنين قطام إلى جحوش  
She longs everyday in desire to a fornicator  
The way a falcon desires small donkeys

The contribution of the intellectual movement has given a new dimension to the concept of stranger and estrangement: as seen earlier, in the other aspects, there was more a melancholic and negative sense of it, whereas in the illustrations discussed here, it is more of a positive feature, that became part of the debates of the Abbasid period and the issues pertinent to the milieu then, and it was incorporated in the genres that most flourished.

## 5.4 Religious estrangement

Later in the 3<sup>rd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> century, there was more interest in the idea of *ghurba* than *hanīn*, from the intellectual perspective, perhaps for religious reasons: the clear call was to abandon everything related to the past age, the *jāhiliyya*, and to avoid looking back in reminiscence. Of course, this was not applied exclusively, as mentioned in some of the social aspects revealed in poetry and the kind of nostalgia some poets expressed.<sup>359</sup> The famous *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muhammad “Islam began as a stranger and will return as a stranger, so blessed are strangers”<sup>360</sup> started gaining some attention and circulation, especially with the rising of the Sufī movement. The social and spiritual decadence in the 4<sup>th</sup> century criticized by poets like al-Ma‘arrī, and Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī for example, has also contributed in building up the feeling of dissatisfaction of how life turned to be, and as a reaction emerged the poetry of *zuhd* or ascetic, whose pioneer is considered to be Abū al-‘Atāhiya.

<sup>358</sup> Ibn ar-Rūmī: *Dīwān* 3/1249.

<sup>359</sup> Review Chapter 4, the social dimension, 4.2.

<sup>360</sup> Muslim 145.

As religious works based on the hadith on stranger are two major treatises: *Kitāb al-ghurabā'* (The book of strangers)<sup>361</sup> by al-Ājurrī (d. 360/971) and *Kashf al-kurba fī waṣf ḥāl ahl al-ghurba* (Relieving affliction in describing the state of the people of strangehood) by Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī (d. 795). In both titles we see reference to the “agents” of *ghurba*, in the first title using a plural form of the adjective strangers and, in the second title, using a composed noun, people of strangehood.

Al-Ājurrī's book, which falls within the period discussed here, defines who are the *ghurabā'* and gives examples of those who believe in God, who did not care about the splendor of this world, as their souls rose above the earthly world, those who honor their morals and were called semi-prophetic. It begins by presenting the different commentaries of the *ḥadīth* on strangers, and citing verses, mostly with unknown attribution, on the same meanings. The image that can be assembled of the *gharīb* is someone who holds all virtues and good manners of Islam, who is patient, but he is also the one who distances himself from the corrupt community, he is the knowledgeable among ignorant. The stranger is destined to sorrow and little joy, except that God is going to reward him. This is where al-Ājurrī assigns a chapter on inciting the reader to reach the status of a stranger. Two remarkable observations on this work are: first, that it has many citations from Sufī sources, in agreement of what will be discussed further below; and second, that the emphasis on the isolation of the *ghurabā'* in the society, a characteristic that is later traced in the poetry of *zuhd*.

The major poet discussed here is Abū al-ʿAtāhiya, who is considered the forerunner of al-Maʿarrī, yet the poetry of the latter which has been discussed in the section above is more philosophical than what is present in this section. In fact, the words of Nicholson justify best the choice to classify the two poets in two different sections:

“Maʿarrī has been compared with his celebrated predecessor Abu ʿl-ʿAtāhiya. Since both preach asceticism, their poems naturally have much in common, but Abu ʿl-ʿAtāhiya writes in a relatively orthodox religious spirit which quite lacks the breadth and freedom of al-Maʿarrī's philosophical outlook. The one is a Moslem, the other a citizen of the world. And the style of the Luzum, though less easy, is far superior in force and originality”<sup>362</sup>.

---

<sup>361</sup> *Kitāb al-Ghurabā'*, Abū Bakr Muḥammad al-Ājurrī, ed. Bad al-Badr, Dar al-Khulafa'li l-Kitab al-Islami, Kuwait, 1983.

<sup>362</sup> Nicholson, Reynold: *Studies in Islamic Poetry*. Cambridge University Press. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Cambridge. 1969. p. 52 no. 2.

The spiritual and religious development in the poetry of Abū al-‘Atāhiya, especially as he introduced the genre of ascetic poetry or *zuhdiyyāt*, marks the use of the motif of estrangement. Themes of mortality of the human being, the futility of his action and the insignificance of his social status are the core of his poetry.<sup>363</sup> The *zuhdiyyāt* of Abū al-‘Atāhiya could be in many perspectives compared to the panegyric *qaṣīda*, but whereas in the latter the patron is portrayed as the invincible hero who can defeat anything, including fate, in the former man is appears to be deprived of all power, and the praise goes to the only triumphant, who would be God.<sup>364</sup> This is where particular themes such as repentance, piety, contentment, modesty and others are instituted in his verses.

He reiterates the image of man being a stranger in the worldly life, regardless of how much he achieves. Actually, we see also the motif of home very present in his poetry, what he refers to as “*dār*” most of the times, referring to the Islamic understanding. The earthly life is ephemeral (*dār al-fanā*) and full of vice, whereas the pursued life which he preached for is eternal. He says: (*mutaqārib*)<sup>365</sup>

أراك لدنياك مستوطناً

ألم تدري أنك فيها غريب

I see you anchored in your worldly-life  
Do you not know that you are a stranger in it

He depicts the fact that man lives in a surrounding similar to him, but if he ages and gets older then he lives in a time other than the time in which he lived with his companions, so he becomes a stranger. It is then worthless to live longer if one keeps doing misdeeds: (*tawīl*)<sup>366</sup>

إذا ما مضى القرنُ الذي كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ

وَحُلِفْتَ فِي قَرْنٍ فَأَنْتَ غَرِيبٌ

If the people you live among perish  
And you were left among others, you are then a stranger

Death is also another theme the poet frequently reminds his audience of. In the following verses, he refers to the spatial estrangement of the dead in his grave, as well as the inner alienation that causes sadness and depression in the soul. By describing the frightening atmosphere of the grave, together with the miserable condition of the person now inhabiting it and his disintegrating body, Abū al-‘Atāhiya catches the feel of alienation. The terms he uses: lonely, desolated and secluded, they all add together to mean feeling

<sup>363</sup> Stefan Sperl: Mannerism in Arabic literature, p. 81.

<sup>364</sup> Stefan Sperl, Mannerism in Arabic literature, p. 82.

<sup>365</sup> Abū al-‘Atāhiya: *Dīwān*, p. 50.

<sup>366</sup> *Ibid*, p. 34.

a stranger. The alienation in the grave has its own bitterness, because it is related to the inability of man to act in front of the force majeure. But again, even when one is dead, he remains a stranger in his grave, suffering from solitude there: (*kāmil*)<sup>367</sup>

أمسى وقد قُطعت هناك حباله يومًا ولا لطف الحبيب يناله متشيتًا بعد الجميع عياله وتفرقت في قبره أوصاله	ما حالٌ من سكن الثرى ما حاله أمسى ولا رَوْحُ الحياة تصيبه أمسى وحيدًا موحشًا متفردًا أمسى وقد درست محاسن وجهه
--	--

Oh, how is the one who inhabits the soil  
 He ended up having his strings cut off  
 He ended up without a breath of life reaching him  
 Any day, and the kindness of the beloved not attaining him  
 He ended up lonely, desolate, secluded  
 And his family after all is scattered  
 The beautiful features of his face vanished  
 And his parts in his grave dismembered

Abū al-‘Atāhiya stressed the equity of all beings face to death, since fate will spear no one and neither wealth nor conquest will make a difference when the time comes to die. He also criticized the ruling class of his time and expressed resentment towards the upper strata of society, perhaps because he himself came from a humble background. Again, even influential figures, who own palaces and armies, will confront death, which will turn them into strangers to the worldly life: (*mutaqārib*)<sup>368</sup>

وَرِيحٌ تُرَى الْأَرْضِ مِنْ عَطْرِهِ غَرِيبٌ وَإِنْ كَانَ فِي مِصْرِهِ	وَبَدَلٌ بِالْبُيُوطِ فَرَشَ الثَّرَى أَخُو سَفَرٍ مَا لَهُ أُوْبَةٌ
--	---

He substituted the carpets with the spread of soil  
 And the smell of the soil is of his scent  
 A follower of travel, [now] he has no return  
 A stranger, even when he is in his own land

We find this meaning in a verse by Abū Firās, who has some verses along the *zuhd* genre. In a short poem, he speaks of the esteemed and humiliated kind of people, when in grave they become equal in their loneliness and estrangement: (*mutaqārib*)<sup>369</sup>

وحيدين تحت طباق الثرى	غريبين ما لهما مؤنس
-----------------------	---------------------

Two strangers without a companion  
 Alone in the folds of the earth

For Abū al-‘Atāhiya, death appears to be certitude and longing is now directed not only towards the lost ones who passed away, but it is also a longing to be at the same place

<sup>367</sup> Ibid, p. 369.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid, p. 207.

<sup>369</sup> Abū Firās: *Dīwān*, p.22.

and join them. The poet uses the same traditional image of *ḥanīn* to the inhabitants of homeland, yet substituting the homeland with graves: (*munsariḥ*)<sup>370</sup>

ما أعجب الموت ثم أعجب من  
 حن لأهل القبور من تقتي  
 له مؤمن موقن به ضجكا  
 إن حن قلبي إليهم وبكى

How astonishing is death, more astonishing  
 Is a convinced believer in it with a laugh  
 He longed for the graves' inhabitants out of faith  
 When my heart longed for them and wept

The line of *zuhd* poetry that Abu al-'Atahiya established has also been expressed by other poets whose verses had a more religious connotation. We will discuss here two different major examples, namely ash-Shāfi'ī (d. 204/820) and ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī (d. 406/1016).

As a matter of fact, al-Imām ash-Shāfi'ī has been more famous for being a scholar and jurist rather than a poet. More specifically, he is one of the Imams after which the four Sunni schools of law have been named, still he has a poetry collection and has been quoted in *adab* anthologies, notably on the theme of estrangement and related theme of travel.<sup>371</sup>

The theme of *zuhd* and detachment from the earthly pleasure is over all present in his poetry. What is remarkable for the reader is his invitation to constant travel. This could be on one hand related to his biography, as he moved between Mecca, Medina, Irak, Najran and Egypt. On the other hand, it reflects a deliberate approach to living. It appears that he recurrently emphasizes the benefits of travelling, as he articulates it in the following verses: (*tawīl*)<sup>372</sup>

تَعَرَّبَ عَنِ الْأَوْطَانِ فِي طَلَبِ الْعُلَا  
 تَفَرُّجُ هَمِّ وَاكْتِسَابُ مَعِيشَةٍ  
 وَسَافِرٌ فِي الْأَسْفَارِ خَمْسُ فَوَائِدِ  
 وَعِلْمٌ وَأَدَابٌ وَصَحْبَةُ مَلَدٍ

Leave the lands to seek high ranks  
 And travel, for travelling has five advantages  
 Relieving worries, gaining a living,  
 Knowledge, culture and company of the noble man

Obviously, this is a pragmatic view that prioritizes the well being of man in his life, and does not have the reductionist approach of Abū al-'Atāhiya or al-Ma'arrī for instance, and the idea of the insignificance of the worldly life. Nevertheless, the sense of

<sup>370</sup> Abū al-'Atāhiya: *Dīwān*, p. 302.

<sup>371</sup> See for example: al-Qurṭubī: *Bahjat al-Majālis* 1/224;

<sup>372</sup> Ash-Shāfi'ī: *Dīwān*, p. 61.

alienation from discomforts and inadequate treatment from the entourage could also be understood from some of his other verses. In this meaning he says: (*basīl*)<sup>373</sup>

ما في المقام لذي عَقْلٍ وَذِي أَدَبٍ  
سَافِرٌ تَجِدُ عَوَضاً عَمَّنْ تُفَارِقُهُ  
مِنْ رَاحَةِ فَدَعِ الْأَوْطَانَ وَاعْتَرِبْ  
وَإِنصَبْ فَإِنَّ لَذِيذَ الْعَيْشِ فِي النِّصَبِ

فَلَا تَعْرَبْ هَذَا عَزَّ مَطْلَبُهُ  
وَإِن تَعْرَبْ ذَاكَ عَزَّ كَالذَّهَبِ

There is no comfort for the intellectual and cultured in settlement  
Then leave the homelands and depart  
Travel, you shall find a substitute for those you are leaving behind  
Do endure, for the joy of life is in suffering

...

When this one depart, he becomes cherished  
When that one leaves, he becomes dear as gold

Furthermore, this example, together with another one of a similar meaning,<sup>374</sup> are in effect far from being among the *zuhd* genre and reminds us instead of the alienation expressed in verses from al-Mutanabbī and Abū Tammām, stemming from a self-worth and personal distinction from the rest of people.<sup>375</sup> Of course, the two previously cited poets were talking in terms of their poetic skills and the value of their poetry, but this is not the case for the Imām. Although he was fond of poetry and *adab*<sup>376</sup> and was praised for his eloquence<sup>377</sup> and his poetry,<sup>378</sup> the relevant explanation for this poetic statement, might be his resentment towards some incidents he faced in the course of his life, mainly his disagreement with his master's Mālikī school of law, and later his incident with the caliph Harūn ar-Rashīd, allegedly considered by some as inquisition (*miḥna*).<sup>379</sup>

But in addition to this, the image of estrangement that we trace in his poetry seems not to be connected with a religious or ascetic aspect. On the contrary, this determination to depart and be ready to go anywhere in order to achieve his goal is closer to the poetic

<sup>373</sup> Ibid, p. 25-26.

<sup>374</sup> See *ibid*, p. 103-104.

<sup>375</sup> Review 4.2 above.

<sup>376</sup> In a verse, he explicitly states that, had it not been for his religious status, he would have been a better poet than Labīd. See the poem on *fakhr* in his *Dīwān*, p. 58.

<sup>377</sup> See what different scholars, such as al-Aṣma'ī, Tha'lab and al-Jāḥiẓ say about his eloquence in the introduction of Ahmad Shaker to his edition of ar-Risāla by ash-Shāfi'ī: p. 13-14.

<sup>378</sup> Ibn Rashīq, al-Mubarrad and others also praise his poetic skills; see the introduction of Mujāhid Bahjat to his edition of the *Dīwān*, p. 16. His early contact with the Hudhayl tribe, known for having many poets among them, and the long period he spent among them, could be a source of this poetic fascination.

<sup>379</sup> See the discussion on this disputed incident in: Akashi Moteki "The *Miḥna* of Imām al-Shāfi'ī", in *Orient* Volume 48, 2013, p. 3-20.



attitude of *jāhili* poets vis-à-vis fate and his longing to defeat it by his journey, his accomplishments and his poetry. He says: (*tawīl*)<sup>380</sup>

سَأَضْرِبُ فِي طَوْلِ الْبِلَادِ وَعَرَضِهَا      أَنَالُ مُرَادِي أَوْ أَمُوتُ غَرِيبًا

I will roam in the land in all directions  
Until I obtain my intent or I die a stranger

But what is it that as-Shāfi‘ī wants? He chooses alienation seeking knowledge, as mentioned earlier, but also as a refuge from attacks because of his opinion. Still, when he is in a strange land, it seems he looks for matters of argumentation: (*tawīl*)<sup>381</sup>

وَأَنْزَلَنِي طَوْلَ النَّوَى دَارَ غُرَابَةٍ      إِذَا شِئْتُ لَأَقِيبُ أَمْرًا لَا أُشَاكِلُهُ  
أَحَامِفُهُ حَتَّى أَقَالَ سَجِيَّةً      وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا عَقْلٍ لَكُنْتُ أَعَاظِلُهُ

Long travelling brought me to strange land  
If I want I find a matter that I do not approve of  
I play the fool and pretend it is a nature  
Had it been reasonable, I would have treated it with reason

On the other hand, it is interesting also that his *Dīwān* includes very rarely mention of longing, for he is constantly advocating dislocation.<sup>382</sup> An existential kind of estrangement has thus not been tracked in ash-Shāfi‘ī’s poetry, nor has the fact that he is an Imam really influenced his perspective on this concept. He expressed instead a positive view towards it as a retreat from burdens.

From his side, ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī (d. 406/1016), who was in the first place a poet but enjoyed a religious standing in the Imāmī Shī‘ism,<sup>383</sup> was very prolific on motifs of estrangement and nostalgia. In fact, his *Dīwān* includes in addition to panegyrics mainly to family and friends, many elegies written also for his friends, family and ancestors who go back to the grandson of the Prophet Muḥammad, al-Husayn b. ‘Alī, and *ghazal* poems. It is in these two latter genres that he extensively used the traditional motifs of the *qaṣīda*, especially homes, in articulating images of estrangement characterized by remorse, lamentation and a melancholic tone which are communicated through different stylistic and linguistic means, such as vocative (*nidā’*), repetition, rhetorical questions and parallelism, as we shall see in the illustrations below. He has also preserved much of

<sup>380</sup> Ash-Shāfi‘ī: *Dīwān*, p. 27-28. This verse resonates with the one by ‘Antara:

دَعَوْنِي أَجْدُ السَّعْيِ فِي طَلْبِ الْغَلَا      فَأَدْرِكُ سُؤْلِي أَوْ أَمُوتُ فَأَعْذُرُ

Let me strive earnestly to reach a high rank  
Either I fulfill my wish or die and be excused

<sup>381</sup> Ash-Shāfi‘ī: *Dīwān*, p. 123.

<sup>382</sup> We identified one instance that reflects his longing to Mecca: as-Shāfi‘ī: *Dīwān*, p. 109.

<sup>383</sup> On his biography, see: *EI2*, “al-*Sharīf al-Raḍī*”.

the conventional topos of *ḥanīn ilā al-awṭān* whether in the opening of his remarkably lengthy poems, or within the core text.<sup>384</sup> It is important to mention that the poetry of ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī seems to be founded in the tragedy of al-Husayn's killing,<sup>385</sup> whether from the dominant elegiac aspect on his verses generally, or the content of his poem, as he has also written open elegies about him.<sup>386</sup>

We can discern two main interpretations of stranger and estrangement in poetry: the first one refers to the poet himself and corresponds to the meaning of a prevailing existential feeling and position of being a stranger in this life because of an intellectual disposition, a notion shared with the previous poets discussed in this chapter. On that he says: (*tawīl*)<sup>387</sup>

لِفَضْلِي فِي هَذَا الزَّمَانِ غَرِيبٌ                      فَمَا لِي طَوْلَ الدَّهْرِ شَيْ كَأَنِّي

Wherefore am I, all the time moving as if,  
due to my merit, I am a stranger in this time

The same dimension of boasted estrangement is reiterated with the addition of an explicit declaration of alienation within one's own community. Not only is the poet a stranger of his time, but also among his family and kinship when ties between them have changed, so that the poet does not find anyone that resembles him and therefore he cannot identify himself with any of them: (*tawīl*)<sup>388</sup>

وَإِنْ جَمَعْتَ أَعْرَاقَنَا نَبَعَاتِهَا                      لَقَدْ غَرَبْتَنِي حُظْوَةَ الْفَضْلِ عَنْكُمْ  
إِذَا فُقِدَ أَشْكَالُهَا وَلِدَائِهَا                      وَالنَّفْسُ فِي الْأَهْلِينَ إِلَّا غَرِيبَةٌ

Achieving grace drove me away from you,  
Even when our origins hold their roots together  
The soul is but a stranger among its people  
When its equals and fellows wane

One can read in these verses the sense of rebuke that ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī is communicating to his tribesmen, which becomes clearer in the political context of the whole poem.

In all cases, there is a recurrent feeling of agony in most of his poems, especially in verses of estrangement. Travel and departure are portrayed as source of sorrow in life.

<sup>384</sup> See for example in his *Dīwān*: 1/97; 1/594; 2/281; 2/420.

<sup>385</sup> Jāsim: *al-Ighṭirāb fī āyāt wa shi'r ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī*, p. 14-15.

<sup>386</sup> For example: Ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī: *Dīwān* 2/168-171;

<sup>387</sup> As-Sharīf ar-Raḍī 1/184.

<sup>388</sup> *Ibid* 1/204. See also in the same meaning: 1/296.

Nostalgic longing is evoked to complete a cycle of mourning. In contrast to ash-Shāfi‘ī, travelling to foreign lands leads eventually to death: (*tawīl*)<sup>389</sup>

وَإِنْ شِئْتَ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ الْجَمَامُ فَفَارِقْ      إِذَا شِئْتَ أَنْ لَا تَهْجَرَ الِهَمَّ فَأَعْتَرِبْ  
وَلَا سِيَّمَا قَلْبَ الْغَرِيبِ الْمُفَارِقِ      فَكُلُّ غَرِيبٍ يَأْلَفُ الِهَمُّ قَلْبَهُ

If you wish not to abandon the worry then travel  
And if you wish death to come then depart  
For every stranger’s heart befriends worry  
In particular the stranger who leaves

It is remarkable that in many instances the verb used for travelling is mostly “*ihgtaraba*” and not “*sāfara*”, which underlines the evident connection between the two verbs: every travel holds in it a feeling of estrangement. This again reveals his holistic view on the nature of man’s existence in life. Although this then represents the intellectual contribution of his poetry, essentially through its wisdom nature, ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī, as mentioned earlier, remained faithful to the earlier images and motifs, especially the earlier *hanīn* ones. In the same poem cited, he adds:

وَكَم أَنَا وَقَافٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مَنْزِلٍ      وَكَمْ أَنَا مُرْتَاخٌ إِلَى كُلِّ بَارِقٍ  
أَحْنُ إِلَى مَنْ لَا يَجِنُّ صَبَابَةً      وَمَا وَاجِدُ قَلْبًا مَشُوقٍ وَشَائِقٍ

How many times I stand at every dwelling  
How I feel comfort to every lightening  
I long fervently to someone who doesn’t long [for me]  
And I don’t find the hearts of a desiring and desirable

The other character of the stranger appears mostly in his *rithā’*, when mourning the deceased who becomes a stranger to the earthly life which he refers to as “home” with the different terms likely used. He says in one of his poems lamenting al-Ḥusayn: (*khafīf*)<sup>390</sup>

يَا غَرِيبَ الدِّيَارِ صَبْرِي غَرِيبٌ      وَقَتِيلَ الْأَعْدَاءِ نَوْمِي قَتِيلٌ  
بِي نِزَاعٍ يَطْعَى إِلَيْكَ وَشَوْقٌ      وَعَرَامٌ وَرَفْرَةٌ وَعَوِيلٌ

Oh stranger [away from] homes, my patience is scarce,  
[Oh] victim of the enemies, my sleep has been slain  
I am dominated by a desire and longing for you,  
[By] love, moaning and wailing

In life one is a stranger and in death one is a stranger too as the poet points out. In his elegy, he reminds his addressee —and his audiences— of this bitter existential truth, that

<sup>389</sup> Ibid 2/54.

<sup>390</sup> Ibid 2/170.

once death captures him, he can never come back, becoming a stranger to this life he calls home: (*tawīl*)<sup>391</sup>

غَرِيبٌ عَنِ الْأَوْطَانِ لَا لَكَ هَبَّةٌ  
إِلَيْهَا وَلَا عَدَاةَ الْمُضِيِّ رُجُوعٌ  
A stranger away from home you shall not return  
As there is no turning back after departure

As seen so far, the predominance of the character of wisdom and preaching on poetry of al-Ma‘arrī, Abū l-‘Atāhiya, ash-Shāfi‘ī, and ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī is coupled with their disenchantment—to borrow Schiller’s expression—from the time they live in. The religious dimension of estrangement and nostalgia, which is partially seen in the *zuhd* genre of poetry, had only a modest appeal in the poetry of the period up to the 4<sup>th</sup> century. It is not until the end of the century and in later times that this motif gained circulation within another branch of *zuhd* literature, Sufism.

During this time period, it was only the debut of notions like estrangement, expressed as *ghurba* and *ightirāb* interchangeably, in the literature of early sufi figures and the limited body of poetry. The concept of *ghurba* is best presented by al-Harawī (d. 481/1089) in his work *Manāzil as-Sā’irīn* (The stations of the seekers) among the one hundred *maqām* (station). In fact, *ghurba* is listed under number 77 in the *wilāyāt* section, which is equivalent to a state of sainthood in the sufi tradition,<sup>392</sup> and is composed of three categories: *ghurba al-awṭān* (homelands), *ghurba al-ḥāl* (state) and *ghurba al-himma* (zeal).<sup>393</sup> The central idea is that the Sufi, or seeker of truth (God) is a stranger in this world begins his journey by leaving his homelands, leaving his community; he becomes a righteous man in a vile time, and that is the man of knowledge among ignorant and the friend among hypocrites. This category, as one can understand, is intended by the *ḥadīth* on *ghurabā’*, as al-Harawī says: “and this [category] is among the *ghurabā’* who are blessed”. Lastly, it is the estrangement of the *‘ārif* who has reached cognition of the truth and this estrangement of all estrangement (*ghurba al-ghurba*), for he is a stranger in the earthly life and in the hereafter.

<sup>391</sup> Ibid 1/591.

<sup>392</sup> On *wilāya*, see: Knysh, *A New History of Islamic Mysticism*, p. 42-44. It is interesting that al-Harawī in his introduction states that each one of these stations has three levels, the second being “going through *ghurba*” (*dukhūluhu fī l-ghurba*), which he explains as being related to a *ḥadīth gharīb* saying that seeking the truth is a *ghurba*: *Manāzil as-Sā’irīn*, p. 7, 9.

<sup>393</sup> Al-Harawī: *Manāzil as-Sā’irīn*, p.108-109.

Al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1072) a contemporary of al-Harawī, also lists *ghurba* as one of the compiled one hundred terms that somehow sum up sufism, in his booklet *‘Ibārāt aṣ-Ṣūfiyya* (as number 71). He also lists *watan* (as number 93), which he defines as the sufi servant’s final settlement.<sup>394</sup>

The concept of *ghurba* in the Sufi literature has been elaborated later on, especially in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries, with a major contribution of Ibn al-‘Arabī (d. 638/1240) in his seminal work *al-Futūḥāt al-Makiyya*.<sup>395</sup>

As in Sufi poetry, the direct references to *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* are rare, we find with the early figures of Sufism some verses. For example, Abū Sa‘īd al-Kharrāz (d. 286/899) a Sufi of the school of Baghdad is heard saying: (*tawīl*)<sup>396</sup>

وتذكّرهم وقت المناجاة لسرّ فأغفوا عن دنيا كإغفاء ذي السكر	حنين قلوب عارفين ي ذكر أديرت كؤوس لمنايا عليهم
--	---

The mystics’ longing hearts to invocation  
Their remembrance of the secret while praying  
Glasses of death were turned towards them  
They slumber away from life like the drunken slumbers away

Finally, perhaps the most articulate author who “infused literary tradition with both Sufi internalization and philosophical discipline in a way that was hardly possible after him”<sup>397</sup> is Abū Ḥayyān at-Tawḥīdī (d. 414/1023). It seems that he has different personal and psychological reasons to be occupied with the status of stranger and the state of estrangement, which can be tracked in different works of at-Tawḥīdī, but it is in his *al-Ishārāt al-Ilāhiyya* that he dedicated an essay to this subject.<sup>398</sup> This essay in a form of epistle is based on the central idea that estrangement has three ascending stages, the last one being more profound and more painful than the former ones: an estrangement from the homeland, and estrangement from the community and estrangement in the essence of the human being.<sup>399</sup> This is in fact an understanding which is very close to that of al-Harawī discussed above. Interestingly, at-Tawḥīdī makes the distinction between the

<sup>394</sup> Al-Qushayri: *‘Ibārāt*, p. 56, 59.

<sup>395</sup> Ibn al-‘Arabī: *al-Futūḥāt al-Makiyya* 4/234-237.

<sup>396</sup> Al-Qushayrī: *Risāla*, p. 501.

<sup>397</sup> Rozenthal: *Stranger*, p. 55.

<sup>398</sup> At-Tawḥīdī: *al-Ishārāt al-Ilāhiyya*, p. 80-87.

<sup>399</sup> Qadi: *al-gharib*, p.129-132.

essence of estrangement that he means and the one expressed in al-Mutanabbī's verse:  
(*basīṭ*)<sup>400</sup>

بِمِ التَّعَلُّ لَأ أَهْلٌ لَأ وَلَا وِطْنٌ      وَلَا نَدِيمٌ وَلَا كَأْسٌ وَلَا سَكْنٌ  
With what shall I console myself, being without my people, my home,  
Having neither boon-fellow, nor cup, nor any to comfort me

In this poetic verse it is a social estrangement which is not the main problem, because al-Mutannabī's stranger stops to be one once he regains these lost things; whereas the ultimate estrangement that aches at-Tawhīdī is the source of all trouble and it lies in the heart of the stranger, it is his essence as he says.<sup>401</sup>

From the definition of *ghurba* as a *maqām* in Sufi teachings, the connection and continuation of the concept of *zuhd* is visible, and it is more intellectually elaborated. For the Sufis as well as for the poets treated in this section, the subject is in a state of estrangement among the rest of people because he possesses something that others don't, whether a poetic gift or a divine knowledge.

---

<sup>400</sup> al-Mutanabbī: *Dīwān*, p. 468. The translation is from Arberry, *Poems of al-Munabbi: A Selection*, p. 102.

<sup>401</sup> Qadi: al-gharīb, p.133-134.

## 6. Conclusion

The continuum of estrangement and nostalgia in Arabic poetry up to the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century developed along the geographic, emotional, social and intellectual dimensions at distinct degrees.

The prevailing motif of *ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān* (nostalgia to the homelands) represents the foundation of this continuum, and it is associated with the major conventional constituent of the Arabic ode, the *aṭlāl* opening of the *qaṣīda*. In the Arabic culture, precisely in times before urbanization, the relationship with space was very important since the desert makes up the Bedouins' whole world and most of their existence revolves around their survival in this place. The relationship of the human being with the elements of the desert, as this appears in poetry, rests to a great extent on the personification of these elements, especially the camel. This figure appears to be a key poetic character holding much of the articulation on estrangement and nostalgia, especially in the pre-Islamic poetry. With time, and with the growth of other poetic forms than the traditional *qaṣīda*, the camel as image of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* remained only as a convention, and gave way to other motifs. Apart from the camel, other elements of the desert were particularly instigators of feelings of estrangement and nostalgia to the Bedouins, such as fauna and flora and meteorological factors, which were translated as a distinct pattern of short poems collected by later authors, and forming the seed for later development in poetic genres. The geopolitical events of the early Islamic period had naturally an impact on the poetic expression of the Arabs, in particular the substantial movement of conquests and later on the development of sedentary life and establishment of cities, which introduced new perspectives on issues of belonging and homeland. That has thus created an increase in images on estrangement related to the new environments of expansion together with a pattern of images communicating the nostalgia towards the Bedouin familiar milieu. Similar poetic images and metaphors were transposed on the *nasīb* prelude with names of places referring now to the new appropriated geographies, in a way that places that were once of estrangement became now places of nostalgia.

These spatial elements therefore defined which places were those of belonging, homes, and which were those of estrangement, but they also played a role on the emotional

level, namely within poetry on love, where they performed as major motifs of *ghurba* and *hanīn*. The two main components among them are the desert of Najd and the wind of Saba; the first functioning as a symbol of the beloved and the second being the most frequent intermediary of nostalgia. Estrangement in the context of love poetry, *ghazal*, has been transferred from the place to the person, implying a longing to a distant beloved, or a beloved in a shattered relationship. In fact, *ghurba* and *hanīn* appear as a characteristic of the courtly love poetry, *ghazal 'udhrī*, which started growing in the beginning of the Umayyad period and expanded throughout. Since this poetic genre is founded on unachieved love, it includes expressions of suffering and grief on behalf of the poet, with an attempt of consolation through the memory of pleasant moments related to the beloved, hence the correspondence with the meaning of loss, alienation and longing for the past.

From another side, it has been shown that estrangement and nostalgia in poetry did not only have a romanticized aspect, but it also communicated some factual images about the community and circumstances of its time. The social dimension of these motifs has been originally perceived in the poetry of brigand and outcast poets, *sa'ālīk*. Through their artistically reported experience, one can notice that images of estrangement is more present than those of nostalgia, since they portray their condition as rejected individuals from their tribe and the concrete scenes of their exile, beside the consequences on their own attitude of estrangement. They are therefore socially treated as strangers and psychologically bearing this classification. It is a case where one can see as a double estrangement, both “objective”, emanating from the other and “subjective”, emanating from the self. In their poetry we can also identify a response to this status they endure, expressed in a form of invitation to live an estranged life, having a double function: on one hand, it is a practical path to cope with the poverty they suffered from, as a result of this expulsion from the tribal system of the community; on the other hand, this invitation acts as a therapeutic agency to their deep disappointment from the social sanction afflicted upon them. Sanctions entailing images of estrangement were also represented through the motifs of prison and exile which developed during the institutionalization of the Islamic state. Verses depicting the prison as a setting of alienation started thus gaining more presence. Whereas the nostalgic motif was mentioned in a subtle way in the poetry of *sa'ālīk*, in a form of bitter longing to the tribe and family, here the spatial



context of imprisonment appear as motive for a nostalgic memory to a pleasant life in freedom and a longing to the loved ones there. The latter image of nostalgia can be seen then as holding a catharsis effect vis-à-vis estrangement. From a different perspective, motifs of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* started later on, in the Abbasid timeframe, to be worked out as to serve other poetic purposes, such as praising the patron and seeking his compassion and mercy.

This feature falls within the last dimension treated, the intellectual one, which is understood in the sense of a conscious attitude of poets towards their literary work and a deeper involvement of their being, as poets, in their expression of estrangement and nostalgia. The former aspect is manifested in the panegyric ode, where the two motifs are maneuvered in the praise in two common patterns: the first one is the poet's image portrayed as a stranger when he is away from the patron and longing for his presence around him and for his generosity. The second one is the patron described as a stranger among the rest of people, due to his unique deeds and qualities. Initially, poets expressed their feeling of estrangement facing time, not the patron, using the motif of age and grey hair which could be traced in the pre-Islamic poetry and persisted until the Abbasid period. This reflected the condition of all human beings, whereas their particular condition as poets has been also termed as an image of estrangement among common people. This image had been applied this time in another poetic genre that flourished in the early Abbasid period, *zuhd* or ascetic poetry, characterized sometime by a clear pessimism towards life. This pessimism has culminated in a philosophical attitude with Abu al-'Alā' al-Ma'arrī who depicted himself in this respect as a great figure of estrangement as it has been presented elaborately. Simultaneously, the Islamic religious influence marked some images of estrangement especially related to meanings revolving around the theme of death. Furthermore, the emerging mystical tradition, Sufism, brought forward the concept of estrangement as an important status of the Sufi in earthly life. Sufi poets used motifs of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* to translate their perpetual condition as strangers on earth and their longing for reaching their spiritual aim of connecting with God.

As demonstrated in various chapters, the poetry of estrangement and nostalgia is characterized by certain individual features. Episodes of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*, especially related to geographical and emotional dimensions, present a structure that introduces the

motifs through a process that includes the activating factor(s), surrounding factor(s), catalyst(s), and a critical stage where feelings are explicitly declared. Another feature also identified, is the formulaic verses and phrases such as (*alā layta shi'ri*) and (*yudhakkirunī ash-shabāb*) that function as a signal announcing these episodes. Besides, an interesting observation is that a lot of the verses on estrangement and nostalgia are attributed to different poets at the same time, or to anonymous poets, especially those related to love or to Najd. This fact suggests a sort of universal aspect of these motifs and their ability to be cultivated in different contexts. Even the verses that specify Najd, they transcend the actual geographical space to implicate in the imagination of the listener an archetypal space of nostalgia. This universality is also suggested by the philosophical implication of estrangement which is not bound to a specific time and place.

From a historical perspective, or speaking in terms of periodization, we conclude that estrangement and nostalgia, present all along side by side, had nevertheless three main phases in within the poetic corpus of the period examined here, from the pre-Islamic period to the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>. The first one is mostly marked by estrangement to the homeland, which extends roughly until the beginning of the Umayyad period; from there, the second phase which can be called the age of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn*, witnessed a proliferation of both motifs, elaborating into relatively independent poems as well as being cultivated in another more frequent and shaped genre, *ghazal*; the third phase is characterized by more presence of images on estrangement, which were influenced by an overall development of intellectual activity and maturity in different branches of knowledge.

Looking at the matter from another angle, we can say that the motifs went through two main stages: what one can call an age of production, where these two complementary motifs of *ghurba* and *ḥanīn* took rise; the second age is the one of compilation, where the poetic material started taking shape in both individual compilations works and multi-thematic anthologies and were classified under specific designations.

Although the motifs did not succeed to become a sustained poetic genre, there are some poems that can be considered utterly as *ghurba-and-ḥanīn-qaṣīda*: the *yā'yya* by Mālik b. ar-Rayb for instance, which has been cited in almost all dimensions of estrangement and nostalgia, can be considered the closest to be a genre. This archetypal poem, alongside the various examples analyzed in this study, is an example that, indeed, argues

against the claim of Wadad Qadi about the poetic material of nostalgia, that it lacks “the capacity to make powerful, all rounded, and hence artistically enduring cases for individual, deep, and overwhelming experiences of alienation and its negative effects on the human psyche”.<sup>402</sup>

Throughout the present study I tried to show in fact that the poetic material on estrangement and nostalgia has different aspects, defined in the dimensions presented, and engaging in the various human experiences, whether individual or collective. The fact that the motifs of *ghurba* and *hanīn* transcend one genre of poetry proves their ability to adapt with a variety of other themes. Although their images are often associated with a negative feeling on love, social and intellectual levels as has been clearly demonstrated, this artistic expression acts in itself as a healing process.

---

<sup>402</sup> Qadi: Dislocation and nostalgia, p. 23.

## Bibliography:

### Abbreviations:

*EI2* = Bearman, Peri J., et al., (eds), *Encyclopedia of Islam, New Edition*. 12 Vol. Brill. Leiden. 1954-2002.

*EI3* = Krämer, Gudrun, et al., (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Islam, THREE*. Brill. Leiden. 2007-to date.

### Primary Sources:

‘Abīd b. al-Abrāṣ: *Dīwān*. Ed. ‘Adra, Ashraf Aḥmad. Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī. Beirut. 1994.

Abū al-‘Atāhiya, Ismā‘īl b. Qāsim: *Dīwān*. Ed. Al-Bustānī, Karam. Dār Beirut. Beirut. 1986.

Abū Dihbil al-Jumāhī, Wahab b. Zam‘a: *Dīwān*. Ed. ‘Abdalmuḥsim, ‘Abdal‘azīm. Maṭba‘at al-Qaḍā’. an-Najaf. 1972.

Abū Firās, al-Ḥārith b. Abī al-‘Alā’: *Dīwān*. Ed. Ad-Duwayhī, Khalīl. Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī. Beirut. 1994.

Abū Tammām, Ḥabīb b. Aws: *Dīwān*. Ed. ‘Azzām, Muḥammad ‘Abdu. Dār al-Ma‘ārif. 4 Vol. Cairo.

al-Ājurī, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥsayn: *Kitāb al-Ghurabā’*. Ed. al-Badr, Bad. Dar al-Khulafā’ li l-Kitāb al-Islāmī, Kuwait, 1983.

al-Āmidī, al-Ḥasan b. Bishr: *al-Muwāzana bayna Shi‘r Abī Tammām wa-l-Buḥturī*. Ed. Ṣaqr, as-Sayyid Aḥmad. Dār al-Ma‘ārif. 3 Vol. Cairo. 1993.

al-‘Askarī, Abū Hilāl: *Diwān al-Ma‘ānī*. Ed. Krenwo, Fritz. 2. Vol. Maktabat al-Quds. Cairo. 1933.

al-Bakrī, ‘Abdallah b, ‘Abdal‘azīz: *Mu‘jam mā Sta‘jam min Asmā’ al-Bilād wa-l-Mawāḍi‘*. as-Saqqā, Muṣṭafā. ‘Ālm al-Kutub. 4 Vol. Beirut. 1945.

al-Bayhaqī, Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad: *al-Maḥāsīn wa-l-Masāwi’*. Dār Ṣādir. Beirut.

al-Buḥturī, al-Walī b. ‘Abīd: *al-Ḥamāsa*, al-Khizāna as-Sa‘īdiyya.

al-Ḥamawī, Yāqūt b. ‘Abdallah: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā. Irshād al-Arīb ilā Ma‘rifat al-Adīb*. Ed. ‘Abbās, Iḥsān. Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī. 7 Vol. Beirut. 1993.

\_\_\_\_\_ : *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*. Dār Ṣādir. 5 Vol. Beirut. 1977.

al-Harawī, ‘Abdallah al-Ansārī: *Manāzil as-Sā‘irīn*. Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya. Beirut. 1988.

al-Ḥuṣārī, Ibrāhīm b. ‘Alī: *Zuhr al-Ādāb wa Thamar al-Albāb*. Al-Bajjāwī, ‘Alī Muḥammad. Al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī. Cairo. 1953.

Al-Iṣfahānī, ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn: *ad-Diyārāt*. Ed. ‘Aṭiyya, Jalīl. Riyād al-Rayyis Books. London. 1991.

\_\_\_\_\_ : *al-Aghānī*. Ed. Iḥsān ‘Abbās et al. Dār Ṣādir. Beirut. 25 Vol. 2008.

al-Jāḥiẓ, ‘uthmān b. ‘Amr: *al-Ḥanīn ilā l-Awṭān*. Dār ar-Rā’id al-‘Arabī. Beirut. 1982.

al-Ma‘arrī, Aḥmad b. ‘Abdallah: *al-Luzūmiyyāt*. Ed. Al-Khanjī, Amīn ‘Abdal‘azīz. Maktabat al-Khanjī. 2 Vol. Cairo.

\_\_\_\_\_ : *Ṣaqt az-Zand*. Dār Beirut and Dār Ṣādir. 1957.

al-Marzūqī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad: *Sharḥ Dīwān al-Ḥamāsa*. Ed. Amīn, Aḥmad and Hārūn, ‘Abdalsalām. Dār al-Jīl. 2 Vol. Beirut. 1991.

\_\_\_\_\_ : *al-Azmina wa-l-Amkina*. Dā’irat al-Ma‘ārif. 2 Vol. Ḥarydarabad. 1914.

al-Mutalammis, Jarīr b. ‘Abdalmasīḥ: *Dīwān*. Ed. aṣ-Ṣayrafī, Ḥasan Kāmil. Ma‘had al-Makḥṭūṭāt al-‘Arabiyya. 1970.

al-Mutanabbī, Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn: *al-‘Arf aṭ-Ṭayyib bi Sharḥ Dīwān Abī aṭṭ-Ṭayyib*. Ed. Al-Yāzījī, Ibrāhīm. St. Georges Press. Beirut. 1882.

\_\_\_\_\_ : *Dīwān*. Ed. ‘Azzām, ‘Abdalwahāb. Lajnat at-Ta’līf wa-t-Tarjama wa-n-Nashr.

al-Qālī, Ismā‘īl b. al-Qāsim: *al-Amālī wa dh-Dhayl wa t-Tanbīh*. al-Hay’a al-Miṣriyya al-‘Āmma lil Kitāb. Cairo. 1975.

al-Qaṭṭāl al-Kilābī: *Dīwān*. Ed. ‘Abbās, Iḥsān. Dār ath-Thaqāfa. Beirut. 1989.

al-Qurṭubī, Yūsuf b. ‘Abdallah: *Bahjat al-Majālis wa Uns al-Mujālis*. Ed. al-Khawālī, Muḥammad Mursī. Aḥmad. Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya. 2 Vol. Beirut.

an-Nābigha adh-Dhubaynī: *Dīwān*. Ed. ‘Abdulsattār, ‘Abbās. Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya. Beirut. 1996.

al-Qushayrī, ‘Abdalkarīm b. Hawāzin: ‘Ibārāt aṣ-Ṣūfiyya wa Ma‘ānīha. In: *Arba‘ Rasā’il fī at-Taṣawwuf li Abī l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī*. Ed. as-Sāmīrā’ī, Qāsim. Al-Majma‘ al-‘Ilmī al-‘Irāqī. Baghdad. 1969.

ash-Shāfi‘ī, Muḥammad b. Idrīs: *Dīwān*. Ed. Bahjat, Mujāhid Muṣṭafā. Dār al-Qalam. Damascus. 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_ : *ar-Risāla*. Ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir. Al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī. Cairo. 1940.

as-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā. *ash-Shihāb fī ash-Shayb wa sh-Shabāb*, Matba'at al-Jawaib. Costantinople, 1885.

ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn: *Dīwān*. Ed. Farḥāt, Yūsuf Shukrī. Dār al-Jīl. Beirut. 1995.

as-Sariyy ar-Raffā': *Dīwān*. Ed. al-Bustānī, Karam. Dār Ṣādir. Beirut. 1996.

aṣ-Ṣimma al-Qushayrī: *aṣ-Ṣimma b. 'Abdallah al-Qushayrī. Ḥayātuhu wa Shi'ruhu*. Ed. al-Jabr, Khālīd 'Abdalra'ūf. Dār al-Manāhij. 'Ammān. 2003.

as-Sukkarī, al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥusayn: *Sharḥ Ash'ār al-Hudhaliyyīn*. Ed. Shākir, Maḥmūd Muḥammad and Farrāj, 'Abdalsattār Aḥmad. Dār al-'Urūba. 3 Vol. Cairo. 1965.

ash-Shanfarā, 'Amr b. Mālik: *Dīwān*. Ed. Ya'qūb, Emile Badī'. Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī. Beirut. 1996.

ash-Shimshāfī, 'Alī b. Muḥammad: *al-Anwar wa Maḥāsin al-Ash'ār*. Ed. Yūsuf, as-Sayyid Muḥammad. Maṭba'at Ḥukūmat al-Kuwait. 2 Vol. Kuwait. 1977.

at-Tawḥīdī, 'Alī b. Muḥammad: *al-Ishārāt al-Ilāhiyya*. Ed. Qadi, Wadad. Dār ath-Thaqāfa. Beirut. 1982.

ath-Tha'ālībī, 'Abdalmalik: *Yatimat ad-Dahr fī Maḥāsin Ahl al-'Aṣr*. Ed. Qamīḥa, Mufīd Muḥammad. Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya. 5 Vol. Beirut. 1983.

az-Zawzanī, al-Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad: *Sharḥ al-Mu'allaqāt al-'Ashr*. Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāt. Beirut. 1983.

Ibn al-'Arabī, Muḥyī ad-Dīn b. 'Alī: *al-Futūḥāt al-Makiyya*. Ed. Shamseddīn, Aḥmad. Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya. 9 Vol. Beirut. 1999.

Ibn ad-Dumayna, 'Abdallah b. 'Ubayd: *Dīwān*. Ed. an-Naffakh, Aḥmad Rātīb. Maktabat Dār al-'Urūba. 1960.

Ibn Ḥamdūn, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan: *at-Tadhkira al-Ḥamdūniyya*. Ed. 'Abbās, Iḥsān and 'Abbās, Bakr. Dār Ṣādir. 10 Vol. Beirut. 1996.

Ibn Khaldūn: *Al-Muqaddima*. Ed. Darwīsh, 'Abdallah Muḥammad al-. Dār Y'rub. Damascus. 2004.

Ibn Manzūr, Muḥammad: *Lisān al-'Arab*. Dār Ṣādir. 15 Vol. Beirut.

Ibn al-Marzubān: *Kitāb al-Ḥanīn ilā l-Awṭān*. Ed. 'Aṭiyya, Jalāl. 'Ālam al-Kutub. Beirut. 1987.

Ibn Maymūn, Muḥammad b. al-Mubārak: *Muntahā aṭ-Ṭalab min Ash‘ār l-‘Arab*. Ed. Ṭarīfī Muḥammad Nabīl. Dār Ṣādir. 9 Vol. Beirut. 1999.

Ibn Munqidh, Usāma: *al-Manāzil wa d-Diyār*. Ed. Ḥijāzī, Muṣṭafā. Cairo. 1992.

Ibn Qutayba, ‘Abdallah b. Muslim: *Kitāb al-Anwā’ fī Mawāsim al-‘Arab*. Dār ash-Shu‘ūn ath-Thaqāfiyya al-‘Āmma. Baghdad. 1988.

Ibn Qutayba, ‘Abdallah b. Muslim: *ash-Shi‘r wa sh-Shu‘arā’*. Ed. Shākir, Aḥmad Muḥammad. Dār al-Ma‘ārif. 2 Vol. Cairo. 1982.

Ibn ar-Rūmī, ‘Alī b. al-‘Abbās. *Dīwān*. Ed. Nassār, Ḥusayn. Dār al-Kutub wa l-Wathā‘iq al-Qawmiyya. 6 Vol. Cairo. 2003.

Ibn Ṭabātibā: *Iyār ash-Shi‘r*. Ed. Abulsattār, ‘Abbās. Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya. Beirut. 2005

Ibn al-Athīr, ‘Alī b. Muḥammad: *al-Kāmil fī t-Tārīkh*. Ed. al-Qādī, Abū l-Fidā’ ‘Abdallah. Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya. 11 Vol. Beirut. 1987.

Ibn Dāwūd, Muḥammad: *Kitāb az-Zahra*. Ed. As-Sāmīrā’ī, Ibrāhīm and al-Qaysī, Nūrī Ḥammūdī. 2 Vols. Maktabat al-Manār. Jordan. 1985

Ibn Kathīr, ‘Imādaddīn: *al-Bidāya wa-n-Nihāya*. Dār al-Ma‘ārif. 15 Vol. Cairo. 1988.

Ibn Mayyāda, ar-Raḥmān b. Abrad: *Shi‘r ibn Mayyāda*. Ed. Ḥaddād, Hanna Jamīl. Maṭbū‘āt Majma‘ al-Lugha al-‘Arabiyya bi Dimashq. Damasacus. 1982.

Ibn Muqbil, Tamīm: *Dīwān*. Ed. Ḥasan, ‘Azza. Dār ash-Sharq al-‘Arabī. Beirut-Damascus. 1995.

Ibn Qayyim, Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr : *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbīn wa Nuzhat al-Mushtāqīn*. Ed. ‘Azīr Shams, Muḥammad. Dār ‘Ālam al-Fawā’id. 2010

Ibn Rashīq, al-Ḥasan: *al-‘Umda fī Ṣinā‘at ash-Shi‘r wa-Naqdih*. Ed. Sha‘lān, an-Nabawī. al-Khanjī. 2 Vol. Cairo.

Ḥamīd b. Thawr: *Dīwān*. Ed. al-Maymanī, ‘Abdal‘azīz. Ad-Dār al-Qawmiyya li ṭ-Ṭibā‘a wa n-Nashr. Cairo. 1965.

Ḥātim aṭ-Ṭā’ī: *Dīwān*. Ed. al-Ḥittī, Ḥannā Naṣr. Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī. Beirut. 1994.

Hudba b. al-Khashram: *Dīwān*. Ed. Yaḥya al-Jabbūrī. Dār al-Qalam. Kuwait. 1986.

Imru’ al-Qays: *Dīwān*. Ed. Ibrāhīm, Muḥammad abū l-Faḍl. Dār al-Ma‘ārif. Cairo. 1984.

Jamīl bin M‘mar: *Dīwān*. Ed. Nassār, Ḥussayn. Maktabat Miṣr. Cairo. 1979.

Ka‘b b. Zuhayr: *Dīwān*. Ed. Fā‘ūr, ‘Alī. Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya. Beirut. 1997.

Kuthayyir b. ‘Abdalrahmnān: *Dīwān*. Ed. ‘Abbās, Iḥsān. Dār ath-Thaqāfa. Beirut. 1971.

Mālik b. Al-Rayb: *Dīwān Mālik b. Al-Rayb ḥayātuhu wa shi‘ruhu*. Ed. Nūrī Ḥammūdī Qaysī. *Majallat Ma‘had al-Makhṭūṭāt*, Vol. 15 part 1.

Qays b. al-Mulawwiḥ: *Dīwān*. Ed. Farrāj, Abdulsattā Aḥmad. Maktabat Miṣr. Cairo. 1979.

Qudāma b. Ja‘far: *Nadq ash-Shi‘r*. Ed. Muṣṭafa, Kamāl. Al-Khānjī. Cairo. 1963.

Tahman al-Kilābī: *Dīwān*. Ed. al-Mu‘aybid, Muḥammad Jabbār. Maṭba‘at al-Irshād. Baghdad. 1968.

‘Urwa b. Ḥizām: *Dīwān*. Ed. Al-Qawwāl, Anṭwān Muḥsin. Dār al-Jīl. Beirut. 1995.

Yazīd b. Mufarrigh al-Ḥimyarī: *Dīwān*. Ed. Abū Ṣāliḥ, ‘Abdalquddūs. Mu‘assasat ar-Risāla. Beirut. 1982.

### Secondary Sources:

Agha, Salih Said and Khalidi, Tarif: Poetry and Identity in the Umayyad Age. *Al-Abhath*, 50-51 (2003), 55-120.

Ali, Hussein: *The Lightning-Scene in Ancient Arabic Poetry: Function, Narration, and Idiosyncrasy in Pre-Islamic and Early Islamic Poetry*. Harrassowitz. Wiesbaden. 2009.

Antrim, Zayde: *Routes and Realms. The Power of Place in the Early Islamic World*. Oxford University Press. 2016.

Arazi, Albert: al-Ḥanīn ilā al-Awṭān entre la Ġāhiliyya et l’Islam. Le Bedouin et le Citadin Reconciliés. *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*. 143, 2 (1993).

\_\_\_\_\_ : Une épître d’Ibrāhīm b. Hilāl al-Ṣābī sur les genres littéraires. *Studies in Islamic history and civilization in honour of David Ayalon*. Ed. Sharon, Moshe, et al. Brill. Leiden. 1986, p. 473-506.

Arberry, A. J.: *The Seven Odes*. London and New York. 1957

\_\_\_\_\_ : *Poems of al-Munabbi: A Selection*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 1967.

Athamina, Khalil: A‘rāb and Muhājirūn in the Environment of Amsār. *Studia Islamica*. No. 66. (1987), p. 5-25.

Bauer, Thomas: al-‘Abbās ibn al-Aḥnaf: ein literaturgeschichtlicher Sonderfall und seine Rezeption. Wien: *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*. Band 88, p. 65-107.



Bauer, Thomas: Fremdheit in der klassischen arabischen Kultur und Sprache. *Fremdes in fremden Sprachen*. Ed. Jostes, Brigitte and Trabandt, Jürgen. Wilhelm Fink Verlag. München. 2001, p. 85-105.

\_\_\_\_\_ : Communication and Emotion: The case of Ibn Nubātāh's Kindertotenlieder. *Mamlūk Studies Review*. 7 (2003), p. 49-95.

Bauer, Thomas and Neuwirth, Angelika: Introduction. *Ghazal as World Literature I. Transformation of a Literary Genre*. Ed. Bauer, Thomas and Neuwirth, Angelika. Orient-Institut Beirut. Beirut, p. 9-34.

Bauer, Thomas: *Liebe und Liebesdichtung in der arabischen Welt des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts. Eine literatur- und mentalitätsgeschichtliche Studie des arabischen Ġazal*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1998 (Diskurse der Arabistik Bd. 2).

\_\_\_\_\_ : Wie fängt man eine Qaside an? Formelhafte und nichtformelhafte Nasīb-Einleitungsverse. *Zeitschrift für Arabische Linguistik*, No. 25 (1993), p. 50-75.

Bayyud, Hussein: *Die Stadt in der arabischen Poesie, bis 1258 n. Chr.* Klaus Schwarz Verlag. Berlin. 1988.

Bizra, Aḥmad al-: *al-Asr wa s-Sijn fī Shi'r l-'Arab*. Mu'assasat 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān. Damascus. 1985,

Blachère, Régis : *Histoire de la Littérature Arabe des Origins a la Fin du XV<sup>e</sup> Siècle de J.-C.* Vol. 2. Paris. 1964.

Bonebakker, Seeger Adrianus: Poets and critics. *Logic in classical Islamic culture*. Ed. Von Grunbaum, Gustave E. Otto Harrassowitz. Wiesbaden. 1970, p. 85-112.

Boym, Svetlana: *The Future of Nostalgia*. Basic Books. New York. 2001.

Crone, Patricia and Moreh, Shmuel: *The Book of Strangers. Medieval Arabic Graffiti on the Theme of Nostalgia*. Markus Wiener Publishers. Princeton. 1999.

Donner, Fred: *The Early Islamic Conquests*. Princeton University Press. New Jersey. 1981.

Eksell, Kerstin: Genre in early Arabic poetry. *Literary History. Towards a Global Perspective*. Ed. Lindberg-Wada, Gunilla. Vol. 2. Walter de Gruyter. Berlin. New York. 2006, p. 156-198.

Elinson, Alexander: *Looking Back at al-Andalus: The Poetics of Loss and Nostalgia in Medieval Arabic and Hebrew Literature*. Leiden. Brill. 2009.

Enderwitz, Susanne: "Die grauen Haare. Zu Alter, Zeit und Schicksal in der arabischen Liebesdichtung". *Die Welt des Islams*. New Series. Bd. 28. Nr. 1/4 (1988), p. 126-140.

\_\_\_\_\_ : Homesickness and love in Arabic poetry. *Myths, Historical Archetypes and Symbolic Figures in Arabic Literature. Towards a New Hermeneutic Approach*. Ed. Neuwirth, Angelika, et al. Beirut. 1999. = Beiruter Texte und Studien, Vol. 64, p. 59-70.

Fakhreddine, Huda J.: *Metapoesis in the Arabic Tradition. From Modernists to Muḥdathūn*. Brill. Leiden. 2015.

Freud, Sigmund: Das Unheimliche. *Imago. Zeitschrift für Anwendung der Psychoanalyse auf die Geisteswissenschaften V*, 1919, p. 297–324.

Gibb, H.A.R “Arab poet and Arabic philologist”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol.12, No. 3/4, Oriental and African Studies Presented to Lionel David Barnett by His Colleagues, Past and Present (1948), p. 574-578.

Gruendler, Beatrice : *Al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān. Representations and Visions of Homeland in Modern Arabic Literature*. Ed. Günther, Sebasatian and Milich, Stephan. Georg Olms. Hildsheim, Zürich, New York. 2016, p. 1-42.

\_\_\_\_\_ : *Medieval Arabic Praise Poetry*. Routledge. London and New York. 2013.

Grunebaum, Gustave E.: Zum Lob der Stadt in der arabischen Prosa. *Kritik und Dichtkunst. Studien zur arabischen Literaturgeschichte*. Wiesbaden. 1955.

Heinrichs, Wolfhart: Literary Theory. The Problem of its Efficiency. *Arabic Poetry. Theory and Development*. Ed. Grunebaum, Gustave. E. Otto Harrassowitz. Wiesbaden. 1973, p. 19-69.

Hermes, Nizar: The Byzantines in Medieval Arabic Poetry: Abu Firas’ “Al-Rumiyyat” and the Poetic Responses of al-Qaffal and Ibn Hazm to Nicephore Phocas’ “Al-Qasida al-Arminiyya al-Mal’una” (The Armenian Cursed Ode). *Byzantina Symmeikta*. Vol. 19 (2009), p. 35-61.

Ḥilmī Ibrāhīm: *Ash-Shayb wa sh-Shabāb fī shi’r al-Buḥturī*. Master Thesis. Jām’at al-Iskandaria. 2014.

Ḥuwwar, Ibrāhīm: *al-Ḥanīn ilā l-Awṭān fī l-Adab al-‘Arabī ḥattā Nihāyat al-‘Aṣr al-Umawī*. Cairo. 1973.

Illbruck, Helmut: *Nostalgi.: Origins and Ends of an Unenlightened Disease*. Northwestern University Press. Illinois. 2012

Jabbūrī, Yaḥyā: *Al-Ḥanīn wa l-Ghurba fī sh-Shi’r al-‘Arabī. Al-Ḥanīn ilā l-Awṭān*. Dār Majdalāwī. Jordan. 2008.

Jacobi, Renate: Altarabische Dichtung. *Grundriss der arabischen Philologie*, II. Ed. Gätje, Helmut. Wiesbaden. 1987, p. 7-19

Jacobi, Renate: The Camel-Section of the Panegyric Ode. *Journal of Arabic Literature*. Vol. 13 (1982), p. 1-22.

Jamāl, Milād ʿĀdil: as-Sijn wa l-Ākhar al-Mutakhayyal fī Shiʿr Zayd b. ʿAdī al-ʿIbādī. *Majallat Jāmiʿat Karkūk li d-Dirāsāt al-Insāniyya*. 11-2 (2016), p. 153-173.

Jāsim, ʿAzīz as-Sayyid: *al-Ightirāb fī Ḥayāt wa Shiʿr ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī*. Dār al-Andalus. Beirut. 1986.

Johnson, F. E.: The Hanged Poems. *The Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East*. Vol. V. Ancient Arabia. Ed. Charles F. Horne, Parke, Austin, and Lipscomb; New York and London, 1917.

Kharshūm, ʿAbdalrazzāq: *al-Ghurba fī sh-Shiʿr al-Jāhilī*. *Dirāsa*. Ittiḥād al-Kuttāb al-ʿArabī. Dāmascus, 1982;

Khulayf, May: *Zāhirat al-Ightirāb ʿinda Shuʿarāʾ al-Muʿallaqāt*. Dār ath-Thaqāfa. Cairo. 1991.

Knysh, Alexander: *A New History of Islamic Mysticism*. Princeton University Press. New Jersey. 2017.

Larcher, Pierre: L'Expression de l'Autre et de l'Ailleurs en Arabe Classique", *Arabica* 49, 4 (2002), 494–502.

Leamann, Oliver, *The Qur'an: an Encyclopedia*. Routledge. London and New York. 2008.

Leder, Stefan and Kilpatrick, Hilary: Classical Arabic prose literature: a reserachers' sketchmap, *Journal of Arabic Literature* 23, 1 (1992), p. 2-26.

Lewis, Bernard: Watan. *Journal of Comparative History* 26: 3/4 (1991), p. 523-533.

Lyll, Charles: *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*. Translation and Notes. Vol. 3. Oxford. 1918.

Mallūhī, ʿAbdalmuʿīn al-: *Ashʿār al-Luṣūṣ wa Akhbāruhum*. Dār Usāma.

Mesisami, Julie Scott and Strakey, Paul: (Ed). *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*. Routledge. London and Newy York, 1998.

Meltzer, Gary: *Euripides and the Poetics of Nostalgia*. Cambridge University Press. 2006.

Montgomery, James: Sundry Observations on the Fate of Poetry in the Early Islamic Period. *Tradition and Modernity in Arabic Language and Literature*. Ed. Smart, Jack. Routledge. London and New York. 1996, p. 49-60.

Moteki, Akashi "The *Miḥna* of Imām al-Shāfiʿī", in *Orient* Volume 48, 2013, p. 3-20.

Mourad, Suleiman: Poetry, History, and the Early Arab-Islamic Conquests of al-Shām (Greater Syria). *Poetry and History. The Value of Poetry in Reconstructing Arab History*. Ed. Ramzi Baalbaki, Saleh Agha and tariff Khalidi. AUB Press. Beirut, p. 175-193.

Müller, Kathrin: Al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān in early adab literature. *Myths, Historical Archetypes and Symbolic Figures in Arabic Literature: Towards a New Hermeneutic Approach*. Ed. Angelika Neuwirth, Birgit Embalo, Sebastian Günther, et al. Beirut, 1999, p. 33-58.

Murād, Barakāt: *Abū-Ḥayyān at-Tahwīdī Mughtariban*. Jāmi‘at al-Kuwait. Kuwait. 2001.

Nicholson, Reynold: *Studies in Islamic Poetry*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 1969.

Papoutsakis, Nefeli: *Classical Arabic Begging Poetry and Šakwā, 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Centuries*. Harrassowitz Verlag. Arabische Studien 14. Wiesbaden. 2017.

Qabāja, Muḥammad ‘Abdalmun‘im Muḥammad: *Al-ghurba wa l-ḥanīn ilā ad-diyār fī shi‘r al-‘aṣr al-‘Abbāsī ath-thānī*, MA thesis, al-Khalil University, April 2008.

Qāḍī, an-Nu‘mān al-: *Shi‘r l-Futūḥ l-Islīmiyya fī Šadr l-Islām*. Dār al-Manāra li-n-Nashr wa-t-Tawzī‘. 1998.

Qadi, Wadad: Dislocation and nostalgia: al-ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān. Expression of alienation in early Arabic literature. *Myths, Historical Archetypes and Symbolic Figures in Arabic Literature. Towards a New Hermeneutic Approach*. Ed. Neuwirth, Angelika, et al. Beirut. 1999. = Beirut Texts and Studies, Vol. 64, p. 3-29.

Qadi, Wadad al-; *al-Gharīb fī ishārāt at-tawḥīdī*. Mélanges de l’Université Saint-Joseph v. 50 (2). 1984, p.127-139.

Rabī‘ī, Aḥmad al-. *Al-Ghurba wa l-Ḥanīn fī sh-Shi‘r al-Andalusī*. Beirut. 2013.

Rajabī, Abdulmun‘im Ḥāfiz al-: *al-Ghurba wa-l- Ḥanīn ilā ad-Diyār fī sh-Shi‘r al-Jāhilī*. Damascus. 2012.

Rosenthal, Franz: The Muslim Concept of Freedom Prior to the Nineteenth Century. *Man Versus Society*. Ed. Dimitri Gutas. Brill. Leiden. 2015, p. 21-28.

Rosenthal, Franz: The stranger in medieval Islam. *Arabica* 44, 1 (1997), p. 35-75.

Rosenwein, Barbara: Problems and methods in the history of emotions. *Passions in Context*, 1 (2010), 1-31.

Routledge; Clay: *Nostalgia, a Psychological Resource*. Routledge. New York and London. 2015.

Salāmī, Samīra: *al-Ightirāb fī sh-Shi‘r al-‘Abbāsī: al-qarn ar-Rābi‘ al-Hijrī*. Dār al-Yanābī‘. Damascus. 2000.

Salem, Rafik M.: *Exile and Nostalgia in Arabic and Hebrew Poetry in al-Andalus (Muslim Spain)*. Phd Diss. School of Oriental and African Studies. 1987.

Schacht, Richard: *Alienation*. Doubleday & Company. New York. 1970.

Sells, Micheal: Shanfara's lamiyya: a new version. *Al-'Arabiyya*. vol. 16. No. 1/2 (Spring & Autumn 1983), p. 5-25.

Sperl, Stefan: *Mannerism in Arabic literature. A Structural Analysis of Selected Texts (3rd Century AH/9th Century AD - 5th Century AH/11th Century AD)*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 1989.

Stanford, William Bedell: *Greek Tragedy and the Emotions. An Introductory Study*. Routledge & Keagan Paul. New York. 1988.

Stearns, Justin: Representing and Remembering al-Andalus: Some Historical Considerations Regarding the End of Time and the Making of Nostalgia. *Medieval Encounters* 15, 2-4 (2009), p. 355-374.

Suwaydī, Fāṭima al-: *al-Ightirāb fī sh-Shi‘r al-Umawī*. Maktabat Madbūlī. Cairo. 1997.

Smith, William: *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 2013.

Schoeler, Gregor: The genres of classical arabic poetry: classifications of poetic themes and poems by pre-modern critics and redactors of dīwāns. *Quaderni di Studi Arabi, nuova serie*. Vol. 7. Arabic, Literature and Music (2012), p. 241-246.

Sean, Anthony: The Domestic Origins of Imprisonment: An Inquiry into an Early Islamic Institution. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. Vol. 129, No. 4 (October-December 2009), p. 571-596.

Ṭaḥṭaḥ, Fāṭima: *Al-Ghurba wa l-Hanīn fī sh-Shi‘r al-Andalusī*, Rabat, 1993.

Tarabieh, Abdallah. *Nostalgia and Elegy for Cities in the Andalusian Arabic and Hebrew Poetry*.

Ṭarīfī, Muḥammad Nabīl: *Dīwān al-Luṣūṣ fī l-‘Aṣrayn al-Jāhilī wa-l-Islāmī*. Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya. Beirut. 2004

Tarlow, Sarah: Emotions in Archeology. *Current Anthropology*. Vol. 41. No. 5 (December 2000), p. 713-746.

Wood, Allen: Alienation. Routledge *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Ed. Graig, Edward. Routledge. London and New York. 1998.

Zāmil, Sālih: *Taḥawwul al-Mithāl. Dirāsa li-Zāhirat al-Ightirāb fī Shi‘r al-Mutanabbī.* al-Mu‘assasa al-‘Arabiyya li-l-Dirasāt wa-l-Nashr. Beirut. 2003.

Zwettler, Micheal: Desert yearning or partisan polemic?: on the lines ascribed to Maysun, wife of Mu'awiya. *Asiatische Studien: Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft.* 47 (1993), p. 299-372.