It may occur in any type of *qasida*, often together with episodes involving other animals, oryx or onager, in every possible combination. Bauer insists, repeatedly, that in early Arabic poetry, almost anything is possible: "there is hardly anything that isn't there" (I, 74, cf. 67, 127, 134, 273). Well, I could think of a thing or two that aren't there, but a bit of exaggeration is justifiable. The central part of Volume I deals with the structure of the episode itself: its *dramatis personae* (which include the hunter's bow and arrows); the interaction of description and narrative; the parts of the narrative, often marked with formulaic introductory expressions. According to the champions of the "oral poetry thesis" of Arabic poetry, one should find exact repetition of words or syntactic patterns; as it turns out, exact repetition is so rare as to make conscious quotation likely. Instead, one finds an infinite number of variations. What is valid for these formulas may be said about the episode as a whole: for all its apparent sameness, the subject offered an opportunity to the poet to display his originality and his ability to make subtle variations. These can only be appreciated by a public thoroughly familiar with the genre. The formula (also discussed in a separate chapter) serves as an indicator, a familiar signal that alerts the audience to the fact that, in all likelihood, something original is to follow. It is wrong to conclude that the occurrence of such formulas proves that the poems were extemporized.

In a separate chapter on metre and rhyme, the individuality of poets is further analyzed, by means of a formula (a mathematical one, for once) for calculating the "originality index" of a poet in terms of metre or rhyme. Imra' al-Qays or 'Alqama score low, unlike Muraqqish and 'Amr Ibn Qaml'a; the greatest artist within the genre is al-Shammakh. That means of a formula (a theory of poets is further analyzed, hy

Bauer's book is a very important contribution, which strikes the right balance between the plausible but unreadable (e.g., Gottfried Müller's *Ich bin Land*), and the readable but implausible (e.g., some of Suzanne R. Stetkevych's various studies). It may well be the most significant monograph on early Arabic poetry since Renate Jacobi's *Studien zur Poetik der altarabischen Qaside* of 1971.

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the narration of the battle events; coda is used for the final part with often gnomic remarks; and cadence, as a "type of utterance used for stops along the way: to mark the end of a theme, to provide a threshold before the next". The author defines a syntactic *attacca* [an Italian imperative used as a musical term, meaning "connect immediately with the preceding passage, go on immediately with a new theme"] as certain devices introducing a new theme. These *attacca* are syntactic devices such as an imperative, an interrogative particle, a vocative, etc. Among the formal criteria which combine with thematic, Hamori examines for instance: battle descriptions beginning with a perfect verb (as we see in chapter 2). Before the onset of the battle scene, several possibilities of cadence can be distinguished: gnomic ones which can also consist of the utterance of a universal truth of which Sayf al-Dawlah is the exception: a beautiful comparison or simile (*rashīb malīth*, sometimes introduced by *ka-anna* or *mithl*); a wisdom sentence or proverb (*hikmah* or *mathal*) working well in closure; or a *taqsim* [which seems to be a kind of parallel syntactic division of the line: "We get no medieval help", Hamori affirms, A.S.]. The exceptions to the rule are called by Hamori "special cases".

The author also devotes a chapter to closures, and how the battle narration comes to an end in the closure. Certain concepts such as *Majd* (glory), *Allah* (God), *Dahr* (Time, i.e., Fate), *Layāli* (Nights, i.e., Fate), *Ayyām* (Days, i.e., Fate), *Zamān* (Time, i.e., Fate), *Manāyū* (Fate), mention of ancestry and the use of anaphora of *anta* (You) often occur in those final parts of each battle *qaṣīdah*.

In the appendices diagrams are given which demonstrate how the different parts of those battle *qaṣīdahs* are linked together.

My first remark about this study is the following: from the title one could easily imagine that Hamori wants to deal with the *Sayfīyyāt* in toto. This is not the case: he selected the long war poems which are undoubtedly the most important part of this collection. The collection, which is usually presented as part of al-Mutanabbi's total *Diwān*, comprises 79 pieces of different length, among them panegyrics with laudatory sections on Sayf al-Dawlah, and three pieces written before or after al-Mutanabbi's Sayf al-Dawlah period. Al-Mutanabbi began to write for Sayf al-Dawlah, the Hamdanid prince, at the age of 35 being already a poet of considerable fame, when he was in Antioch in 337/948 where he composed three poems on his new patron. In al-Wahidi's and al-Yaziji's more or less chronologically arranged editions the second part of the poet's *Diwan* begins with the *Sayfīyyāt*, when the poet had already composed at least 159 pieces (which are the contents of the first volume). Al-Mutanabbi stayed in the service of Sayf al-Dawlah nine years, after which he came to court with the black ruler Kafūr in Egypt in the year 346/957. Hamori deals with 22 poems of the *Sayfīyyāt*, whose original Arabic texts we find in one of the appendices of Hamori's book. Sometimes *nasīb*-passages are left out, such as the famous *nasīb* passage of the first poem of the *Sayfīyyāt*. Al-Mutanabbi's *nasībs* are famous because of their peculiar character. As said, Hamori's book deals with the *Sayfīyyāt* as far as the longer battle-poems are concerned.

This study by Hamori is a very useful one, it is an eye-opener for those who have studied the *Sayfīyyāt* in a limited way, only looking for the historical setting or the themes which are used. We know the historical setting of the poems from the book by Blachère1). From my new book on the relationship between Arabic and Hebrew Andalusian poetry, one can see al-Mutanabbi's war themes. I used a lot of al-Mutanabbi's war poems to show the influence of the *Sayfīyyāt* of this poet on the war poems by the Hebrew Andalusian poet and statesman Samuel han-Nagid2). The influence apparently was limited to the thematic domain and my study was restricted to thematics. In his treatment of the structure of al-Mutanabbi's war poems, Hamori has introduced a new way of analysis, and discovered features which no orientalist nor Arab literate were aware of. Therefore this study by Hamori is to be considered as a mile stone in the study and analysis of Classical Arabic poetry.

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1) See Régis Blachère, *Un poète arabe du IVe siècle de l'hégire XVe siècle de J.C.*, *Abou 'l-Tayyib al-Mutanabbi*, Paris (Adrien-Maisonneuve), 1935. However, Blachère did not have much appreciation for al-Mutanabbi's poetry.