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 syntactic *attacca* [an Italian imperative used as a musical term, meaning “connect immediately with the preceding passage, go on immediately with a new theme” A.S.] as certain devices introducing a new theme. These *attacce* 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 [tasbih malith, sometimes introduced by *ka-anna* or *miithil*]; 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 *Majid* (glory), *Allah* (God), *Dahr* (Time, i.e., *Fate*), *Layâlî* (Nights, i.e., *Fate*), *Ayyâm* (Days, i.e., *Fate*), *Zamân* (Time, i.e., *Fate*), *Manâyâ* (Fate), mention of ancestry and the use of *anaphora* of *anta* (You) often occur in those final parts of such a battle qasîdah.

In the appendices diagrams are given which demonstrate how the different parts of those battle qasîdahs 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 *Sayfîyyât* 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 *Diwan*, comprises 79 pieces of different length, among them panegyrics with battle-descriptions, shorter laudatory pieces and elegies [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 *Sayfîyyât*, 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 Kafur in Egypt in the year 346/957. Hamori deals with 22 poems of the *Sayfîyyât*, whose original Arabic texts we find in one of the appendices of Hamori’s book. Sometimes *nasîb*-passages are left out, such as the famous *nasîb* passage of the first poem of the *Sayfîyyât*. Al-Mutanabbi’s *nasîb* are famous because of their peculiar character. As said, Hamori’s book deals with the *Sayfîyyât* 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 *Sayfîyyât* 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 *Sayfîyyât* 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 thematic. 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.

Amsterdam/Leiden, January 1994

A. Schippers


This book devoted to Abî Tammâm’s poetry, as well as the poetics of his time, contains the translations of five odes by this poet, and an extensive introduction on his Poetics borrowed from the well-known sources about the reception of this poet such as al-Suli’s *Akhbâr Abî Tammâm*, al-Amîdî’s *Muwâzânah*, and Jurjani’s *Wasâtîh*. The extensive quotations from these works are very useful for those who want to orientate themselves more on Arabic poetry, from those whom we (A.S.) could call the Classical poets of Arabic literature (Stetkevych, however uses the term Classical in the sense of traditional. A.S.). At that time however, the poets were called Moderns, in contrast with the Ancient poets with their archaic language which took its origin from pre-Islamic and early times. The main stylistic devices, which were consciously used by the Moderns are covered with the technical term *badi‘*. This style, according to Stetkevych’s theory, is inspired by the *mutakallimun* and the Mu’tazilah. Stetkevych reveals the fundamental paradox at the basis of classical Arabic critical thought: it establishes the Ancient poetry as a model to be imitated by “Modern” poets, but at the same time the cultural-historical factors rendered the Ancient poetry virtually inimitable. Stetkevych argues that Arab critics were unaware of these factors. This had to do, according to Stetkevych, with the transition from a predominantly oral to a predominantly written poetic tradition. It has also to do with the radical change in the role of poetry. In the pre-Islamic oral tradition poetry served for preserving information. Formal and rhetorical aspacts had a mnemonic function. The new functions of the rhetorical devices of the Moderns were not their mnemonic qualities.

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

but ritual and exegetical qualities. They used archaic rhetorical forms to express their cultural identity, their pledge of allegiance to Arabism. The effect of badi' poetry with its madhhab kalami [stylistic device taken from the muta-kallimun] is exegetical, because of its manipulation of abstractions, which deserves tawil (exegeesis).

The present author deals with five panegyric odes, from which she quotes a typical Abu-Tammamian rhetorical expression in the chapter heads: Time’s Beardless Youth (in a panegyric on the Caliph al-Ma’mun), The Tragacanth’s Fruit (in a panegyric devoted to Abu Sa’id al-Thaqifhi), a Morsel in Destruction’s Hand (in a panegyric to al-Mu’tasim on the Capture of Babak al-Khurrarni), the Virgin whom the Hand of fate had not deflowered (in a panegyric dedicated to al-Mu’tasim on the occasion of the conquest of Ammuriyah), and the brilliant gems set by the poet (dedicated to al-Mu’tasim on the occasion of the immolation of al-Afsin). It appears that Abu Tammam manipulates the traditional images and structures freely, abandoning, gradually, the traditional structure of the ode with its sequences. The author of the book apparently postulates a surface structure and a deep ritual structure in the odes of Abu Tammam. The surface is old, the old traditional sequence, the deep structure evens goes back to “the Ancient Near Eastern paradigm of sacrifice”. In ode no. 133, there is still the classical nasib-rabil-madih surface structure, but as a vessel for new imagery. “The imagery and epheths of the Jahili madih are Islamicized; the mandih is now the agent of Allah and the inexorable fate of the Jahiliyyah is replaced by a foreordained Islamic teleology”. In the other odes, Stetkevych notes that the nasib is no longer determined by the classical ode form but by the chronological and cosmological or mythic order of the historical events that are its subject. In one of the odes, the mandih (the praised person, in this case the heir-apparent) is identified with the beloved (nabi-babah). “Contemporary events have been integrated into the poetic tradition to create a unified Arab-Islamic vision of the future as well as of the past”. Abu Tammam reforges the classical ode by means of transposition of the traditional motifs through metaphor and antithesis. He progressively uncovers “the deep sacrifical structure beneath the classical gasiḏah-form”. He recasts its form and motifs. By manipulating metaphorically, logically and philologically the traditional motifs, the poetic tradition is able to embrace new ideas. The experiment with badi’ led to “uncovering the deep paradigmatic structure that had originally generated the classical Arabic qasidah as the ‘Abbasid critics conceived it”. The Arab-Islamic was reintegrated with the Arab-Islamic was reintegrated with the

in them. The chapter on elegies and the one about the weeping on the deserted encampment are interrelated. The hierarchy expressed in the poems is reflected in the structure of the Ḥamāṣah: it starts with the praising of noble manhood, and ends with the vituperation of womanhood. Abu Tammam’s Ḥamāṣah is at the same time a poetic and metapoetic work, which is clear from its metaphorical and antithetical interconnection. The Ḥamāṣah of al-Buhturi, with its 174 chapters, is totally different. It looks like the musammat type of hadith collection arranged on subject and with poems adduced at every subject. Abu Tammam’s categories embrace an entire system of values, while al-Buhturi’s ones are discrete topics illustrated by literal examples without expansion into the tropical, metaphorical, the archetypal, symbolic or ritual connections. Al-Buhturi’s Ḥamāṣah is not held together by any unifying concept of a literary tradition that expresses a coherent system of values.

This is in contrast to Abu Tammam’s dynamic concept of the literary tradition as appears from the interrelationship and organization of the poems in his Ḥamāṣah.

Finally it is useful to connect Abu Tammam’s selection in the Ḥamāṣah with his opinions on poetics and poetry, as Klein-Franke did earlier). If one closes one’s eyes for the change of function in the Arabic poetry from a Bedouin type to a sedentary type. The emergence of the badi’ style and the problem of the Ancient and the Modern is certainly linked with this change of function¹). Finally it is useful to connect Abu Tammam’s selection in the Ḥamāṣah with his opinions on poetics and poetry, as Klein-Franke did earlier). If one closes one’s eyes for the change of function in the Arabic poetry from a Bedouin type to a sedentary type. The emergence of the badi’ style and the problem of the Ancient and the Modern is certainly linked with this change of function¹). Finally it is useful to connect Abu Tammam’s selection in the Ḥamāṣah with his opinions on poetics and poetry, as Klein-Franke did earlier). If one closes one’s eyes for the change of function in the Arabic poetry from a Bedouin type to a sedentary type. The emergence of the badi’ style and the problem of the Ancient and the Modern is certainly linked with this change of function¹).

Leiden/Amsterdam, January 1994

A. SCHIPPERS
