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 paratactic 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 attacces 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 nahl, 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), Layjali (Nights, i.e., Fate), Ayaym (Days, i.e., Fate), Zamam (Time, i.e., Fate), Manayy (Fate), mention of ancestry and the use of anaphora of anta (You) often occur in those final parts of such a battle qasidah.

In the appendices diagrams are given which demonstrate how the different parts of those battle qasidahs 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 Sayfyyid 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 337/957 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 Sayfyyid 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 Sayfyyid, whose original Arabic texts we find in one of the appendices of Hamori's book. Sometimes nasib-passage are left out, such as the famous nasib passage of the first poem of the Sayfyyid. Al-Mutanabbi's nasib are famous because of their peculiar character. As said, Hamori's book deals with the Sayfyyid 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 Sayfyyid 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 Sayfyyid 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 this. 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

* * *

STETKEVYCH, Suzanne Pinckney - Abi Tammâm and the Poetics of the 'Abbasid Age. Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1991 (24 cm, xvi + 404) = Studies in Arabic Literature, supplements to the Journal of Arabic Literature XIII. ISBN 90-04-09340-0. HFL 180,- ; $ 100.00.

This book devoted to Abi Tammam'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 Akhbar Abi Tammam, al-`Amidi's Muwzatanah, and Jurjani's Wadzalat. 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 Ancien 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 aspects 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 XVe siècle de J.C., About 'Abbâs ibn-Mutanabbi, Paris (Adrien-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-kallimin] is exegetical, because of its manipulation of abstractions, which deserves ta’wil (exegesis).

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 Tragedancy’s Fruit (in a panegyric devoted to Abu Sa’id al-Thaghibri), a Morsel in Destruction’s Hand (in a panegyric to al-Mu’tasim on the Capture of Babak al-Khurrmi), 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 ‘Ammuriyyah), and the brilliant gems set by the poet (dedicated to al-Mu’tasim on the occasion of the immolation of al-Afsfin). It appears that Abū Tammām 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 Abū Tammām. The surface is old, the old traditional sequence, the deep structure goes back to “the Ancient Near Eastern paradigm of sacrifice”. In ode no. 133, there is still the classical nasib-rabit-madīth surface structure, but as a vessel for new imagery. “The imagery and epithets of the Jahili madīth are Islamicized; the mawdīth 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 mawdīth (the praised person, in this case the heir-apparent) is identified with the beloved (mawāb). “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”. Abū Tammām reforges the classical ode by means of transposition of the traditional motifs through metaphor and antithesis. He progressively uncovers “the deep sacrificial structure beneath the classical gaṣṣād-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.”

Leiden/Amsterdam, January 1994
A. SCHIPPERS