

Anthologists and the Literary Market: A Comparative Study of al-Tha‘ālibī’s *Yatīmat al-dahr*
and ‘Awfī’s *Lubāb al-albāb*

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Abstract

This thesis offers the first detailed study of publishing culture in the medieval eastern Islamic world by examining how two influential anthologists active in Central Asia mediated between authors and their audiences. It analyses the contents of al-Tha‘ālibī’s (d. 429/1037-8) *Yatīmat al-dahr*, a biographical anthology of Arabic poetry and prose concerned with the literature of the 4th/10th and the early 5th/11th centuries, comparing them with the material found in ‘Awfī’s (d. 640/1242 or before) *Lubāb al-albāb*, a biographical anthology of Persian poetry focused on verse produced between the late 3rd/9th and the early 7th/13th centuries. *Yatīmat al-dahr* and *Lubāb al-albāb* are approached as ventures which aimed to render the high culture of Arabic and Persian literature accessible to readers by presenting hitherto unpublished texts in a pedagogical fashion. The thesis contributes to a current wave of research that is concerned with the history of the book in the Islamic world, but it moves the focus of such scholarship onto literary texts and their manipulation. Its principal findings can be summarised as follows:

Firstly, it revises the prevalent idea that literary culture was entirely dependent on patronage, by demonstrating how market demand influenced the kinds of writing produced in the different regions of the Arabic- and Persian-speaking worlds. Patronage emerges as a force that was intertwined with the book trade, which had already begun to define conceptions of authorship.

Secondly, it shows that anthologies are more than collections of exemplary texts, by uncovering how al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī pursue the study of society, literary history and literary theory. The anthologists did not simply reproduce extracts, but edited them in accordance with their broader intellectual projects.

Lastly, it reconstructs the cosmopolitan literary culture which existed in Khurasan and Transoxiana between the 4th/10th and 7th/13th centuries, showing that many authors worked in bilingual Arabic-Persian environments, moved between Arabic and Persian spheres, and read books in both languages.

The thesis is accompanied by an index of circa eight thousand poems catalogued by genre, and by an appendix which lists the material that the anthologists drew from their sources.

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A Note on Transliteration

Throughout this study, I use the *IJMES* system of transliteration for Arabic, and the modified *IJMES* system for Persian. The names of well-known cities and dynasties are transliterated without diacritics.

Introduction

Anthologies have been a defining aspect of Arabic and Persian literary culture since the early medieval period. Pre-modern compilers selected texts for inclusion in compendia that could be as broad in their scope as surveying the entire history of poetry, or as narrow as presenting the best verses on the theme of tears. Until as late as the early twentieth century, it was through works such as these that readers most often encountered texts, and hence anthologists' versions of literary history have proved to be highly influential. Today, historians of literature and culture are also dependent on anthologies, which preserve fragments of texts that would otherwise be lost.

It is tempting to imagine pre-modern anthologists as conservators who gathered all the material that they could find and preserved it for posterity. This is not the case: they were authors who created biographical representations of other writers; they were editors who chopped and changed the texts that they transmitted; they were publishers who tried to produce books that would provide them with an income; they were critics who assayed the value of literature. Yet scholarship has been slow to recognise anthologists as anything other than the unthinking transmitters of other people's texts. There have been few sustained attempts to examine how they shaped the material that they relayed, and the issue of exactly which audiences they addressed in their work remains only partially addressed.

This thesis is concerned with two of the most comprehensive and influential literary anthologies produced in the medieval eastern Islamic world: al-Tha'ālibī's (d. 429/1037-8) *Yatīmat al-dahr fī maḥāsin ahl al- 'aṣr*, or *The Orphan Pearl of the Age, on the Fine Qualities of Contemporary Men*, and 'Awfī's (d. 640/1242 or before) *Lubāb al-albāb*, or

The Kernels of Intellects. Examining the circa eight thousand extracts of poetry and prose that they contain, spread across some three thousand pages of printed text, I present for the first time in scholarship an assessment of these anthologies as publishing ventures which critiqued and interpreted the literary corpus. Having outlined the position of *Yatīmat al-dahr* and *Lubāb al-albāb* in their literary and historical contexts, I approach the two anthologies from four perspectives. Chapter One is devoted to the history of how texts circulated and were ‘published’ between the tenth and thirteenth centuries of the Common Era. Unpicking the common conception that literary culture was entirely dependent on patronage, I study how the anthologists represent poetry as a commodity which was traded in courts, chancelleries, city streets and villages as part of an economy of supply and demand. The idea of poems as articles of commerce reflects the extent to which literary production was embedded in exchange: exchange between patrons and poets, between audiences of readers and auditors and poets, and between peers. The anthologists represent this exchange as a form of trade governed by a market, with different audiences supporting the production of an interconnected series of poetic genres. The issue of demand leads us into Chapter Two, which examines how al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī documented the state of the market across the Islamic world. The anthologists bring biography and geography together to argue that the environment in which a writer found themselves shaped the content of their work. In doing so, they highlighted the roles of social interaction and exchange in the creation of literature. As this study shows, there are very genuine differences in the kinds of writing produced in each geographical region of *Yatīmat al-dahr* and in each social stratum of *Lubāb al-albāb*.

The representation of poetry as a commodity suggests that it had values – both aesthetic and monetary – and hence that, like other luxury objects, it could be evaluated. Chapter Three studies how al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī acted as critics, editing and arranging poems in

Yatīmat al-dahr and *Lubāb al-albāb* in accordance with critical criteria which I term ‘aesthetic’. Finally, Chapter Four studies the anthologists’ representation of continuities between Arabic and Persian poetry, highlighting the role of exchange among bilingual communities of poets and readers in fostering the translation and mutual appropriation of images and rhetorical devices. The thesis is accompanied by a generic catalogue of every poem in the two anthologies (Appendix One), and by an appendix documenting the material transmitted by every named source in *Yatīmat al-dahr* and *Lubāb al-albāb* (Appendix Two). Together, the appendices show the extent to which the two anthologists shaped the material that they transmit, demonstrating the they were acting as the architects of their literary traditions.

The following introduction is divided into four sections. I provide a brief overview of the position of *Yatīmat al-dahr* and *Lubāb al-albāb* within the context of pre-modern Arabic and Persian anthologies, and outline the methodology of this study. I then present biographies of al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī, in order to highlight the intellectual and social background against which their works emerged. Lastly, I survey the print editions and manuscripts of the two anthologies.

1. Arabic and Persian Anthologies

Al-Tha‘ālibī’s (d. 429/1037-8) *Yatīmat al-dahr fī maḥāsin ahl al-‘aṣr*, or *The Orphan Pearl of the Age, on the Fine Qualities of Contemporary Men* (henceforth ‘the *Yatīma*’) and ‘Awfī’s (d. 640/1242 or before) *Lubāb al-albāb*, or *The Kernels of Intellects* (henceforth ‘the *Lubāb*’) are anthologies of literature that connect writing to the human environments in which it was produced. The *Yatīma* and its supplement, the *Tatimma* (*The Supplement*), survey the work of just under five hundred authors active in Arabic in an

area extending from Andalusia in the west to Central Asia in the east,¹ while the *Lubāb* covers two hundred and eighty-five authors active in Persian, who lived and worked between Iraq and India.²

The *Yatīma* is concerned with a group of writers whom al-Tha‘ālibī terms the ‘Contemporaries’ (*al-‘aṣriyyūn*), and who were active between ca. 930-1030 of the Common Era. In historical terms, the poets of this generation are important because they responded to the ‘Modern’ (*muḥdath*) Iraqi and Syrian literary heritage of the ninth century, pushing the geographical boundaries of the Arabic literary world and creating new styles marked by their aestheticism.³ They include some of the most canonical figures in the history of Arabic literature, including al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965), Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī (d. 357/968), al-Ṣāḥib ibn ‘Abbād (d. 385/995), and Badī‘ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī (d. 398/1008).⁴ The *Lubāb* surveys literary production from the late ninth century, when poetry began to be composed in New Persian in earnest, to the year 617/1220, when ‘Awfī drafted his work. Just as al-Tha‘ālibī charts the spread of Arabic letters and the creation of distinct regional approaches to writing in the *Yatīma*, so too ‘Awfī maps the diffusion of Persian letters into new territories and the development of regional literary identities in the *Lubāb*. Like the *Yatīma*, ‘Awfī’s anthology also covers

¹ Throughout this study all references to the *Yatīma* are to M. M. Qumayḥa’s print edition of the text, henceforth abbreviated to ‘YD’, unless indicated otherwise.

² Throughout this study all references to the *Lubāb* are to the edition of the text by E.G. Browne and M. Qazvīnī, henceforth abbreviated to ‘LA’, unless indicated otherwise.

³ There have been few sustained attempts to study or describe the ‘Contemporary’ style, with most scholars seeing it as an extension of the so-called ‘Modernism’ of the ninth century. There is a distinct overlap between the style of the poets included in the *Yatīma* and so-called ‘late ‘Abbāsīd Mannerism’, on which see Schoeler, *Arabische Naturdichtung*, and Bürgel, *Die ekphrastischen Epigramme*.

⁴ Succinct biographies of all four figures are given in de Young and St. Germain (eds.), *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography, 925-1350*.

many canonical poets, including Rūdakī (d. 329/940),⁵ Farrukhī (d.429/1037-8),⁶ ‘Unṣūrī (d.431/1039),⁷ Mu‘izzī (d. c. 518-21/1125-7),⁸ and Anvarī (d. 582/1186 or before).⁹

Since this thesis is concerned with the literatures of two languages, it is necessary to begin by exploring why anthologies were compiled in Arabic and Persian, and by highlighting how the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* can and should be compared. My aim here is not to present an overarching history of Arabic and Persian anthologies, but rather to explore the function of literary historiography, and to examine why the format of anthologies based on biography and geography proved enduringly popular in the two languages.

The English word ‘anthology’ ultimately derives from the Greek *anthologion/anthologia*, meaning ‘a gathering of flowers’ and ‘a collection of extracts’.¹⁰ In Medieval and Renaissance Europe, the term could be used to designate an assembly of verse or prose passages, but it was applied most particularly to published collections of epigrams composed by multiple authors, which were selected because of their perceived quality.¹¹ There are four salient aspects to this definition of the anthology: that it is a book with a broad public circulation; that the extracts which it presents are short; that it should contain examples of the work of more than one writer; that these examples should be of a high quality.

While books that conform to the European definition of the anthology abound in Arabic and Persian literary culture, it should be emphasised that both languages use multiple words with different nuances to denote a work containing extracts. Several terms

⁵ The most comprehensive study of Rūdakī remains Nafīsī, *Muḥīt-i zindagī*.

⁶ The most comprehensive study of Farrukhī remains Yūsufī, *Farrukhī Sīstānī*. See also Bosworth, “Farrukhī’s Elegy”; Meisami, “Ghaznavid Panegyrics”.

⁷ For a brief biography, see Ed., “‘Onṣori”. A fuller study is available in ‘Unṣūrī, *Dīvān*.

⁸ On Mu‘izzī, see Khusruvānī Ṭurfa, “Sharḥ-i ḥāl-i Amīr-Mu‘izzī”; Tetley, *The Ghaznavid and Seljuq Turks*.

⁹ For Anvarī’s life, see the introduction to Anvarī, *Dīvān-i Anvarī*.

¹⁰ “Anthology, n.” *O.E.D.*

¹¹ Ibid. For studies on the role of anthologies in literary cultures outside the Islamic world, see Ferry, *Tradition and the Individual Poem*; Gutzwiller, *Poetic Garlands*; Yu, “Poems in their Place”.

underscore the process of collection and selection. These include *majmū‘a*, (‘collection’), and *mukhtārāt* (‘selections’) in Arabic, and *majmū‘a*, (‘collection’), *intikhāb* or *muntakhab* (‘selection’) and *khulāṣat* (‘epitome’) in Persian.¹² The Persian word *gulchīn*, meaning ‘a collection of flowers’, appears to be a late calque from a European language.¹³ The *dīwān/dīvān*, most often meaning a recension of the works of a single poet, cannot strictly be considered a form of anthology, but, like the anthology, it is a curated collection of texts, often edited and disseminated by someone other than the poet, such as a peer, student, or family member. Other forms of compilation that fall under the general term ‘anthology’, such as *ḥamāsa* (‘valour’, or ‘epic’) in Arabic, can denote the genre of the material contained in the collection.¹⁴ There are words which are intended to describe an anthology conforming to a certain physical form: the Arabic and Persian *safīna* (lit. ‘boat’) and the Persian *jung* (‘ship’) can connote a long, narrow book used primarily for transmitting lyric poetry, although medieval texts suggest that they could simply be catch-all terms for anthologies.¹⁵ There is also the *bayāḍ/bayāz*, meaning ‘note book’, which can describe a published or unpublished collection of verses selected in accordance with the personal taste of the compiler.¹⁶ Finally, there is a particular form of anthology called the *ṭabaqāt* in Arabic and the *tazkira* in Persian. This is the biographical anthology, in which a verbal portrait of each author is given before selections of their writing are presented.

Why compile and publish an anthology? The most obvious reason is that anthologies tend to select and present extracts in accordance with an overarching theme, appealing to readers with a specific set of interests. The selection can be topical, such as ‘poetry

¹² Hamori et al., “Mukhtārāt”.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ The best-known *ḥamāsa* is by Abū Tammām (d. 232/845). See Abū Tammām, *Hamasa Carminae* and al-Marzūqī, *Sharḥ dīwān al-ḥamāsa*; Gamal, “The Basis of Selection in the *Ḥamāsa* Collections”.

¹⁵ Dihkhudā, “Safīna”; “Jung” For the early use, see Niẓāmī ‘Aruzī Samarqandī, *Chahār Maqāla*, p. 27.

¹⁶ Dihkhudā, “Bayāz”.

describing wine', technical, such as 'poems depending on similes', generic, such as 'lyric poetry', or formal, such as '*qaṣīda* poetry'. It can also be extremely broad, such as 'the best poetry', but anthologies devoted to this theme are generally concerned with the verse of a particular era, or with a certain genre. The *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* conform to the latter type. The *Yatīma* is concerned with the 'fine points' (*maḥāsīn*) of contemporary writing, and in the opening lines of the anthology al-Tha'ālibī emphasises his stringent criteria in selecting his material: 'speech has many blossoms, but its fruits are rare...the shells [of verse and prose] are plain for all to see, but their kernels are hard to find'.¹⁷ 'Awfī picks up on this image in the title of his anthology, which suggests that the work consists of 'the essence' of poetry. While the *Lubāb* contains material drawn from a wider historical time frame than the *Yatīma*, its generic focus is narrower: 'Awfī concentrates almost entirely on lyric poetry, praise poetry, satire and connected genres. Although the *Lubāb* includes entries on several renowned authors of narrative *maṣnavī* poems, including Firdawsī (d. 411/1020), Gurgānī (fl. ca. 441/1050), 'Aṭṭār (d. 506/1190 or later), and Nizāmī Ganjavī (d. ca. 605/1209), 'Awfī's anthology contains no narrative poetry. This is most probably because 'Awfī was working within a relatively restrictive definition of the word *shī'r*, focusing on the most traditionally prestigious poetic forms.

It is not too simplistic to state that the majority of pre-modern Arabic and Persian anthologies which enjoyed a broad circulation were 'didactic' or pedagogical works, designed to give their readers the tools to pick poetry apart and compose their own. This pedagogical function is particularly important because both literary cultures considered poetry to be the pre-eminent form of self-expression. Those who produced good-quality verse showed themselves capable of ordering their thoughts and communicating with others. In professions where clarity of idea and expression were considered desirable

¹⁷ YD 1:25.

qualities, there was a concomitant pressure to compose poetry. In his introduction to the *Yatīma*, al-Tha‘ālibī describes verse (*al-shi‘r*) as the ‘buttress of learning and sociability’ (*‘umdat al-adab*), underscoring the view that it was not just an abstract art but also a practical tool for connecting learned people to one another.¹⁸ A not dissimilar opinion is found in the *Lubāb*, where ‘Awfī defines poetry as knowledge (*‘ilm*, *dānish*), and the poet as a ‘knowledgeable person who perceives subtle ideas’.¹⁹ Definitions such as these render an understanding of poetry central to the acquisition of learning, and help us to understand why there may have been a great demand for anthologies that could show readers how good poetry was constructed.

The biographical anthology forms a particularly important sub-genre of the anthology, and one that is common to both Arabic and Persian. The verbal portraits of authors that compilers included in this kind of anthology often provided basic factual information, including names and dates. They paired writers with extracts, and hence made definitive claims concerning the authorship of the texts that they transmitted, an important task when it came to extracts in Arabic and those in Persian that did not bear the *takhalluṣ* (the line of a *ghazal* where the poet introduces their pen-name, which functioned as a pre-modern stamp of ‘intellectual property’).²⁰ Biographical anthologies also gave readers a guide to interpreting an author’s style. In more complex anthologies, such as the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*, the anthologists subtly alter their own style of writing when describing authors, mimicking their preferred devices and conceits. When it came to the extracts themselves, the compilers of biographical anthologies exhibited as much interest in arranging poems according to rhetorical technique, theme and motif as the authors of other kinds of

¹⁸ YD 1 :25.

¹⁹ LA 1:15.

²⁰ As de Bruijn notes, most of the lyric poetry contained in the *Lubāb* predates the widespread acceptance of the *takhalluṣ*. See van Gelder and de Bruijn, “Takhalluṣ”. ‘Awfī’s judgements concerning the authorship of the corpus of lyric poetry are consequently more influential than they would have been at a later date.

anthology. Thus, the biographical anthology had a twofold purpose: to instruct readers in the art of poetry itself, and in the context of its production.

Although the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* are both biographical anthologies, their authors do not call them *ṭabaqāt* or *tazākīr*. Al-Thaʿālibī briefly refers to the different ‘classes’ (*ṭabaqāt*) of poets, but he calls the *Yatīma* itself a ‘collection’ (*majmūʿa*), and sometimes just a ‘book’ (*kitāb*).²¹ ʿAwfī writes of previous works devoted to the ‘classes’ (*ṭabaqāt*) of the Arabic poets, and states that he has written his anthology on the ‘classes’ (*ṭabaqāt*) of the Persian poets, but he calls the *Lubāb* itself a ‘collection’ (*majmūʿa*) and a ‘compilation’ (*taʿlīf*).²² Even though later anthologists saw ʿAwfī as the father of the *tazkira* form of anthology, ʿAwfī does not use the term. The fact that both compilers called their works ‘anthologies’, rather than ‘biographies’ or even ‘biographical anthologies’, emphasises the extent to which the primary focus of the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* is literature.

The format of the *Yatīma* appears to be al-Thaʿālibī’s invention, although it responded to the *ṭabaqāt* (‘classes’) model of literary biography.²³ Focused on the verse produced by the poets of particular stylistic eras, *ṭabaqāt* had previously been composed on the poetry of the Pre-Islamic (*jāhili*) and Early-Islamic (*mukhaḍḍam*) periods, on poets of the seventh and eighth centuries (*al-islāmiyyūn*), and on the ‘Modern’ (*muḥdath*) poets of the ninth century.²⁴ In compiling the *Yatīma*, al-Thaʿālibī signalled that poetry had now entered a new stylistic era – that of the Contemporary age – which was distinct from the Modern era.

²¹ See YD 1:26.

²² LA 1: 9-10.

²³ On the *ṭabaqāt* form, see Gilliot, “Ṭabaqāt”; Hafsi, “Recherches sur le genre *Ṭabaqāt* I” ; idem, “Recherches sur le genre *Ṭabaqāt* II” ; idem, “Recherches sur le genre *Ṭabaqāt* III”.

²⁴ The best-known *ṭabaqāt* works on poetry which pre-date the *Yatīma* are Ibn Sallām al-Jumāhī’s (d. 232/846-7) *Ṭabaqāt fuḥūl al-shuʿarāʾ*; Ibn Qutayba’s (d. 276/889) *al-Shiʿr wa l-shuʿarāʾ*; Ibn al-Muʿtazz’s (d. 296/908) *Ṭabaqāt al-shuʿarāʾ al-muḥdathīn*.

The primary difference between the *Yatīma* and its predecessors in the *ṭabaqāt* genre is that al-Tha‘ālibī made geography his guiding organisational principle. While the basic format of entries in the anthology is biographical, al-Tha‘ālibī grouped them according to the court or city, and more broadly according to the region, in which his biographical subjects were active. This system of arrangement may have been practical, since it provided contemporary readers with a system for finding entries in manuscript copies of the work, but practicality alone cannot explain al-Tha‘ālibī’s choice of method. The compilers of biographical dictionaries, such as Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463/1071), arranged their entries alphabetically. Some kinds of literary anthologies, such as Ibn al-Raḥīq al-Qayrawānī’s (d. after 418/1027-8) *Quṭb al-surūr fī awṣāf al-khumūr* (*The Pole of Joy on Describing Wine*), were devoted to specific topics,²⁵ while compendia of poetic images, like Abū Hilāl al-‘Askarī’s (d. after 395/1005) *Dīwān al-ma‘ānī*, surveyed many different themes within their generic context.²⁶ In contrast to such relatively simple criteria of arrangement, al-Tha‘ālibī’s decision to juxtapose writers who were active in the same environment leads to a complex structure. Short entries follow long ones in the *Yatīma*. Disparate poetic forms are grouped together. Material drawn from the same sources is divided up and placed in different chapters.

Despite these irregularities, al-Tha‘ālibī’s achievement in compiling the *Yatīma* was to create a kind of anthology that was flexible enough to survey the totality of literary production in every region where Arabic was used as a language of high culture. It utilised the *ṭabaqāt* model of biography in conjunction with a newly emergent kind of geographical literature which described the different climes and the characteristics of their

²⁵ For a detailed survey of the different kinds of anthologies, see Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, pp. 10-33. Orfali designates the *Yatīma* an *adab* anthology, and consequently pays minimal attention to comparing it with works of criticism. It is worth stressing that both the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* pursue multiple lines on enquiry, and that the literary-critical approaches of the anthologists should not be ignored.

²⁶ On *Dīwān al-ma‘ānī*, see Gruendler, “Motif vs Genre”.

inhabitants. The best-known such work is al-Muqaddasī's (d. after 381/991) *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī ma'rifat al-aqālīm* (*The Best of Divisions, on Knowledge of the Different Regions*), which created a kind of human geography, based around the study of the society and customs of the seven Arab and seven 'Barbarian' climes. Al-Muqaddasī's sociological approach seems to chime more closely with al-Tha'ālibī's methods than the 'physical' approach adopted by earlier geographers such as Ibn Khurradādhbih (d. 300/911).²⁷

Al-Tha'ālibī combined biographical and geographical approaches with a detailed survey of literary themes and motifs in the *Yatīma*, making his work a study in practical criticism as well as a biographical anthology. As in al-Āmidī's (d. 371/987) *Muwāzana*, the great comparative study of the poets Abū Tammām (d. c. 232/845) and al-Buḥturī (d. 284/897), he studies the borrowings that poets made from one another, and examines their application of images across the major genres of poetry. The *Yatīma* subsequently became immensely popular because it was not concerned with one kind of person, or with one kind of poetry, but with the interaction of many. As well as documenting traditionally prestigious forms of verse, such as courtly *qaṣīda* poetry produced by professional poets for patrons, this new form of anthology also recorded innovative uses of poetic genres among communities such as tradesmen, showing how they responded to, or in some cases influenced, their professional contemporaries. In grouping together authors who were active in the same city, al-Tha'ālibī documented how social interaction fostered borrowings in genre and motif. The transnational focus of the *Yatīma* also allowed al-Tha'ālibī to showcase the influence of poets from one region on those of another.

Since al-Tha'ālibī's model allowed the anthologist to document a complex system of literary exchange, in which different types of poetry were composed and consumed by

²⁷ On both al-Muqaddasī and Ibn Khurradādhbih, see Miquel, *La géographie humaine*, pp. 87-92; 313-330.

networks of authors and their audiences which extended between social classes and political territories, anthologies based on the *Yatīma* became a feature of literary culture in the so-called ‘Middle Period’ (c. 1000-1750 C.E.). While the political constitution of the Islamic world changed considerably during this time, one consistent feature was the presence of many directly competing centres of study and patronage. This meant that authors active in Arabic were frequently obliged to travel to market their work. It is possible that the model provided by the *Yatīma* was deemed more appropriate for documenting a form of literary production predicated on migration and exchange than other kinds of anthologies, such as those centred on the study of themes and motifs.

Sequels to the *Yatīma*, which applied its format to documenting the poetry of the compilers’ contemporaries, began to be written immediately after its completion.²⁸ The earliest one may be a now lost continuation of the *Tatimma* by al-Tha‘ālibī’s fellow townsman Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥasan b. al-Muẓaffar al-Naysābūrī. (d. 442/1051).²⁹ The next compiler of an anthology based on the *Yatīma* was ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan al-Bākhārī (d. 467/1075), author of *Dumyat al-qaṣr wa- ‘uṣrat ahl al- ‘aṣr*, or *The Statue of the Palace and the Refuge of Contemporary Men*.³⁰ Al-Bākhārī had grown up a door down from al-Tha‘ālibī and considered him a second father.³¹ In the twelfth century, Abū l-Ḥasan b. Zayd al-Bayhaqī (d. 565/1169), from Bayhaq in the vicinity of Nishapur, wrote a continuation of al-Bākhārī’s *Dumya* entitled *Wishāḥ dumyat al-qaṣr* (*The Sash of the Statue of the Palace*) which, like the *Yatīma*, had a supplement.³² At around the same time,

²⁸ For a survey of anthologies which responded to the *Yatīma*’s form, see Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, pp. 30-1.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 30 n.109. The source is Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-udabā’*, pp. 1016-18, who mentions seeing al-Naysābūrī’s continuation of the *Tatimma* but is unable to recall the anthology’s title.

³⁰ The *Dumya* is a relatively short work, focused on the eastern Islamic world. See al-Bākhārī, *Dumyat al-qaṣr*.

³¹ Al-Bākhārī, *Dumyat al-qaṣr*. 2:967.

³² On this work, see Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p. 30. Styled as a supplement to the *Dumya*, the *Wishāḥ* remains unpublished. Orfali identifies an incomplete unicum of the work, MS. Hüseyin Celebi 870, without naming a repository.

the copyist and bookseller Abū l-Ma‘ālī al-Ḥazīrī (d. 568/1172), who lived in Baghdad, composed *Zīnat al-dahr wa- ‘uṣrat ahl al- ‘aṣr fī dhikr laṭā’if shu ‘arā’ al- ‘aṣr* (*The Adornment of the Age and the Refuge of Contemporary Men, on the Pleasantries of the Poets of the Era*).³³ Yet another continuation of the *Yatīma* was then written by Usāma b. Munqidh (d. 584/1188).³⁴ In the late Saljuq period, ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī (d. 597/1201), chronicler of the life of Saladin, compiled a vast anthology that responded to the *Yatīma* and the *Dumya*, entitled *Kharīdat al-qaṣr*, or *The Virgin of the Castle*.³⁵

The format of the *Yatīma* also quickly became popular on the other side of the Arabic-speaking world, in the Maghrib, Sicily and Andalusia, demonstrating how quickly al-Tha‘ālibī’s anthology garnered renown. The Andalusian anthologist Ibn Bassām (d. 542/1147) modelled his work *al-Dhakhīra fī maḥāsin ahl al-jazīra* (*The Treasury, on the Fine Qualities of the People of the Peninsula*) on al-Tha‘ālibī’s anthology.³⁶ Ibn al-Qaṭṭā‘ (d. 515/1121) used a similar scheme for his work on Sicilian and Maghribī poets named *al-Durrat al-khaṭīra min shu ‘arā’ ahl al-jazīra* (*The Weighty Pearl from the Poets of the Peninsula*),³⁷ while Ibn Sa‘īd al-Maghribī (d. 685/1286) adapted the model in a diachronic fashion for his survey of past poets of the west, *Rāyāt al-mubarrizīn* (*The Banners of the Champions*).³⁸ After a break of some three hundred years, the format of the *Yatīma* was revived by Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Khafājī, (d. 1069/1659), a native of

³³ Ibid. See also al-Samarra’i, “Some Biographical Notes”, 184. Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-udabā’*, pp. 1349-50.

³⁴ Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p.30. On Usāma b. Munqidh, see de Young and St. Germain (eds.), *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography*, p. 364ff.

³⁵ *Kharīdat al-qaṣr* has not been the object of sustained study. Like the *Yatīma*, it consists of four parts, on 1) Iraq, 2) Syria, 3) Egypt and the west, and 4) Iran, Khurasan and Transoxiana. These have all been published individually. See *al-Qism al- ‘irāqī* eds. J. Sa‘īd and M. B. Atharī; *Qism shu ‘arā’ al-shām* ed. Sh. Faiṣal; *Qism shu ‘arā’ al-maghrib* ed. M. Marzūqī; *Qism shu ‘arā’ miṣr* eds. A. Amīn, Sh. Ḍayf and I. ‘Abbās; *Kharīdat al-qaṣr* ed. ‘A. M. Āl Ṭum‘a. Āl Ṭum‘a’s edition covers the poets of Iran, Khurasan and Transoxiana.

³⁶ Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p.31.

³⁷ Ibid. See Ibn al-Qaṭṭā‘, *Un compendio dell’Antologia di poeti arabo-siciliani*.

³⁸ Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p.31.

Egypt, in his *Rayḥānat al-alibbā' wa-zahrat al-ḥayāt al-dunyā* (*The Sweet Basil of the Learned and the Blossom of the Life of this World*).³⁹ Supplements to this work were composed by the Damascene Muḥammad b. al-Amīn al-Muḥibbī (d. 1111/1699),⁴⁰ and by Ibn Ma'sūm al-Madanī (d. 1120/1708), a native of Medina who migrated to the Deccan as a young man.⁴¹

Thus, the *Yatīma* is significant not only because it provides a unique window into a period of extraordinary productivity in Arabic poetry, but also because it stands at the head of a generic tradition which encompasses some further thirteen major anthologies. From a comparative perspective, the *Yatīma* is also important because it was one of the stylistic models explicitly acknowledged by Muḥammad 'Awfī (d. 640/1242 or before) in his *Lubāb*.⁴² The format of the *Lubāb* does not mirror that of the *Yatīma* directly, since 'Awfī made the biographical criterion of profession, rather than geography, his overarching organisational principle, and he surveyed the history of poetry in New Persian from its beginnings in the late ninth century to his own time, rather than focusing on the verse of a particular era. However, the largest chapters of the *Lubāb* are sub-divided into geographical regions, and hence 'Awfī's debt to al-Tha'ālibī is clear. Although two earlier works, Niẓāmī 'Aruẓī Samarqandī's (d. after 551/1156) *Chahār Maqāla* (*Four Discourses*) and Abū Ṭāhir Khātūnī's (fl. c.500/1106-7) now lost *Manāqib al-shu'arā'* (*The Feats of the Poets*), had included biographical information on poets, 'Awfī's anthology can lay claim to being the first real work of literary historiography and biography in Persian that is still extant.⁴³

³⁹ Orfali, *The Anthologist's Art*, p.30 n.109. For the biography of al-Khaḥḥājī, see van Gelder, "Shihāb al-Dīn al-Khaḥḥājī".

⁴⁰ Orfali, *The Anthologist's Art*, p.30 n.109. For the biography of al-Muḥibbī, see Elger, "Muḥammad Amīn ibn Faḍl Allāh al-Muḥibbī".

⁴¹ Orfali, *The Anthologist's Art*, p.30 n.109. For the biography of Ibn Ma'sūm, see Lowry, "Ibn Ma'sūm".

⁴² LA 1:10.

⁴³ LA 1:3.

Like the *Yatīma*, the *Lubāb* is significant partly because it is our primary source for a great deal of poetry in Persian, and partly because it was used as a stylistic model by later anthologists. Dawlatshāh Samarqandī, author of *Tazkirat al-shu‘arā* (*Biographical Anthology of the Poets*), an anthology in which poets were arranged into classes according to the historical period in which they were active, makes no mention of the *Lubāb*. Nor does Mīr ‘Alīshīr Navā’ī, compiler of an anthology on the poetry of his contemporaries that is entitled *Majālis al-naḡāyis* (*The Assemblies of the Illustrious*).⁴⁴ However, later writers active in the Safavid-Mughal period appear to have been more familiar with ‘Awfī’s work, borrowing its organisational principles. In the year 1000/1591-2, ‘Alī b. Maḥmūd al-Ḥusaynī, active at the Mughal court, compiled the *Bazm-Ārāy* (*The Ornament of the Feast*) an anthology which plagiarises whole sections from the *Lubāb* and retains its format.⁴⁵ Also in the late sixteenth century, Amīn Rāzī (fl. 10th-11th/16th-17th centuries) completed his *Haft Iqlīm* (*The Seven Climes*), a work of geography divided into chapters based on regions, which was interspersed with biography and poetry, and in which he cited ‘Awfī among his sources.⁴⁶ Muḥammad Ṭāhir Naṣrābādī’s (d. after 1091/1680) *Tazkira-yi Naṣrābādī* (*Naṣrābādī’s Biographical Anthology*), an important biographical anthology of seventeenth-century poetry, is divided into sections based on the profession of each poet and the region in which they lived. Naṣrābādī was aware of the *Lubāb* and used it.⁴⁷ Taqī Kāshī’s (d. after 1016/1607-8) *Khulāṣat al-ash‘ār va zubdat al-aḡkār* (*The Epitome of Poems and the Cream of Thoughts*) contains a concluding section on contemporary poets which is arranged geographically.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ *Majālis al-naḡāyis* was originally written in Chaghatay Turkic, but was translated into Persian soon after its composition. Most of the poems that it contains are in Persian.

⁴⁵ See Naqavī, *Tazkira nivīsī dar Hind va Pākistān*, pp. 114-6.

⁴⁶ See Ibid., p.118. For a discussion of *Haft iqlīm* within its Mughal context, see Sharma, *Mughal Arcadia*, pp. 66-7.

⁴⁷ See Sprenger, *A Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian and Hindustany Manuscripts*, p.88.

⁴⁸ See Naqavī, *Tazkira nivīsī dar Hind va Pākistān*, p.128

The *Lubāb* was also a highly valued source for anthologists surveying the history of poetry in Persian, even if they did not borrow its system of arrangement. Despite using an alphabetical scheme in their anthologies, Taqī Awḥadī (d. after 1042/1632-3),⁴⁹ ‘Alī Qulī Khān Vālih (d. 1169/1756),⁵⁰ Āzād Bilgrāmī (d. after 1200/1786),⁵¹ and Rizā Qulī Khān Hidāyat (d. 1288/1871),⁵² all used ‘Awfī’s anthology as a source for the work of the earliest poets active in Persian. The debt of later compilers of biographical anthologies to ‘Awfī was explicitly noted by some, who saw him as the originator of their genre of writing. For example, Āzād Bilgrāmī contended that all later compilers of anthologies in Persian were dependent on ‘Awfī.⁵³

Hence, the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* can and should be compared because they used a similar format, rooted in the Arabic *ṭabaqāt*, and because many later compilers of biographical anthologies active in Arabic and Persian saw them as the foundational texts of the genre in which they wrote. The study of these two anthologies tells us much about the state of literature between the tenth and the thirteenth centuries, but it also has an immediate relevance for understanding the contours of a literary genre that would continue to be written into the nineteenth century.

2. Previous Scholarship and the Methodology of this Study

In scholarship from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first, the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* have frequently been used as source-books by historians of literature and culture.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ Ibid., p.157.

⁵⁰ See ‘Alī Qulī Khān Vālih, *Riyāz al-shu‘arā*, passim. Many of Vālih’s entries on early poets are drawn without alteration from the *Lubāb*.

⁵¹ See Naqavī, *Taḏkira nivīsī dar Hind va Pākistān*, p. 426.

⁵² LA 1:د

⁵³ LA 1:ط

⁵⁴ Studies incorporating material from the *Yatīma* include: Bürgel, *Die ekphrastischen Epigramme*, on al-Ma’mūnī; Hāmori, “The Silken Horsecloths”, on Ibn ‘Abbād; Idem, “A Sampling of Pleasant Civilities”, on al-Babbaghā; Roberts, “Being a Sabian”, on al-Ṣābī; Naaman, *Literature and the Islamic Court*, on Ibn

Material has been extracted from them and studied in great deal, but minimal attention has been paid to the questions of how the anthologists collected and curated the texts that they transmitted, and of what al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī were trying to achieve in their works. This situation first began to change when Rowson and Bonebakker published their computerised listing of biographical information drawn from the *Yatīma* as part of the Onomasticon project, in which they recognised that al-Tha‘ālibī’s anthology was planned and structured.⁵⁵ Since that time, scholarship has increasingly come around to appreciating that curated texts – texts composed by one party and edited by another – are the most common type of writing encountered in pre-modern Arabic and Persian literary culture.⁵⁶ There is, therefore, a greater sense today that the analysis of pre-modern literary texts should account for the context of their presentation. Anthologies provide a useful way into this problem, because they tend to be the product of a single author who follows an editorial method.⁵⁷

One of the most recent works to examine anthologies in either Arabic or Persian literary culture is Bilal Orfali’s 2016 study of al-Tha‘ālibī.⁵⁸ Orfali divides his book into three

‘Abbād and the poets of his court; Pomerantz, *Licit Magic*, on Ibn ‘Abbād; Bosworth, *The Medieval Islamic Underworld*, on Abū Dulaf al-Khazrajī; al-Maghribī, *Walīmat ibn wāsān*, on al-Wāsānī; Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, Vol. 1, pp. 445-77, on the poets of Iran, Khurasan and Transoxiana. Most of Part Four of the *Yatīma* was translated into French by Barbier de Meynard as “Tableau littéraire du Khorassan”. Studies incorporating material from the *Lubāb* include: Bland, “On the Earliest Persian Biography of Poets”; Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, Vol. 1, pp. 445-77, and Vol. 2 passim; Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Poetry*, pp. 1-43, consisting of translations of extracts; Keshavmurthy, “Finitude and the Authorship of Fiction”, on ‘Awfī’s discussion of the nature of poetry. The *Lubāb* was also an important source for studies such as Lazard, *Les premiers poètes*, Nafīsī, *Muḥīt-i zindagī*, and Bertel’s, *Persidskaya poeziya*. The contents of the text are surveyed in Gulchīn Ma‘ānī, *Tārīkh-i tazkira-hā-yi fārsī*, Vol. 2, pp. 77-86.

⁵⁵ Rowson and Bonebakker, *A Computerized Listing*, pp. 7-25.

⁵⁶ See, in particular, Kilpatrick, *Making the Great Book of Songs*; eadem, “Context and the Enhancement of Meaning”; Bray, “Ya‘qūb b. al-Rabī’ Read by Mutanabbī and al-Mubarrad”; Gruendler, “*Qaṣīda*: Its Reconstruction in Performance”.

⁵⁷ Two recently published studies of Mamlūk anthology-making and encyclopaedism should also be mentioned here. Adam Talib’s examination of the epigram (*maqṭū‘*) surveys a corpus of early-modern anthologies, which mostly differ from the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* because they are dedicated to a specific form, genre or theme. See Talib, *How Do You Say Epigram in Arabic?*. At the other end of the scale lie enormous projects of encyclopaedism, such as al-Nuwayrī’s (d. 732/1332) *Nihāyat al-arab*. This work, and its organisational principles, are the subject of Elias Muhanna’s *The World in a Book*.

⁵⁸ Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*. Recent studies focused on the *tazkira* in Persian literary culture include Brookshaw, “Qajar Confection”, Smith, “Literary Connections”, Sharma, “From ‘Ā’isha to Nur Jahān”, and

main sections, surveying the history of *adab* anthologies in Arabic, examining al-Tha‘ālibī’s life and bibliography, and studying the contents of the *Yatīma* and the *Tatimma*. His approach to the *Yatīma* is essentially concerned with al-Tha‘ālibī’s use of biographical techniques, from the juxtaposition of entries on writers who knew one another, to the recurrent formulae that the anthologist employs when describing an author’s work. He also reconstructs a list of al-Tha‘ālibī’s principal sources – both written texts and human transmitters – in the *Yatīma* and the *Tatimma*. Orfali’s research represents an important step in establishing the architecture of al-Tha‘ālibī’s anthology, but it almost entirely ignores the main subject of the *Yatīma*, which is not life writing, but the literary extracts that form the bulk of each entry. Al-Tha‘ālibī presents thousands upon thousands of short pieces of verse and prose, and the space that he dedicates to these far outweighs his characterisations of writers and their work, which are principally designed to give the reader a sense of a writer’s style and thematic concerns. This is not to say that biography should be ignored. It is only by examining the interaction between al-Tha‘ālibī’s framing devices – his biographical comments, his notes on his sources, his critical remarks – and the literary texts themselves that we can reconstruct how his anthology works.

An earlier study, but in some ways a more revealing one, is Hilary Kilpatrick’s examination of Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī’s (d. c. 363/972) *Kitāb al-aghānī*.⁵⁹ Kilpatrick’s research demonstrates how Abū l-Faraj embeds the song texts that are the primary object of his study within the context of biographical, genealogical, philological, literary, historical and sociological information, and the *Aghānī* consequently emerges as an intellectual project that pursues several lines of enquiry in parallel. These findings are of

Beers, “The Biography of Vahshi Bāfqī”. Of these, only Brookshaw and Sharma engage with the broad problem of how texts are curated; Smith takes a long view of the politics of canonisation, while Beers attempts to establish a single objective biography through the use of several *tazākīr*, an approach which ignores the arguments of the individual texts.

⁵⁹ Kilpatrick, *Making the Great Book of Songs*.

relevance for our understanding of the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*, because they demonstrate the extent to which an anthology can have multiple sets of interests, studying topics such as social history and literary theory in addition to literary history.⁶⁰

In this study, I focus on the relationship between the literary extracts and the curatorial devices featured in the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*. The thesis is built around a catalogue which classifies every poem featured by al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī according to genre (Appendix One), and by an appendix listing the material transmitted by their sources (Appendix Two). The former demonstrates how al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī represented the poetic character of each geographical region. The latter throws into relief the extent to which the two anthologists manipulated their sources, rather than reproducing them wholesale.

In the light of this evidence, it becomes clear that al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī were engaged in ventures that represented the literary corpus in innovative ways. The main text of this thesis explores how they curated and evaluated their material, and why they did so. These issues are particularly germane because the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* were both publishing ventures. Al-Tha‘ālibī was disseminating the work of recent writers, many of whom were still living. They had a stake in the success of his anthology, since it provided them with the opportunity to enjoy an increased demand for their work. ‘Awfī was publishing the classics and living authors too. The two anthologists were thus engaged in projects which not only documented what was being written and where, but which also established the value of authors. If demand for the written works of a dead author was stimulated by the circulation of the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*, then book sellers and copyists had the

⁶⁰ For a modern equivalent, in which life writing is used as a prism for exploring an interconnected set of social and literary issues, see Booth, *Classes of Ladies of Cloistered Spaces*. While social approaches represent an important method in the modern study of Arabic literature, minimal attention has been paid to the forms of social criticism practised by medieval writers themselves. One of the few studies to engage with this issue is Kilpatrick, “Abū l-Faraġ’s Profiles of Poets”. See also al-Aḥmad, *Ab‘ād al-naṣṣ*, pp. 181-90.

anthologists to thank, and if a living poet's renown suddenly increased, then they too had to be grateful to al-Tha'ālibī and 'Awfī.

Behind this discussion lurk two ideas which have come to characterise our understanding of literary production in early modern Europe: The Literary Market and the Republic of Letters. The Literary Market refers to the mechanisms which establish the value of texts and their authors. These include the domain of criticism, which assays the aesthetic values of writing, and that of the publishing industry, which disseminates writing in accordance with the demands of a reading public.⁶¹ Twentieth-century scholars largely saw the roots of the Literary Market in sixteenth-century Europe.⁶² It was supposed that the rise of print publishing and the formation of a reading bourgeoisie created a book business entirely regulated by market economics, and that the previously dominant system of patronage disappeared at this time. However, in recent years, this conception has been refined. Turnovsky, for example, shows that patronage and the book business were intertwined in seventeenth and eighteenth-century France,⁶³ a conclusion that is largely mirrored in Sher's study of publishing networks in eighteenth-century Britain and America.⁶⁴ These studies are illuminating because they demonstrate that patronage and the market are not antithetical. Nor is patronage a fundamental feature of 'pre-modern' societies and the market an inherent sign of modernity.

As this study shows, two anthologists active in medieval Iran and India conceived of a literary market which connected courts, cities, and villages, and hence linked the writing

⁶¹ Important studies on the publishing industry that have influenced my approaches here include Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England*; Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*; St. Clair, *The Reading Nation*; Chow, *Publishing, Culture and Power*; Ayalon, *The Arabic Print Revolution*. Two studies of literacy and the social order in the early modern period are Hanna, *In Praise of Books*, and Sajdi, *The Barber of Damasucs*.

⁶² One of the most influential theorists to engage with the idea of the role of the Market in consumer culture is perhaps Jürgen Habermas. See Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*.

⁶³ See Turnovsky, *The Literary Market*.

⁶⁴ See Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*.

produced under patronage to that composed for a paying readership. In engaging with the theme of the market I am responding to scholars of the Enlightenment such as Turnovsky and Sher, but I am doing so in terms that reflect the arguments of al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī themselves. I am also building on the work of recent scholarship on the topic of the book trade in the ‘Abbāsīd world, which has explored the issue of the publishing industry, but which has not conceived of it in these terms. Chief among these studies are Gruendler’s analyses of the transformations effected in ‘Abbāsīd society by the advent of cheap rag paper;⁶⁵ Toorawa’s examination of the work of Ibn Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr, a copyist and book-seller, or ‘book man’, active in Baghdad;⁶⁶ and Gregor Schoeler’s investigation into the problem of oral and written forms of dissemination in the compilation of books.⁶⁷ Schoeler’s work extends the research of twentieth-century scholars such as Werkmeister and Fleischhammer, who reconstructed the sources behind two of the most significant pre-modern Arabic anthologies.⁶⁸ In undertaking this study, I argue that the idea of a publishing industry should not be seen as anachronistic in the context of the medieval eastern Islamic world.

Like the idea of the Literary Market, the Republic of Letters has largely been connected in scholarship with the advent of print. While the term had been in common use since the early fifteenth century, it began to be employed by writers in late sixteenth-century Europe to represent the collaborative nature of their intellectual enquiry. Writing in 1576, Jean Bodin argued that all [European] peoples were ‘marvellously involved in the universal Republic, as if they were part of one and the same city’.⁶⁹ This republic encompassed authors past, present and future who engaged with a common spirit of enquiry into the

⁶⁵ See Gruendler, “Aspects of Craft in the Arabic Book Revolution”; eadem, *Book Culture Before Print*.

⁶⁶ See Toorawa, *Ibn Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr*.

⁶⁷ See Schoeler, *The Oral and the Written*.

⁶⁸ See Werkmeister, *Quellenuntersuchungen*; Fleischhammer, *Die Quellen des Kitāb al-Aḡānī*

⁶⁹ Wheelan, “Republic of Letters”.

sciences and arts, and who adopted a common behaviour of ‘sociability’, not unlike pre-modern Arabic *adab*.⁷⁰ At its most basic, the idea of the Republic of Letters builds on the notion of intertextuality. It is connected to the concept of the Literary Market because the Republic of Letters depends on writers reading one another and establishing their relative values. There is a greater public demand for authors who are highly valued, and hence the market creates a form of ‘republican’ independence from structures such as patronage. The term ‘Republic of Letters’ has therefore been borrowed, and its meanings extended, by scholars working in fields that are not directly connected to the study of the Enlightenment.

For our purposes, the most pertinent of these studies are by al-Musawi and Montgomery. Al-Musawi makes the case for a medieval Arabic Republic of Letters, charting the development of networks of writers, whose migration and engagement with one another created a vast literary dialogue that extended across languages.⁷¹ This largely sociological model, which responds to the work of Bourdieu,⁷² contrasts with the approach adopted by Montgomery, who investigates how the works of a single author, al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/868-9), attempt to encapsulate and to respond to the totality of creation, and hence engage with the writings of many other authors.⁷³

Al-Musawi’s model is attractive because it emphasises the idea of social interaction, and the potential for communication across political boundaries. The period between the tenth century and the thirteenth century constitutes an important era in the political and linguistic history of Islamic world, because it was during this time that Arabic and Persian ceased to be associated with a single polity, and literature in the two languages began to circulate

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ al-Musawi, *The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters*, p. 305

⁷² Bourdieu’s most extensive foray into literary criticism is his *The Rules of Art*, a work which applies a sociological lens to the study of the content of literary works and the context of their production.

⁷³ See Montgomery, *In Praise of Books*.

between states. A sophisticated manuscript culture fuelled the dissemination of texts among the literate classes across political boundaries. A shared set of ideas and discursive techniques began to define literary production. Writers from Andalusia to Central Asia, and from Iraq to India, produced literary texts that engaged with a common fund of themes. In person and through correspondence, they collaborated in intellectual enquiry, in the study of the religious and natural sciences, and in the creation of a common set of aesthetic practices (*adab*) which defined the behaviour of men of letters (*udabāʾ*).⁷⁴

In all these respects, the similarities with the European Republic of Letters are striking. Yet the model of the Republic of Letters is inherently inappropriate for describing the networks of writers covered by the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*. They were aware that they were engaged in a discourse that overran political boundaries, but the idea of nationhood, and indeed the notion that intellectual enquiry was a form of republicanism that could undermine political structures, do not figure explicitly in their writing. Instead, the writers featured in the two anthologies imagine a literary order which mirrors the political status quo, in which judicious patrons act as the guiding force of the Literary Market. I therefore stop short of imagining the literary dialogues conducted in the two anthologies as a Republic of Letters.

Finally, this study investigates the extent to which we can speak of literary continuities between Arabic and Persian during the medieval period. A broad reaction against academic Orientalism resulted in the combined study of Arabic and Persian becoming unfashionable in the latter decades of the twentieth century. However, the rise of comparatist approaches, and the subsequent popularity of world literature as a discipline, have meant that studies which engage with Arabic and Persian, or with Arabic and

⁷⁴ The collaboration of men of letters in the study of the natural sciences and medicine has received minimal attention in scholarship. The chief study appears to be Daiber, *Naturwissenschaft bei den Arabern*.

Hebrew, or with Persian and Ottoman Turkish, are now in vogue once more. The central questions with which I am engaged here are: ‘to what extent can one speak of ‘post-*muḥdath*’ Arabic and Persian poetry (i.e. the verse of the late tenth to the late twelfth centuries) as a single system? How similar were the generic conventions and rhetorical devices employed by poets in the two languages? What about the theoretical apparatus employed by contemporary literary critics?

These questions are timely because scholarship on Arabic, Persian and Turkish literatures has yet to engage fully with the linguistic cosmopolitanism of medieval and early modern literary production. Writers were often multi-lingual, and lived and worked in environments where there was more than one idiom of high culture.⁷⁵ The *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* do not reveal the full complexity of literary influences present in the eastern Islamic world between the late ninth century and the thirteenth century, including those derived from Turkic, Indian and Greek cultures, but they do allow us to reconstruct some of the networks of authors who wrote in both Arabic and Persian during this period, a topic which I explore in detail in Chapter Four. A comparison between the two anthologies demonstrates that a cosmopolitan literary culture emerged under Sāmānīd and Ghaznavīd rule, in which writers active in Arabic read and listened to poetry in Persian, and where writers active in Persian read and listened to texts in Arabic. The anthologies suggest that people were exposed to texts in both languages at social gatherings. For example, participants in Arabic-speaking *majālis* in eleventh-century Khurasan appear to have listened to poems sung in Persian, and extempore translation between the two languages seems to have been a ‘party trick’ practised in performance contexts in tenth-century Iran.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ For comparisons with South Asia, see Pollock, *The Language of the Gods*.

⁷⁶ See Chapter Four of this thesis.

3. Al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī: Intellectual and Literary Contexts

The lives and work of al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī have been studied in some detail, and it is not my intention to survey their entire literary output or to establish their definitive biographies here. What follows is instead an overview of the social and intellectual contexts in which the anthologists lived and of the kinds of writing that they produced. I have, however, focused on those aspects of the two men’s vitae which remain contested in scholarship.

Al-Tha‘ālibī

Abū Manṣūr ‘Abd al-Malik b. Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl al-Tha‘ālibī grew up during a period when the established boundaries of the ‘Abbāsīd Caliphate had begun to fragment, a phenomenon which affected the form of the *Yatīma*.⁷⁷ Later biographers agree that he was born in the city of Nishapur, which lies in the north east of Iran, in 350/961, in the latter days of the Sāmānīd empire. During his teenage years, in 367/977-8, the Ghaznavids would establish themselves as heirs to the Sāmānīd territories, and it was under their rule that the mature al-Tha‘ālibī lived and worked.⁷⁸ Although he is known to have travelled frequently throughout Iran and Central Asia from his late twenties onwards, the *Yatīma* implies that Nishapur was the site of his main residence. This is perhaps unsurprising, since the city was home to a flourishing cultural scene, and had developed into the major centre of academic learning in Khurasan. Many of the sources whom al-Tha‘ālibī met and

⁷⁷ For a full list of biographies of al-Tha‘ālibī, both medieval and modern, see Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p. 34 n.1. The most important medieval biographies include al-Ḥuṣrī, *Zahr al-ādāb*, Vol. 1, pp. 163-5; al-Bākhārī, *Dumyat al-qasr* Vol. 2, pp. 966-7; Ibn Bassām al-Shantarīnī, *al-Dhakhīra*. Vol. 8, pp.560-83; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān*. Vol. 3, pp. 178-80; al-Ṣafādī, *al-Wāfī bi-l-wafāyāt*, Vol. 19, pp. 194-99. Recent scholarly biographical studies of al-Tha‘ālibī include Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, pp. 34-8; Rowson, “al-Tha‘ālibī”, in *Encyclopedia of Islam*; Idem., “al-Tha‘ālibī”, in *The Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*; Bosworth, *The Laṭā’if al-ma‘ārif of al-Tha‘ālibī*, pp. 1-31; al-Samarrai, “Some Biographical Notes”; al-Jādir, *al-Tha‘ālibī nāqīdan*, pp. 15-135.

⁷⁸ See Spuler and Sourdél-Thomine, “Ghaznavids”.

transmitted from would presumably have come to visit Nishapur because of its intellectual climate. In addition to his home in Nishapur, al-Tha‘ālibī also possessed an estate in the vicinity of Kirmān, southern Iran, to which he appears to have travelled irregularly.⁷⁹

His family background and the events of his youth are uncertain. The name al-Tha‘ālibī itself is connected to foxes (*al-tha‘ālib*), and hence to fox furs, a fact which led the biographer Ibn Khallikān (d. 681/1282) to write: ‘This *nisba* relates to the sewing of fox skins and their manufacture. It was applied to him because he was a *farrā*’.⁸⁰ This word can mean either a furrier, who works with the fur itself, or a merchant who deals in fur garments. Some scholars have interpreted Ibn Khallikān’s statement as meaning that al-Tha‘ālibī was a furrier, or the son of a furrier, and have subsequently concluded that he came from a modest socio-economic background.⁸¹ Yet it is difficult to reconcile this conclusion with the impression that we gain from information scattered throughout al-Tha‘ālibī’s works. In a poem he speaks of being forced to spend his inheritance from his mother and father on propping up an estate (perhaps the one near Kirmān),⁸² and in his book *Ādāb al-mulūk* he transmits a narrative *khavar* that was told to his grandfather, Abū ‘Alī al-Tha‘ālibī (*sic.* in the unicum ms.) by Naṣr b. Ṭazz Sharābdār, wine butler to the Sāmānid kings Abū Muḥammad Nūḥ b. Naṣr (331-43/943-54) and ‘Abd al-Malik b. Nūḥ (r. 343-50/954-61).⁸³

⁷⁹ al-Samarrai, “Some Biographical Notes”, p.179. We may infer that the estate was near Kirmān because al-Tha‘ālibī travelled to it from al-Mikālī’s village of Firūzābād, which lies not far away in the vicinity of Shiraz, and because it was overrun by a band of Qufṣ, a people who live in the Kirmān region. See al-Tha‘ālibī, *Fiqh al-Lughā*, pp. 33; 39.

⁸⁰ Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a‘yān*. Vol. 3, p.180.

⁸¹ See Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p. 35.

⁸² al-Tha‘ālibī, *Dīwān al-Tha‘ālibī*, p.30. Orfali writes that al-Tha‘ālibī speaks of inheriting the estate itself from his father in this poem. This does not seem to be the case. C.f. Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p.35.

⁸³ See *Ādāb al-mulūk*, pp. 47-8. Al-Tha‘ālibī’s discussion of his grandfather may have been noticed first by Radwan (*Tha‘ālibī’s Tatimmat al-Yatīma*, p. 31). It was subsequently discussed by Sadan. See Sadan, “*Ādāb – règles de conduit – et Ādāb – dictons, maximes*”, pp. 287-8. On the basis of this evidence, Julia Bray suggests that the grandfather may have had a connection to the court, and establishes the dates. See “Al-Tha‘ālibī’s *Ādāb al-mulūk*” p. 34 n.4. For Naṣr the wine butler, a boon companion who played a prominent

The passage in question does not necessarily prove that al-Tha‘ālibī’s grandfather worked for the Sāmānids directly; like Abū Manṣūr, he could simply have been well-connected. It does, however, provide strong evidence to suggest that the family had generated wealth several generations before Abū Manṣūr was born, and that they had developed connections at court. It is certainly conceivable that the Tha‘ālibīs could have cultivated such relationships had they been merchants who dealt in furs, rather than furriers. The trade in fur was a significant part of the Sāmānid economy. Marten, squirrel and fox furs were brought to Central Asia from Russia and the Volga Basin, while garments made from the pelts of the red and black foxes of Khwārizm are luxury items which al-Tha‘ālibī mentions in his work *Laṭā‘if al-ma‘ārif*.⁸⁴ It is tempting to speculate that the Tha‘ālibīs may have profited from this trade, and indeed earned their name from it. This would, perhaps, explain how Abū Manṣūr came to inherit landed property.

Biographers transmit minimal information concerning his education. In *Laṭā‘if al-ma‘ārif* he reports that he had a tutor who taught him Arabic and poetry when he was a child.⁸⁵ We infer from the *Yatīma* that he may have studied under the philologist Ibn Fāris (d.

395/1004) and the man of letters Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī (d. 383/993), although it is

role in politics, see Gardīzī, *Zayn al-akhbār*, p.38. Omidasalar has subsequently speculated on the basis of this evidence that the Tha‘ālibīs may have been furriers by royal appointment to the Sāmānid court. See Omidasalar, “Ṣa‘ālibī Nīshāpūrī yā Ṣa‘ālibī Marghānī?”, p. 131ff.

⁸⁴ Bosworth, *The Laṭā‘if al-ma‘ārif of al-Tha‘ālibī*, p. 142. The information presented there on the foxes of Khwārizm is derived from (Pseudo-)Jāhīz, *Kitāb al-tabaṣṣur*. See Pellat, “Ġāhīzīana, I”, p.157. On the fur trade in general, see Ed., “farw”; Lewicki, “Il commercio arabo con la Russia”, pp. 57-8. The main primary sources dealing with the trade route between the Volga, Russia and Central Asia are Ibn Faḍlān, *al-Muqaddasī*, and al-Mas‘ūdī. For a discussion of the black fox fur that was brought to the Bulghār and traded south, see Ibn Fadlan, *Mission to the Volga*, p.28.

⁸⁵ Al-Samarrai, “Some Biographical Notes”, p.175. Reports by two relatively late sources, al-Ṣafādī and Ibn Shākir al-Kutubī, suggest that al-Tha‘ālibī himself may have worked for a time as a boys’ tutor in a school (*yūqālu innahu kāna mu‘addiban ṣibyānin fī maktab*). Some have seen this statement as evidence that he came from a humble background, but such a conclusion seems premature, since we are not informed as to the circumstances of his employment. See Rowson, “al-Tha‘ālibī”, in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*; al-Ṣafādī, *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafiyāt* Vol. 19, p. 197. It is tempting to speculate that the statements may be garbled renditions of al-Tha‘ālibī’s own claim to have *had* a tutor.

unclear when his friendships with these men began.⁸⁶ It is possible that al-Tha‘ālibī received his education by attending lectures given in study circles and *majālis*.⁸⁷ As I explore in Chapters One and Three, it was through fora such as these that he would gather much of the material in the *Yatīma*, and there is evidence to suggest that the anthology itself was designed to be used within similar contexts.⁸⁸ Many – perhaps the majority – of his roughly seventy works of *adab*, including the *Yatīma*, have a strongly didactic element, in the sense that they demonstrate how good poetry is put together, explore the application of rhetorical devices, investigate thematic connections between the verse of professional poets and the prose of chancellery scribes, and explain the derivation of abstruse and recondite phrases.⁸⁹ These are books which are intended to popularise the high culture of literary Arabic, and which are aimed at students and aspiring bureaucrats, but also at autodidacts. It is possible that al-Tha‘ālibī’s education, like that of his intended readers, was spent between public lectures and private study.

The number and variety of al-Tha‘ālibī’s working relationships suggest that his social world bridged several different classes. Beyond his acquaintance with his teachers, al-Tha‘ālibī appears to have developed a friendship early in life with Abū l-Faḍl ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Mīkālī (d.436/1044), of the Mīkāl family, who acted as the civil leaders (*ru‘asā’*) of Nishapur.⁹⁰ Al-Mīkālī would come to act as a major patron of Arabic letters in Nishapur when he became *ra‘īs*, organising literary *majālis* which al-Tha‘ālibī seems to

⁸⁶ The title of al-Tha‘ālibī’s *Fiqh al-lugha* responds to the title of a work by Ibn Fāris. See Rowson, “al-Tha‘ālibī”, in: *The Encyclopedia of Islam*.

⁸⁷ In the later tenth century the *madrasas* that would come to dominate intellectual life under the Saljuqs had yet to be established.

⁸⁸ Although *majālis* represent an important forum for the production and dissemination of literature in pre-modern Arabic and Persian culture, they have not received extensive treatment in scholarship. Studies include: Brookshaw, “Palaces, Pavilions and Pleasure-Gardens”; Ali, *Arabic Literary Salons*.

⁸⁹ For an updated bibliographical survey of al-Tha‘ālibī’s works, see Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, pp. 40-96.

⁹⁰ On the Mīkāl clan, see Bulliet, “Al-e Mikal.” For the relationship between al-Tha‘ālibī and Abū l-Faḍl, see YD 4:407-9; 432-3; al-Tha‘ālibī, *Fiqh al-lugha*, pp. 30-40; al-Tha‘ālibī, *al-Muntaḥal*.

have attended.⁹¹ He also provided al-Tha‘ālibī with access to his private library.⁹² Another figure in al-Mīkālī’s literary circle who maintained a close friendship with al-Tha‘ālibī was Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān, a collector of private means who ‘published’ rare literary works.⁹³ In addition to these two men, some of al-Tha‘ālibī’s most significant acquaintances in Nishapur included Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Mūsawī, whose father had been connected to the Sāmānid court in Bukhara;⁹⁴ Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Bustī (d. 400/1009), secretary to the first Ghaznavid ruler, Sebüktegin;⁹⁵ Abū Sa‘īd Naṣr b. Ya‘qūb al-Dīnawārī, a scribe in the chancellery of Maḥmūd of Ghazna (d. 421/1031);⁹⁶ Abū Sa‘īd ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Dūst, who lectured on grammar, law and poetry;⁹⁷ Badī‘ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī (d. 398/1008), renowned author of the *Maqāmāt*;⁹⁸ Abū Bakr al-Quhistānī, who ran the chancellery of Maḥmūd of Ghazna’s son, Muḥammad (r. 421/1030 and 432-3/1040-1).⁹⁹

Thus, al-Tha‘ālibī’s network of friends extended from authors, to scholarly circles, to the aristocracy of Nishapur, to the chancellery scribes of the Ghaznavid court. He was also well connected to patrons in Iran and Central Asia. He established a friendship with Shams al-Ma‘ālī Qābūs b. Wushmkīr (d. 403/1012), Ziyārid ruler of Jurjān, when the latter was in Nishapur in exile, dedicating two works to him.¹⁰⁰ He also dedicated several publications to Abū l-‘Abbās Ma’mūn b. Ma’mūn (d. 407/1017) of the dynasty of the Khwārizmshāhs, whose court at Jurjāniyya (Urgench, modern-day Uzbekistan) he visited.¹⁰¹ There is a

⁹¹ See al-Tha‘ālibī, *Fiqh al-lugha*, p.33.

⁹² YD 3:395.

⁹³ YD 4:452.

⁹⁴ See Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, pp.152-3

⁹⁵ Al-Tha‘ālibī makes his close friendship with al-Bustī clear in a poignant passage in the *Yatīma*, writing: ‘We are one in *adab*, and its bonds are stronger than those of kinship.’ See YD 4:345.

⁹⁶ Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p. 153

⁹⁷ Ibid, pp. 153-4

⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 154

⁹⁹ Ibid, pp. 154-5.

¹⁰⁰ Al-Samarrai, “Some Biographical Notes”, p.182

¹⁰¹ Ibid, pp. 179-81.

fragmentary reference in the Qumayḥa edition of the *Yatīma* which implies that al-Tha‘ālibī was once present at a *majlis* hosted by the Būyid vizier al-Ṣāḥib Ibn ‘Abbād (d. 385/995) in Isfahan, although this appears to be a misprint.¹⁰²

The dedications of other volumes suggest that al-Tha‘ālibī was on close terms with a swathe of the Ghaznavid civil and military elite. He has a number of books dedicated to Abū Sahl b. al-Ḥasan al-Ḥamdawī, Ghaznavid governor of Khurasan,¹⁰³ and others to Naṣr b. Sebüktegin (d. 412/1021), brother of Maḥmūd of Ghazna and commander of the army in Khurasan.¹⁰⁴ The first recension of the *Tatimma* was dedicated to Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. ‘Isā al-Karajī, one of Maḥmūd of Ghazna’s advisers.¹⁰⁵ It appears that the *Yatīma* did not have only one dedicatee. Al-Tha‘ālibī produced two published editions of his work, the first of which was dedicated to an unnamed vizier.¹⁰⁶ However, popular demand for the anthology appears to have been so great among scholars, students and men of letters that al-Tha‘ālibī did not need to find a dedicatee for its second recension.¹⁰⁷ In the *Tatimma*, we are told that the first person to read and memorise what must have been the first edition of the *Yatīma* was Abū l-Maḥāsin Sa‘d b. Muḥammad b. Manṣūr, the son of the *ra’īs* of

¹⁰² In the entry on the poet Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad al-Burūjirdī, a scribe who served Ibn ‘Abbād in his youth, al-Tha‘ālibī writes that Ibn ‘Abbād once ordered al-Burūjirdī to cap a poem, continuing: ‘One day, these two lines were recited to me in his presence...then he ordered him to cap them’ (*wa-unshidanī bi-ḥadratīhi yawman hādhān al-baytān...fa-amarahu bi-ijāzatihimā*) YD 4:455-6. The Damascus and ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd editions of the text read *unshida*, making it likely that the Qumayḥa reading is a misprint. This is confirmed by Bodleian MS. Selden Superius 16, f.156b, where the text is garbled as “*anshada ḥadratuḥu yawman hādhān al-baytān*”. Despite al-Tha‘ālibī’s silence on the topic, it is tempting speculate that he may have visited the court of Ibn ‘Abbād as a very young man; although it is true that many of the men who transmitted to him are known to have visited Ibn ‘Abbād at Rayy, Jurjān and Isfahan, he often comments in detail on events that occurred in private *majālis* hosted by the vizier, without mentioning a source.

¹⁰³ Al-Samarrai, “Some Biographical Notes”, p.182. His entry in the *Tatimma* is at YD 5:249-50.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, pp. 182; 185. Orfali appears to conflate the amir Naṣr b. Sebüktegin with his father, Sebüktegin, the founder of the dynasty who died in 387/997. Al-Tha‘ālibī’s works *al-Iqtibās min al-Qur’ān* and *Ajnās al-tajnīs* were dedicated to Naṣr b. Sebüktegin. C.f. Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, pp. 35; 47; 50.

¹⁰⁵ Al-Samarrai, “Some Biographical Notes”, p.183; Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p.59. His entry in the *Tatimma* is given at YD 5:256-8.

¹⁰⁶ Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p.61.

¹⁰⁷ See YD 1:27.

Jurjān.¹⁰⁸ In 403/1012-3 al-Tha‘ālibī stayed with Sa‘d b. Muḥammad b. Manṣūr’s family, establishing a close friendship with them.¹⁰⁹

Al-Tha‘ālibī’s network of friends and contacts suggests that he inhabited a world where patrons supported literary production, but where authors also benefitted from a reading public’s demand for books. The fact that he dispensed with a dedicatee for the *Yatīma* demonstrates that he was not dependent on a single patron to support him as he wrote. This could be because he received aid from several different patrons over the many years it took him to compile his anthology, or because he was funded by the income that he received from his property and his other publications. There are, however, indications that his projects were also supported by men of letters, who did not provide al-Tha‘ālibī with cash, but with gifts.¹¹⁰ In many ways, this form of support would not have differed greatly from the kind of aid provided by patrons, who often presented writers with staples such as barley and wine, rather than with the precious stones and fantastic sums of money seen in idealised representations.¹¹¹ When the *Yatīma* was finished, al-Tha‘ālibī lectured on the text.¹¹² It seems likely that his teaching also provided him with some kind of income, perhaps again in the form of gifts from students.

Thus, al-Tha‘ālibī seems to have earned his living through a mixture of inherited wealth, intermittent employment at courts, gifts from patrons and readers, and routine employment in the form of teaching. His prolific output and the *Yatīma* generated his extraordinary

¹⁰⁸ YD 5:166.

¹⁰⁹ YD 5:165.

¹¹⁰ See al-Tha‘ālibī, *Dīwān*, pp. 29; 70; 74; 86. The *Yatīma* also contains many such poems exchanged between poets and their patrons. I have catalogued some of them as *ikhwāniyyāt* in Appendix One. I follow al-Tha‘ālibī in designating a series of such requests by Ibn al-Ḥajjāj (d.991/1000) as *kudya* (asking for things) in my index to Volume Three of the *Yatīma*.

¹¹¹ On this kind of poetry, see Gruendler, “Death and Taxes”.

¹¹² On the students and men whom al-Tha‘ālibī lectured, see Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, pp. 37-8.

renown, which spread as far as North Africa during his life,¹¹³ and which appears to have caused men of letters from across the Arabic-speaking world to visit him in their droves. His death in his seventies in 429/1037-8 has been thought to coincide with a decline in the volume of literary production in Arabic in Iran and Central Asia, but the number of little-studied sequels to the *Yatīma* produced in Khurasan between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries suggests otherwise.¹¹⁴ Indeed, al-Tha‘ālibī seems to be the model for a group of literary scholars active in Iran and Central Asia who systematised and explained the Arabic literary tradition to courtiers and scholars, and who championed it through their publications. Perhaps more than any of his contemporaries, al-Tha‘ālibī worked to push the geographical boundaries of the Arabic-speaking world, documenting literary production, and demonstrating how the corpus fitted together. Later biographers called him the Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/868-9) of Nishapur – not because he took on the same subjects as al-Jāḥiẓ in his work, but presumably because he was a professional author who synthesised the written word and made it accessible to his readers in a way that few others could.¹¹⁵

‘Awfī

‘Awfī’s full name can be reconstructed as Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā b. Ṭāhir b. ‘Uthmān Bukhārī Ḥanafī ‘Awfī, meaning that he was born in Bukhara and belonged to the Ḥanafite *madhhab*.¹¹⁶ The anthologist himself does not supply the date of his birth, but it seems likely that he was born between 1170-1180, since his own anecdotes represent him

¹¹³ Al-Ḥusrī (d. 413/1022) of Qayrawān provides the first biographical description of al-Tha‘ālibī written by anyone anywhere, having availed himself of a quantity of books that a high-ranking local bureaucrat had brought back from a trip to the east. Al-Tha‘ālibī’s renown continued to grow in the west; the Andalusian anthologist Ibn Bassām (d. 542/1147) provides the most extensive biography of al-Tha‘ālibī, demonstrating the extent of his renown.

¹¹⁴ Al-Tha‘ālibī’s death date is given as 429/1037-8 by most scholars, with the exception of Orfali, who gives 429/1039. As the year 429 corresponds to 1037-8, it is unclear to me why Orfali suggests 1039. The source for the date is Ibn Khallikān, *Wafiyāt al-a’yān* Vol. 3, p.180.

¹¹⁵ On al-Jāḥiẓ’s engagement with the book trade, see Montgomery, *Al-Jāḥiẓ: In Praise of Books*, p.41 ff.

¹¹⁶ Naqavī, *Tazkira nivīsī dar Hind va Pākistān* p. 62.

as an accomplished scholar by the year 597/1200-1.¹¹⁷ Despite suggestions to the contrary, his *laqab* appears to have been Saḍīd al-Dīn, the name recorded in descriptions of him by two contemporaries.¹¹⁸

‘Awfī’s *nisba* establishes him as a descendent of the Prophet’s companion ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Awf, whom ‘Awfī himself names as his ancestor.¹¹⁹ His works provide us with no tangible information concerning his parents and his immediate family, but his grandfather, Yaḥyā b. Ṭāhir b. ‘Uthmān ‘Awfī, appears in the *Lubāb* as a leading judge, imam, traditionist and specialist in the genealogies of the Arabs, who lived in Transoxiana.¹²⁰ ‘Awfī’s uncle, Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Adnān Surkhaktī, was a physician who served as private doctor to the Qarakhanid ruler of Samarqand in the late 6th/12th century.¹²¹ Jalāl al-Dīn, Surkhaktī’s son and ‘Awfī’s cousin, also worked at court; we are told that, as a child, he performed conjuring tricks for the sultan.¹²² Like al-Tha‘ālibī, then, ‘Awfī came from a family with court connections.

‘Awfī is significantly more forthcoming than al-Tha‘ālibī regarding his education. In his other major work, *Jawāmi‘ al-ḥikāyāt* (*Compendia of Anecdotes*) we learn that he enrolled in a Sunni college (*madrasa*), where he was taught by the imam Rukn al-Dīn Mas‘ūd Imāmzāda.¹²³ As a young man, he also read al-Zamakhsharī’s (d. 538/1144) *al-Fā’iq fī gharīb al-ḥadīth* (*The Superior [Book] on Remarkable Hadith*), a compendium of abstruse phraseology found in hadith literature, with Ṭāj al-Dīn ‘Umar b. Mas‘ūd al-Burhān, a scion

¹¹⁷ Niẓāmu’D-Dīn, *Introduction to the Jawāmi‘ u’l-Ḥikāyāt*, p.5.

¹¹⁸ Ibid. p.4. ‘Awfī is named as Nūr al-Dīn in some later sources, such as *Tārīkh-i guzīda*, the histories of Firishta and Ghaffārī, and *Ḥabīb al-siyar*. See LA 1: ١٠٠. The name Jamāl al-Dīn is also given occasionally. Nafīsī’s insistence that Jamāl al-Dīn is in fact correct is based on a reading of a poem which may not actually be concerned with ‘Awfī. See Naqavī, *Tazkira nivīsī dar Hind va Pākistān*, pp. 60-1. (N.B. Naqavī mistakenly calls Nafīsī ‘Qazvīnī’ here); ‘Awfī, *Matn-i kāmīl-i lubāb al-albāb*, v.

¹¹⁹ LA 1: ١٠٠.

¹²⁰ LA 1:178.

¹²¹ LA 1 :179.

¹²² LA 1 :180.

¹²³ Niẓāmu’D-Dīn, *Introduction to the Jawāmi‘ u’l-Ḥikāyāt*, p.7.

of Āl-i Burhān, who were a prominent family in Bukhara and the city's civil leaders (*ru'asā'*) for several centuries.¹²⁴ He also knew many more scholars in Transoxiana, including Quṭb al-Dīn Sarakhsī, a calligrapher who had been appointed keeper of the Sar-i Pul Bāzārcha Library in Bukhara by the Burhān family.¹²⁵ It seems likely that he cultivated his scholarly acquaintances by attending study circles and *majālis*. Participation in gatherings such as these resulted in 'Awfī collecting much of the poetry that would later be included in the *Lubāb*.

In the year 597/1200-1, 'Awfī began a period of travel in search of knowledge and, presumably, patronage.¹²⁶ In some ways, the *Lubāb* acts as a document of the compiler's journeys, since 'Awfī includes biographies of many of the men whom he met in his anthology, noting when he met them. On the basis of the factual information that can be extracted from these entries, scholars have assumed that 'Awfī's travels were conducted in the course of a single journey, but it is possible that, like al-Tha'ālibī, he made multiple journeys from his home town. At first, he left Bukhara to join his uncle and cousin at the court of the Qarakhanid Sultan Jalāl al-Dīn Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥusayn Tamghaj Khān in Samarqand.¹²⁷ Here he made new connections with scholars and courtiers who would be featured in the *Lubāb*, and was appointed head of the office of correspondence of Tamghaj Khān's heir apparent for a brief period.¹²⁸ Despite meeting success, he soon headed north-west to Khwārizm (i.e. Kāth, modern-day Uzbekistan).¹²⁹ It was here that he studied with another influential teacher, Majd al-Dīn Sharaf b. Mu'ayyad al-Baghdādī, a poet and

¹²⁴ Ibid. For a study of the family, see Pritsak, "Āl-i Burhān".

¹²⁵ LA 1:210-11.

¹²⁶ His itinerary was reconstructed by Qazvīnī and by Niẓāmu'D-Dīn, both of whom collated the information provided in the *Lubāb*, but who each came to different conclusions.

¹²⁷ LA 1:44-5.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Niẓāmu'D-Dīn, *Introduction to the Jawāmi'u'l-Hikāyāt*, pp. 8-9.

shaykh of the Kubravī Sufi order.¹³⁰ Around this time, ‘Awfī also travelled south west to the Caspian coast, to try his luck at the court of the minor party king Kābūd Jāma (d. c.600/1203-4), who ruled Shahrak-i Naw (near modern-day Gunbad-i Kāvūs, Iran) on behalf of the Khwārizmshāhs.¹³¹ It was at this point that highwaymen attacked him, robbing him of his furniture and possessions.¹³² When he eventually arrived in Shahrak-i Naw, Kābūd Jāma’s greeting was lukewarm, and ‘Awfī was obliged to travel on.¹³³

He turned east, spending a period of time in the towns of Khurasan which would culminate in a relatively long stay in Nishapur in around 603/1206-7. As elsewhere, ‘Awfī’s professional acquaintances in Khurasan included court officials, scholars and men of religion. He met the son of ‘Imād al-Dīn Mu’ayyad b. Aḥmad al-Isfarā’inī, vizier to the Khwārizmshāh,¹³⁴ corresponded and kept company with the learned man Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Razkhālī al-Sarakhsī,¹³⁵ and attended gatherings with the chancellor chief Jamāl al-Dīn ‘Alī Lāhūrī.¹³⁶ Heading into Afghanistan, ‘Awfī next made for Herat, before turning south to Asfīzār and Farāh on the borders of Sīstān. We may infer that these events occurred at some point between the years 607-612/1210-15.¹³⁷ It was in Asfīzār that he met Abū Bakr al-Jamājī, a vizier and military leader whose son would play an important role in ‘Awfī’s later life in Sind.¹³⁸

It is unclear whether ‘Awfī returned to Bukhara after visiting Afghanistan, or whether he made straight for the Subcontinent.¹³⁹ It is possible that he was not driven to Sind by

¹³⁰ LA 1:230. On his *rubā’iyyāt*, see Bertel’s, “Chetverostishiya sheykha madzhd ad-dina bagdadi”.

¹³¹ LA 1:51. See Nizāmu’D-Dīn, *Introduction to the Jawāmi‘u’l-Hikāyāt*, p.11.

¹³² LA 1:51.

¹³³ LA 1:51-2.

¹³⁴ LA 1:147-8.

¹³⁵ LA 1:218.

¹³⁶ LA 1:120-1.

¹³⁷ Nizāmu’D-Dīn, *Introduction to the Jawāmi‘u’l-Hikāyāt* p.11.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p.10. LA 1:111-2.

¹³⁹ C.f. Nizāmu’D-Dīn, *Introduction to the Jawāmi‘u’l-Hikāyāt* p.11-12.

rumours of the impending Mongol invasions, but rather by the lure of the courts of India and the idea of the opportunities for employment that they might offer. Whether deliberately or serendipitously, ‘Awfī’s journey South put him beyond the immediate reach of the Mongols, whose eruption into Central Asia and the Middle East would put an end to over five hundred years of ‘Abbāsīd suzerainty in 1258. He travelled from Ghazna, crossing the Indus and arriving in Lahore.¹⁴⁰ By the year 617/1220-1, he had reached the court of the Ghūrid Mamlūk ruler Nāṣir al-Dīn Qabācha in Uchcha.¹⁴¹ It was here that ‘Awfī settled, receiving the patronage of Qabācha’s vizier ‘Ayn al-Mulk al-Ash‘arī. ‘Awfī dedicated the *Lubāb* to the vizier, calling it the ‘capital’ of his ‘commodities’ (*sarmāya-yi biẓā ‘at-i khūd*).¹⁴² The anthology was, therefore, as much of an opportunity for ‘Awfī to demonstrate the breadth of his knowledge, his aptitude and his social connections to his new employer as it was a primer of Persian poetry.

After completing the *Lubāb* in around 617/1220-1, ‘Awfī was patronised by Qabācha himself. A subscription note recorded on ff.456b-459a of British Library India Office Islamic MS. 1432 shows ‘Awfī to have been in Cambay in Gujrat in the lead up to the year 621/1224, perhaps acting as Qabācha’s representative in the city.¹⁴³ At this point, ‘Awfī was working on a two-part translation of Abū ‘Alī al-Muḥassin b. ‘Alī al-Tanūkhī’s (d. 384/994) *al-Faraj ba’d al-shidda* (*Relief after Distress*) for the sultan. Anecdotes featured in the *Faraj* would later be incorporated into ‘Awfī’s largest work, *Jawāmi‘ al-ḥikāyāt*, a compendium of a little over two thousand condensed anecdotes derived from around

¹⁴⁰ LA 2:411. Niẓāmu’D-Dīn, *Introduction to the Jawāmi‘ u’l-Ḥikāyāt*, p. 12.

¹⁴¹ On the date of the *Lubāb*, see LA 1:ط-ى. The date and patronage of the *Lubāb* would tend to argue against Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui’s thesis that ‘Awfī first arrived at the court of the Ghūrid Mamlūks only after his stay in Cambay. See Siddiqui, *Studies in Indo-Persian Historiography*, p.56.

¹⁴² LA 1:8.

¹⁴³ Niẓāmu’D-Dīn, *Introduction to the Jawāmi‘ u’l-Ḥikāyāt* pp. 14-16. Hodivala demonstrated that Cambay was not under Muslim rule at this time, and hence that ‘Awfī must have been Qabācha’s representative to the Muslim community there. See Hodivala, *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, Vol. 1, p.171; Vol. 2, p.44; Jackson *The Delhi Sultanate*. p. 193.

ninety acknowledged sources.¹⁴⁴ Like the translation of the *Faraj*, *Jawāmi‘ al-ḥikāyāt* was begun under the patronage of Qabācha.¹⁴⁵ However, in the year 625/1228, Qabācha’s competitor for rule over the former Ghūrid domains, Sultan Iltutmish of Delhi (d. 633/1236), conquered Uchcha and the Fortress of Bakkar, and Qabācha preferred to drown himself rather than be captured.¹⁴⁶ ‘Awfī returned with Iltutmish to Delhi, and completed *Jawāmi‘ al-ḥikāyāt* under the patronage of his vizier, Nizām al-Mulk b. Abī Sa‘d al-Junaydī.¹⁴⁷

Evidence found in *Jawāmi‘ al-ḥikāyāt* suggests that ‘Awfī was given a position at the court of Iltutmish, and that he lived beyond the year 628/1230-1.¹⁴⁸ Nizāmu’D-Dīn argued that ‘Awfī was still alive in 640/1242, on the basis of his account of the ‘Abbāsīd Caliphs in *Jawāmi‘ al-ḥikāyāt*.¹⁴⁹ Thirteen manuscripts of this work include a line of poetry which records the succession of the last ‘Abbāsīd, al-Musta‘ṣim (r. 640-656/1242-58), and prays for him to enjoy a lengthy reign.¹⁵⁰ This *bayt* could be an interpolation which entered the manuscript tradition, but the information it provides is as convincing as the hypothesis that ‘Awfī died in or after 630/1232-3, an arbitrary date of two years after the events of 628/1230 that are mentioned in *Jawāmi‘ al-ḥikāyāt*.¹⁵¹

While al-Tha‘ālibī was a truly prolific author who must have devoted his life to writing, publishing and teaching, ‘Awfī seems to have had a more varied career. The fragmentary self-portraits that we find in the *Lubāb* suggest that he adapted to working between a broader public sphere, where he taught literature and the religious sciences, transmitted

¹⁴⁴ Nizāmu’D-Dīn, *Introduction to the Jawāmi‘ u’l-Ḥikāyāt* pp. 19-20.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 20.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid. LA 1:ك.

¹⁴⁷ Nizāmu’D-Dīn, *Introduction to the Jawāmi‘ u’l-Ḥikāyāt*, p.20.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Nizāmu’D-Dīn, p.6

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ See LA 1:ك.

hadith, preached, and worked as a judge, and a courtly sphere, where he acted as a secretary, as an administrative official, and as a compiler of books. However, the boundaries between these two spheres were permeable. The subscription note concerning ‘Awfī’s life in Cambay, for example, suggests that he engaged with his fellow men of letters at the same time as authoring a work for a private patron and acting as a public official. In this respect, ‘Awfī’s life mirrors that of al-Tha‘ālibī. Both men lived and worked in an environment where patronage was often necessary to authorship, but where literary networks extended far beyond courts, into public life.

4. Manuscripts and Print Editions of the Two Works

Manuscripts and Print Editions of the *Yatīma*

There are three twentieth-century print editions of the *Yatīma*, none of which can be considered critical or scholarly, and all of which are replete with misprints. These are the al-Ṣāwī edition of 1933-5, the ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd edition, first published in 1946, and the Qumayḥa edition of 1983, which incorporates the *Tatimma* as Part Five of the *Yatīma*. The editors do not list the manuscripts that they used in compiling their editions, which contain addenda and supplementary material that cannot be from al-Tha‘ālibī’s original recension of the *Yatīma*. All three editions are heavily dependent on the early Damascus edition of 1886-7.¹⁵² The *Tatimma* was also published separately in Tehran by Iqbāl, and A.G.S Radwan produced a hand-written edition of it for his still unpublished doctoral thesis of 1972.¹⁵³ Radwan’s edition contains a number of variations and transpositions of material in comparison with the Qumayḥa and Iqbāl editions. Despite its flaws, I have used Qumayḥa’s edition of the *Yatīma* and the *Tatimma* as my primary source for this study,

¹⁵² See Rowson and Bonebakker, *A Computerized Listing*, p. 12; Bosworth, *The Medieval Islamic Underworld*, Vol. 2, pp. 190-1.

¹⁵³ See Radwan, *Tha‘ālibī’s Tatimmat al-Yatīma*.

collating passages with al-Şāwī, ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, the Damascus edition, Iqbāl, Radwan, and Bodleian MS. Selden Superius 16-19, a late but complete copy of the *Yatīma*.

There are a great many extant manuscripts of the *Yatīma*, the earliest of which date to the mid-twelfth century. The manuscripts and their relative merits have been surveyed by Pertsch,¹⁵⁴ Brockelmann,¹⁵⁵ Bosworth,¹⁵⁶ Topuzoğlu,¹⁵⁷ and Orfali.¹⁵⁸

Manuscripts and Print Editions of the *Lubāb*

There are two print editions of the *Lubāb*, both of which make use of the same three manuscripts. The first edition was published in two parts by Edward Browne and Muḥammad Qazvīnī between 1903 and 1906.¹⁵⁹ It represents a largely faithful transcription of John Rylands Library Persian MS. 308, the only (nearly) complete copy of ‘Awfī’s anthology. Browne and Qazvīnī also made use of a second, defective manuscript of the *Lubāb*, Berlin Staatsbibliothek MS. Sprenger 318, and of a manuscript copy of the *Bazm-Ārāy*, the late sixteenth-century anthology by the Mughal compiler ‘Alī b. Maḥmūd al-Ḥusaynī which plagiarises whole sections from the *Lubāb*.¹⁶⁰ In 1957, Sa‘īd Nafīsī reprinted Browne and Qazvīnī’s anthology in Tehran.¹⁶¹ Although Nafīsī seems to have been aware of the existence of a third, defective but old manuscript of the *Lubāb* in the collections of the University of Lucknow, he did not make use of this codex, instead preferring to emend Browne and Qazvīnī intuitively.¹⁶² While Nafīsī may be correct in arguing that the Browne and Qazvīnī edition is highly flawed, it does nevertheless reflect

¹⁵⁴ Pertsch, *Die arabischen Handschriften der herzoglicher Bibliothek zu Gotha*. Vol. 4, pp. 156-7.

¹⁵⁵ Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur* Vol. 1, p.338; *Supplement* Vol. 1, p.499-500.

¹⁵⁶ Bosworth, “Manuscripts of al-Tha‘ālibī’s *Yatīmat al-dahr*”; Idem., *The Medieval Islamic Underworld*. Vol. 2, pp. 181-90.

¹⁵⁷ Topuzoğlu, “Further Istanbul Manuscripts”.

¹⁵⁸ Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, pp. XVII-XIX.

¹⁵⁹ Emendations to Browne and Qazvīnī’s edition were soon published by Dastgirdī as “Taṣḥīḥ-i Lubāb al-albāb”.

¹⁶⁰ On the *Bazm-Ārāy*, see LA 1: p. ۵. Rieu, *Supplement*, pp. 73-4, Cat. No. 106.

¹⁶¹ Nafīsī’s re-print has subsequently been released a further two times by separate publishers.

¹⁶² ‘Awfī, *Matn-i kāmil-i lubāb al-albāb* ii-iii.

the manuscripts faithfully, and I have therefore chosen it as my primary source for this study.

As the manuscripts of the *Lubāb* have been a matter of some confusion in previous scholarship, I have elected to provide summary descriptions of the three known codices here.

John Rylands Library Persian MS. 308

This almost complete copy of the *Lubāb* was in the possession of J.B. Elliott of Calcutta (1785-1863) in the early nineteenth century.¹⁶³ It was either Elliott or the vendor from whom he purchased the work who had the manuscript rebound.¹⁶⁴ During this process, the text block of each folio and most of the marginalia were cut out and placed in thick ‘windows’ made of cream-coloured paper, presumably in order to strengthen the manuscript. Unfortunately, this salvage job led to the loss of the remaining marginalia and any text that might state when and where the manuscript was copied. Elliott subsequently gave the manuscript to Nathaniel Bland (1803-65), who used it for his pioneering study of the *Lubāb*.¹⁶⁵ After Bland’s suicide, his manuscripts passed into the hands of the book dealer Bernard Quaritch (1819-99), who sold them to the Earls of Crawford in 1866. It was while Persian MS. 308 was in their possession that Edward Browne borrowed the book to produce his print edition of the *Lubāb*.¹⁶⁶ In 1901, the entire Crawford collection was bought by Enriqueta Rylands for the newly founded John Rylands Library in Manchester, where Persian MS. 308 is now kept.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶³ P.619 of Persian MS. 308 bears the note ‘Read at Patna June 1825 J.B.E’ (i.e. ‘John Bardoe Elliott’).

¹⁶⁴ My analysis of the end papers of Persian MS. 308 reveals that they bear the watermark ‘Ruse & Turners 1818’, some seven years before Elliott notes reading the manuscript.

¹⁶⁵ Bland, “On the Earliest Persian Biography of Poets”, p. 113 n.1.

¹⁶⁶ LA 2:7-8.

¹⁶⁷ LA 2:8-9.

Despite the loss of contextual information caused by the salvage job, it is possible to infer from the codicological evidence that the text of Persian MS. 308 was copied in India, most probably during the sixteenth century.¹⁶⁸ Annotations in the manuscript suggest that the scribes collated copies of the work to produce their edition, but the number of marginal additions is high, and it must be borne in mind that we are not only dealing with ‘Awfī’s recension of texts in the print editions of the *Lubāb*, but also with the Mughal editors’ recension of ‘Awfī.¹⁶⁹ There are also some lacunae in Persian MS. 308, particularly in the final chapter of the text, where the scribes have omitted phrases that were illegible in the originals, leaving blank spaces.¹⁷⁰ We can therefore infer that the originals consulted by the copyists were themselves damaged.

MS. Sprenger 318

The second manuscript of the *Lubāb* is now in the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin.¹⁷¹ This is a defective copy of the work, which ends with the section on Nizāmī Ganjavī (d. c. 605/1209) that begins Section Three of Chapter Eleven. It is also missing folios from the introduction. It does, however, appear to be older than John Rylands Persian MS. 308, perhaps dating to the fifteenth century. The manuscript entered the Royal Library of Berlin from the collection of Aloys Sprenger, who may have purchased it in Lucknow. This one manuscript has been catalogued twice: once by Sprenger in his catalogue of his own

¹⁶⁸ The text is written in at least two separate hands using an angular, ‘Indian’ *nasta‘līq*, on brownish, fibrous paper. There is a certain amount of insect damage.

¹⁶⁹ The abbreviation *ḥ* meaning *nuskha ukhrā* (‘another manuscript’) is used frequently by the scribes, suggesting that they collated their edition from two copies of the *Lubāb*.

¹⁷⁰ In the Browne and Qazvīnī edition, asterisks are used to denote blank space. Bland reasoned that John Rylands Persian MS. 308 is missing a chapter. See Bland, “On the Earliest Persian Biography of Poets”, p.123.

¹⁷¹ See Pertsch, *Die Handschriften-Verzeichnisse der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*. pp. 596-7, Cat. No. 637.

collection (*The Bibliotheca Sprengeriana*),¹⁷² and once in Pertsch's catalogue of the Royal Library in Berlin.

MS. 891.5519 M70T

The third extant manuscript is now in the Library of the University of Lucknow. Beyond the title, no description of the manuscript is given in Kali Prasad's 1951 hand list of that collection,¹⁷³ but we may infer that this is the same codex as the one mentioned by Sprenger in his catalogue of the libraries of the King of Oudh (Avadh, modern-day Lucknow).¹⁷⁴ Like the Berlin manuscript, this volume ends with the section on Niẓāmī Ganjavī, and is missing folios from the introduction. Sprenger describes the volume as 'old', implying a date of the fifteenth century or earlier. Given the common lacunae shared between the Berlin and Lucknow manuscripts, it seems probable that one is a copy of the other.

The similarities between the Berlin manuscript and the Lucknow manuscript, and the fact that both were catalogued by Sprenger, have caused some confusion in scholarship.

Browne and Qazvīnī conflated the two manuscripts,¹⁷⁵ as did Storey.¹⁷⁶ Nafīsī was the first to contend that three copies of the *Lubāb* existed,¹⁷⁷ and this opinion has been repeated by Naqavī,¹⁷⁸ and by Vohidov.¹⁷⁹ Nafīsī argued that the manuscript which Sprenger catalogued in Lucknow must now be in the University library there, but provided no direct

¹⁷² Sprenger, *A Catalogue of the Bibliotheca Orientalis Sprengeriana*, p.22, Cat. No. 318. No descriptive information is given beyond the work's title.

¹⁷³ Prasad, *Catalogue of Oriental Manuscripts in the Lucknow University Library*, p. 22, Cat. No. 145.

¹⁷⁴ Sprenger, *A Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian and Hindustany Manuscripts*, pp. 2-3. The manuscript described there displays differences with MS. Sprenger 318 in the number of folios and in the number of lines of text per page. Unless a fourth manuscript exists, it therefore seems likely that this is codex now in the Library of the University of Lucknow.

¹⁷⁵ LA 2:10; 15.

¹⁷⁶ Storey, *Persian Literature* 1/2, p.783.

¹⁷⁷ 'Awfī, *Matn-i kāmīl-i lubāb al-albāb*, pp. i-ii. Nafīsī suggests that Browne and Qazvīnī were unaware of Sprenger's Oudh catalogue, but this is not the case.

¹⁷⁸ Naqavī, *Tazkira nivīsī dar Hind va Pākistān*, p.80.

¹⁷⁹ Vohidov, *Zhizn' i tvorcheskoe nasledie*, p.45.

evidence for this claim.¹⁸⁰ Nor did Nafīsī use the Lucknow manuscript in his edited re-print of Browne and Qazvīnī's work.¹⁸¹ Given the paucity and state of the extant manuscripts of the *Lubāb*, and the fact that no scholar seems to have consulted this codex since Sprenger, MS. 891.5519 M70T represents an important additional comparandum for any future re-printing of the work.

¹⁸⁰ 'Awfī, *Matn-i kāmil-i lubāb al-albāb*, p. ii.

¹⁸¹ Ibid. pp. ii-iii.

Chapter One: Literary Markets

This chapter examines the two anthologies within the context of publishing culture. Here I am concerned with a series of interconnected questions regarding the circulation of literature in medieval Khurasan, how and why the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* were disseminated by their authors, and the profile of the audiences for whom the two books were destined. The application of such questions to anthologies is a novel undertaking within the field of scholarship on pre-modern Arabic and Persian literature. While the history of the book is a rapidly burgeoning area of research in the fields of Islamic cultural and intellectual history,¹⁸² and the study of luxury book production has a long pedigree among historians of Islamic art,¹⁸³ there have been few attempts to examine the practical issues that surrounded the production and reception of literary works prior to modernity.¹⁸⁴ The dearth of such studies has been conditioned partly by the separation in twentieth-century scholarship between the physical book and the texts that it contains, and partly by a lack of documentary sources in Arabic and Persian which might cast more light on how literature was disseminated and consumed early in the so-called ‘Middle Period’ (c. 1000-1700 C.E.).¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² Major studies include: Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands*; Gruendler, “Aspects of Craft”; eadem, *Book Culture before Print*. Two recent themed issues of journals also testify to the burgeoning interest in book culture. See Metcalfe and Ghersetti (eds.), *The Book in Fact and Fiction in Pre-Modern Arabic Literature*; Fierro et al. (eds.), *Histories of Books in the Islamic World*. See also Leder, “Authorship and Transmission”; Nasr, “Oral Transmission and the Book”. Publishing culture is discussed briefly in Touati, *L’Armoire à sagesse* pp. 205-18. For the early modern period, see B. Liebrecht, *Die Rifāʿiyya aus Damaskus*, and idem, “The Library of Aḥmad al-Rabbāṭ”.

¹⁸³ For the purposes of this piece of research, the most important concept developed in the study of Islamic material culture concerns the appearance, at around the time of the tenth century, of an urban bourgeoisie, whose tastes are reflected in media such as metalwork and the patronage of luxury manuscripts. The history of this idea is studied and refined in Contadini, “Patronage and the Idea of an Urban Bourgeoisie”.

¹⁸⁴ There have been several investigations of publishing culture in the Middle East in the early modern period and at the advent of modernity. They include Ayalon, *The Arabic Print Revolution*; Krätli and Lydon (eds.), *The Trans-Saharan Book Trade*.

¹⁸⁵ See Hirschler, “Catching the Eel”, pp. 224-34.

The *Yatīma* and *Lubāb* allow us to go some way towards redressing the disconnect between the study of book culture and literature because they contain a great deal of contextual information which records how poems and books circulated, and how writing produced in one city and in one social context reached broader audiences in different regions and human environments. The two anthologies are valuable sources for this sort of study because they are not restricted in their scope to a single kind of literature or to a specific type of writer. All of the biographical subjects of the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* wrote poetry (*shi‘r*), but only a small majority of them can be considered ‘poets’ (*shu‘arā’*) in the sense of being professionals who made their living through composing verse. Many were rulers who acted as patrons. Others were courtiers and scribes (*kuttāb*) employed in chancelleries, who received salaries from the State. Still others were members of the religious classes, scholars, men associated with the book trade, or tradesmen. Thus, the two anthologies imagine a world in which poetry is employed to different effects in environments which were connected to one another through social networks.

I begin here by exploring the anthologists’ representations of poetry as a form of commodity, and examine their conception of the market. I then investigate the roles of aristocratic patronage and the commercial book trade in disseminating writing, before moving on to study how the movement of texts between regions fostered stylistic innovation. This study reveals that it is possible to apply the notion of a publishing industry to the literary cultures featured in the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*. The demand for writing among audiences such as scholars, chancellery scribes, aspiring poets and men of letters contributed to the development of a transregional book trade, and the expansion of the market into new areas drove intertextuality, as authors read and responded to one another’s work.

Markets and Commodities

In this study I use the notion of the ‘market’, meaning the social system by which commodities are traded, rather than the physical forum in which they are bought and sold, to explore the intersection of talent and financial support in the production of literature. The employment of the term ‘market’ may sound anachronistic to readers, or indeed inappropriate: surely ‘markets’ are synonymous with modernity and capitalism? However, the word ‘market’ (Ar. *sūq* / Per. *bāzār*) is used by al-Tha‘ālibī,¹⁸⁶ and ‘Awfī,¹⁸⁷ to argue that better poetry is produced in more competitive environments. Talk of markets presupposes that poetry, and literature more generally, is a form of ‘commodity’ (Ar. *biḍā‘a* / Per. *bizā‘at*), a term that is employed by ‘Awfī,¹⁸⁸ al-Tha‘ālibī,¹⁸⁹ and a number of writers featured in the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*.¹⁹⁰ In addition to being represented as an object of exchange, texts are deemed a form of currency, with al-Tha‘ālibī referring to some poems as ‘bills of credit’ (*ṣafātij*),¹⁹¹ and ‘Awfī likening poetry to cash (*naqd* / *nuqūd*).¹⁹² Finally, the anthologists imply that their own work fed into this system. ‘Awfī describes the *Lubāb* as his ‘capital’ (*sarmāya*).¹⁹³ Al-Tha‘ālibī too writes of the *Yatīma* as his ‘capital’ (*ra‘ṣ al-māl*), and of the *Tatīma* as the ‘profit derived’ (*al-ribḥ al-mustafād*) from it.¹⁹⁴

The anthologists’ conception of the market is particularly valuable because recent scholarship has paid minimal attention to the history of economic thought in the Islamic world.¹⁹⁵ The ideas discussed by al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī compare favourably with those

¹⁸⁶ E.g. YD 1 :37 ; YD 3 :225.

¹⁸⁷ LA 2:50.

¹⁸⁸ LA 1 :8.

¹⁸⁹ YD 2 :468.

¹⁹⁰ See LA 1:134; YD 4:54.

¹⁹¹ E.g. YD 3:35-6.

¹⁹² LA 2:50.

¹⁹³ LA 1:8.

¹⁹⁴ YD 5:317.

¹⁹⁵ The two most significant studies of economic thought in the Islamic world are Essid, *A Critique of the Origins of Islamic Economic Thought*, and Ghazanfar, *Medieval Islamic Economic Thought*.

featured in works such as al-Dimashqī's (dates unknown; lived between the second/ninth and the sixth/twelfth centuries) *al-Ishāra ilā maḥāsin al-tijāra* (*The Indication of the Fine Points of Trade*), which is the single best-known text to deal with mercantile exchange.¹⁹⁶ Whereas al-Dimashqī's book is largely normative, speaking of wealth (*al-māl*) as the common good, and arguing that it is the merchant's role to ensure that prices remain stable, the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* combine factual information, concerning the sums that were actually paid for texts, with representations of how they thought the literary market should be governed. The narratives that they relate about judicious patrons can be seen as windows onto a developed political and economic theory, in which rulers facilitated the circulation of commodities. While economic historians have long since realised the value of texts of the 'Mirrors for Princes' genre to their enquiry, I contend that both *akhbār* about patronage, and some poems, can also tell us much about approaches to economic thought.¹⁹⁷

Some prior research on the application of economic terminology to literary production has been conducted by Erez Naaman, who has studied the employment of the term 'market' in the representations of the court of Ibn 'Abbād that are found in the *Yatīma* and in the writing of al-Tawḥīdī (d. 411/1023).¹⁹⁸ Contrary to Naaman's analysis, the word 'market' does not appear to be synonymous with 'court' in these works, and the anthologists extend the analogy between writing and economic exchange beyond the context of the court. As we shall see, the genres that were popular at court did not always coincide with those which found favour through the book trade.

¹⁹⁶ See al-Dimashqī, *al-Ishāra ilā maḥāsin al-tijāra*. Al-Dimashqī's text has been studied comprehensively. See Ritter, "Ein Arabisches Handbuch".

¹⁹⁷ On 'Mirrors for Princes' as guides to economic thought, see Essid, *A Critique of the Origins of Islamic Economic Thought*, pp. 19-44; Hosseini, "Understanding the Market Mechanism before Adam Smith", where the *Qābūsnāma* is discussed.

¹⁹⁸ Naaman, *Literature and the Islamic Court*. Chapter 1, Section IV: "Poetry as a Commodity and the Court as a Market".

Poetry as an Article of Commerce

It is common to find poetry represented as a form of commodity in both the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*. For example, in his entry on the civic leader Tāj al-Dīn al-Ābī, ‘Awfī writes: “All over the world, learned merchants have perforated the goods (*mutā*) of his poetry, and the buyers of art have sought it out”.¹⁹⁹ The image developed in this comment depends on a common analogy that likens verse to pearls, which must be bored before they can be strung on a necklace. In ‘Awfī’s introduction to the *Lubāb*, poetry is also compared to ‘goods’ (*mutā*, ‘*arūḏ*’) and to ‘ready money’ (*nuqūd*),²⁰⁰ while the poets of the early Islamic period are described as having practised a profitable trade in which they earned the ‘unexchangeable currency (*naqd-i bī badl*) of fame and renown from those goods’ (i.e. poetry).²⁰¹ This extended metaphor is a prelude to ‘Awfī’s discussion of the relationship between praise poets and patrons, casting eulogy as a form of transaction. In his introduction to the *Yatīma*, al-Tha‘ālibī likens poetry to clothing and jewellery – forms of commodity – writing that his anthology consists of ‘the weave of [poets’] natures, the cast of their ideas and the form of their minds on superior, luxury clothing and pure, brilliant jewellery’.²⁰² Comparisons such as these are not affective. They emphasise that verse had a market value, and imply that, like material objects, poems could be designed to appeal to different audiences depending on their form and the quality of their craftsmanship. They also suggest that poetry could be assayed by audiences and critics, just as textiles are assayed by the buyer and the merchant. Lastly, they suggest an aesthetic approach to the evaluation of verse: in the same way that a buyer can appreciate that a textile is well-made,

¹⁹⁹ LA 1:145.

²⁰⁰ LA 1:7.

²⁰¹ LA 1:8.

²⁰² YD 1:28.

but dislike its appearance, so too an audience can dislike a poem on purely aesthetic grounds.

Analogies likening poetry to textiles or jewellery are common in discussions of Arabic and Persian verse dating from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries. The critic Ibn Ṭabāṭabā (d. 322/934) compares the good poet to a skilful weaver who weaves his striped cloth so that it is well formed and nothing mars it, to a painter who apportions colours in a harmonious fashion in order to please the eye, and to a jeweller who structures his necklace so that it is well balanced.²⁰³ Just under three hundred years later, Shams-i Qays paraphrased and extended Ibn Ṭabāṭabā's comments in the conclusion to his *Mu'jam* (written c. 630/1232-3), again comparing the poet to the painter or the master jeweller, and emphasising the need for balance and harmony in poetic composition.²⁰⁴ These remarks may focus on the form and structure of verse, but they do so in terms which suggest that poems are akin to luxury commodities, designed to please the buyer.

It was not just critics who equated poetry with commodities. Farrukhī (d. 429/1037-8) begins a famous *qaṣīda* to Abū l-Muẓaffar Aḥmad, ruler of Chaghāniyān: 'I left Sīstān with a caravan of cloth / Cloth woven from my heart and soul / Silk cloth, whose fabric is speech / Painted cloth, whose brush marks are the tongue'.²⁰⁵ The context of the panegyric emphasises Farrukhī's implication that he was bringing his 'wares' to the market created by his patron, casting the poem itself as a valuable product. Such images argue that patrons stood to gain from supporting poets financially: they were purchasing representations of themselves which, in Farrukhī's words, could never be damaged.²⁰⁶ As Clinton notes,

²⁰³ Ibn Ṭabāṭabā, *I'yār al-shi'r*, pp. 5-6.

²⁰⁴ See Clinton, "Shams-i Qays on the Nature of Poetry", p.107; Meisami, *Structure and Meaning* n.35, pp. 437-8. Clinton, "Esthetics by Implication"; Idem, "Image and Metaphor".

²⁰⁵ Farrukhī, *Dīvān*, p.331.

²⁰⁶ Ibid. See also al-Tha'ālibī, *Ādāb al-mulūk*, p.116, where it is stated that the circulation of praise poetry preserves positive representations of the *mamdūh*.

comparisons between textiles and panegyric poetry took on a particular relevance, because both *ṭirāz* fabrics produced for rulers and panegyric poems had the patron's name written into them.²⁰⁷

Al-Tha'ālibī reports an exchange between al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965) and Sayf al-Dawla (r. 336-56/947-67) which emphasises another aspect of the analogy between material objects and poetry: the interaction between the artist and the appraiser. Sayf al-Dawla reportedly questioned the order of images in two lines by al-Mutanabbī, comparing them with two lines by Imrū l-Qays (sixth century).²⁰⁸ Al-Mutanabbī then explained the logic of the lines, using the following comparison: 'My lord is aware that the cloth merchant does not know the garment like the weaver himself does, for the merchant is familiar with the garment in its entirety, whereas the weaver knows the finished article and its separate panels, since he has shepherded it from the workshop to the clothes shop'.²⁰⁹ His subsequent explanation of why both he and Imrū l-Qays ordered their images the way they did prompted Sayf al-Dawla to award him fifty dinars of a special kind that was worth ten times the usual value.²¹⁰ Anecdotes such as these vividly exemplify how poetry could be accorded the financial value of a commodity. They also demonstrate al-Tha'ālibī's market principle, since they show how a discerning patron and a good poet improve one another, increasing the value of the verse produced at a court.

Within this setting, much could be said about the significance of poems as 'objects', or 'things' which derived their worth from the social context in which they circulated, an approach to the study of literature which would intersect with the work of anthropologists

²⁰⁷ See Clinton, "Image and Metaphor", p. 9.

²⁰⁸ YD 1:44.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

such as Marcel Mauss,²¹¹ and of sociologists such as Arjun Appadurai.²¹² Indeed, scholars including Suzanne Stetkevych and Jocelyn Sharlet have used these ideas as a lens to explore poetry of the ‘Abbāsīd period.’²¹³ My interest in this chapter is less focused on viewing literary texts as symbols of exchange, and rather more on exploring the mechanisms which contributed to their publication and diffusion. For our purposes, the important point about descriptions of the market for poetry is that they are not simply analogies. Instead, they show that verse was a commodity which was actually bought and sold within an economy of supply and demand.

The Market: Books and Texts

Since they chart the social contexts in which individual poems, poets and styles of writing became sought after and valued, the two anthologies bring us to the idea of ‘markets’.

Histories of literary production have tended to view the advent of market forces as part of the shift from pre-modern to modern forms of consumption, a view which has only begun to be revised in recent years. Commenting on the proliferation of publishing houses in eighteenth-century Scotland, Richard B. Sher writes that for twentieth-century thinkers such as Jürgen Habermas, such developments “marked the transition from an aristocratic to a ‘bourgeois’ or modern, commercial mode of organization of the book trade and, in some respects, of society itself. In Alvin Kernan’s similar formulation, a new literary order emerged, featuring print technology, a broader reading audience, a book trade regulated by market economics, and authors who, like [Samuel] Johnson, wrote chiefly for money”.²¹⁴

The advent of the market not only has a bearing on how literary works are disseminated

²¹¹ Mauss, *The Gift*.

²¹² See Appadurai, “Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value”.

²¹³ Stetkevych, *The Poetics of Islamic Legitimacy*; Sharlet “The Thought That Counts”; Sharlet, *Patronage and Poetry in the Islamic World*.

²¹⁴ Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, pp. 196-7. That said, studies on the circulation of English literature in the seventeenth century have long recognised the phenomenon of ‘scribal publication’, where professional copyists disseminated manuscripts through organised markets. See Love, *Scribal Publication*.

and read, but also on conceptions of authorship: writers begin to be recognised as creators rather than as transmitters, a shift marked in eighteenth-century Britain by the advent of copyright, which enshrined the rights of authors in law. Although no such legal framework existed in the medieval Islamic world for recognising authorship, one should remember that it was hotly contested. For example, debates over *sariqa*, or literary theft, can be seen as attempts to establish the rights of poets over their own work. *Sariqāt* were not only the object of study by critics, and it was common for poets to secure their ownership of their own verses by accusing their colleagues of plagiarism.²¹⁵

Some may balk at the suggestion that the notion of the market can be applied to literary production in the medieval Islamic world. It is true that one cannot speak of a mass-market book trade as extensive or as easily regulated as the one facilitated by the invention of the printing press.²¹⁶ It is also true that texts did not always circulate in a form that we would recognise today as a ‘book’; poems could be transmitted because people heard them, memorised them, and recited them to others when they travelled to distant places, or because they were jotted down in notes or in private miscellanies which were shown to acquaintances.²¹⁷ Hence, the term ‘book trade’ in itself cannot fully encompass the complex processes of oral, aural and written dissemination by which literature circulated, or accurately represent the interaction between the private and the public spheres involved in its diffusion.

However, the idea of the ‘market’ is appropriate to the literary cultures documented in the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*, because the anthologies suggest that there were two forms of competition in the production of poetry: firstly, competition between poets themselves to

²¹⁵ See Naaman, “*Sariqa* in Practice”, and below, for references to the dispute between al-Sarī and the Khālidi brothers.

²¹⁶ On the advent of print technology in the Arabic-speaking world, see Ayalon, *The Arabic Print Revolution*.

²¹⁷ See also Gruendler, “Aspects of Craft”.

produce better verse and attract higher prices for their work; and secondly, competition between audiences to be the first to hear or read poems. The competition to procure poems played out not only through courtly patronage, but also through figures such as copyists and book-sellers (*warrāqūn*), who bought manuscripts so that they could sell them on or use them to produce abridgements, and through the public, who purchased manuscripts through middlemen or directly from writers themselves, and who gained access to controlled environments, such as lectures and concerts, where verse was recited.²¹⁸ The rise of a trade in texts became linked to professional authorship. For example, al-Tha‘ālibī states that the poet Ibn al-Tammār al-Wāsiṭī composed ‘only for the joy of it, not to make a living’, implying that for many, the reverse was true.²¹⁹

Patrons and Markets

The rise of the trade in texts meant that patronage was only one part of a system of literary production which extended from the aristocracy to the middle classes, and hence from courts into urban environments. Just as Sher demonstrates that patronage did not disappear with the growth of the publishing industry in eighteenth-century Scotland, but rather reinvented itself as a system in which the aristocracy began to bestow “academic positions, church livings, and other offices that enabled authors to write in comfort, and sometimes in affluence”,²²⁰ so too patronage in the medieval Islamic world appears to have been a more complex phenomenon than is sometimes supposed. For example, courtly patrons did not

²¹⁸ On the figure of the *warrāq*, see Toorawa, *Ibn Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr*. Early studies include Akhtar, “The Art of *Waraqat*”. See also Beg, “*Warrāk*”; Idem, “A Contribution to the Economic History of the Caliphate”; Afshār, *Kāghaz dar zindigī va farhang-i īrānī*. Encyclopedias of famous *warrāqūn* include Sa‘īd, *Mawsū‘at al-wirāqa wa-al-warrāqīn*; Namla, *al-Wirāqa wa ashhar a‘lām al-warrāqīn*.

²¹⁹ YD 2:435.

²²⁰ Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, p.204.

always retain professional poets on a salary.²²¹ Instead, courts could function as the sites of the most heated competition, in which both resident and visiting writers went head to head to earn by producing a single poem or a literary work that was used to test their mettle. If an author did not find favour at one court in any given city, they could travel to another city in search of a living. With the gradual break-up of the ‘Abbāsīd Empire and the proliferation of smaller states on its territories, writers in the early Middle Period were faced with a variety of competing courts in which to market their work.

The race between courts to attract talent appears to have fostered competition rather than creating a monopoly on literary production. Both al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī emphasise this point by employing images of the market in their characterisations of patrons. The two most eminent patrons featured in the *Yatīma* are the Ḥamdānīd ruler Sayf al-Dawla (r. 336-56/947-67), and the Būyīd vizier al-Ṣāhib Ibn ‘Abbād (d. 395/995). Al-Tha‘ālibī underscores the competitive nature of literary production at the courts presided over by the two men. That of Sayf al-Dawla is described as ‘the racetrack of poets’ (*ḥalbat al-shu‘arā*), and al-Tha‘ālibī comments: ‘never were so many grandees of poetry (*shuyūkh al-shi‘r*) and stars of the age gathered at the gate of any king – after the caliphs – than at [Sayf al-Dawla’s] gate; for authority is simply a market that attracts what can find a buyer readily’ (*innamā al-sulṭān sūq^{un} yujlab ilayhā mā yanfuq ladayhā*).²²²

Similarly, al-Tha‘ālibī remarks in his opening characterisation of al-Ṣāhib Ibn ‘Abbād: ‘But for him, no market (*sūq*) would have reached superiority (*al-faḍl*) in our age’.²²³ Ibn ‘Abbād’s court is characterised as ‘the legislator of masterpieces of speech, novel ideas

²²¹ The representations of patronage found in texts such as Niẓāmī ‘Arūzī Samarqandī’s *Chahār Maqāla* also testify to this point, since they focus on situations where poets produced particularly pleasing or effective verse, and were subsequently rewarded. The generosity of the patrons featured in these *akhbār* is not automatic. See *Chahār Maqāla*, pp. 32, 34, 39, 40, 42, 43.

²²² YD 1:37.

²²³ YD 3:225.

and the fruit of intellects, and his *majlis* was a gathering place for the direction of intellects and the melding of knowledge and the pearls of talent...The stars of the earth surrounded him, as did the unique men of the age, the sons of excellence and the cavaliers of poetry, whose number exceeded that of the poets of [Harūn] al-Rashīd, and who did not fall short of them in their grip on the reins of rhyme and their dominance of delicate imagery; for stallion poets have never gathered at the gate of any caliph or king to the extent that they did at the gate of [Harūn] al-Rashīd'.²²⁴ The anthologist then lists the famous poets who were patronised by Harūn al-Rashīd (d. 193/809), before providing an even longer catalogue of the poets who were patronised by Ibn 'Abbād, both in person and through correspondence.²²⁵ Here, al-Tha'ālibī's idea of the market is a place of competition which rewards innovation. The more judicious and generous the patron, and hence the more competitive the market, the better the poetry that it produces. This idea is mirrored in the entry on al-Mutanabbī, where al-Tha'ālibī writes that Sayf al-Dawla 'increased the value of his verse' (*naḥḥaqa si'r shi'rihi*).²²⁶ It is no coincidence that al-Tha'ālibī's longest chapters are devoted to figures associated with the environments of the courts of Sayf al-Dawla and Ibn 'Abbād: according to the anthologist, centres of competition produce better poetry than places which lack market forces.

Al-Tha'ālibī uses the term 'market' in reference to one more patron in the *Yatīma*, in the chapter on Abū l-'Abbās Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Ḍabbī (d. 398/1008), a boon companion of

²²⁴ YD 3:225-6.

²²⁵ YD 3:226. The writers connected with Ibn 'Abbād in Isfahan, Rayy and Jurjan are: Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Salāmī, Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī, Abū Ṭālib al-Ma'mūnī, Abū l-Ḥasan al-Badīhī, Abū Sa'd al-Rustamī, Abū l-Qāsim al-Za'farānī, Abū l-'Abbās al-Ḍabbī, Abū l-Ḥasan b. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Jurjānī, Abū l-Qāsim b. Abī l-'Alā', Abū Muḥammad al-Khāzin, Abū Ḥāshim al-'Alawī, Abū l-Ḥasan al-Jawharī, Banū l-Munajjim, Ibn Bābak, Ibn al-Qāshānī, Abū l-Faḍl al-Hamadhānī, Isma'īl al-Shāshī, Abū l-'Alā' al-Asadī, Abū l-Ḥasan al-Ghuwayrī, Abū Dulaf al-Khazrajī, Abū Ḥafṣ al-Shahzūrī, Abū Mi'mar al-Ismā'īlī, Abū l-Fayyād al-Ṭabarī. Others praised him in correspondence, including al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, al-Ṣābī, Ibn al-Ḥajjāj, Ibn Sukarra and Ibn Nubāta. This group includes almost all of the most significant writers featured in Parts Two, Three and Four of the *Yatīma*.

²²⁶ YD 1:139.

Ibn ‘Abbād who succeeded him in the vizierate. The anthologist writes that eloquence clung to al-Ḍabbī after the deaths of Ibn ‘Abbād and Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābī (d. 384/994), and that the ‘pool of fine poetic qualities’ would have dried up after his own demise were it not for Abū l-Faḍl ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Mīkālī (d. 436/1044), the civic leader of Nishapur and al-Tha‘ālibī’s own patron, who was ‘responsible for making the market of prose and verse do a brisk trade’ (*munaḥḥiq sūq al-nathr wa-l-naẓm*).²²⁷ This opinion is reiterated in a poem that al-Tha‘ālibī cites later in the anthology, in the entry on Abū Muḥammad Ismā‘īl b. Muḥammad al-Dahhān, a native of Nishapur who knew the anthologist personally.²²⁸ Al-Dahhān was a gentleman scholar who studied philology, grammar and prosody with the noted local philologist, Abū Naṣr Ismā‘īl b. Ḥammād al-Jawharī.²²⁹ Although al-Tha‘ālibī implies that al-Dahhān possessed independent wealth, he reports that he nevertheless dedicated his services to (*ikhtaṣṣa bi-*) al-Mīkālī and praised him. The following short eulogy represents al-Mīkālī’s mansion as a market of excellence [*majzū’ al-kāmil*]:

في دار مولانا الأمير * ر محل أهل العلم عالي

لا سوق أنفق فيه من * سوق المكارم والمعالي

In the mansion of our lord the amīr * The position of men of science is high

No market does a brisker trade there than * The market of noble qualities and eminence

Al-Dahhān is a particularly interesting figure because he was subject to the aristocratic patronage of al-Mīkālī, but also took part in the trade in books by obtaining a holograph copy of his teacher al-Jawharī’s *al-Ṣiḥāḥ fī l-luḡha* from the author.²³⁰ A second poem by

²²⁷ YD 3:340.

²²⁸ I infer that the two men knew one another from al-Tha‘ālibī’s statement: ‘Despite the fact that he asked me to refrain from including any of his erotic and praise poetry in this book, I would have included a fair amount of it; but I have respected his wishes, and I have done what he asked and not cited it.’ (YD 4: 500).

²²⁹ YD 4:498.

²³⁰ YD 4:498.

al-Dahhān highlights the importance of the book-man's profession (*al-wirāqa*) in the circulation of knowledge [*al-wāfir*]:

نصحتك يا أبا إسحاق فاقبل * فإني ناصح لك ذو صداقة

تعلم ما بدا لك من علوم * فما الأداب إلا في الوراقة

I've given you my advice, Abū Ishāq, so take it * For I'm sincere in my counsel

Study whatever you can find in the way of knowledge * For learning is found only in
copying books

Like al-Tha'ālibī, 'Awfī represents courts run by judicious patrons as the most competitive form of market. The most explicitly economic comments made in the *Lubāb* appear in the entry on the Ghaznavid court poet 'Asjadī Marvazī. Here, 'Awfī describes how 'Asjadī enjoyed the patronage of Maḥmūd of Ghazna, writing: 'During the days of this king's market (*bāzār*), the ready money (*naqd*) of ['Asjadī's] speech circulated well (*nīk rā'ij*).'²³¹ A similar notion is reflected in 'Awfī's description of Abū 'Abd Allāh Rūzbih b. 'Abd Allāh al-Nakatī al-Lahūrī, who was patronised by Maḥmūd's son, Mas'ūd. Again we see poetry represented as a form of currency: 'The ready money of his poetry is fine and well-balanced' (*nuqūd-i shi'r-i ū laṭīf ū mawzūn*).²³² *Mawzūn* is a play on words: it implies that the verse is rhythmically balanced, but it also brings to mind the practice of assaying coin.

In aligning poetry with currency, rather than with commodities, 'Awfī is making a slightly different argument in these passages than al-Tha'ālibī does in his discussions of patronage. The patron is still likened to the market, but here poetry is represented as an object which the patron allows to circulate. That said, al-Tha'ālibī does sometimes represent texts as a

²³¹ LA 2:50.

²³² LA 2:57.

form of currency: not as cash, but as a negotiable bill of credit (*suftaja*, pl. *safātij*), a promissory note used to transfer money, either over long distances or in hazardous situations.²³³ For example, the satirical and invective *qaṣā'id* of Ibn al-Ḥajjāj on kings, amīrs, viziers and chiefs are described as containing the *safātij* of the poet's jest (*hazl*).²³⁴ In this case, the idea is used to designate a form of exchange in which credit accrues to the patron, rather than to the poet.

Thus far, we have seen that the two anthologists use economic terminology in a relatively complex fashion, and it would be reductive to suggest that they simply equate courts with markets. Rather, the patron themselves generally functions as the 'market', facilitating the flow of commodities. Writing can be a commodity which is brought to market, or a form of currency used between poet and patron. If a poem is a satirical one aimed at the detriment of the patron, it can be considered equivalent to a bill of credit issued by the poet. These terms imply a more nuanced set of relationships between poets and patrons than scholarship sometimes supposes existed. They also emphasise the basic point that the production of poetry was a business, and that professional poets expected to be paid for their work.

Commercial Markets

Although patronage may have been the most prestigious forum in which writers could have marketed their work in the early Middle Period, the anthologists use the idea of the market in other contexts too. For example, al-Tha'ālibī writes of the market (*sūq*) of the genealogist and historian Abū Riyāsh al-Yamāmī, a native of Basra, commenting that when it began to do a brisk trade, al-Yamāmī was satirised by the local poet Ibn Lankak (d.

²³³ See Izzi Dien, "Suftaḍja".

²³⁴ YD 3:35-6.

c. 360/970).²³⁵ In other words, when a writer's renown increased, they became an obvious target of invective poetry, because audiences had some understanding of who they were. In this particular case, al-Tha'ālibī seems to be employing the term 'market' with reference to the idea of 'demand'. This image is repeated elsewhere: the anthologist quotes Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Mūsawī as saying that an 'arms market' (*sūq al-silāh*) existed between al-Laḥḥām and Ibn Maṭrān, two satirical poets of Bukhara who produced invective (*hijā'*) on one another.²³⁶ The term not only implies that the two men had a brisk and ugly exchange of poems, but also suggests that these poems found popularity among readers and auditors. The inference is supported by the fact that a copy of Ibn Maṭrān's *dīwān* was taken to Ibn 'Abbād in Iran, who was delighted by it and declared that he had not realised that Transoxiana could produce such a poet.²³⁷ The same is true of Ibn Lankak's satires: al-Tha'ālibī tells us that Ibn 'Abbād possessed a copy of his *dīwān*, on whose opening folio he wrote a short poem praising the poet's wit.²³⁸

Al-Tha'ālibī continues to employ images of the market when referring to exchanges that do not involve patrons. For example, the anthologist writes that when Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Salāmī first arrived in Mosul, he was tested by the leading professional poets of the city, including Abū 'Uthmān al-Khālidī (d. c. 390/1000) and al-Babbaghā' (d. 398/1008), who inspected 'the value of his commodities' (*qadr biḍā'atihi*).²³⁹ The image equates the poets with inspectors or assayers testing the quality of a product. We also find references in the *Yatīma* to a trade in books that was conducted by poets. For example, Ibn Lankak compiled and edited the *dīwān* of al-Khubza'aruzzī – an illiterate baker who composed lyric epigrams on his customers – by attending his

²³⁵ YD 2:407.

²³⁶ YD 4:132.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ YD 2:407.

²³⁹ YD 2:468.

bakery and listening to the poems that he extemporised.²⁴⁰ The satirical poet Ibn Sukkara (d. 385/995) was once asked the price of the *dīwān* of his contemporary Ibn al-Ḥajjāj (d. c. 391/1000), and replied that it was ‘the price of a drain’.²⁴¹ The reply is a joking reference to the subject matter of Ibn al-Ḥajjāj’s verse, which consists most famously of *mujūn*.²⁴² The broader implication of the narrative is that poets knew the market values of manuscripts of one another’s collected works. Al-Tha‘ālibī continues to state that the *dīwān* of Ibn al-Ḥajjāj was sold regularly for between fifty and seventy dinars.²⁴³ When we compare this price with those paid in the context of patronage, it becomes clear that the *dīwān* of Ibn al-Ḥajjāj may have been relatively affordable; elsewhere, for example, we find that the poet Abū l-Qāsim al-Kasrawī, who lived in Bukhara, was paid three hundred dinars for a single *qīṭ‘a* which he composed on the birth of the son of his patron Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb al-Fārisī.²⁴⁴ Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Murādī, another poet of Bukhara, was awarded three thousand dirhams by the Samanid Naṣr b. Aḥmad as a reward for a three-line epigram of praise.²⁴⁵

The discussion of the man of letters Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī (d. 383/993) in the *Yatīma* also testifies to how the notion of ‘markets’ could be extended outside courts and into urban environments. Al-Tha‘ālibī writes that al-Khwārizmī ‘began to do profitable trade’ (*rabiḥat tijāratuh*) when he was admitted to the entourage of Ibn ‘Abbād in Isfahan, but that he subsequently became an extremely wealthy man when he began to work for the Būyid ruler ‘Aḍud al-Dawla (r. 338-72/949-83) at his court in Shiraz.²⁴⁶ In addition to providing him with one-off gifts of money, ‘Aḍud al-Dawla gave al-Khwārizmī a stipend

²⁴⁰ YD 2:428.

²⁴¹ YD 3:40.

²⁴² On *mujūn* in general, see Szombathy, *Mujūn*.

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ YD 4:95.

²⁴⁵ YD 4:85.

²⁴⁶ YD 4:237.

(*rasm*), which allowed him to purchase estates (*ḍiyā*) and landed property (*‘aqār*) in Nishapur.²⁴⁷ Having left the employ of the Būyids with what al-Tha‘ālibī terms a fortune that was won easily (*al-ghanīma al-bārīda*), al-Khwārizmī returned to Nishapur, where he became ‘a market for *adab*’ (*yuqīm li-l adab sūq^{an}*), teaching, dictating, composing poetry and transmitting it in formal and informal *majālis*.²⁴⁸ Patronage provided al-Khwārizmī with his wealth, but by participating in this larger market he was able to institute his own, smaller market as a scholar in Nishapur.

If al-Khwārizmī demonstrates how the market spread between courts and the public sphere, another one of al-Tha‘ālibī’s acquaintances shows how the middle classes could be a driving force in the dissemination of literary texts to broader audiences. Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān appears to have occupied a relatively prominent position in literary life in early eleventh-century Nishapur. He was a correspondent of Badī‘ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī (d. 398/1008), and was one of the more notable figures to attend the debate between al-Hamadhānī and al-Khwārizmī in which the latter was publicly humiliated by the former’s erudition.²⁴⁹ In the *Yatīma*, Ibn al-Marzubān is a minor source, including for poems on food and drink, extracts which it is tempting to think may have been collected from his book, *Ādāb al-ṭa‘ām wa-l-sharāb* (*The Etiquette of Food and Drink*).²⁵⁰ He is more significant as one of al-Tha‘ālibī’s major sources of books, many of which were purchased during his repeated trips to Baghdad.²⁵¹ For example, al-Tha‘ālibī’s source for the poetry of Abū l-Qāsim ‘Abd al-Ṣamad b. Bābak, a poet of Isfahan, was an anthology (*majmū‘*) which Ibn al-Marzubān had ordered (*istida‘ā*) from Baghdad, “as is his custom in ordering

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ See Rowson, “Religion and Politics in the Career of Badī‘ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī”, p. 659 n.34; p. 664.

²⁵⁰ Poems on food and drink transmitted by Ibn al-Marzubān include: YD 2:287; 3:233; 3:489; 4:515. The book appears to be lost.

²⁵¹ YD 4:452.

copies (*istinsākh*) of refined writing, in procuring rare pieces, and in expending large amounts on acquiring new copies (*istiḥdāth*) of witty writing”.²⁵² When Ibn al-Marzubān had submitted the order, Ibn Bābak sent him an autograph volume (*mujallada*) of his poetry.²⁵³ It is noteworthy that the order was sent through Baghdad, the major centre of the book trade, rather than being submitted directly to the poet. This suggests that Ibn al-Marzubān may have used a *warrāq* as a middleman for contacting Ibn Bābak.

In addition to purchasing books, Ibn al-Marzubān also functioned as something of a ‘publisher’ in Nishapur. Having introduced him as a bibliophile who adhered to the maxim that ‘in spending silver on books of *adab*, one receives the gold of intellects in return’, al-Tha‘ālibī writes: ‘Today there is no *dīwān* of marvellous poetry in Nishapur which comprises rarities, or any new book which consists of innovative curiosities, that has not been disseminated through his contraction (‘*aqd*), and that has not been published (*intashara*) by his hand. Nor is there any man in the city apart from him whose ambitions exceed his prosperity, on account of the engagement of book-men (*al-warrāqīn*) in his house’.²⁵⁴ While laconic, al-Tha‘ālibī’s comments present Ibn al-Marzubān as a man of private enterprise, and suggest that he contracted book-men (*warrāqūn*) to work in his home, copying manuscripts of rare and new works that he had obtained from further west. The hypothesis that *warrāqūn* allowed themselves to be hired to fulfil projects is largely supported by extant material evidence. For example, Leiden Arabic MS. 437, a luxury edition of a work on the appearance and disposition of the Prophet that was produced for the Ghaznavid ruler ‘Abd al-Rashīd (d. 442/1051), was copied in Ghazna by the *warrāq*

²⁵² YD 3:437-8.

²⁵³ YD 3:438.

²⁵⁴ YD 4:452.

Muḥammad b. Rāfi'. S.M. Stern argued that the *warrāq* hired himself out to the court to undertake the commission.²⁵⁵

It is unclear to what extent Ibn al-Marzubān's publishing activities were a profitable undertaking, either for him or for the authors whose works he disseminated. When he obtained the previously mentioned holograph volume from Ibn Bābak, we may assume that the poet received copy money, since he was both author and copyist. In another case, Ibn al-Marzubān brought the *dīwān* of the poet Abū l-Faraj Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ghassānī al-Dimashqī, known as al-Wa'wa', from Baghdad to Nishapur, and presented a copy of it to al-Tha'libī in a notebook, to which he had added lines that he had taken in dictation from the singer (*qawwāl*) called 'Ayn al-Zamān.²⁵⁶ Ibn al-Marzubān does not seem to have met al-Wa'wa', instead using 'Ayn al-Zamān and other third parties to gather the material that he transmitted.²⁵⁷ It therefore seems likely that he purchased the book through a *warrāq*. A book-man named al-Ṭarsūsī in Baghdad gave Ibn al-Marzubān an autograph copy of the *dīwān* of the Khālidī brothers as a present, another case in which no profit could have gone to the authors of the text of the manuscript.²⁵⁸

Despite the relative paucity of information in the *Lubāb*, it is possible to infer that there was a relatively extensive trade in books in Persian during 'Awfī's lifetime. The anthologist often refers to the collected works (*davāvin*) of poets, implying the circulation of their texts in book form.²⁵⁹ When a *dīwān* is described as 'famous', we may infer that it enjoyed a degree of popularity, as in the entry on the imam Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad Shifrūh: "The *dīwān* of his poetry is well-known, and I once saw a copy of it more than a

²⁵⁵ See Stern, "A Manuscript from the Library of the Ghaznawid Amīr 'Abd al-Rashīd", p.12.

²⁵⁶ YD 1:334.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.; YD 1:359, where it is stated that that a poem by Ma'add b. Tamīm which Ibn al-Marzubān heard in Baghdad was also ascribed to (*yurwā li-*) al-Wa'wa'. It seems possible that 'Ayn al-Zamān or another performer transmitted the poem to Ibn al-Marzubān.

²⁵⁸ YD 2:138.

²⁵⁹ E.g. LA 2 :224 ; LA 2 :277 ; 2 :405.

hundred folios long (*ziyādat az ṣad ṭabaq kāghaz*) in Nishapur”.²⁶⁰ Since ‘Awfī does not state whether he saw the volume in a book shop, in a public library, or in somebody’s home, we cannot draw firm conclusions as to whether demand among a reading public or among patrons commanded more of a role in the book trade. In places, it is implied that there was demand for a poet’s work among both a reading public and courtly audiences, as in the entry on Ṣahīr Fāryābī (d. 598/1201), where ‘Awfī writes: ‘Orators (*khāṭibān*) in Iraq have sought the products of his true poetic nature eagerly, and the kings of this region have bought the commodities (*biṣā‘at*) of his virtue.’²⁶¹

Control over Texts: Copyists and Publication

The evidence suggests that it was possible for poets to earn from the sale of written copies of their collected work, but only if they themselves acted as copyist. When a manuscript had passed into the hands of another person, the author lost control over how it was used, and hence the ability to earn from the sale of any future copies that were made of their work. An anecdote in Yāqūt’s *Mu‘jam al-udabā’* refers to an earlier period, but provides a rare insight into the interaction between authors and *warrāqūn*.²⁶² It concerns the Kūfan grammarian al-Farrā’ (d. 207/822), and relates that he composed his work *Kitāb al-ma‘ānī* by dictating it to his *warrāqūn*. With the finished text of the work in their hands, the *warrāqūn* attempted to exert a monopoly on its circulation, asking the public to pay the high price of a dirham for every five folios copied. When the public complained to al-Farrā’, and the *warrāqūn* refused to be amenable, the grammarian dictated a new edition of *Kitāb al-ma‘ānī* that ran to one hundred folios. Because of the increase in the length of the

²⁶⁰ LA 1:269.

²⁶¹ LA 2:298. The word *khāṭibān*, meaning both ‘orators’ and ‘bride-grooms’, may be a pun on the idea that novel poetic images are akin to virgin brides.

²⁶² *Mu‘jam al-udabā’*, p. 2814.

work, the *warrāqūn* relented and agreed to make copies of it at a rate of a dirham for every ten folios copied. *Warrāqūn* cannot always be considered the medieval equivalent of publishers, since they could be copyists, authors, middlemen or even play the role of a lending library, but in certain cases they can be thought of as a pre-modern equivalent of the publisher's press.

The lack of authorial control over the manuscript tradition is also demonstrated by comments that al-Tha'ālibī makes concerning the professional rivalry between al-Sarī al-Raffā' (d. c.362/972) and the Khālidī brothers (d. 380/990 and c.390/1000). The anthologist writes that when al-Sarī abandoned his previous occupation as a tailor and began to engage seriously with the business of *adab*, he started to produce copies of the *dīwān* of Kushājim (d. c.360/970-1), who was extremely popular in Mosul and a source of stylistic inspiration for al-Sarī himself.²⁶³ Al-Sarī would add to the size of these manuscripts, hence increasing their price and making 'his market do a brisk trade' (*yunaffiq sūqahu*), by passing the poetry of the Khālidī brothers off as the work of Kushājim.²⁶⁴ An indirect consequence of this action was that al-Sarī bolstered his claims that the Khālidī brothers were plagiarists.²⁶⁵ Al-Tha'ālibī writes that al-Sarī's interpolations took place of such a large scale that they entered the manuscript tradition, and that it was only by comparing autograph copies of the *dawāwīn* of al-Sarī and the Khālidī brothers that the anthologist was able to identify which verses were of doubtful attribution.²⁶⁶

Ironically, the anecdote demonstrates how authorship was defined by the book trade. Al-Sarī was able to portray his rivals as plagiarists and to earn a living, not through

²⁶³ YD 2:138.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

composing poetry, but rather through copying it. He enshrined his authorship of poems that were disputed between him and the Khālīdī brothers by creating autograph copies of his own *dīwān*.²⁶⁷ Ibn al-Marzubān managed to procure one of these in Baghdad, and al-Tha‘ālibī tells us that there were significant differences between the authorised, autograph copy and the copies that were ‘in the hands of the people’ (*fī aydī al-nās*).²⁶⁸ The story shows that figures such as al-Sarī occupied a world in which the book trade had become an integral part of the literary market. Patronage may still have been the only major means by which writers could earn significant salaries, but the circulation of their work in manuscript had begun to define how audiences – from patrons to the reading public – perceived them as authors. Anthologies such as the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* are part of this phenomenon. Indeed, al-Tha‘ālibī’s and ‘Awfī’s judgements define the authorship of the corpus that they present. The two anthologies do not in fact offer definitive recensions of the texts that they transmit – as Chapter Three makes clear, the opposite is true – but they present themselves as authoritative guides to authors and their work.

One of the major differences between the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* is that ‘Awfī provides comparatively little contextual information concerning the dynamics of the book market in his own era, and no figure such as Ibn al-Marzubān stands out among his sources. There is a short passage in the penultimate chapter of the *Lubāb* where ‘Awfī says that, just as al-Tha‘ālibī took some forty years to compile the *Yatīma*, so too it has taken him a considerable time to complete the *Lubāb* on account of various misfortunes that have befallen him.²⁶⁹ He writes that his books have been drowned, burnt and stolen at different points in his life, and continues to discuss the relationship between these books and the *Lubāb*. Unfortunately, the passage is defective in John Rylands Persian MS. 308, and a

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ LA 2 :417-18.

section is missing. Nevertheless, the text that has been preserved implies that ‘Awfī may have possessed his own collection of books. It is unclear whether these were purchased through the trade or whether they were notebooks compiled from material that he consulted in libraries or book shops.²⁷⁰

Information found in other texts casts light on the trade in books in Persian in certain social circles. For example, Anvarī (d. 556/1160-1 or later) speaks of making copies of the *dāvāwīn* of several poets for his own use, and there is an extant codex containing the works of Qaṭrān (d. 465/1072-3 or later) made in 529/1134-5, in which he identifies himself as the manuscript’s owner and its copyist.²⁷¹ The collected correspondence of Sanā’ī (d. c.525/1130) contains a least one letter that the poet wrote to his friend Khvāja Aḥmad-i Mas‘ūd, a wealthy citizen of Ghazna who asked the poet to prepare an edition of his *dīvān* for him.²⁷² The letters also mention two singer-performers (*qavvālūn*), who may have performed Sanā’ī’s poetry for Aḥmad-i Mas‘ūd.²⁷³ A separate poem in Sanā’ī’s *dīvān* suggests that another *qavvāl* paid the poet independently to provide him with a notebook (*daftar*) containing verse.²⁷⁴

Lewis has argued that both Sanā’ī and his performers would have been dependent on courtly patronage to make a living from the production of lyric poetry, supporting this contention with a line from the *dīvān* of Ṣahīr Fāryābī: ‘The *ghazal* is better than any other form of poetry, yet it is not a commodity (*bizā‘atī*) out of which one can make a living’.²⁷⁵

²⁷⁰ Niẓāmu’D Dīn’s extensive research on the sources of ‘Awfī’s other main work, *Jawāmi‘ al-ḥikāyāt*, demonstrates that he had access to some ninety-three named written texts in the work’s compilation, but again it is unclear whether he owned these volumes or consulted them in libraries. See Niẓāmu’D Dīn, *Introduction to the Jawāmi‘u’l-Ḥikāyāt*, p. 35.

²⁷¹ See Bayānī, *Dīvān-i Qaṭrān Tabrīzī*.

²⁷² Sanā’ī, *Makātib-i Sanā’ī*, pp. 53-69. See Lewis, *Reading, Writing and Recitation*, pp. 96-8.

²⁷³ Sanā’ī, *Makātib-i Sanā’ī*, p. 60; p. 68. See Lewis, *Reading, Writing and Recitation*, pp. 98; 172-3, where it is argued that Sanā’ī gave notebooks (*daftar*) containing his poetry directly to the *qavvālūn* mentioned in the letters. Letters 3 and 4 do not tend to support this hypothesis.

²⁷⁴ See Lewis, *Reading, Writing and Recitation*, pp. 97; 172-3.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 98 ; 105.

Contrary to Lewis's suggestion, this line does not seem to be concerned with the differences between composing for a court and composing for the broader public. No indication is given in Sanā'ī's letters that Aḥmad-i Mas'ūd would have either listened to or read the poet's work at the court of Ghazna, rather than at home. Indeed, it seems likely that the holograph material which Sanā'ī produced for performers and readers outside the court may have provided him with substantial financial support. It is probable that Ṣahīr Fāryābī's line itself reflects a commonplace of complaint against the state of the market; the earlier poet Labībī (alive in 429/1037-8) writes: 'I will never compose praise (*sanā'*) or lyric (*ghazal*) poetry again / For the market (*bāzār*) and value (*qaymat*) of poetry (*sarvād*) have disappeared all at once'.²⁷⁶ Since poets could undoubtedly make a living from praise poetry, we should be cautious about taking verses such as these as evidence that the production of lyric poetry was not a money-making activity.²⁷⁷

Public Knowledge: The Role of Libraries in the Diffusion of Texts

Libraries also represent an important forum for the circulation of books.²⁷⁸ Al-Tha'ālibī appears to have used the private libraries of patrons to gather material for the *Yatīma*. For example, he states that he and Ibn al-Marzubān consulted a holograph copy of the *dīwān* of al-Ghuwayrī that was kept in the library of al-Mīkāli.²⁷⁹ 'Awfī seems to have relied on a number of public libraries to find *davāvīn* and anthologies. He discusses his visits to Sar-i

²⁷⁶ Asadī Ṭūsī, *Lughat-i Furs*, p. 108. See also Bertel's, "Persidskaya poeziya v Bukhare", p. 404. For a comparable poem in Arabic by al-Rustamī, see YD 3:376.

²⁷⁷ We find similar suggestions in the *Yatīma*, where al-Tha'ālibī uses the pun *ḥirfat/ḥurfat al-adab* ('the profession/poverty of *adab*') in his biographies, and quotes poems in which authors write of having been struck by this phenomenon. See Bonebakker, "The Misery of the Men of Letters". While scholars have tended to regard the existence of phrases such as these as proof that *adab* was a badly paid profession, it may be more productive to think of discussions of authors' financial woes as evidence that they were attempting to earn on the open market, either by working independently of patronage or by moving between competing patrons.

²⁷⁸ On libraries, see 'Ishsh, *Les Bibliothèques arabes publiques et semi-publiques* ; Touati, *L'armoire*.

²⁷⁹ YD 3:395.

Pul Library,²⁸⁰ and Sirindībī Library,²⁸¹ both in Bukhara, and Sar-i Dū Library in Samarqand.²⁸² Sar-i Pul Library is also mentioned in the entry on its librarian, the *varrāq* Quṭb al-Dīn Sarakhsī, where it is implied that the institution was endowed by ‘Awfī’s own acquaintances, the Burhān family.²⁸³ Since this same narrative relates that a book was brought to Bukhara from Marv in order to be copied, we may infer that libraries aided in the reproduction and dissemination of rare volumes.

Khurasan and Transoxiana appear to have been particularly rich in such public institutions during the Saljuq period. ‘Awfī’s direct contemporary Yāqūt (d. 626/1229) relates in his *Mu‘jam al-buldān* that Marv alone possessed ten libraries which had been endowed through *waqf*.²⁸⁴ Two of these were part of the city’s Friday mosques, and each contained the contents of a private library which had been bequeathed by their owners. Other libraries were attached to colleges, and one formed part of a *khāniqāh*.²⁸⁵ Yāqūt rhapsodises over the ease of access to the Ḍamīriyya Library in Marv, writing that he was allowed to borrow two hundred volumes and to keep them in his house, for the most part without paying a deposit (*bi-ghayr rahn*).²⁸⁶ Significantly, Yāqūt notes that access to the public libraries of Marv allowed him to gather a considerable amount of material for *Mu‘jam al-buldān*, a point which emphasises the value of public institutions for authors as they set about compiling books.²⁸⁷ Yāqūt’s comments also show that men of letters did not necessarily need to be supported by a patron in order to gain access to books.

²⁸⁰ LA 1:19.

²⁸¹ LA 1:70-1.

²⁸² LA 1:38.

²⁸³ LA 1 :210-11.

²⁸⁴ Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu‘jam al-buldān*. Vol. 5, p. 114.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

Since ‘Awfī was active at the same period as Yāqūt, and is known to have visited Marv, he too may have benefitted from the city’s public libraries. Such institutions were not to be found everywhere, however. According to Ibn al-Athīr, the libraries of Nishapur, a city where ‘Awfī stayed for some time, had been burnt to the ground by the Ghuzz in 548/1153, years before the anthologist’s birth.²⁸⁸ Less information is available concerning libraries in Sind, to where ‘Awfī had migrated before the *Lubāb* was set down in its final recension. Sirāj al-Dīn Jawzjānī, author of *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, was appointed head of the Fīrūz College in Uchcha in the year 624/1227;²⁸⁹ it is unclear whether the college possessed a library with significant holdings. As Uchcha’s extant architectural remains consist of funerary structures and mosques only, the material evidence does not allow us to reconstruct the number of *khāniqāhs* and colleges present in the town during ‘Awfī’s era.²⁹⁰ The *Lubāb* is also silent concerning the extent to which the patron to whom ‘Awfī dedicated his anthology, ‘Ayn al-Mulk al-Ash‘arī, supplied the anthologist with books, although the anthologist mentions in passing the ‘exalted library’ (*khizāna-yi kutub-i ‘ālī*).²⁹¹ It is implied that ‘Awfī continued to gather material during his journey to, and after his arrival in, Sind. For example, he states that the small amount of poetry presented in the entry on the Ghūrid ruler al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥusayn al-‘Abbāsī al-Ghūrī represented all the poet’s work that he could find in India and Ghazna.²⁹² Several of ‘Awfī’s informants, such as Shaykh Zakī of Lahore, appear to be acquaintances that he made after arriving at the court in Uchcha.

Local and Transregional Networks: The Market between Cities and Politics

²⁸⁸ Quoted in Pinto, “The Libraries of the Arabs”, p. 226

²⁸⁹ Jawzjānī, *The Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, p. 144.

²⁹⁰ Khan, *Uchchh: History and Architecture*, p. 53.

²⁹¹ LA 1:10

²⁹² LA 1 :39.

In addition to providing the reader with information concerning publishing culture, the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* tell us how poetry circulated by noting when poets interacted or responded to one another. Broadly speaking, two major trends can be distinguished. The first concerns the circulation of texts within individual cities, through fora such as *majālis* and study circles, and is largely local in character, although visitors from other states often participated in such gatherings. In quantitative terms, this form of circulation can be regarded as the most common. Many minor poets are included because they happened to recite an apposite poem at a gathering where better-known figures were present, and their work was therefore memorised or noted down, subsequently entering circulation. Both anthologies also preserve the proceedings of some *majālis*.

Several different kinds of *majālis* are featured in the anthologies, including formal and convivial courtly gatherings, study sessions among scholars, and the meetings of bureaucrats. The vignettes that al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī draw of these sessions highlight the importance of performance and spontaneity in the ex tempore composition and recitation of poetry. In his entry on the vizier al-Muhallabī (d. 352/963), for example, al-Tha‘ālibī reproduces extracts from the journal of Ibn ‘Abbād that cover a series of gatherings in Baghdad and ‘Ukbarā. One describes a session in a room which overlooked the Tigris, and which contained a pool that was fed by water from the river.²⁹³ Al-Muhallabī and Ibn ‘Abbād attended, along with a female singer named Ḥusn al-‘Ukbarāwīya, and the *jāriya* of Ibn Muqla. Ḥusn was positioned behind a screen, and sang verses on distance overcoming union – appropriate lines given her separation from her audience. Ibn ‘Abbād suggests that there was an interplay in the performance between Ḥusn and al-Muhallabī, with the vizier calling the singer’s lines back to her. Then the *jāriya* of Ibn Muqla sang a

²⁹³ YD 2:271.

two-line epigram by al-Muhallabī himself. A typologically similar anecdote is found in the *Lubāb*, where ‘Awfī relates how the ruler of Sīstān, Bahrām Shāh, once improvised a *rubā‘ī* describing the singer and harpist Zāhida as she performed for him in a convivial gathering in Herat.²⁹⁴ Attendees transmitted the poetry that was exchanged at gatherings such as these on to a broader audience, bringing it out of the private sphere and into circulation.

Private anthologies (*majāmi‘* or *safā‘in*) and letters that were not originally intended for broad circulation represent an important medium through which the poetry produced at *majālis* was preserved, and they are a common type of source for the anthologists. *Safā‘in* could also be used to record poetry that was exchanged between friends (*ikhwāniyyāt*), and poets seem to have asked their acquaintances to scribble verses on their private anthologies as mementoes of meetings. For example, we read in the *Lubāb* that the imam Muḥammad b. Abī Naṣr b. Abī Shahīd al-Ghaznavī asked to borrow a friend’s *safīna*, and wrote a *rubā‘ī* praising the volume on its opening folio.²⁹⁵ The prevalence of these kinds of source in the two anthologies points to the importance of local networks of scholars and *udabā‘* in the working lives of al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī.²⁹⁶ As with the proceedings of *majālis*, the anthologists were bringing material out of the private sphere and into the public domain.

Contrasting with ‘local’ circulation, the second broad trend is that of movement from one state or region to another, a phenomenon that can incorporate manuscripts, letters, individual poems and people. In the societies documented in the *Yatīma*, such transregional networks appear to have been common. Abū Muḥammad ‘Alī b. ‘Umar al-

²⁹⁴ LA 1:50.

²⁹⁵ LA 1:284.

²⁹⁶ Evidence suggests that private anthologies may have played an important role in the circulation of literature more generally. For example, ‘Imād al-Iṣfahānī drew on a private anthology in the possession of Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Khāzimī when compiling his section on the poets of Herat in his *Kharīda*. See *Kharīda* ed. Āl Ṭu‘ma, Vol. 2, p. 11.

Balkhī al-Zāhir, a citizen of Nishapur who acted as one of al-Tha‘ālibī’s sources, collected poems by travelling to the relatively distant region of Syria,²⁹⁷ while three poets from Andalusia transmitted directly to al-Tha‘ālibī.²⁹⁸ Some of the more successful entrants in al-Tha‘ālibī’s anthology also journeyed extensively between regions. There is not a direct correlation between travel and success, since the renown of figures such as al-Laḥḥām, Ibn Sukkara, and Ibn al-Ḥajjāj derived from the intrinsically local character of their satirical and invective poetry. However, some successful figures who worked in genres that had a broader appeal, such as al-Mutanabbī, al-Khwārizmī, and Badī‘ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī, did travel extensively, and appear to have generated greater wealth than their peers who stayed in the region of their birth.

The movement of writers between cities appears to have been one means by which the styles of poetry practised in one region were spread to another. Publishing ventures, such as those instigated by Ibn al-Marzubān, also contributed to the spread of material between states. However, there is relatively little indication in the *Yatīma* that it was common practice for a poet active in any one of the four regions to borrow from the work of their contemporaries in the other three regions. This lack of familiarity may have contributed to the formation of distinct regional approaches to poetry. Several anecdotes illustrate this point. For example, al-Tha‘ālibī relates that a man named Abū Ṭāhir, who claimed to be son of the Basran poet al-Khubza’aruzzī (d. c.327/938), came to Nishapur and found success with his poetry, which plagiarised the stylistic techniques of al-Sarī and the Khālidī brothers.²⁹⁹ Since the collected written works of these Syrian poets had not yet arrived in Khurasan, Abū Ṭāhir was able to continue his charade for some time.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁷ For his entry, see YD 4:478.

²⁹⁸ YD 2: 19; 2:27; 2:29.

²⁹⁹ YD 2:429.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

Similarly, we learn that Ibn al-Marzubān was the first person to bring the *dīwān* of the Iraqi poet Ibn Nubāta al-Sa‘dī (d. 405/1010) to Nishapur, and that he presented the volume to al-Tha‘ālibī without showing it to anybody else.³⁰¹

The movement of writers, and not just the critical discernment of patrons, contributed to the state of the market in different cities. For example, Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Umar b. Abī ‘Umar al-Sajzī al-Nawqānī, a native of Sīstān whom al-Tha‘ālibī terms ‘an *adīb*, a poet and a jurist’ (*adīb^{un} shā‘ir^{un} faqīh^{un}*), travelled several times to Khurasan and to Iraq ‘in search of *adab* and knowledge’.³⁰² He visited the court of Ibn ‘Abbād, who pleaded reluctance to let him leave, and he also appears to have visited Baghdad, about which he composed the following epigram [*tawīl*]:³⁰³

غلا الشعر في بغداد من بعد رخصه * وإني في الحالين بالله واثق

فلست أخاف الضيق والله واسع * غناه ولا الحرمان والله رازق

Having been cheap, poetry in Baghdad has become expensive * In both states I trust in

God

I do not fear poverty when God’s riches * Are bountiful, nor deprivation, when God is

generous

Al-Nawqānī’s poem suggests that a brisk market had positive and negative effects for aspiring writers. On the one hand, the rewards of authorship were greater in cities where demand for poetry was high. On the other, demand also created greater competition, to the detriment of some poets.

³⁰¹ YD 2:447.

³⁰² YD 4:392.

³⁰³ YD 4:392-3.

When writers from different regions established a friendship, correspondence allowed them to inform one another of trends in their local literary scene. Two separate anecdotes in the *Yatīma* allow us to piece together one such exchange. In the entry on Abū Sa‘d Naṣr b. Ya‘qūb, who is one of al-Tha‘ālibī’s sources, we are told that he sent a copy of his book on two-part similes, *Rawāyi‘ al-tawjīhāt min badāyi‘ al-tashbīhāt*, to Ibn ‘Abbād, accompanied by a letter and a poem.³⁰⁴ Although the missive appears to have been unsolicited, Ibn ‘Abbād responded favourably, writing that the book had become an integral part of his *majlis*.³⁰⁵ He continued: ‘It delights me that a scribe should also be a poet, just as it delights me that poetry can travel. We shall consider you one of the learned men of this region (*min fuḍalā’ hādhā al-ṣuq*), and we will try to attract you here just as the trunk attracts the branch. Write to me whenever you wish...’³⁰⁶ In the letter, Ibn ‘Abbād also intimates that an estate would be a fitting return for Abū Sa‘d Naṣr b. Ya‘qūb’s work.³⁰⁷ In a separate entry, on Ibn ‘Abbād’s deputy, al-Ḍabbī, we learn that he sent a poem on the Pleiades, marked by a two-part simile, to Abū Sa‘d Naṣr b. Ya‘qūb for inclusion in *Rawāyi‘ al-tawjīhāt*. We can assume that this occurred after Abū Sa‘d Naṣr b. Ya‘qūb had made initial contact with Ibn ‘Abbād.

While the above anecdote documents the role of correspondence in the creation of books, other narratives emphasise the importance of letters to the spread of poetic styles.

Exchanges where the first correspondent employs a technical device that is mimicked by the second correspondent are common in both anthologies. In Arabic, the same rhyme scheme and metre are usually retained, something that we see in the exchange between Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābī (d. 384/994) and al-Babbaghā’ (d. 398/1008) which I study in Chapter

³⁰⁴ YD 4:449.

³⁰⁵ YD 4:450.

³⁰⁶ YD 4:450.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

Two. In Persian, the same metre and *radīf* are kept.³⁰⁸ The poems reproduced in ‘Awfī’s entry on the imam Ḥamīd al-Dīn ‘Alī b. ‘Umar al-Maḥmūdī are derived from his correspondence with the *ra’īs* Sa’d al-Dīn Mas’ūd. The first exchange between the two men consists of poems in the *radīf la’l* (‘ruby’), while the second set used the word *‘aqīq* (‘carnelian’).³⁰⁹ The use of the same word not only creates a superficial, formal similarity between the work of correspondents, but also forces them to engage with the same fields of imagery. Such exchanges of letters can be seen as critical exercises in response and innovation, as poets built on a common theme.

Although exchanges between contemporaries from different regions appear to have taken place relatively regularly, it is far more common for the anthologists to mark connections between a poet and their historical forebears. As Rowson remarked, al-Tha‘ālibī most frequently notes borrowings of phrasing and imagery from the work of Ibn al-Mu‘tazz in that of the Contemporaries.³¹⁰ Ibn al-Rūmī is also recognised as the origin of many lines. In the *Lubāb* it is common for poets to engage with the work of the preceding generation, and Rūdakī (d. 329/940), ‘Unṣurī (d. 431/1039-40) and Mu‘izzī (d. 519-21/1125-7) are recognised as common sources. When the anthologists do make connections between the work of contemporaries, it is not always clear whether the poets themselves would have recognised a link. Thus, Ibn ‘Abbād purportedly considered a line on cooked wine by the Bukharan poet Ibn Maṭrān to be like an inversion of a line by al-Sarī al-Raffā’, but the reader is not given any clue as to what Ibn Maṭrān himself thought.³¹¹ A line of invective by Ibn ‘Abbād, in which he compares his foe to the feet of a peacock, is deemed by al-

³⁰⁸ On this phenomenon, see Lewis, “The Rise and Fall of a Persian Refrain”.

³⁰⁹ LA 1 :203-5.

³¹⁰ Rowson and Bonebakker, *A Computerized Listing*, p. 14.

³¹¹ YD 4 :132-3.

Tha‘ālibī to be like an inversion of al-Mutanabbī’s line of praise comparing the *mamdūh* to the musk of a gazelle.³¹²

Two issues which may have diminished the anthologists’ desire to mark connections between the work of contemporaries are the relative ignominy of literary theft and the desire of poets to enshrine their authorship of their own lines. Al-Tha‘ālibī devotes sections to the *sariqāt* of the best-known writers, but many of these are from poets who lived before the Contemporaries. ‘Awfī discusses a borrowing from the imam Qāzī Maṣṣūr made by his contemporary, the scribe Farīd Kāfī, but is reticent to mark it as such, writing: “One cannot claim that they engaged in literary theft (*intiḥāl*); either they came upon the same image (*yā tavārud-i khāṭir ast*), or their poetic natures coincided. If [the line] was stolen, there is no shame in scribes stealing poetry.”³¹³

The one great exception to the idea that literary borrowings among contemporaries were often not acknowledged is the case of al-Mutanabbī. Al-Tha‘ālibī describes how ‘his renown journeyed the course of the sun and moon, and his speech travelled among the Bedouin and the Settled’, a phrase used to emphasise the circulation of his poetry.³¹⁴ A short section on the *sariqāt* made against al-Mutanabbī includes poets from all four of the *Yatīma*’s regions.³¹⁵ Despite the fact that al-Tha‘ālibī’s Fourth Region appears to have lagged behind the other three, both in terms of the time when it underwent its literary efflorescence and in terms of the circulation of texts, several works were compiled in Khurasan on the poetry of al-Mutanabbī. These include al-Tha‘ālibī’s own section on the merits and defects of the poet, originally conceived as a separate book from the *Yatīma*,

³¹² YD 3: 314.

³¹³ LA 1 :122-3.

³¹⁴ YD 1 :139.

³¹⁵ YD 1 :159-164.

and a volume by the Bukharan poet Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ifriqī al-Mutayyam, entitled *al-Intiṣār li-l Mutanabbī* (*The Victory of al-Mutanabbī*).³¹⁶

The Position of the Anthologies within the Market

Thus far, we have seen that the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* contain information which documents how the demand of readers and auditors for material affected the dissemination of literature. To what extent can we apply the notion of the literary market to the anthologies themselves? Both works are innovative ventures because they gather material drawn from different kinds of source into a single book. They cite texts that circulated in the book trade, in court circles, in scholarly gatherings and in the sessions of *udabā'*, and present them in a largely uniform, classified fashion. Previous anthologies had employed a similar mixture of sources, not least Ibn 'Abd Rabbih's (d. 328/940) *al-'Iqd al-farīd*, which consists of material transcribed during study sessions and writing copied from other books.³¹⁷ However, the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* differ from anthologies such as the *'Iqd*, because while Ibn 'Abd Rabbih's work was a compendium of received knowledge that was widely available throughout the Islamic world in other formats, the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* made literature that had mostly circulated within individual cities and regions available to audiences in other states. The anthologies therefore filled a demand in the market, providing readers with material that they could not access elsewhere.

When a copy of Ibn 'Abd Rabbih's *'Iqd* reached Ibn 'Abbād, he famously described the work as 'our commodities returned to us' (*biḍā'atunā ruddat ilaynā*) (Qur'ān 12:65). In suggesting that the *'Iqd* was largely derivative of material that had circulated in the

³¹⁶ YD 4 :178.

³¹⁷ See Werkmeister, *Quellenuntersuchungen zum Kitāb al-'Iqd al-Farīd*.

Mashriq, Ibn ‘Abbād was lessening the value of the anthology. By contrast, the information that has reached us concerning the reception of the *Yatīma* suggests that al-Tha‘ālibī’s anthology enjoyed considerable popularity with varying audiences. At the beginning of the *Tatimma*, al-Tha‘ālibī writes: ‘When I saw that my book called *Yatīmat al-dahr fī maḥāsin ahl al-‘aṣr* enchanted minds and captured hearts, and delighted kings just as it delighted commoners, and left a fine impression on poets just as scribes drew on its fruit, and [when I saw that] it travelled to distant horizons and became proverbial, and journeyed among different countries just as the imagination does, and when I found that the leading men of learning and the unique men of the age were keener on it than ducks are on water, and more greedy to get at it than the sick are for a cure...it occurred to me to compile a pleasant book based on its form and arrangement’.³¹⁸ Similar comments preface the first volume of the second edition of the *Yatīma*: ‘I was unable to count the number of people who asked to borrow [the first edition], or the copyists who circulated it, until it became the thing for which my fellow *udabā’* were most greedy, and horse-men took it to the most distant lands’.³¹⁹

These comments emphasise the success that the *Yatīma* found across communities of readers, something which can only have been bolstered by the fact that it documents the application of a common fund of poetic images in the work of men from different walks of life. This may have made the anthology attractive to aspiring professional poets who wished to study the whole corpus of recent poetry, and to scribes who wanted to produce verse that was derivative of the styles that had been in vogue. The information that the anthology contains concerning the *vitae* of recent poets and their interactions with their fellows would have also made the work attractive to professional authors of *adab* works

³¹⁸ YD 5:7.

³¹⁹ YD 1:27.

who wished to memorise poetry and to understand the contexts in which it had been produced. This thesis is supported by biographical sketches in the *Tatimma*. For example, al-Tha‘ālibī reports that Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Dūghābādī, a young man associated with the Ghaznavid court, memorised the *Yatīma* in its entirety, so that he ‘took on the poetic natures of the leading Contemporary poets’... ‘If he wishes, he can be al-Sarī and al-Khālīdī, and if he desires, he can be al-Babbaghā’ and al-Salāmī’.³²⁰ The implication of these comments is that the *Yatīma* allowed al-Dūghābādī to become so familiar with the corpus of contemporary verse that he developed flexibility and control over his own style. The anthology taught him how to be a good poet.

Two anecdotes in Yāqūt’s *Mu‘jam al-udabā’* provide us with vignettes of how the *Yatīma* was read in the century after it was compiled.³²¹ Yāqūt himself states that he consulted a copy of the work in Cairo (Miṣr) with reading notes made by a certain Ya‘qūb b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, reporting al-Tha‘ālibī directly. The reading notes contained additional material which was not to be found in the standard manuscripts of the *Yatīma* (*fī al-nusakh al-mashhūra bi-aydī al-nās*).³²² The narrative demonstrates that al-Tha‘ālibī disseminated the text of the *Yatīma* through scholarly reading sessions. A second method of publication is seen in Yāqūt’s entry on Muḥammad b. Ishāq al-Baḥḥāthī (d. 463/1070-1), a judge who came from the village of Zawzan, which lies between Nishapur and Herat. Yāqūt cites ‘Abd al-Ghāfir b. ‘Abd al-Ghāfir al-Fārisī as saying that al-Baḥḥāthī, who was a copyist in addition to being a judge, produced a copy of the *Yatīma* in five volumes which sold for thirty Nishapuri dinars, and which was reputedly worth even more.³²³ Al-Baḥḥāthī also produced a copy of Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī’s *Gharīb al-ḥadīth* authenticated by Ibn Dūst,

³²⁰ YD 5:274.

³²¹ These anecdotes are mentioned in Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p. 37.

³²² Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-udabā’*, p. 701. The passage concerned is to be found in the Qumayḥa edition of the text, which probably contains many more such (unmarked) additions. YD 3:227.

³²³ Ibid. p. 2428.

who was one of al-Tha‘ālibī’s sources.³²⁴ This volume was endowed to the library of the ‘old mosque’ (*al-jāmi‘ al-qadīm*), presumably either in Nishapur or in Ghazna, where al-Baḥḥāthī died.³²⁵ The narrative demonstrates that the *Yatīma* circulated through the book trade, and that certain, valuable works were endowed to public libraries.

The text of the *Lubāb* itself contains little information concerning the reception of the work, although it is made clear that ‘Ayn al-Mulk al-Ash‘arī was the intended recipient. ‘Awfī signals the idea that the *Lubāb* itself marks a form of exchange between him and his patron. Like patrons such as al-Mīkālī, al-Ash‘arī is represented as making the literary market do a brisk trade: ‘when the sun of this state rose, he made the goods of art circulate after a period of stagnation’ (*ravvāj-i mutā‘-i hunar ba‘d az kasād dar ṭulū‘-i khurshīd-i īn dawlat būd*).³²⁶ ‘Awfī writes that the spread of al-Ash‘arī’s ethics had filled the world with the scent of musk, like a perfumers’ market, and that the ‘dirhams and dinars of his knowledge’ had made the state akin to a money changer’s.³²⁷ While such descriptions are largely affective, they are intended to represent patronage as a form of exchange which benefits all parties involved, and emphasise the supposed ethical and economic benefits of the system. ‘Awfī’s description of the *Lubāb* as the capital of his commodities (*sarmāya-yi bizā‘at-i khūd*) corresponds with this metaphorical treatment of the patron as a market.³²⁸ Capital is wealth that can be used to generate future wealth, and ‘Awfī’s employment of the term therefore suggests that the *Lubāb* was intended to be used by al-Ash‘arī instructively.

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ LA 1:14.

³²⁷ LA 1 :4.

³²⁸ LA 1:8.

While his anthology was dedicated to a patron, this does not necessarily mean that ‘Awfī wished the *Lubāb* to circulate only within the Mu‘izzī Mamlūk court at Uchcha. The previously mentioned subscription note by Muḥammad b. ‘Umar b. Muḥammad al-Samarqandī, which is reproduced in British Library India Office Islamic MS. 1432, states that al-Samarqandī asked whether he could borrow ‘Awfī’s translation of *al-Faraj ba’d al-shidda* when he discovered that the work was nearing completion, and subsequently made an unauthorised copy of it. The passage suggests that ‘Awfī may have loaned manuscripts of his books to other men of letters. This material supports the thesis that the *Lubāb* may have enjoyed a broader circulation among an audience of poets, scribes, and men of letters, rather than being the exclusive property of its patron.

The *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* are literary-critical in their focus, as Chapters Two and Three make clear. The utility of this kind of anthology for readers is emphasised in an anecdote related by Ibn ‘Abbād’s librarian al-Tawḥīdī (d. 411/1023):

Najāḥ the servant came to me when he had been looking at the thirty volumes of [Ibn ‘Abbād’s] epistles in his library, and said: “His lordship says to make a copy of these, because a request has come for them from Khurasan”. I was dismayed, and said: “This is too much. Were it permitted, I would extract passages that were like jewels, and fragments that were like pearls, which would circulate in *majālis* like cantaloupes and musk-melons, so that were a mad-man fed them he might recover, and were a sick man nursed on them he might return to health; they would neither bore one nor leave one wanting more; neither would they be thought deficient nor would they be found wanting.” [Ibn ‘Abbād] came to hear of this

without my knowledge, and said: ‘He has belittled my epistles and slighted them, and wished to copy them yet ridiculed them!’”³²⁹

Al-Tawḥīdī’s comments show that anthologies were valued in the context of reading groups and *majālis*, because the methods of epitome and abridgement that they employed made them useful for study and entertainment. Although the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* have a pedagogical and a critical function, most of the entries in the anthologies are sufficiently short to be read and discussed in a single sitting.

Not only readers but writers too may have valued anthologies. *Pace* Ibn ‘Abbād, authors may have found it productive to be anthologized, because entertaining abridgements would have appealed to students and the participants of *majālis* in a way that a writer’s entire collected oeuvre could not have done. When an anthology became popular, renown would accrue to the writers whom it featured, increasing their value in the eyes of potential patrons and employers. As I have implied in my discussion of authorial control, writers may sometimes have effectively received copy money if an anthologist paid them to produce a manuscript of their work. Inclusion in an anthology also increased a writer’s chances of leaving a stylistic legacy, as they became a model for future generations. For those authors who transmitted their poetry directly to the anthologists, al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī were, in essence, their publishers, providing them with an opportunity to circulate their writing to audiences beyond their immediate vicinity.

Conclusion: Authorship and Commerce

³²⁹ Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu‘jam al-udabā’*, pp. 1937-8.

In the course of this chapter, I have attempted to show that the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* both document and cater to a demand for literature among courtly audiences, scholarly circles, professional men of letters and a reading public. This demand was facilitated by the spread of the book trade, and by the adaption of traditional systems of patronage to embrace it. The two anthologies may not be the first works compiled in the Islamic world which document this trend, but they do appear to reflect a novel set of circumstances in Khurasan and Sind. In both contexts, patronage was the driving force of the market, but the literary world extended outside courts, and al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī were able to gather so much material because their social worlds bridged courts and the book trade. Thanks to the patronage of al-Mīkālī, his connections, and the publishing efforts of Ibn al-Marzubān, al-Tha‘ālibī was in a unique position to survey the writing produced in the four major Arabic-speaking regions of his era. ‘Awfī drew on the material that he had gathered through courts, scholarly circles, libraries and the book trade as he produced his survey of poetry in Persian under the patronage of ‘Ayn al-Mulk al-Ash‘arī.

The *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* help us to reconsider the models of pre-modern literary production developed in modern scholarship. Rather than being closed systems, courts fostered the circulation of writers and their texts, and the same poets who were active in royal circles often participated in networks that spread beyond courts and into the world of the middle classes. For example, al-Sarī al-Raffā’ began life as a tailor, worked at the court of Sayf al-Dawla, and produced books of poetry for the trade. Similarly, Sanā’ī was employed at the Ghaznavid court, and produced recensions of his own collected works for the market. This was a literary order governed by demand. The audience of readers and auditors was broad, and writers adapted to the market by making authorship into a commercial activity.

Chapter Two: Poetry, People and Place

Having examined how the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* both reflect and attempt to shape the Literary Market, we now turn to the structure of the two anthologies. This chapter interrogates the models of literary production adopted by al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī, and studies how the contextual information included in the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* interacts with the anthologists’ selections of verse and prose. The use of biography as a framing device connects a writer’s work to the facts of their life, but it does not tie individual poems exclusively to the immediate context of their composition. Indeed, al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī use contextual information to emphasise phrases and lines in individual texts, to highlight connections between one text and another, and to fix the topic of a text. Biographies also establish representations of writers for the market, propagating nominally authoritative portrayals of authors.

I begin by exploring the roles of biography and geography in structuring the anthologies, before examining their contents, highlighting the most noteworthy authors. Having surveyed the two works, the chapter moves on to study how a select number of individual poems chosen by al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī contribute to the creation of the impression that each region is characterised by a distinct set of human relationships and styles of writing. The chapter concludes by suggesting that the literary networks charted in the two anthologies allow us to revise our understanding of the role played by patronage in pre-modern literary production.

Biography and Geography: The Organisational Principles of the Anthologies

While the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* are primarily anthologies of literature, they are structured by two basic organisational concerns: that of biography,³³⁰ and that of geography.³³¹ Each entry in the two anthologies is devoted to a single poet, or in certain rare cases in the *Yatīma*, to a single creative partnership, such as the Khālidi brothers (d. c. 380/990 and c. 390/1000),³³² and the Kayghalagh brothers (d. c. 360/950).³³³ Entries begin by stating the name of the poet if it is known to the anthologist, and often include a potted biography. Unlike in biographical dictionaries, these biographies are not intended to be read as factual accounts of poets' *vitae*, and they rarely provide concrete information, such as the years in which authors were born and died. Instead, they are more focused on describing connections between the style of authors' texts, their poetic character and their work. The compilers achieve this effect by manipulating their own writing style to mimic each poet's preferred conceits. For example, a poet who specialised in mannerist lyric verse might be characterised using terms such as: "His poetry has the taste of honey, the perfume of musk, the bloom of a rose and the delicacy of the breeze".³³⁴

Biographical comments are followed by selections of writers' output. The shortest entries in the two anthologies consist of the name of a poet and a single poem by them. Longer entries may be made up of the poet's name, a series of biographical comments, and many poems and prose extracts. When poems are topical, as they often are, further contextual information is generally provided to introduce them, informing the reader when they were first written or recited, who the principle actors were on the occasion of their composition,

³³⁰ On biography and life writing in general, see Bray, "Literary Approaches to Medieval and Early Modern Arabic Biography"; Cooperson, *Classical Arabic Biography*; Malti Douglas, "Controversy and Its Effects in the Biographical Tradition of Al-Khaṭīb Al-Baghdādī"; Marlow (ed.), *The Rhetoric of Biography*; Reynolds and Brustad, *Interpreting the Self*.

³³¹ On geographical writing in general, see Miquel, *La géographie humaine*; idem (ed. and trans.), *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm*; Antrim, *Routes and Realms*; Olsson, "The World in Arab Eyes"; Zadeh, *Mapping Frontiers Across Medieval Islam*.

³³² YD 2:214.

³³³ YD 1:119.

³³⁴ LA 2:15.

and what they are about. Anecdotes concerning the reception of poems in secondary and tertiary contexts are also common.

The twenty-one longest entries in the *Yatīma* are divided into subsections, each of which cover a generic or a technical aspect of the poet's work. Some of these long entries, such as those of Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī (d. 357/968),³³⁵ and al-Šāhib Ibn 'Abbād (d. 385/995),³³⁶ also follow a vaguely chronological arrangement, beginning with a record of the poet's youth and their 'youthful' (i.e. lyric and erotic) poetry, and ending with an account of their death and the verse with which they were mourned. Thus, they are organised to provide representations of the subjects as they matured and aged. Selections of prose writing are almost entirely absent from the *Lubāb*, but extracts from letters and short maxims (*fuṣūl qiṣār*) are found in many of the larger entries in the *Yatīma*.³³⁷ The basic interest of both anthologies is poetry, and I would contend that al-Tha'ālibī only cites prose when it exhibits a direct continuity of image or genre with his selections of verse.

Throughout the *Yatīma*, and in Chapters Seven, Ten and Eleven of the *Lubāb*, biographical entries are grouped according to the geographical location in which the subjects lived. The understanding that a poet's physical surroundings affected their character and their writing had been implicit in works produced prior to the *Yatīma*, such as the *ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Sallām, which distinguishes between 'urban' poets and 'Bedouin' poets, the former often associated with affected and abstruse style, the latter with linguistic purity and ease of

³³⁵ YD 1:57-115.

³³⁶ YD 3: 225-337.

³³⁷ Unsurprisingly, there is a higher proportion of prose extracts in those sections of the *Yatīma* which contain entries on rulers who conducted their own correspondence or scribes who composed correspondence on behalf of patrons. Selections of *fuṣūl qiṣār* are found in the entries on al-Muhallabī (YD 2:275-80); Ibn al-'Amīd (YD 3: 196-7); Qābūs b. Wushmkīr (YD 4:67-8); al-Iskāfī (YD 4:111); al-Khwārizmī (YD 4:223-9); al-Hamadhānī (YD 4:332-4); al-Mīkālī (YD 4:410-24); al-'Utbī (YD 4:458). On *fuṣūl qiṣār*, see Bray, "Ibn al-Mu'tazz and Politics"; Zakeri, *Persian Wisdom in Arabic Garb*.

comprehension.³³⁸ However, al-Tha‘ālibī may have been the first anthologist to arrange his entries according to the politico-geographical clime in which each poet was active.

Al-Tha‘ālibī’s approach to the study of the relationship between poets and their environment reflect the concerns of earlier works of geography. It is possible that the kind of enquiry pioneered by his near-contemporary al-Muqaddasī (d. after 381/991) in *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī ma‘rifat al-aqālīm* (*The Best of Divisions, on Knowledge of the Different Regions*) may have acted as one methodological source of inspiration for him.³³⁹ Al-Muqaddasī, who spent a period of time in al-Tha‘ālibī’s home town of Nishapur and moved in circles connected to the Mīkālīs,³⁴⁰ displaced the focus of geographical writing away from cartography and towards a more explicitly human geography, which encompassed issues such as modes of reading the Qur’ān in the different regions.³⁴¹

An additional, potential methodological source which may have informed al-Tha‘ālibī’s approach is to be found in those medical texts which explored the influence of physical environment on the human constitution. The best-known such work may be the Arabic version of Galen’s commentary on Hippocrates’s (d. c. 370 B.C.E) *Airs, Waters and Places*, of which a single copy survives in manuscript.³⁴² It is more likely that al-Tha‘ālibī was familiar with popular material derived from the Hippocratic *Aphorisms*.³⁴³ He had conversations about medicine with an acquaintance, the doctor Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī, and in the *Yatīma* he quotes a medical epistle by al-Ṣāḥib ibn ‘Abbād.³⁴⁴ This short text diagnoses

³³⁸ On the *ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Sallām, see Kilpatrick, “Criteria of Classification”.

³³⁹ On al-Muqaddasī, see Miquel, *La géographie humaine*, Vol. 1; Idem (ed. and trans.), *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm*; Antrim, *Routes and Realms*, pp. 108-10.

³⁴⁰ See Miquel (ed. and trans.), *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm*, p. 14.

³⁴¹ See Miquel (ed. and trans.), *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm*, p. 218.

³⁴² For the text, see Galen, *Tafsīr Jālīnūs li-Kitāb Buqrāt fī l-’ahwiya wa-l-miyāh wa-l-buldān*.

³⁴³ On the popularity of this work, see Pormann and Karimullah, “The Arabic Commentaries on the Hippocratic *Aphorisms*”.

³⁴⁴ YD 3:237-239.

an illness afflicting the constitution (*al-mizāj*) of Abū l-‘Abbās al-Ḍabbī by using aphoristic material ascribed to Galen and Hippocrates.³⁴⁵

There is no good reason to assume that al-Tha‘ālibī sought to privilege any one of these intellectual approaches above the other in the *Yatīma*. Indeed, his discussions of the relationship between poets and their environment suggest that he considered physical geography, human geography, medicine and sociology to be fields that all informed one another. Nowhere is this more evident than in his discussion of character (*ṭab*‘), a term used in the specific context of literary criticism to mean ‘poetic nature’. The word points not only to the basic facts of what a poet ‘was like’ as a person, but also to their mettle, the innate well-spring of images inside them that found expression in their poetry. In the context of medical writing, the word is employed to mean ‘constitution’.

At various points in the *Yatīma*, al-Tha‘ālibī’s comments suggest that he considered the relationship between these different senses of the word *ṭab*‘ to be a causal one. In his chapter on the city of Isfahan, for example, he writes that he had been aided in making selections by the effects of the city’s fragrant air, of the beneficial influence of its elevation, and of the sweetness of its waters, on the characters (*ṭibā*‘) of its inhabitants.³⁴⁶ Here al-Tha‘ālibī seems to argue that a fine climate impresses itself upon the denizens of a city, fostering inherently fine poetry. This standpoint is relatively deterministic. Taken to its logical conclusion, it implies that factors connected to environmental geography, such as the sweetness of the local water, inspired Isfahani poets to create ‘sweetness’ (*‘udhūba*) in poetry, one of a series of recurrent aesthetic criteria cited throughout the anthology. The notion that Isfahan was located in the centre of the seven climes, and that its citizens

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ YD 3:350. Compare the stance adopted by al-Tha‘ālibī with that seen in Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-buldān*, Vol. 1, p. 207; Māfarrūkhī, *Kitāb maḥāsīn Isfahān*, p. 4

therefore possessed the most balanced natures of all the peoples of the earth, can be seen in representations of the city outside the *Yatīma*.³⁴⁷ The location of the central clime was the subject of the debate, and some representations pitted Isfahan against Baghdad as the most equable place on earth.³⁴⁸ For our purposes, the debate is important because it is essentially concerned with civility. By one line of thinking, those who lived in the most equable place would have made for the best poets and men of letters, because the excellence of their physical environment impressed itself upon their poetic natures.

The inference that al-Tha‘ālibī was upholding a belief in the power of a poet’s environment – both physical and human – to shape their work is reinforced by more programmatic remarks made at the very beginning of the *Yatīma*, in a section on the merit of the poets of Syria. As these comments are significant for the rest of the anthology, and in general terms for the *Lubāb* too, they need to be examined in detail.

In Part One, Chapter One of the *Yatīma*, al-Tha‘ālibī states explicitly that the poetry of the Arabs of Syria is, and always has been, more poetic (*asha‘r*) than that of the Arabs of Iraq and the surrounding regions.³⁴⁹ The reasons given for this predominance can be categorised as fourfold: that of historical precedent, that of linguistic purity, that of patronage, and that of critical opinion. Al-Tha‘ālibī begins by listing poets among the Moderns who hailed from Syria: al-‘Attābī (d. 208 or 220/823 or 835),³⁵⁰ Manṣūr al-Namarī (d. 190/805),³⁵¹ al-Ashja‘ al-Sulamī (d. c. 195/811),³⁵² Muḥammad b. Zur‘a al-

³⁴⁷ See Olsson, “The World in Arab Eyes”, 494-5. In addition, see Minorsky, *Abū Dulaf Mis‘ar ibn Muḥalhil’s Travels*, p. 60.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ YD 1:33

³⁵⁰ Al-‘Attābī was a poet, secretary and courtier descended from ‘Amr b. Kulthūm, author of one of the seven *mu‘allaqāt*. He served the Barmakids and the caliphs Harūn al-Rashīd and al-Ma’mūn, and is best known for his praise poetry. See Bosworth, “Al-‘Attābī”.

³⁵¹ Manṣūr al-Namarī served the Barmakids and the caliph Harūn al-Rashīd. Fragments of his poetry survive, consisting mostly of *qaṣā’id* and connected *ghazal* poetry. See Kennedy, “Manṣūr al-Namarī”.

³⁵² Al-Ashja‘ al-Sulamī grew up as an orphan in Basra, but was adopted by the Qaysites, who invented a genealogy for him. He subsequently moved to Raqqa, was patronised by the Barmakids, and became a boon-companion to Harūn al-Rashīd. See Kennedy, “Al-Ashja‘ al-Sulamī”.

Dimashqī (dates unknown; he was a contemporary of Dīk al-Jinn, d. 235–6/849–51),³⁵³ Rabī‘a al-Raqqī (d. 198/814),³⁵⁴ and finally Abū Tammām (d. c. 232/845) and al-Buḥturī (d. 284/897), who are classed as the leaders ‘in this technique’ (*fī hādhihi al-ṣinā‘a*).

Modern poetry is presumably meant by this phrase, although it should be noted that Modern poetry itself cannot be understood as a homogenous style. Indeed, the critical tradition turned Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī into the foremost representatives of opposing techniques: the crafted (*maṣnū‘*) and the ‘innate’ (*maṭbū‘*).³⁵⁵

Al-Tha‘ālibī subsequently names important ‘Cross-Breed’ (*Muwalladūn*) poets of the early tenth century from Syria: al-Mu‘awwij al-Raqqī (d.307/919-20), al-Marīmī (d. 316/929),³⁵⁶ al-‘Abbāsī al-Maṣīṣī, (dates unknown) Abū l-Faṭḥ Kushājīm (d. c. 360/970-1),³⁵⁷ al-Ṣanawbarī (d. 334/945-6),³⁵⁸ and Abū l-Mu‘taṣīm al-Anṭākī (dates unknown).³⁵⁹ They are described as the ‘meadows of poetry, and the gardens of refinement’ (*riyāḍ al-shi‘r wa-ḥadā’iq al-ẓarf*), a phrase which recalls the so-called ‘Mannerist’ style for which they are known.³⁶⁰ Lastly it is stated that al-Tha‘ālibī’s selections of the work of ‘Contemporary’ poets of the first region point to the ‘advancement of their steps’ (*taqaddum aqdāmihim*), a

³⁵³ See ‘Afīf ‘Abd al-Raḥman, *Mu‘jam al-shu‘arā’ al-‘abbāsīyīn*, 192; Weipert, “Dīk al-Jinn”.

³⁵⁴ See ‘Abd al-Raḥman, *Mu‘jam al-shu‘arā’*, p.182. Rabī‘a al-Raqqī was a court poet whose life spanned the Umayyad and ‘Abbāsīd periods. Though born in Raqqa, he came to live in Baghdad. He praised the caliph al-Mahdī, and was a boon-companion to Harūn al-Rashīd. His love poetry was highly esteemed by critics including Ibn al-Mu‘tazz.

³⁵⁵ The poetry of Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī was most famously compared and evaluated in al-Āmidī’s (d. 371/987) *Muwāzana*.

³⁵⁶ Al-Marīmī was an Egyptian poet. See ‘Abd al-Raḥman, *Mu‘jam al-shu‘arā’*, 514.

³⁵⁷ Kushājīm, an important exponent of Mannerism, was associated with the court of Sayf al-Dalwa. For a survey of his descriptive poetry, see Giese, *Waṣf bei Kuṣāğim*.

³⁵⁸ Al-Ṣanawbarī, librarian to Sayf al-Dawla, was another important Mannerist. For his poetry, see Schoeler, *Arabische Naturdichtung*.

³⁵⁹ Al-Anṭākī was a source for the poetry of Dīk al-Jinn. See ‘Abd al-Raḥman, *Mu‘jam al-shu‘arā’*, 61.

³⁶⁰ The term ‘Mannerism’, originally formulated with reference to Italian literature and the visual arts of the Baroque period, designates styles characterised by “exaggeration, distorted scale and perspective, and unusual effects of colour and lighting” (*O.E.D.*). Within the context of Persian and Arabic literature, the term appears to have been applied first to the poetry of al-Ma‘mūnī (lived late tenth century) by Bürgel. See idem, *Die ekphrastischen Epigramme*. The idea was subsequently developed by Sperl, in *Mannerism in Arabic Poetry*, and by Schoeler, in *Arabische Naturdichtung*.

comment which implies that they are innovative, thereby reinforcing the notion that stylistic innovation is the hallmark of a good poet.

What do the poets whom al-Tha‘ālibī lists have in common, and in which ways can they be considered the leading writers of their respective eras? Most of them, regardless of the era in which they lived, were court poets, patronised by either the ‘Abbāsids or the Ḥamdānids. Several of the Moderns in the list were also boon-companions of Hārūn al-Rashīd (d. 193/809) and the Barmakids. As we saw in Chapter One, al-Tha‘ālibī attaches value to poetry produced under patrons who were either critics or poets themselves, and it is a central thesis of the *Yatīma* that the best patrons improve the quality of verse. The poets listed were also stylistically innovative and influential. To their ranks al-Tha‘ālibī implicitly adds al-Mutanabbī, who is treated in Part One of the *Yatīma*, and who is deemed by the anthologist to be the most stylistically contentious and innovative poet among the Contemporaries. The thesis that the poets of Syria are the best, and influence those of other regions, is therefore made to hold true for the present as well as the past. The contention is also bolstered by the fact that there is a distinct time-lag between the regions of the *Yatīma*. The major poets of Syria were mostly active just after the middle of the tenth century, those of Iraq and Iran were at the height of their powers in the final quarter of the tenth century, and those of Khurasan bridge the tenth and eleventh centuries.³⁶¹ Chronologically, the Contemporary poets of Syria and the west do therefore take precedence over their eastern neighbours.

In addition to the question of precedent, al-Tha‘ālibī raises the issues of linguistic purity and patronage, both of which are in some sense connected to geographical context. The

³⁶¹ It should, however, be noted that the Part Four, Chapter One is devoted to a circle of bureaucrats active in Sāmānīd Bukhara around the middle of the tenth century. It is unclear whether al-Tha‘ālibī thinks of them as the last representatives of the previous generation or as the first proponents of the Contemporary style.

anthologist writes that Syrian poets excel because of their proximity to the historical heartlands of the Arabs (*al-‘arab*), particularly the Ḥijāz, and because of their distance from the lands of the Persians (*bu ‘dihim ‘an bilād al-‘ajam*). This distance has allowed them to avoid the linguistic ‘corruption’ which has affected Arabic speakers in Iraq, who live alongside Persians and ‘Nabateans’ (*al-nabaṭ*). In contrast to the urban environment of Iraq, Syria is marked by an equilibrium between the eloquence (*faṣāḥa*) of the Bedouin, and the ‘sweetness’ of settled culture (*al-ḥaḍāra*). Perhaps al-Tha‘ālibī considers this equilibrium one of form and content, where clarity of expression is applied to the ‘refined’ topics of settled life. Reflections of these ideas are also seen in the entry on al-Mutanabbī, where the anthologist emphasises that the poet’s childhood was spent in a constant state of movement between settled, urban culture and that of the Bedouin, endowing him with the best of both worlds.³⁶²

It is possible to extrapolate al-Tha‘ālibī’s understanding of other regions from his comments on the precedence of Syrian poets. It is implied that Iraqi poets, for example, are more refined, or wittier, than their Syrian counterparts, on account of their cosmopolitanism, but less eloquent. As the indices to this thesis show, al-Tha‘ālibī’s argument is reflected in his selections of material: the polythematic *qaṣīda*, which had traditionally been the most prestigious poetic form, and which also often possessed a high monetary value when it was composed for patrons, predominates in Syria, whereas the ‘lighter’ genres of lyric poetry, witty invective and *mujūn* are found in greater abundance in Iraq. There are, therefore, genuine differences between the regions of the *Yatīma* and the kinds of literature produced in them.

³⁶² YD 1:141

Al-Tha‘ālibī’s third criterion for the precedence of Syrian poets is that of patronage. The Ḥamdānids and the Banū Warqā’ are identified as ideal patrons because they represented the good old days of the Arabs (*baqiyyat al-‘arab*), were besotted with *adab*, were known for their generosity and nobility, and combined the twin arts of the pen and the sword. More importantly, al-Tha‘ālibī argues that they were also active in fostering talent. They were all men of letters who loved poetry and critiqued it, and who “guided the fine qualities of poetry with the gentlest of reins”.³⁶³ At its best, then, patronage is a critical exercise which rewards innovation.

The active role of patrons in shaping poetic taste plays an important role in the *Yatīma*, particularly in the entries on the Ḥamdānid ruler Sayf al-Dawla (r. 336-56/947-67), and the Būyid viziers Ibn al-‘Amīd (d.360/970), al-Muhallabī (d.352/963) and Ibn ‘Abbād (d.385/995), where it is implied that the best poetry was produced under these men because of the competition created by the system of courtly patronage. These entries not only present selections of poetry and prose which were written by the biographical subjects, but also provide examples of the writing that was produced under their patronage, and *akhbār* concerning how they critiqued poetry in *majālis*. Ibn ‘Abbād is perhaps the critical voice to whom al-Tha‘ālibī attributes the greatest value, and his opinion is cited in all four parts of the *Yatīma*. It is also quoted in Part One, Chapter One, to reinforce the view that the poets of Syria take precedence over those of other regions. Al-Tha‘ālibī writes that Ibn ‘Abbād favoured the poetry of Syria because it was marked by the purity of style, sweetness, eloquence and mellifluousness which were also characteristic of the writing of al-Buḥturī.³⁶⁴ Three anonymised poems on separation and love-longing, purportedly memorised by Ibn ‘Abbād, are provided as evidence of this kind of style. Al-

³⁶³ YD 1:34

³⁶⁴ YD 1:34.

Tha‘ālibī then introduces a second critical opinion, that of al-Khwārizmī (d. 383/993), a major poet of Part Four of the *Yatīma* who spent a considerable amount of time in Aleppo and at the Ḥamdānīd court as a young man. It is stated that al-Khwārizmī benefited from his time in Syria by acquiring positive knowledge (‘ilm) and *adab*, by absorbing fine stylistic turns of phrase (*maḥāsin al-alfāz*), and by ‘hunting’ for poetry there.³⁶⁵ Al-Tha‘ālibī argues that al-Khwārizmī took on the character of al-Buḥturī by associating with Syrian poets and memorising their work.³⁶⁶

Some will consider al-Tha‘ālibī’s argument concerning the precedence of Syria to be forced, particularly given the role of opinion from further east in canonising many of these western poets. However, because of the time-lag between the regions of the *Yatīma*, the poets of Syria were indeed influential stylistic models for writers and critics further east, and al-Tha‘ālibī’s comments raise several important points. The anthologist appears to argue that the best Contemporary poetry responds to the Modern, Neo-Classical and Mannerist styles in an intuitive manner. The debate over style is not that between innate talent and artificiality, and hence between truth and un-truth, an antithesis which had characterised discussions of Modern poetry, but rather between what is pleasing to the listener and what is not. Here al-Tha‘ālibī develops a form of practical criticism which views poetry as the product of the poet’s engagement with both the corpus and their surroundings; it is distinct from reality, but contingent on it. Al-Tha‘ālibī’s subjects, the Contemporaries, respond in different ways to the stylistic legacies of Neo-Classicism and Mannerism, and the anthologist appears to argue that their responses are in large part conditioned by the human context in which they lived.

³⁶⁵ YD 1:35

³⁶⁶ YD 1:35

When one understands the role that al-Tha‘ālibī ascribes to environment in informing the tastes of poets and their audiences, the model of intuitive criticism that he advocates makes sense. If we follow the anthologist in thinking that poetry is the product of a complex interaction between the physical, social and intellectual contexts in which a poet lives, and their combined effect on his or her poetic nature (*ṭab‘*), then it becomes necessary to develop an overarching critical framework which is sufficiently flexible to appreciate that significant differences exist in the forms, genres, themes and rhetoric of the poetry produced throughout the different regions of the Arabic-speaking world, as well as in the predominant literary aesthetics of these regions.

Al-Tha‘ālibī’s approach develops a tension between regional literary identities, whose aesthetic practices are defined by the physical, geographical and social peculiarities of each location, and the influence of the corpus, which encourages poets everywhere to borrow, not only from their peers in their immediate vicinity, but also from a common fund of authors stretching back to the *Jāhiliyya*. Readers today may infer that the *Yatīma* essentially elides regional literary identities with ethnicity and national sentiment, making the Arabic poetry produced in Iran ‘Persian poetry in Arabic’, or the Arabic poetry of Spain ‘Spanish poetry in Arabic’. However, to make such a reading would be to project relatively modern ideas of race and nationhood onto a world in which people defined themselves primarily by the city or the town from which they heralded. Once again, al-Tha‘ālibī’s approach is sufficiently nuanced to appreciate that poets’ constitutions were informed by a vast range of factors, including the contexts in which they worked and the classes of people with whom they socialised.

Superficially different from al-Tha‘ālibī’s organisational approach, ‘Awfī’s method in the *Lubāb* in fact depends on a similar theoretical apparatus. ‘Awfī too was familiar with discussions of *ṭab‘* found in works of social criticism and medicine. He begins Part Three

of his other major composition, *Javāmi* ‘*al-ḥikāyāt*, with a chapter devoted to the question of why people differ in their constitutions.³⁶⁷ He was also familiar with Hippocrates, at least as a figure in wisdom literature, and narratives in the *Javāmi* ‘ discuss Hippocrates’s medical philosophy.³⁶⁸ ‘Awfī’s anthology divides entrants into classes on the basis of their profession, a form of arrangement which emphasises the role of a poet’s social environment in informing his or her poetic nature. Explicit geographical divisions, highlighting the role of human and physical geography in defining character, are only used as a form of sub-division in the three largest chapters, on the ‘*ulamā*’, on early Saljuq poets, and on later Saljuq poets.

Nevertheless, geography does play an important role in the *Lubāb*, particularly when it comes to questions of historical precedent and modernity. ‘Awfī ties the Persian language to the land of Iran by stating that the first person to compose poetry in Persian was the Sāsānian king Bahrām Gūr (r. 420-438 C.E.).³⁶⁹ However, the territory of modern Iran plays only a limited role in the anthology. Instead, ‘Awfī champions Khurasan and Transoxiana as the most dynamic centres of literary production in Persian, implying that these regions are predominant on the grounds of precedent, patronage and linguistic purity.

Historical precedent is given to Khurasan because the earliest professional poets of the later ninth century, who are featured in Chapter Eight, were active there in the territories of the Ṭāhirids, Ṣaffārids and Sāmānids between the late ninth and the mid tenth centuries, and the earliest poet-patrons, covered in Chapter Five, ruled in Sāmānid Bukhara and Ghaznavid Khurasan during the tenth and early eleventh centuries. We are also told that the second professional poet to feature in the *Lubāb*, Fayrūz Mashriqī, arose under ‘Amr b.

³⁶⁷ ‘Awfī, *Javāmi* ‘*al-ḥikāyāt*, jild-i avval az qism-i sivvum, p.6.

³⁶⁸ One narrative which concerns Hippocrates, and which is to be found in the sections of the text that have been printed, is given in ‘Awfī, *Javāmi* ‘*al-ḥikāyāt*, jild-i avval az qism-i sivvum, pp. 69-70.

³⁶⁹ LA 1:19ff.

Lays the Šaffārid (r. 265-87/879-900) and ‘cleansed the Persian (*pārsī*) language of poverty and corruption (*ghass ū fasād*)’, a comment which ties linguistic purity to Khurasan.³⁷⁰ The majority of the viziers, *kuttāb*, ‘*ulamā*’ and professional poets featured in the anthology also hail from either Transoxiana or Khurasan, and the three professional poets to whom ‘Awfī refers most frequently were connected to dynasties based in these regions: Rūdakī (d. 329/940) was associated with the Sāmānids, ‘Unšūrī (d. 431/1039-40) with the Ghaznavids, and Mu‘izzī (d. 519-21/1125-7) with the Saljuqs of Khurasan. Many of the contemporary poets whom ‘Awfī includes also stem from Khurasan and Transoxiana. His reports of meetings with professional poets,³⁷¹ members of the ‘*ulamā*’ and the ruling classes testify to his own personal networks, and hence to his cultural ‘capital’, but they are also intended to demonstrate the vibrancy of literary production in Khurasan and Transoxiana just before the time he was writing. The fact that the most feted modern poets, such as Rashīdī Samarqandī (fl. c. 503/1110),³⁷² Sūzanī (d. c. 569/1173),³⁷³ and Anvarī (d. c. 592/1195-6),³⁷⁴ lived and worked in Khurasan and Transoxiana, also reinforces the impression of the predominance of these regions.

If ‘Awfī sees Khurasan and Transoxiana as the most venerable centres of literary production in Persian, just as al-Tha‘ālibī deems Syria the home of the best poetry in Arabic, he nevertheless argues, again like al-Tha‘ālibī, that the boundaries of the literary world are in a state of flux in the modern world. ‘Awfī contends that there has been a shift in his own era away from the traditional centres of poetry and towards the Subcontinent.

³⁷⁰ LA 2:2.

³⁷¹ LA 2:345-49; 391-4; 404; 416.

³⁷² On Rashīdī, see Šafā’, *Tārīkh-i adabiyāt dar īrān*. 2:547-551; Nizāmī‘Arūzī, *Chahār Maqāla*, p. 42

³⁷³ Sūzanī was affiliated with the Qarakhanid court of Samarqand. He is best known for his invective and obscene poetry. See de Blois, “Sūzanī”; Zipoli, “I Carmina Priapea di Sūzanī.”

³⁷⁴ Anvarī began his career at the Saljuq court in Marv. He travelled extensively, including to Mecca, and spent long periods of time in Balkh and Herat. See the survey article by de Bruijn, “Anwarī,” the full biographical study in the introduction to *Dīvān-i Anvarī*, Vol. 2 pp. 3-55, and the essays collected in Meneghini (ed.) *Studies on the Poetry of Anvarī*.

The most obvious sign of this shift is the *Lubāb*'s final chapter, which consists entirely of contemporary poetry produced at the court of Uchcha, where 'Awfī had taken up residence. A changing geographical focus in literary production is also implied throughout the anthology. In the entry on Abū l-Faraj b. Mas'ūd al-Rūnī, a professional poet who was born in Lahore, and who was patronised by the Ghaznavid rulers there, 'Awfī writes that the Khurāsāni poet Anvarī constantly imitated the style of his poetry (*tatabbu 'i sukhān-i ū kardī*) and carried a copied of his *dīvān* wherever he went.³⁷⁵ 'Awfī also argues that, in addition to influencing poets of the centre, those in regions that had once been marginal had become in his own era the vanguard of innovation. For example, Ḥamīd al-Dīn Mas'ūd b. Sa'd Shālī Kūb, another poet from Lahore, is described as the counterpart of Rūdakī and 'Unṣūrī in his 'pure nature and his poetry'.³⁷⁶

A Summary of Anthologies' Structures

The *Yatīma* is divided into four parts (*aqsām*), which are marked as such by al-Tha'ālibī, and which consist of ten chapters each. Parts Two, Three and Four each cover a single geographical zone that largely corresponds to a contemporary political state, with the eastern and western domains of the Būyids being split between Parts Two and Three.³⁷⁷ Part One is larger than the others, both in volume and in the area that it covers: the poets that it features stem from Andalusia in the west to Mosul in the east. The real interest of Part One, however, is in the Ḥamdānid territories of Syria, and the writers accorded the longest chapters reflect this focus: the Ḥamdānid ruler Sayf al-Dawla (r. 336-56/947-

³⁷⁵ LA 2:241. On the relationship between Rūnī and Anvarī, see Anvarī, *Dīvān*, Vol. 2, pp. 119-123.

³⁷⁶ LA 2:411.

³⁷⁷ On the historical background of Būyid rule, see Kraemer, *Humanism in the Renaissance of Islam*; Hanne, *Putting the Caliph in his Place*; Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership*; Busse, *Chalif und Grosskönig*.

67),³⁷⁸ his cousin Abū Firās al-Hamdānī (d. 357/968),³⁷⁹ his great court poet al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965),³⁸⁰ and al-Babbaghā' (d. 398/1008),³⁸¹ who acted as scribe to Sayf al-Dawla. Much of the content of these chapters consists of *qaṣīda* poetry dedicated to Sayf al-Dawla, although there are particularly notable examples of work in other genres. The output of Abū Firās is marked by the *Rūmiyyāt*, the poems of lament that he composed when he was captured and taken to Byzantium as a prisoner, and by individual pieces such as a *muzdawija* describing a hunt. The work of al-Babbaghā' stands out for a prosimetric narrative which is an excellent example of stylised 'chancellery' prose. Having begun with northern Syria, Part One then devotes a single chapter, Chapter Nine, to poets from southern Syria, Fāṭimid and Ikhshidid Egypt, North Africa and Umayyad Spain. There are two notable authors of satirical poetry in this chapter: al-Wāsānī (d. 394/1004) and Abū l-Raqa'maq (d. 399/1009). However, most of the verse cited here consists of love lyrics. In Chapter Ten we leap to Mosul, whose major poets, including al-Sarī al-Raffā' (d. c.362/972),³⁸² maintained relationships of patronage with the Ḥamdānids. Al-Sarī and his rivals, the Khālidi brothers, are great authors of love lyrics, wine poetry and descriptive poetry.

Because of its geographical focus, Part One, Chapter Nine is an obvious exception in a part of the anthology that is otherwise largely cohesive in its geographical and social interests. Orfali has demonstrated that social connections exist between many of the entrants in Chapter Nine, but the relationship between the poetry found in this chapter and in the rest of Part One remains unexplored. Although it suffers from repetitions, suggesting that material may have been interpolated, there are further connections with the rest of Part

³⁷⁸ YD 1:37

³⁷⁹ YD 1:57

³⁸⁰ YD 1:139

³⁸¹ YD 1:293

³⁸² YD 2:135

One which may indicate that Chapter Nine is better arranged than has been supposed. For example, al-Mutanabbī forms a clear link connecting the chapter with Syria. Chapter Nine features several poets who coalesced around a *rāwī* of al-Mutanabbī, ʿUbayd Allāh b. Muhammad b. Abī l-Jawʿ;³⁸³ there is a link between Syria and the Ikshidid court in Egypt where al-Mutanabbī stayed; al-Thaʿālibī even writes of the Andalusian poet Ibn Darrāj al-Qastallī (d. 421/1030) that “in al-Andalus he was the equivalent of al-Mutanabbī in Syria”.³⁸⁴ Another connection between the chapter and the rest of Part One is the presence of patrons with similar interests. For example, al-Thaʿālibī’s selections of the lyric poetry of the Fāṭimid caliph Tamīm b. Maʿadd (r. 341-365/953-75) bear a certain similarity to the lyric poetry produced by Sayf al-Dawla.³⁸⁵ The popularity of styles of writing, the influence of writers on one another, and the presence of equivalent institutional structures, may therefore contribute to connecting Chapter Nine with the rest of Part One. The greatest difference between Chapter Nine and the preceding chapters is that it consists primarily of love lyrics. However, it is for this very reason that it provides a neat bridge linking the genres of writing produced in Syria with the kind of lyric verse produced in Mosul.

Part Two of the *Yatīma* is concerned largely with a dynasty: that of the Western Būyids in Baghdad. It begins with a short entry on the Būyid kings, before focusing on patrons and writers who flourished under them. In contrast to Part One, which is marked by the relationships between professional poets and courtly patrons, Part Two is dominated by the chancellery and scribes. The Būyid vizier al-Muhallabī (d. 352/963) is named as a major writer and patron.³⁸⁶ A long entry is devoted to the scribe Abū Ishāq al-Sābī (d.

³⁸³ YD 1:477-486

³⁸⁴ YD 2:119. On the poetry of Ibn Darrāj, see Gruendler, “Originality in Imitation”.

³⁸⁵ The entry on Tamīm b. Maʿadd is given twice: YD 1:358 and YD 1:525; for the lyric poetry of Sayf al-Dawla, see YD 1:53-7.

³⁸⁶ YD 2:265

384/994),³⁸⁷ and a separate chapter is given to a further three Būyid scribes who exercised political power: Abū l-Qāsim ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Yūsuf, Abū Ahmad ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Fadl al-Shīrāzī and Abū l-Qāsim ‘Alī bn al-Qāsim al-Qāshānī.³⁸⁸ Other functionaries include al-Qādī al-Tanūkhī, listed under the poets of Basra,³⁸⁹ and a second judge, Ibn Ma‘rūf, whose entry is given in the chapter on the poets of Baghdad.³⁹⁰ The genres that predominate in these chapters are lyrical love poetry, wine poetry and poetry of reproach and complaint. Chapter Nine differs superficially from the others in Part Two, since it consists of praise poems on a single patron – the vizier Abū Naṣr Sābūr b. Ardashīr – which al-Tha‘ālibī excerpted from an unnamed anthology.³⁹¹ The poets whose work features in this chapter stem from Parts One, Two and Three of the *Yatīma*. Since it consists of poems written about the subject, rather than of poems written by him, Part Two, Chapter Nine, displays a number of similarities with the sections of the chapter on Ibn ‘Abbād in Part Three which contain panegyrics addressed to him by different poets. Part Two, Chapter Ten is devoted to the leader of the Iraqi Shī‘ī community, Abū l-Hasan al-Radī al-Mūsawī (d. 406/1016), whose output is notable for its commemorative *qaṣā’id*.³⁹²

In addition to featuring subjects who worked in the higher echelons of government, or who formed part of the ruling class, Part Two also contains a considerable amount of poetry produced in the cities of lower Iraq, most notably Wasit, Basra and Baghdad. Here, al-Tha‘ālibī illustrates his thesis, briefly developed in Part One, Chapter One, that the poets of Iraq are wittier and more refined than the poets of Syria. Authors featured in Part Two

³⁸⁷ YD 2:287.

³⁸⁸ YD 2:369.

³⁸⁹ YD 2:393.

³⁹⁰ YD 3 :125.

³⁹¹ YD 3:145.

³⁹² YD 3:155.

include the ‘obscene’ (*muġġān*) poets Ibn Sukkara (d. 385/995),³⁹³ and Ibn al-Ĥajjāj (d. 391/1000),³⁹⁴ the performer and satirist Abū l-Ward,³⁹⁵ and the ‘beggar’ poet Abū l-Ḥasan al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī.³⁹⁶ Al-Tha‘ālibī implies that there is a degree of overlap in genre between the work of such poets. For example, in addition to obscene poetry (*sukhf*, *muġūn*) and invective poetry (*hijā*), the entry on Ibn al-Ĥajjāj also contains a section of poetry related to the topic of ‘begging’ (*al-kudya*).³⁹⁷ Unlike the poetry of al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī, the poems in this section have little to do with begging on the street. Instead, most of them are requests for food and goods for patrons. However, Ibn al-Ĥajjāj adopts an importuning persona in these poems which is not dissimilar to that projected by al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī, or to that adopted by the character Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Iskandarī in the *Maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhānī, a work which is also described by al-Tha‘ālibī as one concerned with ‘begging’.³⁹⁸

As in Part One, we can see that Part Two of the *Yatīma* is defined by certain styles of writing. This raises the issue of the criteria that the anthologist employed to decide under which region writers should be included. The question is evidently not one as simple as that of where a poet was born, or even necessarily that of where they worked, since al-Mutanabbī was born in Iraq, in Kufa, and worked for a time in Egypt, but is included after the grantees of the Ḥamdānīd court in Part One. In Part Four we encounter al-Ma’mūnī, who was born in Iraq, and who spent an amount of time at the court of Ibn ‘Abbād, but who is given a chapter that follows one dedicated to the poets of Bukhara. There are two poets who are given long entries in Part Two, and whose work is also worth interrogating,

³⁹³ YD 3:3.

³⁹⁴ YD 3 :35.

³⁹⁵ YD 2:443.

³⁹⁶ YD 3:137.

³⁹⁷ YD 3:66.

³⁹⁸ YD 4 :294. On *kudya* in the work of al-Hamadhānī, see Stewart, “Professional Literary Mendicancy”.

since they could justifiably be included under a different region. They are Ibn Nubāta al-Sa‘dī,³⁹⁹ and al-Salāmī.⁴⁰⁰

Both Ibn Nubāta al-Sa‘dī and al-Salāmī were professional poets, and both wrote for a variety of patrons who are included in Parts One, Two and Three of the *Yatīma*. Ibn Nubāta was an Iraqi by birth, but spent time at the courts of Sayf al-Dawla (r. 336-56/947-67), Ibn al-‘Amīd (d. 360/970), and Ibn ‘Abbād (d. 385/995); al-Salāmī was born in the Karkh district of Baghdad, but travelled to Mosul as a young man, where he encountered poets such as Abū Bakr al-Khālīdī, al-Babbaghā’ and al-Tilla‘farī,⁴⁰¹ who are listed in Part One. He also spent time at the court of Ibn ‘Abbād in Isfahan. There may be several reasons why both men are included in Part Two. Their mature panegyric poetry is dedicated to the Būyid ‘Aḏud al-Dawla, who is listed at the head of Part Two, despite the fact that his court in Shiraz was a centre of patronage.⁴⁰² Inclusion in Part Two therefore binds Ibn Nubāta and al-Salāmī to their most eminent patron, just as al-Mutanabbī is bound to Sayf al-Dawla (r. 336-56/947-67) by his inclusion in Part One. That conceptions of distinct differences in style between the regions may also play a role in assigning the two men to Iraq is suggested by one of al-Salāmī’s own poems, where he describes verses by an unnamed author as Iraqi in phrasing and Syrian in rhetoric.⁴⁰³

In Part Three of the *Yatīma* we move to a different context: that of Būyid Iran. The great patrons here are not kings, but viziers, such as Ibn al-‘Amīd (d. 360/970),⁴⁰⁴ his son,⁴⁰⁵ and Ibn ‘Abbād (d. 385/995).⁴⁰⁶ The influence of Ibn ‘Abbād as a patron is strongly felt

³⁹⁹ YD 2:447.

⁴⁰⁰ YD 2:466.

⁴⁰¹ YD 1:349.

⁴⁰² YD 2 :257.

⁴⁰³ YD 2:506.

⁴⁰⁴ YD 3:183.

⁴⁰⁵ YD 3:215.

⁴⁰⁶ YD 3 :225.

throughout Part Three, as many of the poets featured were associated with his court, such as al-Dabbī, who was one of Ibn ‘Abbād’s boon-companions and his eventual successor in the vizierate;⁴⁰⁷ al-Rustamī, one of his court poets;⁴⁰⁸ and Abū Muhammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Ahmad al-Khāzin, who was initially Ibn ‘Abbād’s librarian and one of his boon-companions, but who broke with him and travelled west⁴⁰⁹. The city of Isfahan, which played host to one of Ibn ‘Abbād’s courts, is given its own chapter, and most of the poets featured from there were patronised by him.⁴¹⁰ Praise poetry, particularly verse dedicated to Ibn ‘Abbād, predominates in these chapters, although there is also a considerable amount of descriptive verse based on extended similes. This kind of poetry differs from the descriptive verse of Part Two, which generally uses compressed comparisons. Ibn ‘Abbād’s influence also extends to Part Three, Chapter Nine, which is dedicated to the poets of Jurjan and Tabaristan. Al-Qādī al-Jurjānī (d. 392/1002) was appointed chief judge of Jurjan by Ibn ‘Abbād,⁴¹¹ and Abū l-Hasan ‘Alī b. Aḥmad al-Jawharī was used as an ambassador to the Sāmānids by Ibn ‘Abbād.⁴¹² Al-Tha‘ālibī’s selections of poetry by these two men reflect their relationship with him.

Just as Part Two features chapters which contain poets who do not appear to have benefitted from the major structures of patronage present in their region, so too Part Three has chapters that deal with small, local networks of authors. Chapter Seven is introduced by an entry on the well-known grammarian Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1004).⁴¹³ Here, al-Tha‘ālibī cites a letter by the subject on the poets of the age. Most of the poets mentioned in this letter are encountered in the chapter, and it therefore acts as an introduction to the

⁴⁰⁷ YD 3:339.

⁴⁰⁸ YD 3:335.

⁴⁰⁹ YD 3:379.

⁴¹⁰ YD 3 :349.

⁴¹¹ YD 4:3.

⁴¹² YD 4:29.

⁴¹³ YD 3:463.

topography of the local poetic scene. The second halves of Chapter Seven and Chapter Eight are devoted to short extracts by poets from Iran, about whom little information is given, and the reader may infer that al-Tha‘ālibī gathered the material given in these sections from disparate sources. The verse of these regions often consists of short, descriptive pieces, and poems of complaint and reproach. Chapter Ten is devoted to the Ziyārid ruler of Gilan, Shams al-Ma‘ālī Qābūs b. Wushmkīr (r. 366-711/977-81 and 388-403/ 998-1013), an author renowned for his maxims and advice poetry.⁴¹⁴

Part Four, concerned with the poets of Khwārazm, Transoxiana and Khurasan, deals with a region that was politically independent of the Būyid lands, first under the Sāmānids, and then under their successors, the Ghaznavids. The Sāmānid territories were effectively overtaken by the Ghaznavids by the year 389/999, several years after al-Tha‘ālibī had begun work on the *Yatīma*. The dynastic change is reflected in Part Four, of which Chapter One is devoted to Sāmānid poets of the mid-tenth century, who represent the generation just preceding the Contemporaries.⁴¹⁵ Unlike the earlier parts of the *Yatīma*, which begin with a major patron (Sayf al-Dawla, ‘Aḍud al-Dawla, and Ibn al-‘Amīd), Part Four commences with the scribe Abū Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr, who is described as the first man of letters (*adīb*) of Transoxiana.⁴¹⁶ In choosing a man of letters rather than a patron to head up Part Four, al-Tha‘ālibī emphasises a distinctive aspect of the local poetic scene. Perhaps for a number of reasons, including a shift in courtly patronage away from Arabic and towards Persian in the eastern Islamic world during the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, few significant patrons are featured as subjects in Part Four. Chapter Eight is devoted to al-Tha‘ālibī’s own patron, and friend, Abū l-Faḍl ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Mīkālī (d. 436/1044), who is described as the modern-day equivalent of Ibn ‘Abbād in

⁴¹⁴ YD 4:67.

⁴¹⁵ YD 4:73.

⁴¹⁶ YD 4:73.

Khurasan, but the anthologist does not provide examples which would suggest that the patronage of al-Mikālī was indeed as expansive, or his taste so influential, as that of Ibn ‘Abbād.⁴¹⁷

In general terms, the reader receives the impression that the production of Arabic literature in the Sāmānid and Ghaznavid territories was a more egalitarian affair than at the major courts further west, with poets composing for one another. This is particularly the case in Chapter Two, which is devoted to Contemporaries from the city of Bukhara, such as al-Lahhām,⁴¹⁸ and Ibn Matrān.⁴¹⁹ They, together with poets of an earlier generation such as al-Iskāfī,⁴²⁰ constituted a circle of bureaucrats who promoted the cause of Arabic literature. Contrary to prevailing scholarly opinion, it appears to be men such as these, rather than professional poets working within a system of courtly patronage and men of religion, who were chiefly responsible for Arabic literary production in Central Asia during the tenth century.⁴²¹ As Appendix One shows, poems between friends and colleagues, whether *ikhwāniyyāt* or satirical *hijā*’, are found in greater concentration in Part Four than elsewhere in the *Yatīma*, reflecting the social make up of the region. The comparative lack of major patrons in Khurasan also means that there is less *qaṣīda* poetry in Part Four, and the lyric and descriptive poetry of the region primarily consists of short *qīṭa*’ and epigrams. As in Part Three, these descriptive poems are often based on extended comparisons. The major authors of the region are professional men of letters (*udabā*’), such as al-Khwārizmī (d. 383/993), who dominates Chapter Four;⁴²² Badī’ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī (d. 398/1008), to whom Chapter Five is devoted in its entirety;⁴²³ and the scribe Abū l-Fath al-

⁴¹⁷ YD 4:345.

⁴¹⁸ YD 4 :116.

⁴¹⁹ YD 4:132.

⁴²⁰ YD 4:108.

⁴²¹ Cf. Zadeh, *The Vernacular Qur’ān*, p. 31.

⁴²² YD 4:223.

⁴²³ YD 4 :293.

Bustī (d. 400/1009), to whom most of Chapter Six is dedicated.⁴²⁴ The region's focus on men of letters means that the extracts quoted are also markedly different in some cases from those of the other regions. There is a greater quantity of prose, but the poetry is also marked by styles that found favour among prose writers. For example, the technique of paronomasia (*tajnīs*), popularised by al-Bustī, is more popular in Part Four than elsewhere.

Part Four, Chapter Three is given over to al-Ma'mūnī,⁴²⁵ a descendent of the caliph al-Ma'mūn who was forced to flee from Baghdad to Bukhara for political reasons, and al-Wāthiqī, a son of the caliph al-Wāthiq, who lived in Bukhara, but who plotted unsuccessfully to overthrow the Sāmānids and to have himself installed as caliph in Baghdad.⁴²⁶ Al-Tha'ālibī writes that his intention in placing the chapter on the two men after the entry on the poets of Bukhara was partly to associate al-Ma'mūnī and al-Wāthiqī with the city's men of letters, and partly to distinguish them.⁴²⁷ The distinction is based on nobility, but also on the quality of the writing of al-Ma'mūnī and al-Wāthiqī. By far the greater part of the chapter contains al-Ma'mūnī's ekphrastic epigrams on different objects, a form of light verse which is distinct from that of the poets featured in the chapter on Bukhara.⁴²⁸ As in the seventh chapter of Part Three, the seventh chapter of Part Four consists of short pieces (*tafāriq*) by writers in and around the city of Herat. Chapters Nine and Ten are devoted to al-Tha'ālibī's home city of Nishapur, with those who travelled to the city from the surrounding regions being treated in one chapter, and natives of the city being treated in another.

The *Tatimma* retains the four-part division of the *Yatīma*, although it also has a short conclusion (*khātima*), containing entries on people whom the anthologist had either

⁴²⁴ YD 4: 345.

⁴²⁵ YD 4: 183.

⁴²⁶ YD 4: 220.

⁴²⁷ YD 4 :183.

⁴²⁸ These poems were studied in detail in Bürgel, *Die ekphrastischen Epigramme*.

omitted to include elsewhere, or whose home cities he had forgotten. In general, the subjects of the *Tatimma* are people about whom al-Tha‘ālibī included too little information in the *Yatīma*, or who only rose to prominence after the completion of the *Yatīma*, or who were omitted but ought to have been included. An example of the second type is al-Ma‘arrī (d. 449/1058).⁴²⁹ Part Four of the *Tatimma* ends with a section on notables of the Ghaznavid court, including several of al-Tha‘ālibī’s patrons.⁴³⁰

Because al-Tha‘ālibī classifies writers by the region in which they lived, the *Yatīma* and the *Tatimma* can strike the casual reader as uneven. Differences in the professions of writers are obscured, and long entries are juxtaposed with short ones. Nor does al-Tha‘ālibī provide a clear list of poems, such as Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī’s (d. c. 363/972) top one hundred songs, originally compiled by Iṣḥāq al-Mawṣilī (d. 235/850) for the caliph al-Wāthiq, which would allow the reader to grasp immediately which styles of writing he deemed the best.⁴³¹ The anthologist does, in fact, mark every poem that he considers to be the finest representation of a particular *ma‘nā*, but these remarks are hidden within entries. To criticise the structure of the *Yatīma* as uncontrolled, however, is to miss the point of the arrangement, which emphasises connections between authors and the stylistic similarities in their writing that these connections created. Al-Tha‘ālibī aims to chart literary networks and the state of the market in each region, and this intention is achieved through the anthology’s structure.

Lubāb al-albāb consists of two parts in the John Rylands manuscript, the only known largely complete copy of the work. Part One contains four preliminary chapters, which introduce ‘Awfī’s intellectual framework and his vision of literary history, and three main

⁴²⁹ YD 5:14.

⁴³⁰ See above, Introduction.

⁴³¹ On the Top One Hundred Songs, see Kilpatrick, *Making the Great Book of Songs*, pp. 259-62.

chapters of biographical entries. Part Two, which is larger, consists of five chapters of biographical entries. Each main chapter is dedicated to a particular class of people who produced poetry. Chapters which cover authors from multiple periods and dynasties are arranged in a broadly chronological manner, proceeding from the earliest poet to the most recent.

As in the *Yatīma*, which begins three out of four of its regions with a ruler or a major patron, the first main chapter of the *Lubāb*, Chapter Five, is devoted to kings throughout history, and contains entries on members of the dynasties of the Sāmānids, Ziyārids, Ghaznavids, Ghūrīds, Saljuqs, Qarakhanids and Khwārizmshāhs, as well on as provincial amirs and party kings who flourished under them. ‘Awfī writes that the rulers featured in this chapter composed poetry to ‘whet their intellects’, and cannot be considered poets in the true sense of the term.⁴³² Nevertheless, ‘the words of kings are the kings of words’, and the anthologist considers it fitting that the *Lubāb* should place them first.⁴³³

The chapter begins with Mansūr b. Nūh the Sāmānīd (r. 350-69/961-76),⁴³⁴ and ends with Ikhtiyār al-Dīn Rūzbih al-Shaybānī, a local ruler of the Hindu Kush who flourished in the time of the Saljuq king Sanjar (d. 552/1157-8).⁴³⁵ Some of the rulers featured in the chapter are best known as major literary patrons, including Mahmūd of Ghazna (r. 388-421/998-1030),⁴³⁶ and his son Abū Muhammad.⁴³⁷ Others, such as Qābūs b. Wushmkīr, are primarily thought of as authors in their own right.⁴³⁸ Politically influential kings, such as the Saljuq ruler Tughril (r. 447-55/1055-63),⁴³⁹ are perhaps included more for their

⁴³² LA 1:22.

⁴³³ Ibid. ‘Awfī is echoing comments made by al-Tha‘ālibī (YD 1:29): ‘The best poetry is composed by the most noble men; the worst is spoken by slaves’.

⁴³⁴ LA 1:22.

⁴³⁵ LA 1:60.

⁴³⁶ LA 1:23.

⁴³⁷ LA 1:25.

⁴³⁸ LA 1:29.

⁴³⁹ LA 1:41.

nobility than for the quality of their poetry, while ‘Awfī includes several minor rulers whom he met in person,⁴⁴⁰ or to manuscript copies of whose work he had access.⁴⁴¹ Some of the entrants in this chapter praised one another, such as the amir Buzurjmihr Qasīm b. Ibrāhīm Abū Mansūr al-Qā’inī, who wrote a *qaṣīda* eulogising Maḥmūd of Ghazna.⁴⁴²

Chapter Six of the *Lubāb* is dedicated to viziers and leading *kuttāb*, beginning with the vizier of Maḥmūd of Ghazna, Abū l-Qasm Aḥmad b. Ḥasan [al-Maymandī] (d. 424/1032),⁴⁴³ and Abū l-Fath al-Bustī (d. 400/1009), who was the leading scribe under Maḥmūd and his father before him.⁴⁴⁴ As in the following chapter, which features men of orthodox religion, the majority of the entries in Chapter Six cover figures who lived later in the twelfth or in the early thirteenth century, and ‘Awfī emphasises at the chapter’s end that it has included men whom he met and who transmitted knowledge to him.⁴⁴⁵ There are two organisational principles seen in Chapter Six which are worth noting, because they are common to most of the chapters in the *Lubāb*. The first is the technique of juxtaposing writers who were active at a similar time and in a similar place. Such juxtapositions are most obvious when subjects are related, like the Saljuq vizier Nizām al-Mulk (d. 485/1092) and his son, Mu’ayyad al-Mulk.⁴⁴⁶ However, the method is also applied to colleagues, such as a group of *kuttāb* who were employed in the chancellery of the Ghaznavid ruler Khusraw Malik (r. 555-82/1160-86).⁴⁴⁷ The second technique is that of ‘equivalence’ between chapters; most of the entrants in Chapter Six were subject to kings who are featured in Chapter Five. Although ‘Awfī does not follow al-Tha‘ālibī’s method

⁴⁴⁰ The last Qarakhanid ruler ‘Uthmān b. Ibrāhīm Nuṣrat al-Dīn Qilij Arslan (LA 1 :44) ; The provincial king Nuṣrat al-Dīn Kabūd Jāma (LA 1:51).

⁴⁴¹ The party king of Transoxiana, Pighu Malik (LA 1:52).

⁴⁴² LA 1:33. Al-Qā’inī also has an entry in al-Tha‘ālibī’s *Tatimma* (YD 5:231).

⁴⁴³ LA 1:63.

⁴⁴⁴ LA 1:64.

⁴⁴⁵ LA 1:162.

⁴⁴⁶ LA 1:65-68.

⁴⁴⁷ LA 1:92-108.

of juxtaposing patrons, poets and men of letters who were active in the same place, most of the viziers, *kuttāb*, men of orthodox religion and poets found in the *Lubāb* were subject to the kings who are listed in Chapter Five.

Chapter Seven is given over to Imams, members of the '*ulamā*', judges and 'men of virtue'. It is the first chapter of the *Lubāb* to group its entrants by region, and is subdivided into four sections: on the historical and contemporary '*ulamā*' of Transoxiana; on the '*ulamā*' of Khurasan and Nīmrūz; on the '*ulamā*' of Iraq; and of the '*ulamā*' of Ghazna and the Hindu Kush (*jibāl*). Except for several figures, such as Hamīdī (d. 559/1164) who is the author of a series of *Maqāmāt* in Persian,⁴⁴⁸ the poets featured in this chapter are not well known to literary historiography, but the chapter is important because of its centrality to 'Awfī's thesis about contemporary poetry, and because it demonstrates the extent to which literary networks extended across social boundaries. It is implied in several instances that the '*ulamā*' are among the most inventive groups of contemporary poets.

The sections of Chapter Seven covering Transoxiana and Khurasan are significantly longer than those on 'Iraq' and 'Ghazna', which are mostly focused on men active at the courts of Isfahan and Lahore. This imbalance reflects the fact that 'Awfī chooses to anthologise many '*ulamā*' whom he knew personally, and from whom he had transmitted. While he travelled extensively in Transoxiana, Sistan, Khurasan and the Hindu Kush, there is little evidence to suggest that 'Awfī went as far west as central Iran, which he terms 'Iraq', or into more remote areas of the Subcontinent. Among the relatively few '*ulamā*' included in the section on Ghazna and the Hindu Kush, we find poets such as Fakhr al-Dīn Dammarājī.⁴⁴⁹ 'Awfī writes that, although he had never travelled to the area from which Dammarājī came, he was famous throughout Khurasan, which is taken as evidence for his

⁴⁴⁸ LA 1:198.

⁴⁴⁹ LA 1:286.

excellence.⁴⁵⁰ Thus, ‘Awfī uses the critical standards of the regions in which he had spent time to evaluate the poetry of other areas.

Part Two of the *Lubāb* is concerned with professional poets, beginning with those of the late ninth century and proceeding to ‘Awfī’s own time. Chapter Eight features poets active under the Ṭāhirids, Ṣaffārids and Sāmānids, and it is relatively short. The most distinctive genres of verse featured in this chapter are descriptive *vaṣf* poetry and lyric poems, which are often *qiṭa* ‘ or the introits to *qaṣā’id*. Major poets include Shahīd Balkhī (d. 315/927),⁴⁵¹ Rūdakī (d. 329/940),⁴⁵² Daqīqī (d. c. 366/976),⁴⁵³ and Munjik (lived latter half of the tenth century).⁴⁵⁴ Chapter Nine, again relatively short, is devoted to poets active under the Ghaznavids, and consists of short extracts of descriptive, lyric and praise poetry. It begins with ‘Unṣurī (d. c. 431/1039-40),⁴⁵⁵ and focuses on poets directly associated with the Ghaznavid court, such as Farrukhī (d. 429/1037-8),⁴⁵⁶ and Manūchihrī (d. after 432/1041).⁴⁵⁷ Chapter Ten, divided into the four geographical regions of Transoxiana, Khurasan, ‘Iraq’ and Ghazna, concerns the poets of the Saljuq era until the death of the Saljuq ruler Sanjar (d. 552/1157). Here ‘Awfī’s extracts become significantly more generous, perhaps due to the quality of his sources, and *qaṣā’id* are often given in full. Praise and lyric poetry predominate, although there is also an increasing amount of verse addressed to friends and satirical or invective poetry. Poets featured in this chapter include Mu‘izzī (d. 519-21/1125-7),⁴⁵⁸ Azraqī (d. before 465/1072-3),⁴⁵⁹ and Anvarī (d. c.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁵¹ LA 2:3.

⁴⁵² LA 2:6.

⁴⁵³ LA 2:11.

⁴⁵⁴ LA 2:13.

⁴⁵⁵ LA 2:29.

⁴⁵⁶ LA 2:47.

⁴⁵⁷ LA 2:53.

⁴⁵⁸ LA 2:69.

⁴⁵⁹ LA 2:86.

592/1195-6).⁴⁶⁰ Chapter Eleven, divided into the same four regions, consists of entries on poets active from the death of Sanjar until the fall of the dynasty, and includes poets such as Zahīr Fāryābī (d. 598/1201),⁴⁶¹ and ‘Attār (d. c. 627/1230).⁴⁶² Chapter Twelve, which suffers from serious lacunae in the John Rylands manuscript, consists of *qaṣā’id* in praise of ‘Ayn al-Mulk al-Ash‘arī, produced by his circle at the court of Uchcha.⁴⁶³ The anthology ends with a *qaṣīda* by ‘Awfī, also in praise of al-Ash‘arī.⁴⁶⁴

Life Writing: The Anthologists’ Biographical Comments

The juxtaposition of literary extracts with biography in the two anthologies invites us to pose a number of questions. Is the anthologists’ approach a primarily contextual one, intended to forge a connection between the facts of a writer’s life and their oeuvre? Does this method emphasise the occasional nature of many poems that are contained in the anthologies, lessening their literary value and heightening their importance as social documents? Or does what at first sight appears to be biographical writing play a role in practical criticism, providing the reader with a set of conceptual tools for approaching the work of a given poet?

Biographical comments allow the two anthologists to highlight the nature (*ṭab‘*) of each entrant, and hence to amplify the stylistic features of the poetry that they wrote. In both anthologies we encounter different classes of poets and poetry, who are described using a consistent set of terms. Al-Tha‘ālibī sometimes alludes to types of poetry based on the profession of the speaker. Thus, the anthologist conceives of ‘lawyerly’ poetry, a mode of

⁴⁶⁰ LA 2:125.

⁴⁶¹ LA 2:298.

⁴⁶² LA 2:337.

⁴⁶³ LA 2:418.

⁴⁶⁴ LA 2:428.

writing that he does not compare favourably with the best professional praise poetry.⁴⁶⁵ It is also clear that he thinks of ‘bureaucratic’ poetry as a distinct kind of verse.⁴⁶⁶ The notion that an individual’s character is informed by their occupation is developed with greater clarity in the *Lubāb*, where entrants are classed in the first instance by profession.

Although the classes of men drawn up by the anthologists are clearly intended to represent distinct approaches to writing and different sets of writerly concerns, it is possible for an individual to assume multiple modes of writing, depending on their character, their education, and the people with whom they mixed. To give a simple example from the *Yatīma*, we find individuals classed as ‘a poet, a man of letters, and a scribe’, a characterisation which implies not only three connected professions but also three ways of approaching poetry.⁴⁶⁷ Associated with the professions are certain qualities, such as: *ẓarf* (refinement), a mark of ‘urbane’ poets of any occupation; *karam* or *majd* (nobility), a characteristic generally restricted to those of noble blood; *adab* (learning), which is not innate but acquired; and *faḍl* (excellence) in the *Yatīma* and *hunar* (excellence) in the *Lubāb*, terms which praise the moral qualities and technical skill of a poet. The consequences of these terms for practical criticism are explored in Chapter Three, but here it should be noted that the repeated use of such descriptions allows the two anthologists to show how individuals combine common characteristics in unique ways, and to demonstrate the composition of each writer’s poetic ‘nature’ (*ṭabʿ*). Since both anthologists conceive of poetry as the product of the conjunction of a poet’s ‘nature’ with rhetorical craft (*ṣanʿ*), biographical sketches are a useful way of highlighting stylistic aspects of each writer’s work.

⁴⁶⁵ YD 4:387; 477; 478.

⁴⁶⁶ See YD 4:103; 155; 175; 473.

⁴⁶⁷ YD 4:470.

In more developed entries, the two anthologists often combine common characterisations to develop a complex portrait of the subject. The following example comes from the entry on Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī (d. 357/968) in the *Yatīma*:

He was unique in his age, and the sun of his era, in his learning and excellence, nobility of spirit and lineage, glory, eloquence and intelligence, and in his horsemanship and bravery. His poetry is well-known, oscillating between excellence and good quality, simplicity and purity, sweetness and stateliness, and pleasantness and firmness. It is marked by the vigour of his character, and bears the stamp of urbanity and the weight of kingship. These qualities had never been united before, except in the poetry of ‘Abd Allāh Ibn al-Mu‘tazz, yet Abū Firās is considered the better poet by critics of rhetorical craft and discourse. Al-Ṣāhib used to say: “Poetry began with a king and ended with a king”, meaning Imrū l-Qays and Abū Firās. Al-Mutanabbī admitted to Abū Firās’ precedence and prominence, taking his side and refusing to oppose him in competition or to attempt to outdo him, for he only never praised Abū Firās, and praised the other Ḥamdānids, out of fear of him and to magnify him, not out of ignorance or prejudice against him. Sayf al-Dawla was delighted by the fine personal and poetic qualities (*maḥāsīn*) of Abū Firās, and distinguished him from the rest of the dynasty by paying respect to him, and by binding him to himself, and by making him his companion on frontier raids, and by rendering him his deputy in his affairs. Abū Firās would scatter costly pearls in his correspondence with him, paying homage to his kingship, and uniting the twin arts of swordsmanship and penmanship in his service to Sayf al-Dawla.⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁸ YD 1:57.

These remarks feature several terms that are recurrent in the *Yatīma*. Learning, virtue, nobility of character and spirit, and urbanity are all characteristics that al-Tha‘ālibī uses frequently in his biographical descriptions. However, the portrait that the anthologist draws of Abū Firās is unique, and it approaches him and his work from several angles. Abū Firās is a prince but also a man of letters, combining inherited nobility with acquired learning. He is not just a poet but a military hero too, uniting swordsmanship and penmanship when these two skills are often antithetical. He is the modern-day Ibn al-Mu‘tazz (d. 296/908), a comparison that works on several levels. Both men played second fiddle to their cousins, and both men praised them. Both experimented with poetic form, and both wrote well-known *rajaz* poems. Both were victims of circumstance who died in succession struggles. And both men are leading figures in the transition from the poetry of one age to that of another.⁴⁶⁹ The comparison works, because it compares the biographies of the two men, and because it compares the style of their writing.

Having established critical parameters for reading the work of Abū Firās, al-Tha‘ālibī provides a sense of how the poet’s contemporaries understood his verse. There is the comment by Ibn ‘Abbād to the effect that Imrū l-Qays (sixth century) and Abū Firās together demarcate the chronological extremes of the canon of poetry, similar to another remark by Ibn ‘Abbād, recorded elsewhere in the *Yatīma*, that ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Ibn Yaḥyā al-Kātib (d. 132/750) and Ibn al-‘Amīd (d.360/970) constitute the chronological extremes of the canon of chancellery prose.⁴⁷⁰ There then follows a discussion of the relationship between Abū Firās and al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965). The implication of the comments is clear: Abū Firās was such a good poet that the finest professional poet of the age refrained from contending against him. Al-Mutanabbī’s lack of poetry in praise of Abū Firās is

⁴⁶⁹ On the biography of Abū Firās, see El Tayib, “Abū Firās Ḥamdānī”; de Young, “Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī”. On the biography of Ibn al-Mu‘tazz, see Bonebakker, “Ibn al-Mu‘tazz”.

⁴⁷⁰ YD 3:183.

recast by al-Tha‘ālibī as a mark of respect, presumably intended to imply that Abū Firās was both the social superior of al-Mutanabbī and his peer in the art of poetry. The comments also invite us to question what it was about Abū Firās’ poetry that inspired al-Mutanabbī to recognise his importance. How does the work of the two men compare? What about the verse of Abū Firās is so stylistically innovative that even al-Mutanabbī acknowledged it? These implicit questions prepare us for reading the entry on Abū Firās, and the one on al-Mutanabbī which follows in Chapter Five.

Finally, al-Tha‘ālibī points to Sayf al-Dawla, who is the preceding entrant in the *Yatīma*, and who was equally influential in the lives of Abū Firās and al-Mutanabbī. The comments set up a relationship between Abū Firās and Sayf al-Dawla, and between al-Tha‘ālibī’s juxtaposed selections of their work. Abū Firās’ writing is shown to have been executed in the service of his cousin, and to have been a way of praising him. In his short biographical sketch, al-Tha‘ālibī therefore provides the reader with three approaches to Abū Firās and his work: the comparative, the literary-critical, and the contextual. The sketch tells us which poets Abū Firās can be compared with in terms of style, what his work is like from the perspective of practical criticism, how it was interpreted by his contemporaries, and which topics it treated. At the same time, these comments include the major actors of Part One of the *Yatīma*, and introduce a connection between Part One and Part Three through Ibn ‘Abbād.

Another example of a complex biographical portrait comes from the entry on Rābi‘a bint Ka‘b in the *Lubāb*:⁴⁷¹

Although the daughter of Ka‘b was a woman, she laughed at the men of the world in her excellence. She was a horseman on both battlefields and a guardian of both

⁴⁷¹ LA 2:61.

forms of expression, exercising complete control over Arabic verse while being greatly adroit in Persian poetry. With utmost deftness of memory and keenness of nature (*tab* ') she constantly played at love and engaged in the practice of watching [and describing] young men. They called her the 'Brazen Fly'. The reason for this was a poem that she once composed:

'It is said that golden-headed locusts rained from the heavens on Job / If his patience was rewarded with golden locusts, then it would be fitting for a brazen fly to fall on me'.

Rābi'a bint Ka'b is the only woman to have an entry dedicated her in either anthology, and 'Awfī uses her gender as a distinguishing feature of her biography, suggesting that she outdid her male colleagues.⁴⁷² At the same time, 'Awfī implicitly compares her with them by describing her as 'a horseman on both battlefields and a guardian of both forms of expression', a phrase which is employed several times in the *Lubāb* to denote bilingual poets. The portrait also prepares the reader for 'Awfī's selections of Rābi'a bint Ka'b's poetry, tying her work to the facts of her life. The focus on memory and ardour of temperament implies that her poetry was the product of an interaction between her lived experiences and her inner mettle, while the suggestion that she frequently engaged in the practice of watching and describing men characterises her as a primarily lyric poet. The poem with which 'Awfī segues from the biography into the selections of Rābi'a bint

⁴⁷² Sprenger suggests that another Ghaznavid poet featured in the *Lubāb*, Zaynatī (or Zaynabī) 'Alavī Maḥmūdī (LA 2:39), was a woman. See Sprenger, *A Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian and Hindustani Manuscripts*, p.3. If this is true, later scholars have not picked up on it. Cf. *Lubāb*, ed. Nafīsī, pp. 668-70. There are quite a few later Persian *tazākīr* devoted to female poets, and they have been studied in some detail. See Sharma, "From 'Ā'isha to Nur Jahān"; Szuppe, "The 'Jewels of Wonder'"; Brookshaw, "Qajar Confection". The idea that female poets outdid their male peers appears to be a trope which these later anthologies would develop.

Ka‘b’s own poetry manages to reflect these ideas by showing her ardour in love, her lack of patience with her lovers, and her bold sense of humour.

Biography and Poetry: Connections between Writers

In this section, I study eight sets of extracts of poetry drawn from the two anthologies. In choosing extracts I have attempted to reflect both the diversity of the literary genres found in the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* and the different kinds of social interaction on which literary exchanges could hinge. In order to achieve this aim, I have selected pieces from each of the four regions of the *Yatīma*, and from the chapters in the *Lubāb* that are concerned with professional poets. I have also set out to examine a set of writers whose work has not been the subject of sustained research in modern scholarship, while favouring the work of poets whose verse responds to, or informs, that of their better-known contemporaries. This method allows for the study of overarching trends in the application of literary genres across different regions, and contributes to a clearer understanding of the ‘map’ of literary and social exchanges which are at the core of the two anthologies.

Yatīma Part One: Al-Babbaghā’ and Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābī⁴⁷³

From Part One of the *Yatīma* I have chosen a poetic exchange carried out between al-Babbaghā’ (d. 398/1008), scribe of Sayf al-Dawla, and Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābī (d. 384/994), scribe of the Būyid amirs ‘Izz al-Dawla and Mu‘izz al-Dawla, whose entry is found in Part Two.⁴⁷⁴ Al-Babbaghā’, meaning ‘The Parrot’, was the nickname of Abū l-Faraj ‘Abd al-Wāḥid b. Naṣr al-Makhzūmī, a native of Nisibis.⁴⁷⁵ In his entry on the poet, al-Tha‘ālibī

⁴⁷³ YD 1:309-10. On al-Ṣābī, see Hachmeier, *Die Briefe Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābī’s*; Roberts, “Being a Sabian at Court in Tenth-Century Baghdad”.

⁴⁷⁴ YD 2:287.

⁴⁷⁵ YD 1:293.

praises the quality of al-Babbaghā's verse and prose, and writes that he had been attached to the court of Sayf al-Dawla during his youth.⁴⁷⁶ After Sayf al-Dawla's death, al-Babbaghā travelled down to Mosul and Baghdad, where he became a boon-companion to kings and leaders.⁴⁷⁷ Al-Tha'ālibī's patron, al-Mīkālī, met al-Babbaghā, by then an elderly man, in Baghdad in the year 390/999, when he was returning from Ḥajj, and al-Tha'ālibī himself was presented with a manuscript of al-Babbaghā's collected works by the judge Abū Bishr al-Faḍl b. Muḥammad in Jurjan in the year 391/1000.⁴⁷⁸ At several points in his biographical frames al-Tha'ālibī describes al-Babbaghā as 'refined' (*ẓarīf*); his prose is marked by 'sweetness' (*udhūba*) and simplicity (*suhūla*), while his verse is "like a garden in the moonlight, combining its scent with a pleasant scene".⁴⁷⁹ The poet's lisp, the reason behind his sobriquet, is deemed 'charming'.⁴⁸⁰ Together these characterisations suggest a mode of reading al-Babbaghā's work: he is seen as a writer of refinement and deceptive simplicity.

Al-Babbaghā's correspondent, Ibrāhīm b. Hilāl b. Harūn al-Ṣābī al-Ḥarrānī, was a rather different figure. Head of the Būyid chancellery, and author of the official correspondence of the Caliph al-Ṭā'ī (r. 363-81/974-91), al-Ṣābī is characterised by al-Tha'ālibī as a paragon of eloquence (*balāgha*), skill (*barā'a*) and craftsmanship (*ṣanā'a*) in his writing.⁴⁸¹ Although al-Tha'ālibī makes little out of al-Ṣābī's religion, it is worth noting that he is the only major entrant in the *Yatīma* to be a non-Muslim. As his name suggests, al-Ṣābī was a Sabian, and he belonged to a family who had served the 'Abbāsids since the time of his grandfather, Thābit b. Qurra (d. 298/901). Al-Tha'ālibī stresses that al-Ṣābī

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁸ YD 1:293-4.

⁴⁷⁹ YD 1:293.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁸¹ YD 2:285.

spent most of his ninety-year life in the service of the caliphs while leading the vizierate, and emphasises that his times were marked by sweetness and bitterness.⁴⁸² A poem mourning the loss of one of his own sons is testament to the grief that afflicted al-Ṣābī's private life, but al-Tha'ālibī's comments concerning the bitterness that marked his fate must also refer to his imprisonment by the Būyid 'Aḍud al-Dawla (d. 372/983).⁴⁸³ Al-Tha'ālibī reports that, after al-Ṣābī had been charged with composing *Kitāb al-tājī*, a dynastic history of the Būyids, a friend visited him in his house, where he was busy on a draft, and enquired what he was doing. "Adorning falsehoods and fabricating lies", responded al-Ṣābī.⁴⁸⁴ When the story reached 'Aḍud al-Dawla, he ordered al-Ṣābī to be trampled by the elephant that he had received during the conquest of Oman, but after the intercession of the *kuttāb* Naṣr b. Harūn, Muṭahhar b. 'Abd Allāh and 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Yūsuf, al-Ṣābī was instead imprisoned and his property confiscated.⁴⁸⁵

The friendship between al-Babbaghā' and al-Ṣābī is noteworthy because the two men first met when al-Ṣābī was in prison. The frame with which al-Tha'ālibī introduces their correspondence sets the scene:

"Each of them longed to meet the other, and they corresponded through letters and epistles. Once it happened that Abū l-Faraj [al-Babbaghā'] came down to Baghdad when Abū Ishāq had been in prison for a considerable time. He could hardly wait to meet him, and visited him in his cell, but then he left and did not come back to visit. Abū Ishāq sent him the following [*tawīl*]:

أبا الفرج اسلم وابق وانعم ولا تنزل * يزيدك صرف الدهر حظاً إذا نقص

⁴⁸² YD 2:285.

⁴⁸³ For the elegy, see YD 2:319-20.

⁴⁸⁴ YD 2:291.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

مضى زمن تستام وصلي غالباً * فأرخصته والبيع غالٍ ومرتخص
وأنستني في محبسي بزيارة * شفت كمداً من صاحب لك قد خلص
ولكنها كانت كحسوة طائر * فواقاً كما يستفرص السارق الفرص
وأحسبك استوحشت من ضيق محبسي * وأوجست خوفاً من تذكرك القفص
كذا الكرز اللماح ينجو بنفسه * إذا عاين الأشرارك نتصب للقفص
فحوشيت يا قس الطيور فصاحة * إذا أنشد المنظوم أو درس القصص
من المنسر الأشغى ومن حزة المدى * ومن بندق الرامي ومن قصة المقص
ومن صعدة فيها من الدبق لهزم * لفرسانكم عند الطعان بها قعص
فهذي دواهي الطير وقيت شرها * إذا الدهر من أحداثه جرع الغصص

Abū l-Faraj, may you live in peace and comfort, and may Fate increase your good fortune
whenever it wanes

Time has passed since you thought the price of meeting me too high, and so I lowered it,
since buying is a process of raising and lowering prices

You kept me company by visiting me in my cell, and you tasted sadness from your
companion, who was sincere in his friendship

Yet it was like a fleeting sip, just as a thief seizes an opportunity

I wonder that you were not alarmed at the narrowness of my cell, and seized by dread at
the thought of the cage

Just as a shimmering hawk saves itself when it perceives the snares laid out for hunting

And so you held back - you who are the most eloquent of birds when you recite verse or
study stories -

From a curved beak and the nick of knives; from pellets and razor cuts

And from a slope sharpened by bird-lime, which will make for a quick death for your
horsemen when they clash

These are the disasters that can befall a bird, when misfortune makes it swallow torment

Abū l-Faraj answered him immediately by return [*tawīl*]:

أيا ماجداً مذ يمم المجد ما نقص * وبدر تمام مذ تكامل ما نقص
ستخلص من هذا السرار وأيما * هلال تواري بالسرار فما خلص
برأفه تاج الملة الملك الذي * لسودده في خطة المشتري خصص
تقنصت بالألطف شكري ولم أكن * علمت بأن الحر بالبر يقتنص
وصادفت أدنى فرصة فانتزتها * بلقياك إذ بالحزم تنتهز الفرص
أنتني القوافي الباهرات تحمل الـ * بدائع من مستحسن الجد والرخص
فقابلت زهر الروض منها ولم أرع * وأحرزت در البحر منها ولم أغص
فإن كنت بالببغاء قدماً ملقباً * فكم لقب بالجور لا العدل مخترص
وبعد فما أخشى تنقص جارح * وقلبك لي وكر ورأيك لي ققص

You glorious man, who does not give up his intention when he directs his attentions to
glory, and you full moon who does not wane after waxing

You will escape this black night; what crescent moon is not subjected to eclipse that does
not escape?⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁶ A pun on al-Ṣābī's name, *hilāl* (the crescent moon).

In his mercy Tāj al-Milla is the king whom Jupiter has marked out for lordship

You have snared my thanks with your pleasantries – I did not know that a free man could
be snared with generosity

If I should find the slightest chance to meet you I would grasp it, for opportunities are
grasped with intention

You sent me extraordinary rhymes, marked by inventive ornaments, by turns serious and
tender

I gathered meadow flowers from them, which I had not plucked, and I collected pearls
from them, yet I had not dived

I may have been nicknamed ‘The Parrot’ before, but how many nicknames are invented
through injustice and not through justice

Now I shall not fear capture or harm; your heart is my nest and your good opinion is my
cage.

[al-Tha‘ālibī:] Somehow ‘Aḍud al-Dawla came to hear of the opening poem and its response, and he was greatly pleased with them both and considered them witty. That was one of the reasons why Abū Ishāq was released from prison. Then the two men corresponded and developed a great affection for one another.”

Developed by al-Tha‘ālibī into a narrative about the power of poetry to save the composer, the correspondence between the two men implies more than it says. The poems are partly flippant, playing with the conceit of al-Babbaghā’s nickname and al-Ṣābī’s first name, and their fatuity, intended to mask a serious exchange, is explicitly recognised by both poets. Al-Ṣābī gives al-Babbaghā’s fear of association with a prisoner a fantastic cause: the parrot fears the cage, just as it fears snares set to trap birds, and so it keeps its distance.

The misery of imprisonment is transformed into a joke. Al-Tha‘ālibī’s contextual comments alert the reader to the topic of the poems, but they also fill in the emotional background of the story, justifying al-Ṣābī’s confusion at his friend’s absence. This picture is reinforced by al-Tha‘ālibī’s redaction of the poems themselves. The last line of al-Ṣābī’s poem, where al-Tha‘ālibī’s version of the text finishes, alerts us to the gruesome end that could befall al-Ṣābī unless he is aided. Al-Ṣābī’s reproach of his absent friend and plea for his aid are addressed by al-Babbaghā’ in his response, which uses the same rhyme and metre, as virtually all response poems in the *Yatīma* do. Al-Ṣābī, whose first name is Hilāl – the crescent moon – is urged to retain his fortitude. A single line praising ‘Aḍud al-Dawla is added, presumably in full knowledge that these literary exchanges are designed to be circulated widely. The line also reassures al-Ṣābī that al-Babbaghā’ has understood the task with which he has been charged. Al-Babbaghā’’s final line reflects al-Tha‘ālibī’s characterisation of the close friendship that developed between the two men.

Yatīma Part Two: Al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī⁴⁸⁷

In Part Two of the *Yatīma* I have chosen al-Tha‘ālibī’s extract from the *qaṣīda sāsāniyya* by the ‘beggar’ poet al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī. The extract demonstrates how paradigms of ‘popular’ and ‘elite’ poetry cannot always represent accurately the manner in which verse was performed and read. Since al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī does genuinely appear to have been a beggar, his case raises several questions concerning the preservation and transmission of poetry. Al-Tha‘ālibī’s recension of the *qaṣīda* comes through a letter written by Ibn ‘Abbād, who seems to have acted as a patron to al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī. Sometime after the poet composed his *qaṣīda*, Abū Dulaf al-Khazrajī, a globe-trotter who was associated with

⁴⁸⁷ YD 3:137. Al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī is mentioned briefly in Moreh, *Live Theatre and Dramatic Literature*, p. 134.

the court of Ibn ‘Abbād, attempted to outdo the poem by producing a *mu‘āraḍa* to it.⁴⁸⁸ A lengthy extract from Abū Dulaf’s *qaṣīda sāsāniyya* is presented in the entry on Abū Dulaf in Part Three of the *Yatīma*.⁴⁸⁹ The intertextual and social connections with others do not stop there, since lines composed by Abū Dulaf, asserting the right of everybody to swindle their fellow man, were taken up by Badī‘ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī, himself briefly a protege of Ibn ‘Abbād, and put into the mouth of the character Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Iskandarī in *al-Maqāma al-qarīḍiyya*.⁴⁹⁰ The entry on al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī therefore demonstrates how courtly exchanges could turn the experiences of a beggar into a literary phenomenon. The character that he projected was assumed and refined by Abū Dulaf, a court poet, and a poem composed by Abū Dulaf while in character was ascribed to the fictive hero of a literary work by al-Hamadhānī.

Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Uqayl b. Muḥammad al-‘Ukbarī features in Part Two, Chapter Eight of the *Yatīma* as a poet of Baghdad. Superficially, al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī is remarkable among the poets featured in the *Yatīma* because he is classed by al-Tha‘ālibī as ‘the poet of the beggars’ (*shā‘ir al-mukadīyīn*), a profession that is unique in the anthology. The sobriquet places the poet among a group which is sometimes termed the Banū Sāsān, a name that al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī himself uses in the extract given here. Modern scholarship’s understanding of the Banū Sāsān has largely been defined by the research of C.E. Bosworth on the *qaṣā’id sāsāniyya* of Abū Dulaf al-Khazrajī and Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī (d. c. 750/1349), lengthy poems which presented themselves as summations of the argot and practices of beggars, frauds, *qalandars*, peddlers, and other figures encountered on the street. Having given al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī’s full name, al-Tha‘ālibī writes as follows:

⁴⁸⁸ YD 3:414.

⁴⁸⁹ YD 3:416-436.

⁴⁹⁰ YD 3:415-6. See Badī‘ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī, *Maqāmāt*, p.9.

“The poet of the beggars. He is the refined one among them, and the one who is witty, both overall and in the detail [of his poetry]. I have read a passage by al-Ṣāhib [Ibn ‘Abbād] on him, which I transcribe here:

“Were I to recite to you Al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī’s own poetry which he has recited to me – and he is unique among the Banū Sāsān in Baghdad, and a stylistically fine poet – then you would be filled with surprise at his wit, and with pleasure at his poetry, and no less with the manner in which he boasts of himself, as he says:

على أني بحمد الله * ه في بيت من المجد

بإخواني بني ساسا * ن أهل الجد والحد

لهم أرض خراسان * فقاشان إلى الهند

إلى الروم إلى الزنج * إلى البلغار والسند

إذا ما أعوز الطرق * على الطراق والجند

حذاراً من أعاديهم * من الأعراب والكرد

قطعنا ذلك النهج * بلا سيف ولا غمد

ومن خاف أعاديه * بنا في الروع يستعدي

Yet, Praise be to God, I belong to an honourable house,

Among my confreres of the Banū Sāsān – a serious and quick-witted group.

They are the masters of Khurāsān, and Qāshān, up to the borders of India;

To Byzantium and Zanzibar, to the territories of the Bulgars and Sind.

When the roads become dangerous for night-time wayfarers and soldiers,

Wary of their enemies among the Bedouin and the Kurds,

We hold up those roads without swords and scabbards

And whoever fears his enemies, appeals to us in his terror

This last line has a novel meaning, and this is it: the poet means that whenever someone of wealth, or of skill and honour, falls into the hands of highwaymen and wishes to be freed, they say: ‘I am a beggar’. See how he dug deep and found this abstruse image.” The citation from al-Ṣāhib [Ibn ‘Abbād] stops here.”

In addition to the *qaṣā'id* by Abū Dulaf al-Khazrajī and al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī, the *Yatīma* contains a third *qaṣīda* by al-Wāsānī (d. 394/1004), describing a horde of non-Arab bureaucrats who came to his estate for a banquet and gutted it.⁴⁹¹ The *qaṣīda* has been connected by Shmuel Moreh with literature on the Banū Sāsān,⁴⁹² and there are indeed certain formal similarities between all three poems. The short extract from al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī’s piece is essentially a long list of non-Arab names which may have struck audiences as nonsense verse. We find similar sections in the other two *qaṣā'id*. The one by al-Wāsānī lists the ethnicities of the bureaucrats who visited him. They possess increasingly farcical names; note the word *ṭamāṭim* for ‘Himyarites’ [*khafīf*].⁴⁹³

جمعوا لي الجموع من خيل جيلا * ن وفر غانة إلى ديلمان

ومن الروم والصقالب والتتر * ك وخلق من بلغر واللان

ومن الهند والطماطم والبر * بر والكيلجوح والبيلقان

A horde of horsemen gathered at my house, from Gilan and Ferghana up to Daylam

⁴⁹¹ YD 1:414-24.

⁴⁹² Moreh, “Banū Sāsān”.

⁴⁹³ YD 1:415.

From Byzantium and the territories of the Slavs and the Turks, as well as a group of people
from the lands of the Bulghars and Alans,

Of the Indians, Himyarites, Berbers, Kayljūḥ and Bailaqān Turks...

The poem by Abū Dulaf misses out the long descriptive passage found in the other two, replacing it with a simple summary: 'We take protection money (*jizya*) from people / from China to Egypt / Even to Tangier / Everywhere on Earth that our horses roam'.⁴⁹⁴

Nevertheless, the comparison suggests that lengthy descriptions using non-Arabic terms, which may have sounded nonsensical and amusing, were part of the contours of the genre.

One way of reading the *qaṣā'id sāsāniyya* is to see them as accurate, almost ethnographic representations of what Bosworth termed the medieval Islamic underworld; another way is to view them as parodic pieces, perhaps intended for performance, which satirised the more abstruse aspects of Arabic philology and *adab*. Since they present us with vignettes of street life, the *qaṣā'id sāsāniyya* also demonstrate a degree of continuity across genres, including with the *Maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhānī, and with several later shadow plays, most notably Ibn Dāniyāl's (d. 710/1310) *'Ajīb wa-gharīb*. Like the *Maqāmāt* and *'Ajīb wa-gharīb*, the *qaṣā'id sāsāniyya* are primarily concerned with characters who are in some sense marginal, often because of their socioeconomic position, and who exploit the gullibility of others to comic effect. Again, like the *Maqāmāt* and *'Ajīb wa-gharīb*, the *qaṣā'id sāsāniyya* are presented by a narrator who introduces vignettes of different characters and their actions.

Apart from these similarities in topic, there are features of form and genre which connect the *qaṣā'id* with other kinds of poem. Ibn 'Abbād's description of al-Aḥnaf al-'Ukbarī's *qaṣīda* ties it to the genre of self-vaunting (*fakhr*). This classification is interesting,

⁴⁹⁴ YD 3:417.

because most poetry of self-vaunting in the *Yatīma* is by rulers or professional poets, and it is serious or self-aggrandising in tone. Al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī’s poem subverts the conventions of the genre. Is this perhaps why al-Tha‘ālibī terms him a technically proficient and witty poet?

Yatīma Part Two: al-Salāmī and al-Mutanabbī⁴⁹⁵

This case study examines a similar set of intertextual connections between the praise poetry of al-Mutanabbī and that of al-Salāmī, whose biography I discussed briefly above. Al-Salāmī followed al-Mutanabbī in eulogising the Būyid ruler ‘Aḍud al-Dawla. Al-Tha‘ālibī indirectly tells the reader that the *nasīb* given here represents part of a response poem (*mu‘āraḍa*), which ‘Aḍud al-Dawla asked Al-Salāmī to produce to outdo al-Mutanabbī’s *qaṣīda* on the Bawān ravine, *maghānī al-sha‘b ṭayyiban fī l-maghānī* (‘The abodes of the valley are the most pleasant’). Al-Mutanabbī’s poem is not discussed in the *Yatīma*, but it is given in Ibn Jinnī’s (d. 392/1002) edited *Fasr*.⁴⁹⁶ Although Ibn Jinnī’s approach is philological and not literary-critical, he introduces the poem by stating that it was penned for ‘Aḍud al-Dawla, and that it described al-Mutanabbī’s journey through the Bawān ravine to reach the Būyid court in Shiraz.⁴⁹⁷ Along with the oasis on the south side of Damascus, the ravine was considered one of the two Paradises on Earth.⁴⁹⁸

Al-Salāmī’s poem was extemporised as he travelled with the royal retinue away from Shiraz to Iraq. Al-Tha‘ālibī sets the scene:

⁴⁹⁵YD 2:485-6.

⁴⁹⁶ *Al-Fasr*, Vol. 3: 728-42.

⁴⁹⁷ *Al-Fasr* 3:728.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid*.

“Once, ‘Aḍud al-Dawla came down into the Bawān ravine on his way to Iraq, and al-Salāmī was with him. Then ‘Aḍud al-Dawla said: ‘Compose something on the ravine; I have heard what al-Mutanabbī said.’ So al-Salāmī returned to his tent and wrote the following [*basīṭ*]:

1 اشرب على الشعب واحلل روضة أنفا * قد زاد في حسنه فازدد به شغفا

إذ ألبس الهيف من أغصانه حلاً * ولقن العجم من أطيّاره نتفا

وأثمرت حسن الأغصان مثمرة * من نازع قرطاً أو لابس شنففا

والماء يثني على أعطافه أزرا * والريح تعقد في أطرافه شرففا

5 والشمس تخرق من أشجارها طرفاً * بنورها فترينا تحتها طرففا

من قائل نسجت درعاً مفضضة * وقائل ذهبت أو فضضت صحفا

ظلت تزف له الدنيا محاسنها * وتستعد له الألفاف والتحففا

من عارض وكفا أو طائر هتفا * أو بارق خطفا أو سائر وقففا

هذا مما قاله بديهاً وليس بمستحسن في الوزن إلا أن ابا تمام قال

يقول فيسمع ويمشي فيسرع * ويضرب في ذات الإله فيوجع

رجع

10 ولست أحصي حصى الياقوت فيه ولا * درأ أصدافه في مائه صدفا

يظن من وقفت فيه الشجون به * أن الصبابة شابت والهوى خرففا

تعسف الشوق فيه كل ذي شجن * والشوق أطفه ما كان معتسففا

فاحلل عرى الهم واشربها مشعشة * رق النسيم مباراة لها وصففا

ماذا يقول لك المداح قد نفذت * فيك المعاني وبحر اللفظ قد نزففا

Drink on the edge of the ravine and settle in the meadow of the mountain spur / It has
increased in its beauty, so increase your love for it

Since its tender limbs have donned robes and the Persians have taken dictation from its
birds

And the beauty of the branches has born fruit that appears to be wearing earrings or
bangles

And the water curls around its edges, and the wind ruffles its edges on high
In places the sun's light passes through the trees, and we can be seen beneath them in a
group

Of men napping whose shirts the sun has woven from silver, or others whose skin it has
gilded and limned

The world has continued to wed its beauties to [the valley], making it glad with gifts and
presents

[Presents] of clouds in their downpour, and birds in their singing, or lightning flashing, or
travellers stopping

[al-Tha'ālibī:] This is what he improvised, and the metre does not quite fit, although Abū
Tammām also composed:

He speaks and then listens, and he walks then runs, and he strikes God's creation and is
hurt

[al-Tha'ālibī:] Returning to al-Salāmī's text:

I cannot count the pebbles that lie like rubies in the ravine, nor the oyster pearls that are set
haphazardly in its waters

Whoever arrives there beset by worries will think that youth has aged and that love is an
old wives' tale

Every worried man there will feel a vague sense of longing, and longing is at its most
pleasant when it is vague

So settle there free from worry and drink until you are giddy. Yesterday the breeze blew
gently and crisply.

What can eulogists say to you? Images have been spent on you and the sea of phrasings
has dried up

No stratagem is left for me but prayer, and if he hears, Fate will remain devoted to him"

Al-Salāmī's *mu'āraḍa* uses a series of cognate images and poetic techniques which reinforce its connection to al-Mutanabbī's poem. In both poems, Line 1 makes use of a form of paronomasia (*maghānī* in al-Mutanabbī's poem; *zāda/azdid* in the response). The following lines remark on the ethereal character of the valley. Al-Mutanabbī's poem emphasises the uncanny nature of the place, using the familiar connection between the prophet Solomon and the language of the birds to suggest that were even he present in the ravine, he would need an interpreter to understand their warbling. Al-Salāmī merely hints at the archetype by implying that the birds converse in the alien (to Arabic speakers) language of Persian. Al-Mutanabbī's poem features several images of circular objects: the tender branches of the trees scatter pearl-like fruit on the mane of his horse; the forest filters sunlight so that it falls on his chest like round dinars. The response builds on these

images and expands them: the branches of the trees are laden with round fruit that look like women's looped earrings; the branches of the trees filter sunlight which appears to limn the shirts of the travellers with silver and gild their skin, recalling the images of silver and gold coins in the original.

While al-Tha'ālibī only records the introductory *nasīb* of al-Salāmī's poem in his section on the poet's descriptive verse, the extant extract allows us to infer that al-Salāmī's response was markedly different in style from al-Mutanabbī's archetype. Al-Mutanabbī uses the introductory description of the valley as a metaphor for a lost paradise, to which he concludes that only 'Aḏud al-Dawla is capable of leading man. Al-Salāmī's response is more conditioned by Mannerist nature poetry. The notion of nature as a beneficent donor, implicitly foreshadowing the generosity of the patron, is used as a clasp to compare the features of the valley, from spring lightning to the pebbles that lie on the riverbed, to rare gifts. Here, the valley is less of an abstraction and more of an object for contemplation. Al-Salāmī cultivates nostalgia, or longing (*shawq*) as the primary tone of the poem, and connects this mood with the intoxication brought on by drinking wine. The extract also stands as an independent poem, one that foreshadows the descriptive techniques and themes of wine poems in Persian by Ghaznavid poets such as Manūchihrī.⁴⁹⁹

Yatīma Part Three: Ibn Khallād and Ibn al-‘Amīd⁵⁰⁰

This extract comes from Part Three of the *Yatīma*, from the chapter on the Būyid vizier Ibn al-‘Amīd. In his introductory remarks on the vizier's character, al-Tha'ālibī emphasises his

⁴⁹⁹ For an analysis of Manūchihrī's descriptive techniques, see Clinton, *The Divan*, pp. 114-5. The formal elements of his poetry are catalogued in de Fouchécour's *La Description de la nature*.

⁵⁰⁰ YD 3:199-201. On Ibn al-‘Amīd, see al-Tawḥīdī's *Akhlāq al-wazīrayn*; Daiber, *Naturwissenschaft bei den Arabern*; Mannā' and Yāsin, *Al-Nathr al-fannī fī l-‘aṣr al-‘Abbāsī*; Amedroz, "The Vizier Abū l-Faḍl Ibn al-‘Amīd".

learning and his erudition. Ibn al-‘Amīd is characterised as a polymath who “hits the arts with a true arrow”, and as a man who is “proverbial for his eloquence”.⁵⁰¹ Moreover, he is the support of the Būyid state and the best scribe of the age. Al-Tha‘ālibī also quotes with approval remarks made by Ibn ‘Abbād: Ibn al-‘Amīd is to men what Baghdad is to cities.⁵⁰² The comparison works on several levels, since Baghdad was not only perceived to be the best of cities, but it also occupied a central location in the geography of the *Yatīma*, and acted as a gathering place to which people travelled in search of patronage and employment. Most of the entry on Ibn al-‘Amīd consists of representative samples of his letter writing, maxims and verse in common genres, but several pages are devoted to an exchange of poems that he conducted with his friend, the judge Ibn Khallād, who was from Rāmhurmuz in Iran. Ibn Khallād is also given an entry in Part Three, where he is characterised as one of the class of judges who mixed with viziers and leaders. Al-Tha‘ālibī emphasises that Ibn Khallād was particularly close to Ibn al-‘Amīd, and that the two men were united by their shared love of letters, but notes that Ibn Khallād also maintained a friendship with another Būyid vizier, al-Muhallabī.⁵⁰³

The exchange between the two men that is recorded in the entry on Ibn al-‘Amīd consists of several lengthy comic poems on food. The poems, particularly those composed by Ibn al-‘Amīd, are generically inventive, mixing complex descriptive techniques which had their origins in Mannerism with the sophisticated silliness that defines many of the unofficial exchanges which took place between high-ranking bureaucrats. Al-Tha‘ālibī provides the reader with a vignette of the social settings in which such exchanges could occur in the entry on another judge, al-Qāḍī Abū l-Qāsim ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Tanūkhī of Basra. Al-Tha‘ālibī reports that, once a week, al-Muhallabī would gather with al-Qāḍī

⁵⁰¹ YD 3:183.

⁵⁰² Ibid.

⁵⁰³ YD 3:490.

al-Tanūkhī and his other boon companions, who were all judges of a venerable age, and who possessed long, white beards, to relax and let off steam. When their gatherings had got into full swing, the men would plunge their heads into enormous golden goblets of wine and drain them, sprinkle one another with wine, link arms and dance, their beards all the while stained a dark red. In the mornings, the men would assume the gravity and conservatism that befitted the dignity of their office.⁵⁰⁴

The correspondence between Ibn al-‘Amīd and Ibn Khallād can be seen as a more subtle exercise in loosening restraint. Al-Tha‘ālibī frames the subsection by writing that Ibn Khallād sent Ibn al-‘Amīd an item of food (what exactly is left unstated), and that the gift was accompanied by a poem describing it. Poems marking gift exchange are a common phenomenon in the *Yatīma*, and the presence of independent anthologies on this topic, such as *Kitāb al-tuḥaf wa-l-hadāyā* (*The Book of Gifts and Presents*) by the Khālīdī brothers, and *Kitāb al-hadāyā wa-l-tuḥaf* (*The Book of Presents and Gifts*) by Muḥammad b. Khalaf b. al-Marzubān (d. 309/921), suggest that giving gifts and accompanying them with poems which described them were an important part of social protocol in late ‘Abbāsīd culture.⁵⁰⁵ Al-Tha‘ālibī introduces the exchange in this manner:

“Ibn Khallād sent him a letter on food just as Ibn al-‘Amīd’s appetite had returned to health after a period of illness, and he replied by sending a *qaṣīda* to Ibn Khallād, of which the following is an extract:⁵⁰⁶

فهمت كتابك في الأطعمة * وما كان نولي أن أفهمه

فكم هاج من قرم ساكنٍ * وأوضح من شهوة مبهمه

⁵⁰⁴ YD 2:394.

⁵⁰⁵ See al-Khālidiyyān, *Kitāb al-tuḥaf wa l-hadāyā*; Muḥammad b. Khalaf b. al-Marzubān, *Al-Muntakhab min kitāb al-hadāyā*. On such poems, see Sharlet, “The Thought That Counts”.

⁵⁰⁶ YD 3:199-201.

وأرث في كبدي غلة * من الجوع نيرانها مضرمه
فكيف عمدت به ناقهاً * جوانحه للطوى مسلمه
خفوق الحشى إن تصخ تستمع * من الجوع في صدره هممه
تتيح له شرهاً موجعاً * وتغري به نهمة مؤلمه
فأين الإخاء وما يقتضيه * ه منك بأسبابنا المبرمه
وأين تكرمك المستفيض فينا إذا غاضت المكرمه
وهلا أضفت إلى ما وصف * ت شيئاً نهش لأن نطعمه
يمد الصديق إليه يداً * إذا ما رآه ويشجى فمه
وأين شواريزك المرتضاة * إذا ما تفاضلت الأطعمه
وأين كواميخك المجتباة * ة دون الأطايب بالتركه
وهل أنت راضٍ بقولي إذا * ذكرت دعوة فما الأمه
إذا المرء أكرم شيرازه * فلا أكرم الله من أكرمه
وكيف ارتقابي بقيا امرىء * إذا ليم أعتب بالنبرمه
فإن كان يجذبك نعت الطعام * إذا الجوع ناب أذاه فمه
إذا جعت فاعمد لمسموطة * بجواذبه الموز مستقرمه
متى قستها بالمنى جاءت * سواءً كما جاءت الأبلمه
وبز السرابيل عن أفرخ * تخال بها فلذ الأسنمه
تهب النفوس إلى نبيها * كأن النفوس بها مغرمه
فلا الفم إن ذاقه مجه * ولا الطبع إن زاره استوخمه
ودونك وسطاً أجاد الصنا * ع تلفيق شطريه بالهنده

وعالي على دفه هيدبا * كثيفاً كما تحمل المقرمه
سدى من نتائف نيرت بهن فأضحت نسائجها ملحمه
فمن صدر فائقة قد ثوت * ومن عجز ناهضة ملقمه
ودنر بالجوز أجوازه * ودرهم باللوز ما درهمه
وقاني بزيتونها والجبن * صفائح من بيضة مدعمه
فمن أسطر فيه مشكولة * ومن أسطر كتبت معجمه
وفوف بالبقل أعطافه * فوافى كحاشية معلمه
موشى تخال به مطرفاً * بديع التفوايف و النمنمه
إذا ضاحكتك تباشيره * أضاعت له المعدة المظلمه
وهاك خبيصاً إذا ما اقارحت * على العبد إنعامه أنعمه
إذا سار في ثغرة سدها * أو انساب في خلل لأمه
فإن شئت فادخل به مفرداً * وإن شئت فادع إليه لمه
وإياك تهدم ما قد بنا * ههدماً وتنقص ما أبرمه
فإن لم تجد ذاك بجدي عليك * إذا ما سغبت فقل لي لمه
تعد من الجود وصف الطعام * ولست تقول بأن تطعمه
وتحظر ما قد أحل الإله * ضراراً و تطلق ما حرمه
فهل نزلت في الذي قد شرعت * على أحد آية محكمه
وهل سنة فيه مأثورة * رواها لأشياحكم علقمه
وقلت تواصلوا بصبر جميل * فأين ذهبت عن المرحمه
ومن عجب حاكم ظالم * يرجى ليحكم في مظلمه

I took note of your letter on food / But I can't say I understood it

How it stirred up my dormant hunger / And lit obscured desire

It fired a conflagration of hunger / In my liver whose flames are ablaze

How I relied on it as a convalescent / Whose ribs were surrendered to hunger

If you strike his stomach you will hear how it flutters / From starvation and how his chest
heaves

He is driven by crazed greed / And goaded on by grievous cravings.

So where is your brotherliness and what it provides from you for the entwined strands of
our friendship?

And where is your generosity that rains on us, since your noble deed has faded away?

For in your description you added something that we would like to taste

Your friend extends his hand towards it whenever he sees it, and his mouth waters

Since you have deigned to present me with food, tell me, where is this pleasing yoghurt?

And where are your hand-picked pickles, in addition to your gift of delicacies?

Would you be pleased with what I said if I were to recall a banquet? What is baser than
that?

If a man treats Shirazi dates with reverence, may God not revere the one who reveres them

But what can I expect of a man who excuses himself with pastilles when he is reproached?

If you enjoy praising food when hunger is afflicting a man's ears then stop

If you're hungry you can rely on roast lamb, its entrails stuffed with the gravy of banana
bread

Which divides into two perfect halves when you cut into it in your desire

Or wrest the skin off pullets that wear it, and take pleasure in camel humps

Men's passions are drawn towards them raw, as though they were besotted with them

The mouth that tastes them does not disgorge them, nor does one's nature find them
indigestible

Before you, in the middle of the table, skilful men can neatly cleave it in two

It lies proud on its side, covered in thick hair, as though wearing a blanket

A warp of tufts of hair that have become matted and grown together with the weft

Morsels from a buxom breast that has become flat, and from a curvaceous rump

Its centre has been studded with walnuts that look like dinars, its edges scattered with
almonds that could be dirhams

It is surrounded by blood-red olives and by cheese cut into white sheets

Some of the lines on these sheets appear to be covered with undotted letters, while others
seem to be dotted

Its edges are decorated with herbs like the striped hem of a garment

An embroidered shawl of extraordinary decoration and striped patterning

Whenever its glad tidings smile at you, one's darkened stomach beams

And here is a dish of *khabīṣ*⁵⁰⁷ - When you recommend it to your servant, give him some!

⁵⁰⁷ *Khabīṣ* is a kind of pudding made from dates and clarified butter.

When it enters a mouth it shuts it up, and when it flows into the gaps between teeth it
blocks them

Eat these dishes alone if you wish, or in a group

It's up to you whether you wish to raze what has been built and diminish what has been
established

If that does you no good when you are starving, tell me why

You consider the description of food to be an act of generosity, and you do not claim to
relish it

You forbid what God deemed licit by compulsion, yet make free with what he explicitly
forbade

Has there ever been a divine prescription on what you deem licit?

And is there an established custom related to your Shaykhs by 'Alqama?⁵⁰⁸

Indeed it is strange to find an unjust judge whom one wishes to make rulings in court

Ibn al-'Amīd's poem responds to a genre of descriptive poetry that is best-known in the
work of Modernist poets such as Ibn al-Rūmī and Mannerist poets such as Kushājīm.⁵⁰⁹

Van Gelder has discussed one of the earliest such poems, by the minor Kufan poet

Musāwir al-Warrāq, who lived in the middle of the eighth century, and whose piece is

recorded in Ibn 'Abd Rabbih's (d. 328/940) *Iqd al-farīd*.⁵¹⁰ Whereas Ibn al-'Amīd's

poem lists foodstuffs that a convalescent would find too rich to stomach, that of al-Warrāq

presents itself as a catalogue of luxuries which lie beyond the speaker's reach. Al-

⁵⁰⁸ 'Alqama b. Qays (d. 62/682) was a renowned early Islamic legal authority from Kufa.

⁵⁰⁹ For poetry on food, see van Gelder, *Of Dishes and Discourse*, 48-74; Idem., "Musāwir al-Warrāq and the Beginnings of Arabic Gastronomic Poetry".

⁵¹⁰ Van Gelder, "Musāwir al-Warrāq".

Warrāq's poem is a representation of an ideal banquet located somewhere in the past, and imagines the process of setting and laying the table; by contrast, that of Ibn al-ʿAmīd limits itself to describing course after course.⁵¹¹ Ibn al-ʿAmīd's poem reads as a comic rebuke of his friend, a judge, whose supposed cruelty contradicts the office of his profession. The closing lines of the poem insinuate that the foodstuffs which captivate Ibn Khallād's imagination are proscribed by religious law.

The poems by al-Warrāq and Ibn al-ʿAmīd share a number of formal and generic features. Both follow a tripartite structure. Al-Warrāq introduces the banquet, describes it, and then dismisses the prescriptions of doctors in favour of a good meal; Ibn al-ʿAmīd relates his own suffering, launches into the description of Ibn Khallād's imaginary banquet, and then rebukes his friend. There is a medical element to both poems, the former denying the advice of doctors, the latter sustaining it. The two also share descriptive techniques, turning the consumption of food into a quasi-erotic experience by implying comparisons between dishes and the female body.⁵¹² Unlike al-Salāmī's response to al-Mutanabbī, which mostly consists of simple similes and metaphors, Ibn al-ʿAmīd's poem depends on lengthier comparisons, a feature that it shares with much of the *wasf* poetry in Part Three.

Yatīma Part Four: al-Iskāfī and al-Lahhām⁵¹³

The final set of poems that I have chosen from the *Yatīma* come from the beginning of Part Four, and focus on the relationship between a chancellery scribe, Abū l-Qāsim ʿAlī b.

⁵¹¹ For the setting of al-Warrāq's poem, see van Gelder, "Musāwir al-Warrāq", 318.

⁵¹² Sv. al-Warrāq l.21: "The broth has carried away my appetite and my longing"; l.25: "With [the rolls of fat making] folds on its flanks, of a pure colour, with plump legs from the sumptuous nutrition".

⁵¹³ YD 4: 112-3.

Muḥammad al-Iskāfī al-Naysābūrī, and a satirical poet, Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan al-Laḥḥām al-Ḥarrānī.

Al-Iskāfī was a major figure at the Sāmānid court in Bukhara, and ran the chancellery under Nuḥ b. Naṣr (r. 331-343/943-54). He would become synonymous with the secretary’s art in later writing in Persian, including in *Chahār Maqāla*, where Nizāmī ‘Arūzī devotes an anecdote to him, yet he is absent from the *Lubāb*.⁵¹⁴ Al-Tha‘ālibī characterises him as the most prominent figure in Khurasan in the scribe’s art (*kitāba*) and in eloquence (*balāgha*).

The two poems presented here are light examples of the genre of invective poetry (*hijā*) for which their composer, al-Laḥḥām, was known. There are a number of differences in function between these and the poems given above. The exchange between al-Babbaghā’ and al-Ṣābī was made up of poems that drew verbal portraits of their subjects. Ibn al-‘Amīd’s poem on food represents part of an exchange of thought experiments with Ibn Khallād. Al-Laḥḥām’s poems are vignettes of a particular moment in time: the vigil maintained by al-Iskāfī’s friends as he lay dying. At first glance they appear to be simple caricatures of men whom the poet did not like, but since al-Laḥḥām was evidently part of their social circle, it may be possible to see the poems as attempts to alleviate the gloom surrounding al-Iskāfī’s death watch with a little black humour. Al-Tha‘ālibī employs them as a vivid record of al-Iskāfī’s final days, since they testify to the people who were present as he lay dying and the mood that prevailed:

“Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Fārisī once told me the following: ‘The vizier Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. al-‘Abbās b. al-Ḥusayn and Abū l-Qāsim al-Muqā‘inī were two of al-Iskāfī’s closest friends, and he considered them important to him. When al-

⁵¹⁴ See Nizāmī ‘Arūzī, *Chahār maqāla*, pp. 13-16.

Iskāfī fell ill, al-Laḥḥām wrote this poem to him – Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad was nicknamed ‘Catastrophe’ (Ṭawīs) and al-Muqā‘inī was known as ‘Disaster’ (Qāshir, after a horse that failed to produce progeny) [*al-mujtathth*]:

طويس إحدى الفواتر * شوماً وقاشر قاشر

ومنهما يا أبا قا * سم عليك أحاذر

فلا يكن واحد من * هما ببابك عابر

إن لم يكن بك شوق * إلى الثرى والمقابر

Calamity’s prone to misfortune and Disaster’s a disaster

Abū Qāsim, I’m warning you about the pair of them

Neither will pass through your gate

Unless you long for the earth and your grave

Then al-Laḥḥām came to visit him one day, and found Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. al-‘Abbās b. al-Ḥusayn, Abū l-Qāsim al-Muqā‘inī and Ibn Maṭrān there. He said [*rajaz*]:

ثلاثة أودوا بفذ عصره * أودوا به في عنفوان أمره

قصده يوماً بعيد فجره * وكان قلبي مولعاً بذكره

لفضله ونبله وفكره * إذا طويس جالس في نحره

وقاشر قد انبرى من قشره * عن سلة الشوم وعن قمطره

فقلت قد أعوز جبر كسره * من بعد ما كان دنا من جبره

وقد تقضى فاطوه بغيره * الشأن فيمن هم على ممره

Three men have killed the paragon of the age / They have killed him in his prime

One day I set out to visit him soon after dawn / And my heart was fixed on the thought of
him

On account of his excellence, his nobility and his ideas / But there was Catastrophe sitting
next to him

And Disaster had bared his teeth / At the unleashing of misfortune and calamity from their
box

I said: 'It is impossible to set what is broken / After the decree that has come to pass
Time has run out, so leave the affair to others / The problem is for those who pass in his
wake'.

Although al-Tha‘ālibī uses these poems to illustrate a biographical moment, they are part of a feud that is played out throughout Part Four of the *Yatīma*. Al-Tha‘ālibī reports that al-Laḥḥām’s satires on the grandees of Bukhara reached a peak when he produced an invective poem on the vizier al-Bal‘amī (d. 329/940), and that the Sāmānīd authorities called for him to be exiled.⁵¹⁵ When it became known that al-Laḥḥām would make for Nishapur, the authorities of the two cities conspired to kill him, and he was attacked, fatally wounded, and mounted on a donkey that was sent in the direction of Qā’in, where he died.⁵¹⁶ One of the men present at al-Iskāfī’s bedside, Ibn Maṭrān, rejoiced in the fate of al-Laḥḥām, and wrote a four-line poem, beginning “Your tongue’s got you up the creek, al-Laḥḥām”, which celebrates the fact that he had received his ‘comeuppance’ at the hands of the police.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁵ YD 4:131.

⁵¹⁶ YD 4:131-2.

⁵¹⁷ YD 4 :181.

Invective is perhaps the most obviously occasional genre of Arabic poetry, its themes directly dependent on the lives and characters of the people satirised. The poems discussed in this subsection are used by al-Tha‘ālibī to intertwine the biographies of some of the most influential poets in Bukhara, and in this respect they are typical of genre. Invective poems in the *Yatīma* share certain features: they are short and epigrammatic, and they are largely focused on drawing a vignette of a single scene, or on describing an aspect of somebody’s character. Even though they are generically different from descriptive epigrams, such as those of al-Ma’mūnī, they share a set of common formal features with such poems. Epigrams are not unique to Part Four of the *Yatīma*, but I would contend that, in al-Tha‘ālibī’s representation, their use as a major medium for exchanging ideas is greater in the fourth region than elsewhere.

Lubāb Part Two: The Reception of Rūdakī

I have chosen three sets of poems from the *Lubāb* which demonstrate three different kinds of poetic interaction: that of reverence for a past poet; that of intertextual borrowing from past poets; and that of correspondence between two contemporaries. The first set of poems consists of apologies of Rūdakī by Rashīdī Samarqandī (fl. c. 503/1110) and Nizāmī ‘Arūzī Samarqandī (d. after 551/1156). The two poems come from the entry on Rūdakī in Chapter Eight of the *Lubāb*. The entry is important because, although Rūdakī is not listed as the first professional poet in New Persian (that honour falls to Ḥanzala Bādghīsī in the *Lubāb*), he is portrayed as the first influential poet, and the first one to benefit significantly from patronage. In his biographical sketch, ‘Awfī emphasises Rūdakī’s uniqueness: he was blind, and he had a spectacular memory, both for the Qur’ān and for poetry.⁵¹⁸ The images

⁵¹⁸ LA 2:6.

with which he experimented in his poetry as a child were so nuanced that the people developed a great desire to hear it.⁵¹⁹ Aided by his naturally talented voice, he became a minstrel, and he was patronised by Naṣr b. Aḥmad the Sāmānid, under whom he accumulated great wealth.⁵²⁰ These comments are accompanied by praise of Rūdakī by his contemporaries, Ma‘rūfī and Daqīqī, and by ‘Unṣūrī, whom ‘Awfī later characterises as the Ghaznavid ‘equivalent’ of Rūdakī. We therefore have evidence of Rūdakī’s acceptance among his contemporaries and successors.

Although ‘Awfī’s citations imply that Rūdakī was considered a model poet, there remains the question of his style, and the extent to which later poets accepted or rejected it. ‘Awfī quotes several poems by Rūdakī which are marked by vibrancy of image, but which lack the technical complexity that is seen in later poetry. One of these poems is the following, which ‘Awfī categorises as a description of wine:⁵²¹

ز آن می که گر سرشکی از آن در چکد بنیل

صد سال مست باشد از بوی او نهنگ

آهو بدشت گر بخورد قطره از او

غرنده شیر شود و نندیشد از پلنگ

From that wine whose scent, should a drop fall in the Nile,

Would make the crocodiles drunk for a hundred years

If a gazelle on the grasslands drinks a globule of it

It will become a fierce lion and give no thought to the leopards

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

⁵²⁰ LA 2:7.

⁵²¹ LA 2:8. I have emended this poem using Rudakī, *Dīvān*, p. 39.

Technically, the extract differs quite substantially from descriptions of wine written by later poets, and even by Rūdakī's near-contemporaries, such as Abū Shakūr (possibly born 300/912-3).⁵²² As in the case of al-Mutanabbī, whose style polarised readers, Rūdakī seems to have divided critics. 'Awfī adds to the impression that Rūdakī is one of the best – and hence, most controversial – poets by including two apologies of his work, written by Rashīdī and Niẓāmī 'Arūẓī Samarqandī. It should be noted that the two men were also poets of Samarqand, and hence Rūdakī may have been a source of civic pride for them:

“Rashīdī said of the unique benefits and veracity of [Rūdakī's] poetry:⁵²³

گر سری باید بعالم کس بنیکو شاعری
 رودکی را بر سر آن شاعران زیبد سری
 شعر او من شمردم سیزده ره صد هزار
 هم فزون آید اگر چونان که باید بشمری

If the world needs a leader in the art of good poetry / Pride of place should go to Rūdakī at
 the head of those poets

I have counted the number of lines that he composed as thirteen times one hundred
 thousand / If you count as you should it may come out at even more

Some ignorant person made rude remarks about Rūdakī's poetry and cast aspersions concerning the exquisite brides and delightful visions [of his verse]. Niẓāmī 'Arūẓī composed the following in defence of him:

ای آنکه طعن کردی در شعر رودکی * این طعن کردن تو ز جهل و کودکیست

⁵²² LA 2:21.

⁵²³ LA 2:7.

کآن کس که شعر داند داند که در جهان * صاحب قران شاعری استاد رودکیست

You who revile the poetry of Rūdakī / Your remarks are due to ignorance and immaturity

For whoever knows poetry knows that in all the world / Rūdakī is the lord of the
conjunction of poetry

In contrast to the *Yatīma*, which refers to the work of past poets on a regular basis but privileges writing produced in a single era, the *Lubāb* makes the connection between poets of one generation and the next more explicit. Rashīdī and Nizāmī ‘Arūzī both have their own entries, and hence the reader is able to judge to what extent they were influenced by Rūdakī in their own work. ‘Awfī’s critical descriptions of the work of Rashīdī suggest that he responded to the clarity of Rūdakī’s style: his poetry is ‘masterly’ and ‘free of extraneous words’, but it is also ‘crafted’ (*maṣnū*), and hence marked by the use of technical devices that are largely absent from Rūdakī’s poetry.⁵²⁴ For example, an extended simile describing a pomegranate placed next to a bunch of grapes is marked by the use of fantastic aetiology, likening the two parties to battle-worn enemies who have covered one another in blood, and have hence become red.⁵²⁵ The selections of the poetry of Nizāmī ‘Arūzī Samarqandī, however, are marked by greater continuity with the style of Rūdakī. A poem describing intoxication argues that wine is strange, because while it has not known sadness over the many years of its fermentation, “It kept compay with the goblet for an hour / And learnt to divulge its secret (*fāsh kardan-i rāz*)”.⁵²⁶ Like Rūdakī’s poem, this one by Nizāmī ‘Arūzī Samarqandī uses an innovative extended simile to describe drunkenness.

⁵²⁴ LA 2:176.

⁵²⁵ LA 2:180.

⁵²⁶ LA 2:209.

Thus, ‘Awfī uses the apologies for Rūdakī to two differing effects. They connect the earlier poet with Rashīdī and Nizāmī ‘Arūzī, linking poets from the same place across time. However, they also invite the reader to compare the writing of one generation with that of a later one.

Futūhī Marvazī⁵²⁷

Futūhī (fl. c. 545/1150) was poet from the city of Marv who flourished under the Saljuqs. His enmity with his contemporary Anvarī, which was caused by a poem that Futūhī composed in censure of Balkh, and which he circulated as the work of Anvarī, is well known, and the two men exchanged invective verses.⁵²⁸ ‘Awfī includes Futūhī in the subsection of Chapter Ten on the Saljuq poets of Khurasan, between Sīmā’ī Marvazī,⁵²⁹ and Shihāb al-Dīn Ṭalḥa, both of whom were also from Marv.⁵³⁰ In contrast to the verse of many of the twelfth-century poets featured in the anthology, that of Futūhī, Sīmā’ī and Ṭalḥa consists almost entirely of lyric poetry. ‘Awfī’s selections of work by Futūhī and Sīmā’ī are made up largely of *ghazaliyyāt* and *qīṭa*’, and he writes that Ṭalḥa was best known for his *rubā’iyyāt*, which are easier to find than his panegyric *qaṣā’id*.⁵³¹

Having introduced Futūhī, ‘Awfī continues in the following manner:

⁵²⁷ LA 2:148. On Futūhī, see Ṣafā’, *Tārīkh-i adabiyāt dar īrān*. 2: 688-690.

⁵²⁸ Ṣafā’, *Tārīkh-i adabiyāt dar īrān*. 2: 688 ; For the text of the *qīṭa* in censure of Balkh, see Anvarī, *Dīvān*, Vol. 1 pp. 569-70. For invective verses penned by Anvarī against Futūhī, see Anvarī, *Dīvān*, Vol. 2, pp. 714, 753.

⁵²⁹ LA 2:145.

⁵³⁰ LA 2:153.

⁵³¹ LA 2:153.

“The mountain of his erudition (*fazl*) was firmly rooted, and the pleasantries of his thought copied the pages that recorded ‘Unsurī and Mu‘izzī. His well-ordered verse was marked by great good taste, purity of style (*jizālat*), delicacy and mellifluousness. These *ghazaliyyāt*, which speak of youth and the age of desire, are by him:

باز کی گیرم اندر آغوشت * تا کی آرم به چنگ چون دوش
هرگز آیا بخواب خواهم دید * یک شب دیگر اندر آغوش
اینست عشرت که دوش بود مرا * با لب می بخش می نوشت
چون بدیدم بزیر حلقه زلف * حلقه گوش بر بنا گوشت
گشت یکبارگی دل ریشم * حلقه در گوش حلقه گوشت
با شکسته دلم چه کرد همی * یا رب آن بر شکسته شب پوش

When again will I take you to my chest / when will I grasp you as I did last night?

Will I ever dream of another / night at your breast?

The pleasure that I took from you last night / from your lips, which offered wine and tasted
of it too

When I saw beneath the ringlets of your hair / Your earring touching the nape of your neck

My heart was torn, a slave to your earring

My God, what did your earring do to my torn heart on your torn blanket!

This *ghazal* is also by him:

بر وعده مرا هر شب در بند روا داری * ای ماه چنین آخر تا چند روا داری
ای سنگ دلی جانان بر جان و دلم هر شب * این واقعه بیسندی وین بند روا داری
جورت که روا دارد بر عقل و دلم فرمان * بر تا ببرد جانم هر چند روا داری
عشق تو که او با جان پیوند بقا دارد * گر بگسلد از جانم پیوند روا داری
مژگان جگر دوزت کشتند فتوحی را * بی جرم چنونی را بکشند روا داری

Each night you think it fine to keep me tied up with promises /

Moon, for how long will you continue in this vein?
 My love, in your hard-heartedness, you've seen fit to let this happen /
 to my soul and heart every evening.
 For how long will your cruelty, which makes free with my heart and my mind,
 cut out my soul whenever you see fit?
 If my love for you, which is linked to my soul eternally,
 Escapes from my soul, then you may bind it
 Your glances, which pierce my liver, have killed Futūhī.
 Will you see fit to let them kill one as innocent as him?

‘Awfī’s comments here have more of an obviously literary-critical tone than many of his other portraits of poets. The terms ‘purity of style’ (*jizālat*), ‘delicacy’ (*riqqat*) and ‘mellifluousness’ (*silāsat*) with which the anthologist characterises Futūhī’s work, suggest that his poems are simple in their diction, are marked by lyricism, and flow well. A comparison is also developed between the work of Futūhī and that of the earlier poets ‘Unṣurī and Mu‘izzī, whose poetry is represented by the anthologist in similar terms in their own entries. The images deployed by ‘Unṣurī are described as ‘subtle’,⁵³² while the poetry of Mu‘izzī is characterised as both sweet and ‘natural’ (*maṭbū*), and polished and ‘artificial’ (*maṣnū*).⁵³³ ‘Awfī therefore seems to be praising a style of artful simplicity, in which rhetorical craft is used in an effective but unobtrusive fashion. And indeed, we find these qualities reflected in Futūhī’s poems. The first *ghazal* given here is marked by its use of parallelisms, such as *may-bakhsh may-nūshat* (l. 3), *ḥalqa dar gūsh-i ḥalqa-yi gūshat* (l.4), and *shikasta dilam...shikasta shab-pūshat* (l.5), which connect the lines of the poem

⁵³² LA 2:32.

⁵³³ LA 2:69.

formally and contribute to a sense of limpidity. The second poem makes use of an antithesis between the ideas of binding and releasing, with a *ṭibāq* found in lines 1 and 4.

As ‘Awfī implies, there are certain continuities between these poems and the work of ‘Unṣurī and Mu‘izzī. A *rubā‘ī* ascribed to ‘Unṣurī develops a similar vignette of the relationship between lover and beloved, ending with the line: “Until pantherine pride leaves your heart / They will find that mine is made of wax, and yours of stone”.⁵³⁴ The poetry of Mu‘izzī is marked by parallelisms which are technically similar to those employed by Futūḥī. We can compare the chiasmic structure of l.3 in the first poem given above with l.1 in a *ghazal* by Mu‘izzī: “You whose cheeks are the Pleiades, and you whose lips are coral / Your Pleiades spell disaster for my heart and your coral is my heart’s nourishment”.⁵³⁵

Lubāb Part Two: Rashīdī Samarqandī and Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān⁵³⁶

The final close reading presented in this chapter concerns an exchange of letters between the Qarakhanid court poet Rashīdī (fl c. 503/1110) and his better-known correspondent, Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān (d. c. 515/1121-2). ‘Awfī writes that Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān was born in Hamadan, but later migrated to Ghaznavid Lahore.⁵³⁷ The anthologist includes him in the subsection of Chapter Ten on the poets of Ghazna and Lahore who lived during the early Saljuq era. The anthologist justifies this choice by writing that Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān found success and recognition in India, and that works of history have associated him with

⁵³⁴ LA 2:32.

⁵³⁵ LA 2:70.

⁵³⁶ LA 2:177. On Rashīdī, see Ṣafā‘, *Tārīkh-i adabiyāt dar īrān*. 2:547-551. On Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān, see LA 2:246; Sharma, *Persian Poetry at the Indian Frontier*.

⁵³⁷ LA 2:246.

the region.⁵³⁸ While ‘Awfī does not state it, the decision to include Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān among the poets of Ghazna and Lahore juxtaposes him with his colleagues and teachers. The poet who precedes him, Abū l-Faraj al-Rūnī,⁵³⁹ acted as his mentor, while the poet who follows him, Sanā‘ī (d. c. 525/1131), drew inspiration from his style.⁵⁴⁰

Superficially, an examination of the correspondence between Rashīdī and Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān provides an opportunity to study whether there were mutual influences in their writing. However, their poems are different in their genres. Rashīdī’s opening letter is a fairly epigrammatic request, but Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān’s response is a substantial praise poem, describing Rashīdī’s missive in a manner that seems otiose.

“[Rashīdī] sent this *qit‘a* to Khwāja ‘Amīd Mas‘ūd Sa‘d, asking for a copy of his poetry:

خواجه مسعود سعد اگر ببند * که مبیناد از حوادث گرد

آن نتیجه کمال شعر وزیر * بفرستد بجای راه آورد

دائم اکنون که خواهد اندیشید * کاینست شوخ و گدا و مطمع مرد

پاره عود کدیه کرد و نیافت * طمع صد طویله گوهر کرد

If he sees, may Khvāja Mas‘ūd Sa‘d never see the dust of calamity

May the vizier send the outcome of his perfect poetry as a present

I know now that he will think this a joke, a beggar’s importuning or a demand

He asked for a box of aloe wood and did not receive it / So he asked for a hundred strings
of pearls

⁵³⁸ Ibid.

⁵³⁹ LA 2:241. See his *Dīvān*, ed. M. M. Dāmghānī.

⁵⁴⁰ LA 2:252. See his *Dīvān*, ed. M. Raḡavī. See also de Bruijn, *Of Piety and Poetry*, and Lewis, *Reading, Writing and Recitation*.

This was the reply:

رسید شعر تو ای تاج شاعران بر من * چو نو شگفته گل اندر بهار گرد چمن
نه گل که باغ بهنگام نو بهار آورد * بنفشه و گل و شمشاد و ارغوان و شمن
چو دولتی که به سوی کمال دارد روی * که محنتش نتواند شدن پیرامن
چو صورتی که کند حکم فیلسوف بدانک * ز عقل دارد روح و ز روح دارد تن
نه مشک و می را گفته نسیم او خوش بوی * نه مهر و مه را خوانده فروغ او روشن
من از فروغ و نسیمش ملوکوار شدم * دو حسن او ز نسیم دگر شده گلشن
نشستگاه من از رنگ و بوی او دائم * چو کارگاه عدن گشت و بارگاه ختن
آیا چو اصل بزرگی بزرگ در همه اصل * آیا چو عقل تمامی تمام در همه فن
سپاه علم ترا هست صد هزار علم * درخت فن ترا هست صد هزار فن
تو ان بزرگ وزیری که از بلاغت تست * بلند فرق معانی و راست قد سخن
چه ساحر است گه کار کلک تو که کند * ز مشک تبت بر سیم پخته در عدن
بتیر ماند و زخمش درون شود به عدو * و گر ز مرکز عالم کند عدوش محن
به طفل ماند کلکش صریر او ز دوات * شفاء خلق جهان گشته از لبان لب⁵⁴¹
شب است خطش و معنیش روز و طرفه بود * میان تیره شب اندر گرفته روز وطن
دهان او افق شرق نیست ای عجبی * چرا همی شب و روز آیدش ز دهن

Crown of the poets! Your poem seemed to me to be spring's newly flowered roses around
a meadow

⁵⁴¹ The Browne/Qazvīnī text reads 'libās-i laban'. *Libān-i laban* seems to me a more appropriate reading.

Not just rosed, since when spring arrives the garden brings forth violets, roses, box-trees,
Judas trees and jasmine

Like good fortune that has turned its countenance towards perfection, in whose orbit no
harm can occur

Like a form which the philosopher decrees derives its spirit from intellect and its body
from its spirit

Its scent is called fragrant, not that of wine and musk

Its brilliance shines, not that of love or the moon

Its scent and brilliance have made me a king

Its two fine qualities have been altered by the breeze

The garden in which I sit has become Eden's workshop and the court of China through its
colour and scent

Are you noble like your origins – noble in every fibre?

Are you perfect like your intellect – perfect in every art?

The army of your learning has a hundred thousand standards

The tree of your knowledge has a hundred thousand branches

You are that great vizier from whose eloquence derive the summit of ideas and the tall
stature of speech

What magician is this who inlays Tibetan musk on the liquid silver of Yemeni pearls?

Your letter looks like an arrow, and it strikes the enemy as an arrow would /

Even if the enemy takes shelter in the centre of the earth

The pen used to write it is like an infant, and its mewling has been hushed for the people of
the world by the inkpot's nursing

The hand in which it is written is the night, but the ideas that it contains are the day. How
strange that day should have taken up its abode in the night

The letter's mouth is not the horizon of the east, so it is wondrous that night and day
emerge from its mouth

The response poem mixes the genres of the *ikhwāniyya*, or verse exchanged between equals, and descriptive *vaṣf* poetry, developing imagery that is seen throughout the corpus of 'Awfī's selections of the work of Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān.⁵⁴² The combination of the two genres in a single poem shows Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān to be a pre-eminent exponent of the kind of 'scribal' poetry that he produced in his capacity as a vizier, and a leading lyric poet as well. In contrast to other exchanges, where the same rhyme and *radīf* are kept by the correspondent, Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān alters his, distinguishing his reply from Rashīdī's original missive. 'Awfī's decision to include this exchange, which is to the benefit of Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān rather than Rashīdī, forms part of a larger, implicit argument made throughout the *Lubāb*, which suggests that there has been a shift in the quality of literary production over time away from the traditional centres of Transoxiana and Khurasan and towards the Subcontinent.

Chapter Conclusion: The Varied Contexts of Literary Production

⁵⁴² E.g. LA 2:247; 251.

I conclude Chapter Two by drawing together two issues that have marked the material studied here. The first concerns the different contexts in which writing was produced, and the second has to do with the anthologists' social approach to the discussion of literature.

The impression that most medieval poetry was produced in courtly environments, and under a system of patronage, has tended to dominate scholarship. Broadly speaking, this view suggests that poets were at the mercy of patrons, who were able to censure the content of writing, to reward poets as they saw fit, and to monopolise the production of literature. The *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* suggest that this thesis should be qualified in several ways. Except for al-Salāmī's panegyric to 'Aḍud al-Dawla, the poetry that I have studied in this chapter does not derive directly from a system of courtly patronage, but rather from a highly varied series of contexts: two chancellery officials, al-Ṣābī and al-Babbaghā', corresponded while the former was in prison; a beggar, al-Aḥnaf al-'Ukbarī, composed in Baghdad; a vizier and a judge, Ibn al-'Amīd and Ibn al-Khallād, traded letters in their leisure hours; a circle of bureaucrats, including al-Laḥḥām, performed a vigil as their friend, al-Iskāfī, lay dying; later poets defended the style of Rūdakī against the insults of their colleagues; and a vizier, Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān, corresponded with a poet, Rashīdī Samarqandī. None of these examples reflect an institutionalised system of patronage in which rulers paid for professional poets to compose. Rather, they help us to re-imagine the system of literary production as a network of mutually beneficial relationships which extended beyond courts, into chancelleries and offices, onto city streets, and even into villages.

A distinction should be made here between patronage and critical opinion. While much of the writing included in the two anthologies was not produced under the auspices of patronage, it is critical opinion – both of knowledgeable patrons and of the anthologists – which affects the value that is attached to it. Here the notion of the market is vital, because,

while poetry is composed in many fora, it is only in those contexts where critical weight is established that a poet becomes successful. Success is not necessarily created by travelling to a court and meeting a patron; it is enough for a critic or a patron to have read and appreciated a poet's work in manuscript or correspondence for their prestige to increase. The comparisons between courts and markets, and between poems and goods, which are seen throughout the anthologies, are appropriate because, as with markets, courts do not create innovation, but reward it. Neither anthologist argues that good poetry can only be produced in a court, and their selections of writing testify to the diversity of situations in which it was composed.

What unites some of case studies featured in this this chapter is the presence of a ruler or a courtly patron in the background, whose positive evaluation of a poem after its production led to its publication. 'Aḍud al-Dawla cannot be considered to have sponsored the exchange between al-Ṣābī and al-Babbaghā', but his appreciation of the poems led to their renown. Ibn 'Abbād did not necessarily pay for al-Aḥnaf al-'Ukbarī to write his *qaṣīda sāsāniyya*, but his critical evaluation for the poem meant that it was picked up by others and began to circulate. Similarly, the regard of the viziers Ibn al-'Amīd and Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmām for the poetry of their correspondents led to the preservation of the poems by Ibn Khallād and Rashīdī Samarqandī. On the other hand, there are also cases where patronage played no role in preserving a poet's work. Al-Laḥḥām satirised the grandees of Bukhara to such an extent that he was attacked and murdered; his poems only survive because al-Tha'libī himself collected his fragmentary satires and attempted to edit his *dīwān*. The short pieces by Rashīdī and Niẓāmī 'Arūzī in defence of Rūdakī also cannot be considered the direct result of patronage. Like many other poems in the anthologies, they are epigrammatic statements of opinion. Here the anthologists emerge, like patrons, as the arbiters of literary quality.

The anthologists' context-based approach to poetry, one that considers the location in which an author worked and the facts of their lives germane to understanding their writing, argues that real-life experiences shape the forms and themes of poetry, as well as its reception. In the anthologists' model of criticism, the human context in which poets lived and worked plays a decisive role in defining whether their poetry is good or bad, because there is an implicit recognition that taste itself differs among groups of people. Al-Tha'ālibī's conflation of the biographical and geographical models is an important development in the history of pre-modern criticism, because it allows for a flexible system of aesthetics. His brand of 'social' criticism, which is adopted by 'Awfī, is not proscriptive in defining what good poetry is, but rather allows readers to use his anthology for their own purposes.

Chapter Three: The Manipulation of Texts

The preceding chapter examined how the poets featured in the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* represented one another and debated ideas in their writing, creating and cementing friendships, alliances and relationships of enmity that contributed to the formation of distinct regional trends in poetry. Chapter Three turns towards questions of authorship and criticism, arguing that modern scholarship has underestimated the extent to which medieval compilers (*mu'allifūn*) could arrange texts written by other authors to new and original effect.

I begin by exploring the interplay between spoken forms of dissemination and manuscript culture in publishing literary works during the early Middle period, before studying the nature of the anthologists' sources. I then consider the anthologists' roles as editors and authors, suggesting that the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* are both designed to make sense of the literary corpus in distinct ways. Al-Tha'ālibī edits and arranges poems into units that highlight a set of rhetorical devices (*maḥāsīn*) employed by contemporary poets, whose writing was marked by its urbanity and its response to the 'modern' (*muḥdath*) style of Arabic poetry. 'Awfī, who was not attempting to encapsulate the work of a generation, but to investigate the poetic corpus from its inception to the thirteenth century, arranges his entries to demonstrate his critical ideal of an equilibrium between innate literary talent (*ṭab'*) and learned poetic craft (*ṣan'*), two concepts that had been traditionally opposed since the period of 'Modern' poetry in the ninth century.

Finally, the chapter studies the practical application of literary theory in the anthologies. While it is sometimes assumed in scholarship that criticism in Arabic and Persian was concerned with the coherence of individual lines and passages, the anthologies offer the

reader a form of linked reading which connects longer extracts and whole poems to one another. Connections are forged using form, theme, genre, and often a combination of all three. As in the anthologists' 'social' approach to the study of literature, which uses a series of interconnected criteria such as class and patronage to decide where a writer should be placed within the broader system, their 'theoretical' approach pursues several lines of enquiry in tandem. The intellectual breadth of the anthologists' approaches testifies to the complexity of their projects.

The Oral and the Written

Recent scholarship on Arabic literature has tended to emphasise the role of both oral and written forms of textual transmission as sources for anthologies and other compilations in the Umayyad and 'Abbāsid periods. Most notably, Gregor Schoeler has concluded that, perhaps contrary to modern expectations, both forms of transmission could be used in concert, either to keep material restricted to a small circle, or to disseminate it to a wider audience. Schoeler's argument that books including Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī's (d. c. 363/972) *Kitāb al-aghānī* were informed by "lectures held by *ṣayḥs* (teachers) on the basis of written notes – read out or recited from memory – which were listened to and put back into writing by students", posits a system of learning which placed great emphasis on individual memory, but which nevertheless used informal and unedited written memoranda as an aide-memoire to marshal material, which might then be reworked and 'published' in book form at a later date.⁵⁴³ Schoeler's analysis makes it clear that orality is not, as we might assume, an intrinsically 'free', or uncontrolled, method of disseminating texts. Transmitters could choose exactly to which audiences they recited the texts that they had

⁵⁴³ Schoeler, *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam*, p.45.

memorised, ensuring, if they wished, that they received either cash or payment in kind for their services. Orality should therefore be considered an important arm of the medieval ‘publishing’ industry.

Although Schoeler’s comments are intended to apply to book production in Arabic under Umayyad and ‘Abbāsid rule, both oral and written forms of transmission appear to have played a role in shaping texts in Persian literary culture too, in both Iran and India.⁵⁴⁴

While it may be tempting to imagine that written forms of transmission would have steadily erased the role of orality (the recitation of texts from memory) and aurality (the recitation of texts from a book or notes) as paper became more common, this does not appear to be the case.⁵⁴⁵ For example, in later anthologies such as *Tazkira-yi Naṣrābādī* (completed 1090/1679-80), produced at a time when paper was unquestionably in abundant supply, forms of oral and aural transmission still play an important role in informing the compiler’s representation of the state of contemporary poetry in the city of Isfahan, where he lived. The transmission of texts in person, whether through recitation or reading aloud, is not simply linked to the availability of paper, but to the broad question of how literary culture operates.

Although written culture obviously played an important role in shaping the source material of the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*, the previously ‘unpublished’ nature of the majority of the material featured in the two anthologies makes it tempting to infer that the anthologists may have been heavily dependent networks of oral sources. For example, while many of the professional poets featured by ‘Awfī were historical figures at the time of writing, the majority of the scholars and bureaucrats whom he discusses were his contemporaries or

⁵⁴⁴ For the case of India, where techniques of oral dissemination continued into the nineteenth century, see Pollock, “Literary Culture and Manuscript Culture in Precolonial India”.

⁵⁴⁵ On this point, see also Toorawa, *Ibn Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr*, p. 9ff.

near-contemporaries, and some of them were direct acquaintances. Even with historical poets, ‘Awfī often seems keen to include only material that would not be readily encountered by the reader in other – most likely oral – contexts. For example, in one instance ‘Awfī records a poem by Naṣr b. Muḥammad al-Istighnā’ī al-Naysābūrī that he had never *heard*, even though the poet was reportedly discussed in written *ṭabaqāt* literature.⁵⁴⁶

As far as the *Yatīma* is concerned, not only was much of the material featured in the anthology previously ‘unpublished’, but it also included the work of different social classes, some of whom were highly literate, and others of whom, such as artisans and beggars, would not necessarily have recorded their poetry in written form in the first instance.⁵⁴⁷ It is implied that the work aimed to reproduce poetry which was not transmitted widely in contexts such as *majālis*, since al-Tha‘ālibī describes the writing in the anthology as material which had not “sounded” in the ears of literary men (*udabā’*) previously (*mā lam yaqra‘ min qabl ādhānahum*).⁵⁴⁸

In analysing the sources of the *Yatīma*, Orfali reaches the conclusion that al-Tha‘ālibī’s work represents “a strong return to [the] orality” of early Islamic culture in part, while acknowledging that the anthologist used a number of *dīwāns* (the collected works of a single poet), *kutub* (manuscripts or letters), and other forms of textual material, such as *ruq‘as* (notes) and *rasā’il* (learned epistles), which were sent to him directly by authors.⁵⁴⁹ Orfali further contends that each of the four parts of the *Yatīma* is dependent on different forms of transmission. Thus reliance on widely circulating material, such as *dīwāns*,

⁵⁴⁶ LA 2: 23.

⁵⁴⁷ See, for example, the entry on al-Khubza’aruzzī, who was a baker in Basra (YD 2:428-433). Al-Tha‘ālibī stresses that he was illiterate, and that his *dīwān* was only compiled and disseminated through the efforts of Ibn Lankak.

⁵⁴⁸ YD I:27.

⁵⁴⁹ Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, pp. 156-7.

manuscripts and letters, is at its greatest in Part One, which covers an area extending from Andalusia to Mosul, while Part Three, featuring material from modern-day Iran, makes extensive use of material such as notes and letters.⁵⁵⁰ Orfali concludes that Part Four, covering the regions of Khurasan and Transoxiana, in which al-Tha‘ālibī lived and travelled for the longest period, features the greatest use of direct oral transmission between poets and the anthologist.⁵⁵¹

Orfali’s model should be qualified in several ways. Material often reached al-Tha‘ālibī through complex chains of transmission, and it did not always come directly from the region in which it was composed. For example, there is material relevant to the first region which was transmitted to al-Tha‘ālibī from the jealously guarded anthology (*safīna*) of Ibn ‘Abbād, who lived in the third region.⁵⁵² While it may be broadly accurate that al-Tha‘ālibī’s reliance on written material increases with distance, there is still significant use of written source material even in the Fourth region. For example, al-Tha‘ālibī writes that the only poem given in the entry on Abū ‘Alī al-Salāmī, who was from Bayhaq, in the vicinity of Nishapur, came from the written copy of his works, and that he had not heard the lines from al-Salāmī himself.⁵⁵³ Similarly, some poets from the Fourth region who knew al-Tha‘ālibī personally did not recite their verse to him, but rather gave him autograph copies of their work.⁵⁵⁴ The writers who are accorded the most expansive chapters in the Part Four, such as al-Ma’mūnī, al-Khwārizmī, al-Hamadhānī and al-Bustī, all knew al-Tha‘ālibī and recited to him, but the anthologist appears to have used their written collected works as his primary source for compiling their entries.⁵⁵⁵

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 157.

⁵⁵¹ Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p. 148; 157.

⁵⁵² See YD 5:37.

⁵⁵³ YD 4:108.

⁵⁵⁴ Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. ‘Uthmān al-Naysābūrī al-Khāzin (YD 4:96); Abū l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Kātib (YD 4:506).

⁵⁵⁵ See YD 4:195, 4:223, 4:295; 4:345.

The polar opposition developed by Orfali between spoken and written forms of dissemination can also be interrogated. While there is a substantive and obvious difference between an anthologist's use of a *dīwān* circulating in manuscript on the one hand, or an oral source on the other, forms of transmission were not always so clear-cut. The two anthologists both used a number of 'guarantors', men who acted as sources for the poetry of others. How did these guarantors store and order the material that they transmitted? Did they, as Orfali assumes in the case of the *Yatīma*, memorise it and transmit it orally and verbatim?⁵⁵⁶ Orfali argues that, in al-Tha'ālibī's case, oral transmission would have been aided by the "dominance of the short *qīṭ'a* (short poem or epigram) over the long *qaṣīda* (multithematic ode) on the poetic tradition of the period", yet *qaṣīda* poetry is omnipresent in the *Yatīma*, as it is in the *Lubāb*.⁵⁵⁷

May oral sources have played an authorial role, gathering other people's material in accordance with their own interests, ordering and editing it, before transmitting it? Indeed, did the guarantors always gather their material directly from the lips of the poets from whom they transmitted, or did they correspond, or did they use a mixture of the oral and the written? It should be noted that, while scholarship has tended to emphasise the editorial role played by transmitter-reciters (*rāwīs*) of poetic texts in early Islamic culture, less attention has been paid to the notion that oral transmitters in later periods may have done more than simply repeat texts verbatim.⁵⁵⁸ Many men renowned for their erudition were famous for their ability to memorise thousands of lines of poetry, but there is nothing to suggest that they were obliged to repeat poetry exactly as they heard it, and we may wonder to what extent the men who acted as oral sources for al-Tha'ālibī and 'Awfī

⁵⁵⁶ Orfali, *The Anthologist's Art*, pp. 156-7.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁸ Cf. Jacobi, "Rāwī".

exercised some form of editorial control themselves, abridging the texts that they transmitted or ‘improving’ them in line with their own tastes.

A degree of caution is also required with the *Yatīma* because the terminology used for oral and written transmission does not necessarily differ. The word *anshadanī* (‘he recited to me’), by far the most common term used by al-Tha‘ālibī to introduce poetic material, along with the passive *unshidtu* (‘it was recited to me [by persons unknown]’) would initially seem to imply oral dissemination, yet there is a small number of cases where al-Tha‘ālibī writes *anshadanī fī kitābⁱⁿ/kitābihi* (‘he recited to me in a book/his book’).⁵⁵⁹ In one notable instance al-Tha‘ālibī remarks that extracts from two *qaṣīda* poems by Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī al-Namarī were sent to him in written form by Abū Sa‘īd b. Dūst, a major guarantor responsible for transmitting the work of some thirteen poets across three regions, and that this had been Ibn Dūst’s habit in the preparation of the *Yatīma*.⁵⁶⁰ Since the verb *anshadanī* is used to mark all other chains of transmission in which Ibn Dūst features, we may question the extent to which the term must be taken to designate orality.⁵⁶¹

It is therefore only with instances where al-Tha‘ālibī uses a word such as *sami‘tu* (‘I heard’), a relatively infrequent occurrence, that we can be absolutely certain of a method of either oral transmission, in which the source recited poetry from memory, or aural transmission, in which they read aloud. Indeed, it is possible that a significant number of cases that Orfali considers to be examples of purely oral transmission may represent either written transmission or, equally probably, a hybrid form of written transmission backed up by orality. ‘Hybrid’ methods appear to have been adopted by guarantors such as the major

⁵⁵⁹ YD 1: p. 291; 1: p. 356.

⁵⁶⁰ YD 2: 422. Ibn Dūst was a deaf jurist, grammarian and literary scholar who taught in Nishapur. See Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p. 153.

⁵⁶¹ The cases where the term *anshadanī* is used in relation to Ibn Dūst are: YD 1:361; I:362; 2:41; 2:57; 2:85; 2: 261.

literary figure Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī (d.383/993), who is reported to have recited and written material pertaining to the first part of the *Yatīma* for al-Tha‘ālibī, to have done the same for the poetry of al-Sarī al-Raffā’ in Part Two, and to have recited (*aqra’ nī*) for al-Tha‘ālibī a pamphlet containing the ‘Mansion Poems’ composed for al-Ṣāhib Ibn ‘Abbād in Part Three.⁵⁶² In the introduction to Part One, Chapter Nine, al-Tha‘ālibī notes that the material presented in that section had been gathered for the most part from oral sources and addenda (*ta’līqāt*),⁵⁶³ and that he had not been able to find collected works of poetry large enough to allow him to select material. Rather, these were fragments that had been brought together and marginalia (*hawāshī*)⁵⁶⁴ that had been collected.⁵⁶⁵ The implication of these statements is that if al-Tha‘ālibī did indeed place great store in hearing poems from trustworthy sources, he was no less keen to find written corroboration for a line of poetry. We find confirmation of this supposition in Part Three, where al-Tha‘ālibī writes that he had only been able to gather the verse of Abū l-Qāsim al-Iṣbahānī from the mouths of reciters, but that he had not given up on his long-cherished desire to find a copy of the poet’s *dīwān*.⁵⁶⁶

We are given a further sense of the manner in which al-Tha‘ālibī and his circle transmitted texts in an appendix on the poet Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad, which was written by al-Tha‘ālibī’s friend and patron, the amir Abū l-Faḍl ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Mīkālī (d. 436/1044), and added to Part Four of his own copy of the *Yatīma*. The addendum states that, during a reading session (*qirā’a*), al-Tha‘ālibī had said to one of his students that he had authorised (*qad ajaztu*) the addition that al-Mīkālī had made to his own copy, and that

⁵⁶² YD 1: 36; 2: 140; 3:240. The Mansion Poems have been studied in detail by Erez Naaman. See Naaman, *Literature and the Islamic Court*, Chapter 4.I-4.III.

⁵⁶³ On this term, see Gacek, *The Arabic Manuscript Tradition*, p. 101.

⁵⁶⁴ On this term, see Gacek, *The Arabic Manuscript Tradition*, p.33.

⁵⁶⁵ YD 1: 349.

⁵⁶⁶ YD 3:377.

he also authorised the student to record the entry in its place in the book, thereby introducing the appendix into the manuscript tradition of the *Yatīma*.⁵⁶⁷ While the statement is terse, it implies several things: that for al-Tha‘ālibī, reading was not a private activity and that books were to be perused in the company of an authority who could explain the text; that he preferred texts to be authenticated critically by more than one person, as suggested by his statement that the student could record al-Mīkālī’s text; that he recognised the importance of the oral discussion of texts, but that he also had a strong desire to control the manuscript tradition of the *Yatīma* as further copies were made of the work.⁵⁶⁸ On the basis of this snapshot into the way in which al-Tha‘ālibī himself read and disseminated texts, it would not be unreasonable to assume that an amount of the material that Orfali assumes to have been gathered in a purely oral context was derived from a ‘hybrid’ context, either of written correspondence later backed up by an oral explanation, or of recitation with the aid of draft notes.⁵⁶⁹

Discussions of al-Tha‘ālibī’s approach to orality and literacy should be contextualised with reference to the comments made by his contemporary, the judge, philologist and literary critic al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī (d. 392/1002), in his *Wasāʾiṭa*. These comments are part of the introductory chapters to the *Wasāʾiṭa*, from which al-Tha‘ālibī quotes in his entry on al-Jurjānī in the *Yatīma*.⁵⁷⁰ The remarks are of particular interest because they connect written culture with urbanity (*al-ḥaḍāra*) and the collapse of the ‘Bedouin’ literary system in which orality had predominated.⁵⁷¹ Al-Jurjānī argues that modern poets are worse at

⁵⁶⁷ YD 4: 519-20. The passage is mentioned in B. Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, pp. 127-8.

⁵⁶⁸ When compared with the reconstructions of reading practices made by Hirschler, al-Tha‘ālibī’s method of reading appears to have been typical. See Hirschler, *The Written Word in the Medieval Arabic Lands*.

⁵⁶⁹ Further examples of group readings at which al-Tha‘ālibī was present, including the case of a copy of the *Yatīma* annotated by Ya‘qūb b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Nīshāpūrī (d. 474/1081) over the course of studying the text with al-Tha‘ālibī himself, are given in Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, pp. 37-8.

⁵⁷⁰ YD 4:5-8. See also *Al-Wasāʾiṭa bayn al-Mutanabbī wa khuṣūmih*, pp. 23-4; 17-18.

⁵⁷¹ *Al-Wasāʾiṭa*, pp. 16-17. The passage is also addressed in Naaman, *Literature and the Islamic Court*, Chapter 4.V.

reciting poetry than their ancient forebears, and have poorer memories, because words are only remembered through oral repetition and recitation. The early poets all transmitted one another, and thereby improved their own poetic talent while expanding the corpus. By contrast, poets of the modern era searched through the *dīwāns* of the ancients with a fine-tooth comb, while reciting poetry less and less, leading to a reliance on rhetorical devices copied from past models. The aesthetics of ‘Modern’, urban poetry are therefore dependent on the notions of *ta’addub*, or writerly culture, and *taẓarruf*, or elegance and refinement.

Al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī’s comments make an important connection between poetic style and literary culture, reminding us that most of the poetry collected in the *Yatīma* reflects this ‘modern’, writerly style of verse. The ‘urban’ and ‘writerly’ notions of *ẓarf* and *milḥ*, ‘refinement’ and ‘wit’, are two critical conceptions that al-Tha’ālibī applies a great deal in his discussion of poetic style. While a culture of teaching and oral discussion played an important role in shaping the contents of the *Yatīma*, it should be emphasised that the anthology is the product of a culture in which books and a culture of writing had long since come to define the way in which poetry was produced and disseminated.

Literacy and orality seem to play similar roles in the *Lubāb*, even though ‘Awfī placed greater store than al-Tha’ālibī in personal connections with his subjects, and he appears to have considered his own memory for poetry an important ‘archive’ of material. In contrast to the terminology in Arabic, the Persian used by ‘Awfī is unambiguous in marking aural or written transmission. ‘Awfī generally uses the phrase *istimā’ uftād* (‘it was heard’) to indicate when he heard a poem, and *dīdam* (‘I saw’) or *muṭāla’a uftād* (‘it was perused’) when he read something, but regardless of whether a source was oral or written, he seems to have attempted to memorise material and to have backed up his memory with a system of written notes and reminders. For instance, on consulting a bilingual (Arabic and Persian) *dīwān* attributed to, but presumably not penned by, the Sasanian monarch Bahrām

Gūr (r. 420-438 C.E.), which was kept at the Sar-i Pul Library in Bukhara, ‘Awfī writes that he transcribed poems and memorised them (*ash ‘ār nivishta va yād girifta*).⁵⁷² That this was a consistent practice is implied by his comments on the poet Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. al-Mu’ayyad al-Ḥaddādī: “even though there is a lot of pleasant poetry by him, since I have been absent from Transoxiana for such a long time, I have forgotten what I once remembered and my draft notes (*musavvadāt*) have been lost”.⁵⁷³ We see very similar comments in the *Tatimma*, where al-Tha‘ālibī notes in the entry on the judge Abū l-Qāsim ‘Ālī al-Shīrāzī that he had taken dictation notes from their meeting, but had subsequently lost the transcript, and so was forced to rely on his memory.⁵⁷⁴

More generally, the *Lubāb* gives the sense that, at the time ‘Awfī was writing, literary culture in Persian depended on writing as a means of storing information, but that there was a constant interplay between orality and literacy in its diffusion. For example, ‘Awfī writes that the preacher ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Uzgandī, known as Ziyādat, did not give his poetry to others and wrote in such a way that nobody else could read it, which meant that his verse and prose were not well known.⁵⁷⁵ When referring to the poetry of the Imam Kamāl al-Dīn Ziyād al-Iṣfahānī, ‘Awfī writes, using a slightly elaborate metaphor, that “notes containing his poetry have been much inscribed on people’s eyelids, and people of learning from all regions should place the leaves of his pleasant poetry on their eyes (*āmāq*, lit. ‘tear-ducts’).”⁵⁷⁶ The substantive implication of this statement is that the content of written material was often memorised, and could then be diffused either orally or again in written form.

⁵⁷² LA 1: 19.

⁵⁷³ LA 2: 383.

⁵⁷⁴ YD 5: 268.

⁵⁷⁵ LA 1: 189.

⁵⁷⁶ LA 1: 274.

If it is to be understood that the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* were created in an environment where books were sufficiently common to be an indispensable source of information, but where the knowledge of the individual carried equal authority on the grounds of both prestige and practicality, then the manner in which al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī gathered and edited material takes on a particular importance, since their sources are vital to shaping the contents of the two anthologies. A guarantor with an interest in thematic variations connected with *qaṣīda* poetry,⁵⁷⁷ an anthology devoted to poetry on a specific theme,⁵⁷⁸ or one man’s private miscellany in which he asked his friends to record verses,⁵⁷⁹ will all have influenced the range of methods and scope of interests that the anthologists were able to adopt.

The Sources of the *Yatīma*

As Appendix Two shows, al-Tha‘ālibī appears to have drawn on three major types of sources in compiling the *Yatīma*: previously ‘published’ written sources, hitherto ‘unpublished’ written sources, and human sources who transmitted both ‘published’ and ‘unpublished’ material in written, oral and aural form.

The vast majority of the material in the twenty-two longest entries in the *Yatīma* appears to have been derived from manuscripts. These twenty-two entries are concerned with: Abu Firās al-Ḥamdānī,⁵⁸⁰ al-Mutanabbī,⁵⁸¹ al-Babbaghā’,⁵⁸² al-Sarī al-Raffā’,⁵⁸³ the Khālidī

⁵⁷⁷ Ibn Dūst is a good example. His selections include: two lines of self-vaunting excerpted from a *qaṣīda* (YD I: 361); three excerpts of *waṣf*: two on glances that inspire desire; and one on the effects of wine (YD I: 361); a three-line panegyric extract on the ‘slavery’ of love (YD 1: 362); a three-line extract on the advent of middle age (YD 1:362); A two-line extract on a patron’s generosity (I: 362); extracts from a panegyric *qaṣīda* (2: 41); four lines of reproach (2: 57); a five-line *raḥīl* section (I2: 84); a description of an addressee’s steadfastness in the face of an enemy (2: 85); a five-line *nasīb* (2: 261).

⁵⁷⁸ An example is Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ifīqī al-Mutayyam’s *Kitāb ash ‘ār al-nudamā’*, from which al-Tha‘ālibī extracts a two-line poem by Abū l-Ḥasan al-Mamshūq al-Shāmī on a loaf of bread (YD I: 362).

⁵⁷⁹ An example is a poem seen by ‘Awfī in al-Ābī’s hand in the *Safīna* of Najīb al-Dīn al-Abīvardī, consisting of a reply to al-Abīvardī’s request for al-Ābī to adorn his book (LA 1: 145).

⁵⁸⁰ YD 1:57.

⁵⁸¹ YD 1:139.

⁵⁸² YD 1: 293.

⁵⁸³ YD 2:137.

Brothers,⁵⁸⁴ Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābī,⁵⁸⁵ ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Yūsuf,⁵⁸⁶ Ibn Lankak,⁵⁸⁷ Ibn Nubāta al-Sa‘dī,⁵⁸⁸ al-Salāmī,⁵⁸⁹ Ibn Sukkara,⁵⁹⁰ Ibn al-Ḥajjāj,⁵⁹¹ Ibn al-‘Amīd,⁵⁹² al-Ṣāhib Ibn ‘Abbād,⁵⁹³ al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī,⁵⁹⁴ al-Ma’ mūnī,⁵⁹⁵ al-Khwārizmī,⁵⁹⁶ al-Hamadhānī,⁵⁹⁷ al-Bustī,⁵⁹⁸ al-Mīkālī,⁵⁹⁹ and al-‘Utbī.⁶⁰⁰ When he is able to examine the body of a poet’s work, al-Tha‘ālibī can actively select and edit down extracts that reflect his concerns, mining lines, poems or passages and suggesting overall patterns in the ideas and style of a poet, and the twenty-two longest entries are all divided into subsections concerned with formal and generic aspects of the given poet’s work.⁶⁰¹

In some of the major twenty-two entries, such as those on al-Babbaghā’ (d. 398/1008), al-Sarī al-Raffā (d. c.362/972) and the Khālīdī brothers (d. 380/990 and d. c.390/1000), al-Tha‘ālibī had access to autograph manuscript copies of the poets’ complete works, which gave him an unprecedented insight into their writing and allowed him a free hand in making selections of their poetry.⁶⁰² At other times, he reports that he used redacted works like Ibn Jinnī’s *dīwān* of al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965), which readers of the *Yatīma* would have been able to access in manuscript.⁶⁰³ There are also entries where we can conclude

⁵⁸⁴ YD 2:214.

⁵⁸⁵ YD 2:287.

⁵⁸⁶ YD 2:369.

⁵⁸⁷ YD 2:407.

⁵⁸⁸ YD 2:447.

⁵⁸⁹ YD 2:466.

⁵⁹⁰ YD 3:3.

⁵⁹¹ YD 3:35.

⁵⁹² YD 3:383.

⁵⁹³ YD 3:225.

⁵⁹⁴ YD 4:3.

⁵⁹⁵ YD 4:183.

⁵⁹⁶ YD 4:223.

⁵⁹⁷ YD 4:293.

⁵⁹⁸ YD 4:345.

⁵⁹⁹ YD 4:407.

⁶⁰⁰ YD 4:458.

⁶⁰¹ See also Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, pp.158-9.

⁶⁰² YD 1: 293-4; 2:138.

⁶⁰³ YD 2:140.

that al-Tha‘ālibī must have had access to the collected works of a poet, even though this is not stated explicitly. For example, it is likely that he had access to Ibn Khālawayh’s edition of the *Dīwān* of Abū Firās (d. 357/968), given the volume of his selections and the fact that many of the rubrics used to introduce poems in the *Dīwān* and the *Yatīma* are similar.

The second major type of source used in the *Yatīma* consists of works such as anthologies, diaries and letters. For example, there is the so-called ‘diary’ (*Rūznāmja*) of Ibn ‘Abbād, which is used in Part Two. As with manuscript copies of *dīwāns*, it is likely that some of these sources would have been in circulation, and that others would have been ‘unpublished’. To give two contrasting examples: it is possible that Ibn ‘Abbād’s diary would have been included in the copy of his widely circulated epistles which al-Tha‘ālibī consulted,⁶⁰⁴ but the anthologist only managed to get hold of a panegyric poem in praise of Shams al-Ma‘ālī Qābūs b. Wushmkīr by Abū Naṣr ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Jabalī al-Astarābādhī when al-‘Utbī showed him some of the poet’s holograph notes.⁶⁰⁵

The reader is referred to Appendix Two for a full list of al-Tha‘ālibī’s human sources and the material that they transmitted. As with written sources, human sources can transmit either ‘published’ or previously ‘unpublished’ material. Unlike written sources, however, they each tend to transmit a maximum of a few poems at any one time. Human sources are significant primarily because the narratives and poetry which they pass on often concern or stem from events which they either witnessed or participated in. Hence they provide a conduit for getting material out of ‘private’ contexts such as *majālis al-uns*, the intimate gatherings of rulers and their boon-companions.

⁶⁰⁴ YD 3:238.

⁶⁰⁵ YD 4:55.

The Sources of the *Lubāb*

As Appendix Two demonstrates, ‘Awfī appears to have used roughly sixty named books, under twenty letters, around ten examples of drafts or marginalia and just under eighty oral sources in compiling the *Lubūb*, initially suggesting only slightly greater dependence on the written word than on orality. However, it should be borne in mind that the actual quantities of material transmitted by each medium differ, in the sense that a purely oral-aural source – one in which the listener memorises a text without the aid of notes – tends to transmit a maximum of one or two poems, while a written source can transmit many more.

As in the *Yatīma*, the primary sources for the work of many of the major poets are circulating *dīvāns*. This is true of the entries on later Ghaznavid and Saljuq poets such as ‘Unṣurī,⁶⁰⁶ Mu‘izzī,⁶⁰⁷ Azraqī,⁶⁰⁸ Khāqānī,⁶⁰⁹ Aṣṣīr Akhsikatī,⁶¹⁰ Abū l-Faraj al-Rūnī,⁶¹¹ Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān,⁶¹² ‘Imād al-Dīn Ghaznavī,⁶¹³ Shihāb al-Dīn Shāh ‘Alī Abī Rijā’ al-Ghaznavī,⁶¹⁴ Zāhīr Fāryābī,⁶¹⁵ Abū l-Saḥarī al-Ṣandalī,⁶¹⁶ and possibly Mu‘ayyad al-Dīn Nasafī.⁶¹⁷ It is noteworthy that ‘Awfī does not mention using *dīvāns* for the work of Sāmānid and early Ghaznavid poets prior to ‘Unṣurī, which may imply that their poetry tended to circulate in sources such as *saftīnas* and other forms of anthology. This thesis is

⁶⁰⁶ LA 2:29.

⁶⁰⁷ LA 2 :69.

⁶⁰⁸ LA 2:86.

⁶⁰⁹ LA 2:221.

⁶¹⁰ LA 2:224.

⁶¹¹ LA 2:241.

⁶¹² LA 2:246.

⁶¹³ LA 2 :257.

⁶¹⁴ LA 2:277.

⁶¹⁵ LA 2:298.

⁶¹⁶ LA 2 :334.

⁶¹⁷ LA 2:359.

supported by the fact that ‘Awfī’s selections from the work of these early professional poets are short and limited in scope.

As in the *Yatīma*, the interplay between the written and the memorised word in the *Lubāb* is complex. For example, in the entry on Abū l-Qāsim ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. Abī Ṭayyib al-Bākhazī (d. c.467/1075), ‘Awfī writes that he consulted an alphabetically-arranged collection of *rubā’īyāt* by the author, entitled *Ṭarabnāma*, in the library of Sirindībī at Bukhara.⁶¹⁸ ‘Awfī subsequently memorised seven poems: a metaphorical description of face, two on love-longing, one on wine, one on a censer; and one on self-sacrifice for the honour of another. The selection demonstrates the generic interest of the source material in epigrammatic poetry, but ‘Awfī has disrupted the alphabetical sequence of poems found in the source book and replaced it with an organisational scheme based on generic sub-types, moving us from love poetry to more explicitly descriptive poetry.

It is not only in the case of publicly accessible libraries that ‘Awfī faced difficulties with finding and keeping hold of material. Once more in the entry on al-Bākhazī, ‘Awfī reports that he read the poet’s Arabic work in an edition entitled *al-Aḥsan fī shi‘r ‘Alī bin al-Ḥasan* (*The Best of ‘Alī bin al-Ḥasan’s Poetry*), in the company of the civic leader (*ṣadr*) Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥasan, and that he borrowed extensively from the ideas presented in the work (*iqtibāsī mīrafi*).⁶¹⁹ Suddenly, the more senior leader Naṣīr al-Mulk requested the manuscript, and so ‘Awfī lost access to the book.⁶²⁰ He did however manage to remember several lines, which would not necessarily have been continuous originally, from a *qaṣīda* in praise of Tughril and an erotic *qīṭ‘a*.⁶²¹

⁶¹⁸ LA 1: 70-1.

⁶¹⁹ LA 1: 68.

⁶²⁰ Ibid.

⁶²¹ Ibid.

‘Awfī’s apparent lack of interest in reproducing large quantities of text from written sources may reflect, in part, the difficulties that he may have faced in gaining access to written collections of the kinds of lyric and panegyric poetry that feature in the *Lubāb*, and his consequent dependence on his memory and notes for transmitting texts. The titles of books in other genres of writing, such as ‘Utbī’s history of Maḥmūd of Ghazna, *al-Ta’rīkh al-yamīnī*,⁶²² Firdawsī’s *Shāhnāma*,⁶²³ and seven works by Ḥamīdī,⁶²⁴ are cited, but extracts are not given. In the case of the *Shāhnāma*, ‘Awfī simply writes that the work is too large and exalted to be quoted,⁶²⁵ and in the entry on Firdawsī himself, only a short extract from a panegyric in praise of Maḥmūd of Ghazna and a poem on the frustration of the poet’s hopes are given.⁶²⁶ ‘Awfī does, however, draw attention to the edition, or selections (*ikhtiyārāt*), of the *Shāhnāma* made by the poet Mas‘ūd Sa’d Salmān, writing that whoever has consulted that book will know the extent of Firdawsī’s poetic powers.⁶²⁷

The citation of a book’s title without quotation from its contents can be understood in several ways. Firstly, it could be inferred that ‘Awfī had a hierarchy of genres and poetic forms which differed from that of al-Tha‘ālibī, meaning that the kind of epic poetry found in the *Shāhnāma*, or the type of *maqāma* written by Ḥamīdī, went beyond what he considered to be the *Lubāb*’s remit, even though he does occasionally compare the style of two authors’ prose writing without citation.⁶²⁸ Although contemporary critics such as Shams-i Qays do include the *maṣnavī*, used almost exclusively for narrative poetry, among their surveys of poetic forms, narrative traditionally lay somewhere at the bottom of the list

⁶²² LA 1: 24.

⁶²³ Ibid.

⁶²⁴ LA 1:198.

⁶²⁵ LA 1: 24.

⁶²⁶ LA 2 :32-3.

⁶²⁷ LA 2:33.

⁶²⁸ For example, ‘Awfī compares the prose of Ḥamīdī with that of Ahvāzī and Vaṭvāt (LA I: 199), and the prose of Daqā’iqī Marvazī with the *Maqāmāt* of Ḥamīdī (LA I: 212).

of the most valued, and the most theorised, kinds of poetry. Perhaps this helps to explain why the narrative poetry of not only Firdawsī, but also of equally well-known poets such as Nizāmī Ganjavī, Gurgānī and ‘Aṭṭār, is excluded from the *Lubāb*. Secondly, al-Tha‘ālibī’s inclusions of forms of writing such as prose letters and short maxims (*fuṣūl qiṣār*) tend to be grounded in a pool of imagery shared with lyric and praise poetry, the main focus of his interest. In ‘Awfī’s case, the differences between the images expressed in lyric and praise poetry on the one hand, and forms of writing such as epic poetry and *maqāmāt* on the other, may have been sufficiently great to render comparison redundant. ‘Awfī also tells the reader explicitly that he did not consider some genres, such as comic poetry, to be suitable for the anthology.⁶²⁹

Alternatively, it would also be logical to assume that there may have been practical reasons why ‘Awfī does not quote from many of the works whose titles he lists. Had he perused them in one of the libraries that he mentions without memorising or noting down extracts, or did he perhaps assume that such texts were sufficiently widely available to make citation from them redundant? There are cases where ‘Awfī states that he has not cited material because it is already well known.⁶³⁰

While it is possible that ‘Awfī does not quote material because he knew it to be in broad circulation, there are also indications that he did not think his readers would have access to supplementary material. In the first instance ‘the reader’ can be taken to mean the *Lubāb*’s patron, the vizier al-Ash‘arī. In the entry on Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Bustī (d. 400/1009) ‘Awfī states that there were two separate *dīvāns* by the poet, one in Arabic and the other in Persian, and that while he had seen the Persian one once, it was not available in Uchcha (*dar īn bilād*),

⁶²⁹ LA 2:175.

⁶³⁰ LA 2:252.

and so he was forced to reproduce the one poem that he could remember.⁶³¹ In discussing the writing of Ṣahīr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Samarqandī, ‘Awfī writes that his books, *I’rāz al-riyāsa fī ighrāz al-siyāsa* and *Sam‘ al-ṣahīr fī jam‘ al-ṣafīr*, are little consulted in the region.⁶³² We can infer from this statement that Uchcha may not have been able to supply either ‘Awfī or his intended reader with access to a comprehensive archive of literature in Persian, or indeed in Arabic.

Although we lack explicit detail about how ‘Awfī edited his text and whether he had students or colleagues who helped in its preparation, we do know of group readings in *majālis* that informed the contents of the *Lubāb*. For example, ‘Awfī refers to his time in Nishapur, and to a particular occasion when he was in the company of the secretary Jamāl al-Dīn ‘Alī Lāhūrī, head of the chancellery of Mu’ayyad, and the two men discussed the secretary Farīd Kāfī.⁶³³ Lāhūrī had a male slave (*ghulām*) bring out a letter addressed to him by Farīd Kāfī, and the anthologist and the secretary were able to study it together.⁶³⁴ ‘Awfī excerpts a poem from the letter, which imagines a bird as the bearer of the epistle and describes Farīd’s experience of reading Lāhūrī’s own missive to him.⁶³⁵ Apart from being a source of material, the experience of handling Farīd Kāfī’s writing appears to have been valued by ‘Awfī, who compares the quality of his hand to that of the Ibn Muqla (d. 328/940, an ‘Abbāsīd vizier and calligrapher of proverbial renown).⁶³⁶ While the *majlis* is often considered a site of sociability, poetic performance, and group critique, it appears to have fulfilled an additional and more basic function in ‘Awfī’s environment, as a means of access to texts themselves. Furthermore, it is clear from ‘Awfī’s remarks that, in the

⁶³¹ LA 1: 64.

⁶³² LA 1: 91-2. The text of *I’rāz al-riyāsa* survives. It is a biographical *adab* anthology, consisting of anecdotes and poetry connected to Pre-Islamic and Islamic kings. See Kātib al-Samarqandī, *I’rāz al-riyāsa*. Kātib al-Samarqandī was also the author of a recension of *Sindbādnāma*. See Idem, *Sindbādnāma*.

⁶³³ LA 1: 121-2.

⁶³⁴ Ibid.

⁶³⁵ LA 1: 122.

⁶³⁶ Ibid.

context of work produced by the bureaucratic and scribal classes, for whom penmanship was necessarily valued as a skill, the quality of a writer's hand and the formal presentation of their writing were perceived to be an integral aspect of their work.

ʿAwfī appears to have been far more intent than al-Thaʿālibī on marking the number of people who made up his own literary network, including figures such as his grandfather, the judge and Imam Sharaf al-Dīn Abū Ṭāhir Yaḥyā b. Ṭāhir ʿUthmān al-ʿAwfī. In his grandfather's entry, ʿAwfī cites a *rubāʿī* on the theme of ageing, which he saw in the subject's hand on the fly-leaf of a collection of poetry (*saḡīna*).⁶³⁷ This demonstrates that the anthologist used written material even in some cases where he knew the subject intimately. As in the *Yatīma*, human sources transmit material in both written and oral form, and we cannot infer that ʿAwfī was more dependent on the spoken word than on the written word in those sections of the *Lubāb* which deal with contemporary poetry.

The Manipulation of Source Material in the *Yatīma*

In his introduction to the *Yatīma*, al-Thaʿālibī characterises the nature of contemporary poetry, writing that is better constructed in its use of unusual rhetorical devices (*ajmaʿ li-nawādir al-maḥāsīn*) and more ordered in its use of pleasing ornament (*anzām li-laṭāʾif al-badāʾiʿ*) than the poetry of any of the other preceding five schools,⁶³⁸ because it attains the furthest reaches of beauty (*ḥusn*) and the most distant extremes of good quality (*jūda*) and wit (*ẓarf*).⁶³⁹ Contemporary poets are also described as more perfect in their phrasing and

⁶³⁷ LA 1: 178.

⁶³⁸ The other schools envisaged by al-Thaʿālibī are the *jāhiliyūn* (pre-Islamic poets), *islāmiyūn* (poets of the early Muslim era), *muḥdathūn* ('modern' poets), *mutaqaddimūn*, and *muwalladūn* ('cross-breeds'). The word *mutaqaddimūn* is generally taken to designate the 'Ancients', in contrast to the 'Moderns', but al-Thaʿālibī's placement of the word between the moderns and the cross-breeds may suggest that it is intended in another sense, such as 'the avant-garde'.

⁶³⁹ YD 1:26.

poetic imagery that those of past generations, on account of their craftsmanship (*ṣanʿa*).⁶⁴⁰ This description uses vocabulary familiar from the critical tradition, introducing a set of descriptive techniques that are employed in the characterisations of poets and their work that al-Thaʿālibī makes throughout the *Yatīma*. The word *maḥāsīn* is particularly important here, since it also features in the full title of the *Yatīma* itself: *Yatīmat al-dahr fī maḥāsīn ahl al-ʿaṣr*, or *The Unique Pearl of the Age, on the Fine Qualities of Contemporary Men*. While the term can be taken to mean ‘fine personal qualities’, it also refers to the rhetorical devices that are the object of al-Thaʿālibī’s reference in his introductory discussion.

Al-Thaʿālibī’s definition of the qualities of contemporary poetry is matched in the introduction by a discussion of how he edited the *Yatīma*. It is stated that al-Thaʿālibī began work on the anthology in his youth, and that it went through several recensions.⁶⁴¹ The final copy (*nuskha*) cannot have been the first version of the work to be published, since al-Thaʿālibī writes that he had been unable to count the numbers of people who had borrowed the first edition, or the copyists who had passed it from hand to hand (*wa-anā lā aḥsub al-mustaʿrīn yataʿwirūnuh wa-l-muntasikhīn yatadāwilūnuh*).⁶⁴² The final copy does, however, reflect a significant number of changes in the arrangement of the work that were introduced by the author: he altered the order of the anthology, remodelled the organisation of chapters, drew up a firmer structure, and strengthened its composition (*ghayyartu tartībahā wa jaddadtu tabwībahā wa aʿudtu tarṣīfahā wa aḥkamtu taʿlīfahā*).⁶⁴³

Al-Thaʿālibī’s comments concerning the reorganisation of the *Yatīma* suggest two distinct forms of editing. The first is connected to the idea of how the work was divided into parts

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁴¹ YD 1:27.

⁶⁴² Ibid.

⁶⁴³ YD 1:28.

(*tartīb*), and how its individual chapters were arranged (*tabwīb*). The second implies the integration of chapters into an overarching system (*tarṣīf*), and their harmonisation (*ta'ālīf*). This section argues that the harmonisation undertaken by al-Tha'ālibī is intended to highlight what the author considered to be the defining technical aspects of contemporary poetry.

The term *maḥāsīn*, used by al-Tha'ālibī to define the characters of contemporary poets and the quality of their writing, is employed by Ibn al-Mu'tazz (d. 296/908) in his *Kitāb al-badī'*, the first work on rhetorical figures in Arabic, which describes the figures of speech that had come to characterise the oeuvre of the author's contemporaries, known as the 'Moderns' (*muḥdathūn*). Ibn al-Mu'tazz uses the word *maḥāsīn* to define a set of figures with which poetic discourse can be structured, and which allow the poet to move from image (*ma'nā*) to image.

While Ibn al-Mu'tazz is not prescriptive in defining the number of techniques that exist, thirteen specific ones are mentioned in *Kitāb al-badī'*: *al-iltifāt* (moving from direct address to narrative and back to direct address);⁶⁴⁴ *al-i'tirāḍ* (presenting a topic, moving away from it and returning to it, all in one line);⁶⁴⁵ *al-rujū'* (proposing and retracting a statement);⁶⁴⁶ *ḥusn al-khurūj* (a fine movement from one image into another);⁶⁴⁷ *ta'kīd al-ma'nā bi-mā yushbih al-dhamm* (emphasising an image through seeming to negate it);⁶⁴⁸ *tajāhul al-ʿarīf* (feigning ignorance of a known thing);⁶⁴⁹ *al-hazl yurād bihi al-jidd* (jest with serious effect);⁶⁵⁰ *ḥusn al-taḍmīn* (apposite citation);⁶⁵¹ *al-ta'rīḍ wa l-kināya* (allusion

⁶⁴⁴ Ibn al-Mu'tazz, *Kitāb al-badī'*, p.152. See also Bonebakker, "Ibn al-Mu'tazz and *Kitāb al-Badī'*".

⁶⁴⁵ Ibn al-Mu'tazz, *Kitāb al-badī'*, 154.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid., 154.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid., 155.

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid., 157.

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid., 157.

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid., 158.

⁶⁵¹ Ibid., 159.

and metonymy);⁶⁵² *al-ifrāt fī l-ṣiffa* (hyperbole);⁶⁵³ *ḥusn al-tashbīh* (a fine simile or comparison);⁶⁵⁴ *luzūm mā lā yalzam* (rich rhyme);⁶⁵⁵ *ḥusn al-ibtidāʾ* (apposite beginnings).⁶⁵⁶

It should be emphasised that the word *maḥāsin* was not taken at all times to denote these thirteen rhetorical figures. For example, the literary genre of *maḥāsin wa-ʿuyūb* (merits and faults) refers to the general comparison of two poets and their style,⁶⁵⁷ while that of *maḥāsin wa-masāwīʾ* (merits and defects) simply implies an evaluation of what is good and bad about something.⁶⁵⁸ *Maḥāsin* was also used by some critics as an umbrella term for all forms of poetic device, including categories of formal figures, such as metaphor (*istiʿāra*), antithesis (*muṭābaqa*) and paronomasia (*tajnīs*), which were grouped under the separate heading of *badīʿ* by Ibn al-Muʿtazz. This is true of the critic al-Marghīnānī, a near-contemporary of al-Thaʿālibī, who also lived in Khurasan, and who authored *Kitāb al-maḥāsin fī l-naẓm wa l-nathr* (*The Book of Figures of Speech in Verse and Prose*).⁶⁵⁹ The later critic Ibn Rashīq (d. 463/1071) also uses the term *maḥāsin* to designate pleasing use of form, theme and genre in his influential *al-ʿUmda* (*The Butress*).⁶⁶⁰ The tendency to list all devices under the term *maḥāsin*, no matter whether they were based on phrasing (*lafẓ*) or image (*maʿnā*), is also seen in works on rhetoric in Persian, including Rashīd al-

⁶⁵² Ibid., 160.

⁶⁵³ Ibid., 162.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid., 166.

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid., 175.

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid., 176.

⁶⁵⁷ Ouyang, *Literary Criticism in Medieval Arabic-Islamic Culture*, p.138. See also al-Jādir, *Al-Thaʿālibī nāqidan*, p. 239, where it is stated that *maḥāsin* refers to those things in which a poet distinguishes himself, and which people like.

⁶⁵⁸ Orfali, *The Anthologist's Art*, 26.

⁶⁵⁹ See van Gelder, *Two Arabic Treatises on Stylistics*, pp. 4-5; 14-26.

⁶⁶⁰ See Ibn Rashīq al-Qayrawānī, *Al-ʿUmda fī maḥāsin al-shiʿr wa-ādābih*.

Dīn Vatvāt's *Ḥadā'iq al-siḥr fī daqā'iq al-shi'r* (*The Gardens of Magic on the Subtleties of Poetry*),⁶⁶¹ and the *Mu'jam* (Dictionary) of Shams-i Qays.⁶⁶²

Although *maḥāsin* cannot therefore be understood as a specific set of rhetorical devices, it is worth exploring the notion that al-Tha'ālibī is using the term in the sense of 'fine technical aspects of poetry'. While it could be argued that the word is used both in the title of the *Yatīma* and throughout the work solely in the general sense of 'fine personal qualities', or 'merits', reflecting a primarily biographical approach to poets and their work, I suggest that al-Tha'ālibī is attempting to create a balance in focus between an author's writing and the facts of their life, and that he employs the word *maḥāsin* in both its meanings.

Genre and Rhetoric: The Major Entries in the *Yatīma*

Al-Tha'ālibī's use of the biographical entry as an exercise in practical criticism is brought out most clearly in his chapter on al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965).⁶⁶³ In addition to being one of the longest in the *Yatīma*, the entry is also the most explicit in its critical agenda.⁶⁶⁴ As already noted, al-Tha'ālibī informs us that he had access to Ibn Jinnī's *Faṣr dīwān al-Mutanabbī*, the 'edited' version of al-Mutanabbī's collected poetry, in compiling the entry. He was consequently able to survey the poet's work and to make selections from it. The chapter is entitled 'On Abū l-Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbī: what is for him and what is against him', an indication that al-Tha'ālibī is responding to the methods of technical criticism that had grown up around highly influential but controversial poets, like al-Mutanabbī himself

⁶⁶¹ See Chalisova, *Sady volshebstva*, p.226. Russian trans. p.84.

⁶⁶² See Shams-i Qays, *Al-Mu'jam fī ma'āyir ash'ār al-'ajam*, p. 291.

⁶⁶³ YD 1: 139-277.

⁶⁶⁴ The critical value of al-Tha'ālibī's entry on al-Mutanabbī has long since been recognised, but scholars have tended to assume that this is the only section of the *Yatīma* with a critical agenda. See, for example, 'Abbās, *Ta'rīkh al-naqd al-adabī*, pp. 374-7, where it is stated bluntly: "al-Tha'ālibī was not a critic".

and Abū Tammām before him.⁶⁶⁵ Proponents of this critical method included al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī in his *Wasāṭa bayn al-Mutanabbī wa khuṣūmih* (*Mediation between al-Mutanabbī and his Opponents*) and Ibn ‘Abbād in *Kashf ‘an masāwī’ shi’r al-Mutanabbī* (*The Revelation of al-Mutanabbī’s Defects*)⁶⁶⁶. Ibn ‘Abbād and al-Jurjānī are both cited by the author,⁶⁶⁷ and a large portion of the section on al-Mutanabbī’s failings is quoted *in extenso* from Ibn ‘Abbād.⁶⁶⁸

Making a similar suggestion to al-Jurjānī in the *Wasāṭa*, al-Tha‘ālibī notes in his introductory comments to the chapter that al-Mutanabbī’s controversial reputation is the first indication of his abundant merit, and that the chapter is distinguished from others in *Yatīma* as al-Mutanabbī himself was distinguished from his contemporaries by his eminent position in the poetry of time, and by the complete acceptance of him in most royal and common circles.⁶⁶⁹ Greater critical attention, then, is attracted to poets who influence others in their writing. The chapter on al-Mutanabbī expands on the method of comparative evaluation promulgated by al-Jurjānī and Ibn ‘Abbād by discussing issues such as the literary borrowings (*sariqāt*) perpetrated by and against al-Mutanabbī,⁶⁷⁰ as well as the use of the poet’s phrasing and imagery in the prose of writers such as Ibn ‘Abbād, al-Ḍabbī and al-Khwārizmī.⁶⁷¹ Such lines of enquiry connect al-Mutanabbī’s work to the literary corpus, demonstrating the extent to which the poet moulds different genres in new ways.⁶⁷²

⁶⁶⁵ The work of Abū Tammām was considered by certain critics to represent the epitome of ‘crafted’ (*maṣnū’*) poetry, in contrast to the ‘natural’/‘innate’ (*maṭbū’*) poetry of his pupil, al-Buḥturī. The best known critical evaluation of the two poets is al-Āmidī’s *Muwāzana*. See ‘Abbās, *Ta’rīkh al-naqd al-adabī ‘ind al-‘Arab*, pp. 147-85; Ashtiany, *The Muwāzana of al-Āmidī*.

⁶⁶⁶ See also al-Jādir, *Al-Tha‘ālibī nāqidan*, pp.237-8; 246; 257; 266.

⁶⁶⁷ YD 1: 164.

⁶⁶⁸ YD 1: 181-201.

⁶⁶⁹ YD 1: 140.

⁶⁷⁰ YD 1: 159-171.

⁶⁷¹ YD 1: 153-9.

⁶⁷² On the phenomenon of *sariqa*, see von Grunebaum, “The Concept of Plagiarism in Arabic Theory”; al-Jādir, *Al-Tha‘ālibī nāqidan*, p. 252; Heinrichs, “An Evaluation of *Sariqa*”.

Al-Tha‘ālibī devotes the largest part of the chapter to a survey of the negative, and then positive, elements of al-Mutanabbī’s technique, identifying defects in his work, including which of his lines display grammatical weakness or the incorrect use of metre,⁶⁷³ and well-executed aspects, such as which lines contain novel and pleasing images to describe the relationship between poet and patron.⁶⁷⁴ Al-Tha‘ālibī also discusses the poet’s application of figures of speech that would have been recognised by Ibn al-Mu‘tazz as *maḥāsīn*. Thus, there is a discussion of *ḥusn al-khurūj* (a fine movement from one image into another),⁶⁷⁵ one of *al-ifrāt fī l-mubālagha* (exaggerated emphasis),⁶⁷⁶ comparable with *al-ifrāt fī l-ṣifa* (hyperbole), and one of *ḥusn al-tashbīh bi-ghayr adāt al-tashbīh* (fine simile executed without the word ‘like’).⁶⁷⁷ Al-Tha‘ālibī’s focus on recurrent elements of composition reflects the approach to segments, or strophes, of poetry that is found in the writing of medieval critics.⁶⁷⁸

Because of the explicitly critical approach, the chapter on al-Mutanabbī initially appears to be at odds with the rest of *Yatīma*, and modern scholarship has tended to emphasise a perceived difference between al-Tha‘ālibī’s approaches here and elsewhere in the work.⁶⁷⁹ Although it is otherwise rare for al-Tha‘ālibī to frame his discussion of a poet’s work in an explicitly critical, or technical, fashion, it is my contention that the selection and arrangement of poetry throughout the anthology is intended to examine the application of tropes and ornament in poetry systematically.

⁶⁷³ YD 1: 193-196.

⁶⁷⁴ YD 1: 237-239.

⁶⁷⁵ YD 1: 218.

⁶⁷⁶ YD 1: 204.

⁶⁷⁷ YD 1: 224.

⁶⁷⁸ For a modern-day study of the recurrent structural elements found in al-Mutanabbī’s praise poetry, see Hāmori, *The Composition of Mutanabbī’s Panegyrics to Sayf al-Dawla*.

⁶⁷⁹ See Ḥāmid Ibrāhīm Khaṭīb, *Al-Tha‘ālibī nāqidan fī Yatīmat al-dahr*; al-Jādir, *Al-Tha‘ālibī nāqidan*, p. 236.

In the entries on the other twenty-one major poets, al-Tha‘ālibī arranges poems using generic subheadings. The genres of *fakhr* (self-vaunting), *ikhwāniyya* (fraternal correspondence), *madḥ* (praise), *rithā’* (elegy), *itāb* (reproach), *shakwā* (complaint), *ghazal* and *nasīb* (erotic writing), *waṣf* (description), *hijā’* (satire), wine poetry, and *tahni’a* (congratulatory writing) represent the major fields of imagery into which al-Tha‘ālibī divides their work.⁶⁸⁰ Other, connected genres occur less frequently: obscene poetry (*mujūn*) is mostly constricted to the output of the Iraqi writers Ibn Sukkara,⁶⁸¹ and Ibn al-Ḥajjāj;⁶⁸² the longest example of a hunting poem (*ṭardiyya*) is a *muzdawija* by Abū Firās, from which al-Tha‘ālibī selects extracts.⁶⁸³

The author rarely discusses any of these genres using the typical term *gharaḍ* (lit. ‘intention’), instead employing the term *fann* (‘type’ or ‘sub-type’) to describe discrete fields of ideas and their connection to one another.⁶⁸⁴ For example, in the entry on al-Hamadhānī, which mostly consists of extracts from the author’s prose letters, al-Tha‘ālibī introduces selections of his poetry under the heading ‘The Wittiest and Best of his Poetry of Every Type’ (*mulaḥ wa-ghurar min shi’rihi fī kull fann*).⁶⁸⁵ It must be stressed that, particularly in his discussions of long *qaṣīda* poetry, al-Tha‘ālibī rarely presents poems in full, instead selecting specific lines or strophes. Orfali suggests that this is for reasons of space, yet each of al-Tha‘ālibī’s selections invariably consist of a passage dealing with a

⁶⁸⁰ There are, however, additional genres of writing in which certain authors specialise. Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Bustī, for example, writes poetry that is divided by al-Tha‘ālibī into genres such as *nujūmiyyāt* (astronomical poems) (YD 4:359) and *fiqhīyyāt* (poems treating legal questions) (YD 4:355). See also Khawlī, *Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Bustī*.

⁶⁸¹ Al-Tha‘ālibī’s selections of his obscene poetry are given in YD 3:11-15. Obscene poems naturally lead into invective verse (*hijā’*). Ibn Sukkara devoted most of his invective against the singing-girl Khamra, on whom he purportedly composed more than ten thousand lines. See YD 3:3; 15-18.

⁶⁸² Al-Tha‘ālibī’s selections of his obscene poetry are given in YD 3:80-88. A recent study of Ibn al-Ḥajjāj’s obscene verse is Antoon, *The Poetics of the Obscene in Pre-Modern Arabic Poetry*.

⁶⁸³ YD 1:108-11. The full *ṭardiyya* is discussed in Montgomery, “Abū Firās’s Veneric *Urjūzah Muzdawijah*”.

⁶⁸⁴ Cf. Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p.158. I have only identified one occasion in the *Yatīma* where al-Tha‘ālibī uses the term *gharaḍ/aghraḍ*: YD 1:168. It is applied in a discussion of two lines by al-Mutanabbī, and is used more in the sense of ‘field of imagery’ than in the sense of ‘genre’. On the interplay between genre and image in al-Tha‘ālibī’s criticism, see al-Aḥmad, *Ab ‘ād al-naṣṣ*, pp. 234-39.

⁶⁸⁵ YD 4:334.

single generic sub-type, or an extract representing the imagery of a single generic field and its transition into the following strophe.⁶⁸⁶ As van Gelder notes, tenth and eleventh-century critical writing conceived of the individual line or “short passages” as the basic generic unit.⁶⁸⁷

The boundaries between seemingly rigid genres are permeable, and the notion of ‘type’ or ‘sub-type’ (*fann*) helps the anthologist to negotiate them.⁶⁸⁸ Thus wine poetry almost inevitably leads into a description of the beloved, who either serves the speaker or who drinks with them. Congratulatory poems are often directed at the social superiors of the speaker, and hence share a significant amount of imagery with praise poems, as do poems of fraternal correspondence, in which poets tend to praise one another’s attributes. Satire can invert the *topoi* of praise, if not the form of praise poetry.⁶⁸⁹ Poetry of reproach can be directed against a beloved, or a patron, or engage with the idea of complaint against the world (*shakwā/dhamm al-dunyā*). Poetry can also be connected to prose, as is demonstrated in the entry on al-Babbaghā’, which includes a section on the best of the writer’s epistles containing the *maḥāsin* of his poetry.⁶⁹⁰ The separate type-based sections into which al-Tha‘ālibī tends to divide the entries of the major twenty-one poets therefore cultivate distinct groups of images, but there is often an organic connection between one section and another because of overlapping fields of imagery.

In addition to the division by type, the entries of the twenty-one most significant poets can also be arranged by rhetorical device. The entry on al-Khwārizmī, for example, contains a

⁶⁸⁶ See Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p.107.

⁶⁸⁷ van Gelder, “Some Brave Attempts at Generic Classification in Premodern Arabic Literature”, p. 18.

⁶⁸⁸ A useful comparison can be made with Alastair Fowler’s work on genre and type. See Fowler, *Kinds of Literature*, pp. 37-53.

⁶⁸⁹ See van Gelder, “Some Brave Attempts”, p. 20.

⁶⁹⁰ YD 1:302. The technique of turning prose into verse (*ḥall*), and verse into prose (‘*aqd*’), are the topic of a separate work by al-Tha‘ālibī entitled *Nathr al-naẓm wa-ḥall al-‘aqd* (Print edition ed. Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ Tammām). See also Sanni, *The Arabic Theory of Prosification and Versification*; al-Jādir, *Al-Tha‘ālibī nāqidan*, pp. 271-79.

section on the writer's *taḍmīnāt*, or direct quotations from other poets,⁶⁹¹ as does the entry on Ibn al-Ḥajjāj.⁶⁹² Just like in the entry on al-Mutanabbī, the chapter on al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī contains a section on the best examples of how the poet effects movement from one strophe of a poem to the next (*luma ' min shi 'rihi fī ḥusn al-takhalluṣ*),⁶⁹³ while the chapter on al-Sarī al-Raffā' discusses the poet's fine movements from one line or strophe to the next (*ḥusn al-khurūj wa-l-takhalluṣ*).⁶⁹⁴ Movement from one strophe the next is a mark of polythematic *qaṣīda* poetry, and the examples featured in these sections focus on the transition between description and praise. Descriptive poetry (*waṣf*) itself is sometimes explicitly connected by al-Tha'ālibī to *tashbīh* (simile), as is the case in the entries on the poets Abu Firās al-Ḥamdānī,⁶⁹⁵ al-Salāmī,⁶⁹⁶ Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābī,⁶⁹⁷ al-Ṣāhib Ibn 'Abbād,⁶⁹⁸ al-Ma'mūnī,⁶⁹⁹ and al-Mīkālī.⁷⁰⁰ Other poets are associated with the use of a specific rhetorical device. For example, al-Bustī is characterised by al-Tha'ālibī as a master of paronomasia (*tajnīs*) and ornament (*badī'*), an idea encapsulated in the selections of his work.⁷⁰¹

It is therefore clear that al-Tha'ālibī's critical concerns extend beyond the chapter on al-Mutanabbī. His focus on 'types' (*funūn*) in cases where he had access to a large amount of poetry is directly connected to an interest in rhetorical figures, since certain figures are applied more frequently in the context of certain generic types. By juxtaposing poems that

⁶⁹¹ YD 4:224.

⁶⁹² YD 3:102.

⁶⁹³ YD 4:15.

⁶⁹⁴ YD 2:189.

⁶⁹⁵ YD 1:81.

⁶⁹⁶ YD 2:481.

⁶⁹⁷ YD 2:311.

⁶⁹⁸ YD 3:306.

⁶⁹⁹ YD 4:195.

⁷⁰⁰ YD 4:428.

⁷⁰¹ YD 4:345. Al-Tha'ālibī authored at least two separate works devoted to the technique of *jinās/tajnīs*: *ajnās al-tajnīs* (Print edition ed. Maḥmūd 'Abd Allāh al-Jādir), and *al-anīs fī ghurar al-tajnīs* (Print edition ed. Hilāl al-Nājī). See also Orfali, *The Anthologist's Art*, pp. 47-8; al-Jādir, *Al-Tha'ālibī nāqidan*, p. 267.

engage with overlapping sets of imagery, al-Tha‘ālibī is able to demonstrate in a systematic fashion the kinds of rhetorical device that contemporary poets deploy in differing contexts. Sometimes, however, the author uses a different set of criteria to group similar kinds of images and devices together, such as a biographical ‘topic’ which encouraged a poet or poets to produce verse in the same genre. For example, much of the entry on al-Ṣāhib Ibn ‘Abbād is taken up with transcriptions of the poems produced for three ‘contests’ arranged by the vizier, in which it was determined that both visiting poets and writers who were employed at his court would produce polythematic *qaṣā’id* on a given theme. The reader is informed that the first group of poems were read to al-Tha‘ālibī by al-Khwārizmī, from a letter addressed to the latter by Abū Muḥammad al-Khāzin, who was himself present at the competition.⁷⁰² The three separate groups of poems concern: the completion of Ibn ‘Abbād’s mansion in Isfahan;⁷⁰³ the death of the horse (*birdhawn*) owned by Ibn ‘Abbād’s boon-companion Abū ‘Isā b. al-Munajjim;⁷⁰⁴ the arrival of Ibn ‘Abbād in Jurjān on a war-elephant.⁷⁰⁵

The poems on the mansion and the elephant can be understood as explorations of a type of descriptive poetry, focussing on the transfer of images, and its connection to praise poetry. The poems on the death of the horse parody the genre of elegy, and connect it to praise. Lastly, the poems on the elephant also connect description with praise. Thus, although all three sets of poems are linked to an occasion, their arrangement allows for the detailed exploration of genre that al-Tha‘ālibī practices elsewhere in the *Yatīma*.

Al-Tha‘ālibī’s entry on al-Babbaghā’, one of the major twenty-one poets, provides a useful case-study for how the connection between generic type and rhetoric lies at the root of the

⁷⁰² YD 3:240.

⁷⁰³ YD 3:240.

⁷⁰⁴ YD 3:253. See Hámori, “The Silken Horsecloths Shed Their Tears”.

⁷⁰⁵ YD 3:269.

anthologist's critical approach. The entry begins with a prosimetric narrative, set at a Syrian monastery, which showcases al-Babbaghā's talent for composing belletristic prose, praise poetry and erotic verse, and lyrics that could be sung.⁷⁰⁶ The extract may be the longest single piece in the *Yatīma*. In addition to its mixed use of genre, the narrative is highly unusual. Its plot revolves around a mysterious letter and an attempt on the narrator's part to find its author. Al-Tha'ālibī felt that the narrative deserved to be quoted in full despite its length, arguing that 'what is (stylistically) innovative is not tiresome' (*al-badī' ghayr mamlūl*).⁷⁰⁷ The narrative is followed by sections on the poet's belletristic prose and his poetic correspondence with Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābī. Al-Tha'ālibī then proceeds to provide selections from his poetry that could be sung, from his erotic and Bacchic poetry, and from his poetry of all other types (*funūn*).⁷⁰⁸ There is an implicit shape to this chapter of an introductory work, in the form of the narrative, which showcases al-Babbaghā's talents in a number of genres, followed by more comprehensive examples from each of these genres. As the narrative is deemed by al-Tha'ālibī to be innovative, it is almost as though it is given as an exemplum, and the following sections are intended to provide an anatomical survey of the sub-types that constitute it.

A longer entry is devoted to the poet al-Sarī al-Raffā'. Given the accusations of plagiarism exchanged between al-Sarī and the Khālidī brothers,⁷⁰⁹ and his access to autograph copies of both parties' works, al-Tha'ālibī was able to make a forensic reconstruction of which verses were of disputed ownership. In so doing, he undertook a comparative critical evaluation of the two parties.⁷¹⁰ The entry on al-Sarī testifies to the range of genres in which he worked – short pieces, *hijā'* (satire), with special subsections devoted to satirising

⁷⁰⁶ YD 1: 294-302. See Hāmori, "A Sampling of Pleasant Civilities".

⁷⁰⁷ YD 1:294.

⁷⁰⁸ YD 1: 302-331.

⁷⁰⁹ YD 2:138.

⁷¹⁰ See also al-Jādir, *Al-Tha'ālibī nāqidan*, pp. 254-5.

the Khālidī brothers and Ibn al-‘Aṣab al-Milḥī, a friend of Ibn Sukkara, followed by al-Tha‘ālibī’s selections of al-Sarī’s erotic poetry, his poetry on youth, his passages from strophe to strophe (*al-khurūj wa l-takhalluṣ*), praise poetry, martial descriptions, reproach (*‘itāb*), mannerist description of the spring, Bacchic poetry, requests for wine from others, and poetry on the art of entertaining.⁷¹¹

While the section on al-Sarī could stand alone, the one on the Khālidī brothers depends in large part on it.⁷¹² Al-Tha‘ālibī devotes sections to lines that they share with al-Sarī as either mutual appropriations (*tasāruq*) or exact coincidences of idea (*tawārud*),⁷¹³ and pays special attention to the lines thought to be by them that al-Sarī deliberately misattributed in his edition of the collected poetry of Kushājim.⁷¹⁴ The examination of plagiarism (*sariqāt*) here is important, since it arises out of desire to ‘find the origin’ of a field of imagery, and to identify whether a poet has manipulated an image sufficiently to be considered the true author of a line.⁷¹⁵ The fact that the two parties do not differ significantly in their application of imagery and ornament may explain why al-Tha‘ālibī devotes less space to anthologising the Khālidī brothers, despite having access to an autograph copy of their collected works. In the entry on al-Sarī, al-Tha‘ālibī states that the likeness between the two parties is astonishing, and that there is a close similarity in the way they handle the ‘reins of rhyme and the formation of the ornaments of images’.⁷¹⁶

Al-Tha‘ālibī makes use of similar tools in the chapter on Abū Firās. Just as the anthologist demonstrates the quality of al-Mutanabbī’s work by studying the recurrent structural aspects and images of his poetry, he applies the same methods to practical effect in the

⁷¹¹ YD 2: 137-214.

⁷¹² YD 2: 214-244.

⁷¹³ YD 2: 215-218.

⁷¹⁴ YD 2:218-222.

⁷¹⁵ See Ouyang, *Literary Criticism in Medieval Arabic-Islamic Culture*, p.111.

⁷¹⁶ YD 2:139.

entry on Abū Firās by selecting and heavily editing poems. Much of the entry on Abū Firās is taken up by the *Rūmiyyāt*, the poems that he composed when he was incarcerated in Byzantium.⁷¹⁷ In one of these poems, al-Tha‘ālibī’s redaction of the text reproduces the lines from Ibn Khālawayh’s edition of the text in the following order: 1, 2 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 20, 29, [unknown line], 27, 38 [unknown line], 40, 41, 42, 43, [unknown line], 44, 45, 46, 47.⁷¹⁸ The edited version contains Abū Firās’ opening description of his own bravery and resignation to death at the hands of the enemy, before moving through the *takhalluṣ* into praise of Sayf al-Dawla and a discussion of the relationship between the two cousins. The recension then closes with the statement that the poet does not consider the fates to be an enemy.

It is difficult to conceive of the contraction of this poem as reflecting the poor quality of al-Tha‘ālibī’s source manuscript or subsequent scribal or editorial error, and rather easier to imagine that the compiler has deliberately condensed the text to provide the reader with the two most climactic sections of the poem, stitched together with lines that show the transitions from strophe to strophe, particularly since many of the *Rūmiyyāt* in the *Yatīma* display such inconsistencies in comparison with Ibn Khālawayh.⁷¹⁹ In this case, the recension displays important differences in tone with the full poem, emphasising the poet’s determination and drawing attention away from the fact that his *qaṣīda* is a plea to his cousin. As Gruendler shows, it is a common practice in the critical tradition to edit texts down, to differing effects.⁷²⁰ Some critical recensions preserve ‘highlights’ of a *qaṣīda*;

⁷¹⁷ See El-Tayib, “Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī”.

⁷¹⁸ YD 1: 86-87. C.f. *Le Diwan d’Abu Firas al-Hamdani* 2 : 78.

⁷¹⁹ For example : YD 1: 88, cf. *Le Diwan d’Abu Firas al-Hamdani*, 2 :259 ; YD 1 :89, cf. *Le Diwan d’Abu Firas al-Hamdani* 2:260 ; YD 1 : 90, cf. *Le Diwan d’Abu Firas al-Hamdani* 2:363 ; YD 91-2, cf. *Le Diwan d’Abu Firas al-Hamdani* 2:157.

⁷²⁰ See Gruendler, “*Qaṣīda*: Its Reconstruction in Performance”.

others retain moments of skilful rhetoric; still others alter our portrait of the emotional life of the speaker.⁷²¹

The effects of this kind of editing are twofold. Firstly, a concern is implied for giving space to specific motifs and images in *qaṣīda* poetry, with limited interest in establishing a fundamental or original text in the case of each poem. Secondly, it shows how al-Tha‘ālibī’s manipulation of material can create or alter the portrait of a poet’s intellectual and emotional life. As with many of the larger entries in the *Yatīma*, the one on Abū Firās is broadly chronological in scope, in the sense that it begins with the poet as a young man and ends with his death. The poems selected by al-Tha‘ālibī have as their addressees a restricted number of people who appear several times, creating the impression of a changing relationship between them and the poet. The most obvious of these interlocutors is Sayf al-Dawla himself,⁷²² although the poet’s brothers appear several times and are also featured in their own entry in the *Yatīma*.⁷²³

Patterns and Connections: Shorter Entries in the *Yatīma*

While the longest twenty-two entries in the *Yatīma* contain subsections devoted to formal, thematic and generic topics, the vast majority of the entries in the anthology are considerably shorter. In the cases of some minor poets, the author includes just one or two poems under their name, without any biographical detail. Such ‘skeleton’ entries occur most frequently in Part One, Chapter Nine, covering the poets of the west (Syria and Egypt to Andalusia), although they are also encountered in Part Three, in the section on travellers to the mountainous region of central Iran.⁷²⁴ Even in Part Four, covering al-Tha‘ālibī’s ‘home’ region of Khurasan and Transoxiana, there are entries where minimal biographical

⁷²¹ See *Ibid.*, pp. 349-357.

⁷²² YD 1: 37-56.

⁷²³ YD 1: 115-9.

⁷²⁴ YD 3:482-4.

detail and only one or two poems are given.⁷²⁵ In some such cases the reader is informed that there is a significant amount of poetry written by the entrant, but that al-Tha‘ālibī has restricted himself to a minimal number of poems.⁷²⁶

Clearly, then, al-Tha‘ālibī’s decision to include or exclude material was not simply based on its availability or the form in which it reached him. The author frequently writes of poems meeting the criterion (*sharṭ*) of the anthology, and of whether they are appropriate for inclusion.⁷²⁷ For example, in the entry on the minor poet Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Mughallisī al-Marāghī, who is featured in Part Three, al-Tha‘ālibī supplies one unusual poem personifying cloth of gold, and another which gives human attributes to a banner.⁷²⁸ We can infer that al-Tha‘ālibī may have had access to more poems by al-Mughallisī al-Marāghī, since he writes that if he came across more work by the poet he would append it, but only if it came up to the criterion (*sharṭ*) of the anthology.⁷²⁹ An extract by al-Mughallisī al-Marāghī is also given in a letter by the grammarian Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1004) which al-Tha‘ālibī quotes earlier in the same chapter.⁷³⁰ The letter concerns the state of contemporary poetry and its relationship to that of past eras, arguing that the Contemporaries take language in a new direction in order to compete with their forebears (the word *mu‘āraḍa*, meaning an attempt to outdo the work of another poet, is used).⁷³¹ The competition is not between the ‘Moderns’ and the ‘Ancients’, but rather between contemporary poets and the ‘Moderns’, such as Abū Tammām.⁷³² The extract by al-Mughallisī al-Marāghī is given as part of a series of examples intended to illustrate the

⁷²⁵ E.g. Salama b. Aḥmad al-Mu‘ādhī (YD 4:488); Abū l-Qāsim al-Ḥusain b. Asad al-‘Āmirī (YD 4:509); the son of the aforementioned Abū l-Naṣr Ṭāḥir b. al-Ḥusayn (ibid).

⁷²⁶ E.g. Abū l-Qāsim al-Ḥusain b. Asad al-‘Āmirī (YD 4:509).

⁷²⁷ See also Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p.108, where reference is made to al-Tha‘ālibī’s discussion of the poets al-Ghuwayrī and al-Khubza‘aruzzī.

⁷²⁸ YD 3:481.

⁷²⁹ Ibid.

⁷³⁰ YD 3:463 ff.

⁷³¹ YD 4:463-46.

⁷³² YD 4:464.

thesis that contemporary poets can outdo the Moderns. It is tempting to infer that al-Tha‘ālibī’s selections of al-Mughallisī al-Marāghī’s work are also intended to showcase this particularly ‘contemporary’ approach to writing.

My examination of entries that are based on a mixture of oral and written sources suggest that al-Tha‘ālibī still manipulates his material to create patterns in theme and rhetoric. For example, in order to produce his entry on the less prominent Ḥamdānids, al-Tha‘ālibī had recourse to a number of oral and written sources, including Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī,⁷³³ al-Mīkālī,⁷³⁴ and addenda (*ta‘līqāt*),⁷³⁵ but the lines he cites are scattered examples, and he writes that a number of them are of doubtful attribution. He is unable to draw an extensive biographical portrait of the figures such as the prince Abū l-‘Ashā’ir, but short quotations of their work testify to their connections with others to create trends in poetry, which are informed by the links of geography and social interaction. To give one example, a short poem ascribed to Abū al-‘Ashā’ir mixes erotic imagery with that of the hunt, recalling the erotic, descriptive and hunting poetry of his relative Abū Firās, whose entry is close by.⁷³⁶

Although easily dismissed as the work of an uninfluential poet, poems such as the one by Abū al-‘Ashā’ir provide evidence for how genre, imagery and phrasing are applied by writers to create distinct regional aesthetics. This is particularly germane given the disparate nature of al-Tha‘ālibī’s sources. Only in the case of poets such as al-Sarī and the Khālidī brothers could he sift through and do a detailed study of intertextual borrowings. Where sources were thin, his selections tended to emphasise trends in the poetry of each region. Even in the shorter entries, where an interest in formal and generic sub-types is not signposted explicitly, al-Tha‘ālibī continues to arrange poems in an interconnected

⁷³³ YD 1: 115.

⁷³⁴ YD 1: 117.

⁷³⁵ YD 1: 118.

⁷³⁶ YD 1: 116.

fashion, linking them to one another and the surrounding corpus through continuities in form and theme.

The Manipulation of Material in the *Lubāb*

‘Awfī’s work displays several basic differences with the *Yatīma* in terms of its organisation. There is less variation in the length of entries, so that, while a poet in the *Yatīma* can have less than a single page or upwards of a hundred dedicated to them, the longest entries in the *Lubāb* rarely extend beyond fifteen pages or so. This would appear to be a distinct choice on the part of ‘Awfī, since he retains the relatively brief format even when he has access to the *dīvān* of a poet. The entry on the major Ghaznavid poet ‘Unṣurī, for example, is four pages in length, even though the author explicitly states that he drew his material from a copy of the poet’s collected works.⁷³⁷ The chapters on Mu‘izzī and Azraqī, two of the most influential Saljuq poets, are seventeen and eighteen pages long respectively, despite the fact that the author writes in both cases of having access to the poets’ *davāvīn*.⁷³⁸ Since they present poems without explicit subdivisions by genre or form, the entries in the *Lubāb* are closer in structure to the shorter chapters in the *Yatīma*.

‘Awfī justifies his laconism, stating at the beginning of the second volume that he will treat past poets by way of epitome and abridgement (*tījāz va ikhtiṣār*).⁷³⁹ These sentiments are echoed in several entries. For example, in the chapter on Mu‘izzī, the reader is told that the majority of his poetry is collected in written form (*mudavvan*), but that quotation of his entire *dīvān* would be cause for prolixity, and that “prolixity in books and speech creates

⁷³⁷ LA 2: pp. 29-32.

⁷³⁸ LA 2: pp. 69-86 ; 86-104.

⁷³⁹ LA 2: p. 1.

boredom” (*iṭālat dar kitāb va maqālat sabab-i malālat [ast]*).⁷⁴⁰ ‘Awfī writes that he will therefore restrict himself to several pleasant *ghazals* and the remarkable points of Mu‘izzī’s poetry (*bi-ghazalī chand az guftahā-yi laṭīf va nuktaḥā-yi gharīb-i ū ikhtiṣār kunīm*).⁷⁴¹

These statements can be approached from several angles. Certainly, there are the issues of entertainment and the social history of reading, and the extent to which a single private reader or a reading group of many could be expected to engage with a great deal of material in a single session. Cross-references to earlier entries, provided “so that nobody should have recourse to protest and to complain of the compiler’s ignorance”, suggest that ‘Awfī expected his readers to dip in and out of the *Lubāb*.⁷⁴² Notions of epitome and abridgement also recall the critical tradition. Heinrichs writes of *ījāz* and *ikhtiṣār* as “one of the basic ideas of literary theory [in Arabic], being the constituent quality of literary expression in general”.⁷⁴³ ‘Awfī himself states that he has offered the *Lubāb* up to the “brilliant feeling for poetry and critical insight” (*ṭabī‘at-i vaqqād va baṣīrat-i naqqād*) of his patron.⁷⁴⁴ The impression that not just the *Yatīma* but the *Lubāb* too may be structured by critical concerns is reinforced by comments such as those on Mu‘izzī discussed above, where the author writes of his intention to cite only the remarkable (*gharīb*) points of the poet’s work.

‘Awfī’s evaluations of poetry can appear at first sight to be uncritical and prolix, even though they engage with ideas rooted in the critical tradition. For example, in the introductory dedication of the *Lubāb*, ‘Awfī describes the contents of the anthology as the

⁷⁴⁰ LA 2: p. 70.

⁷⁴¹ LA 2: p. 70.

⁷⁴² LA 2: p. 88.

⁷⁴³ Heinrichs, “Literary Theory”, p. 48.

⁷⁴⁴ LA 1: p. 9.

“virgin brides of the thoughts of the learned men of every age” (‘*arāyis-i abkār-i afkār-i fuṣṣalā’-yi har ‘aṣr*).⁷⁴⁵ The comment does not appear at first sight to be in any sense critical, but it is, reflecting the idea that the best, “stallion-poets” (*fuḥūl al-shu‘arā’*) engage with new, previously untested images (*ma‘ānī*).⁷⁴⁶ The remark therefore implies that the anthology will highlight innovative aspects of writing in Persian from the beginning of the tradition to ‘Awfī’s own age. Such a focus on originality and invention inevitably entailed an examination of how the work of individual poets compared with that of their peers and predecessors. It also mirrored a conception of originality found in the work of Arabic critics active during the life of al-Tha‘ālibī, such as al-Rāghib (lived 4th/11th century) and Ibn Rashīq (d. 463/1071).⁷⁴⁷

Many, although not all, entries in the *Lubāb* also engage consistently with a set of critical concepts that had been developed with reference to ‘Modern’ (*muḥdath*) poetry in Arabic. There are some continuities here between the criteria favoured by ‘Awfī and those highlighted by al-Tha‘ālibī.⁷⁴⁸ The idea of *salāsa* (mellifluousness) features regularly,⁷⁴⁹ as do ‘*uzūba* (sweetness),⁷⁵⁰ *matāna* (firmness) of form, and *riqqa* (delicacy) and *diqqa* (subtlety) of content. The term *namakī* (lit. ‘saltiness’, met. ‘wit’), a Persian calque for the Arabic *milḥ*, one of al-Tha‘ālibī’s favourite critical criteria, is also used by ‘Awfī on occasion.⁷⁵¹ These concepts can also be combined in reference to a single poet or poem. For example, the poetry of the amir Abū l-Muẓaffar Ṭāhir b. al-Faḍl b. Muḥammad Muḥtāj al-Chaghānī is described as pleasant (*laṭīf*), while ‘Awfī deems a riddling poem by the

⁷⁴⁵ LA 1: p. 9.

⁷⁴⁶ On this point see Kilito, *The Author and His Doubles*, p. 19.

⁷⁴⁷ See Key, *A Linguistic Frame of Mind*, p. 177.

⁷⁴⁸ See also al-Jādir, *Al-Tha‘ālibī nāqidan*, pp. 241; 247; 266; 269-70, where some of al-Tha‘ālibī’s critical terms are discussed and contextualised with reference to trends in fourth/tenth-century criticism.

⁷⁴⁹ LA 2: 2.

⁷⁵⁰ LA 2 :2, 3.

⁷⁵¹ LA 2: 44.

same writer to be mellifluous, pleasant, subtle in its imagery and delicate in its significance (*dar ghāyat-i silāsat ū liṭāfat ū diqqat-i ma‘nī ū riqqat-i faḥvī*).⁷⁵²

These terms are important because they highlight ‘Awfī’s stance in the debate between *ṭab* ‘(‘natural’ or ‘innate’ ability) and *ṣan* ‘(‘craft’ or ‘artifice’). While the two notions had been opposed in some ‘Modern’ (*muḥdath*) criticism in Arabic, attracting partisan support, criticism in Persian had tended to reiterate the stance that good poetry effected some kind of equilibrium between simplicity and ease of comprehension on the one hand and crafted rhetoric on the other.⁷⁵³ Shams-i Qays, a direct contemporary of ‘Awfī, is insistent that the rhetorical devices which he lists in his *Mu‘jam (Dictionary)* and which he considers to be fine (*mustaḥsanāt*), are all technically affections (*mutakallafāt*).⁷⁵⁴ He writes that affected poetry itself is only produced when a poet attempts to include too many images in a single line, or lists several different nouns, or produces a strange and abstruse poem in order to test their own mettle or that of another, such as one using only dotted or undotted letters.⁷⁵⁵

These critical concepts are also carried over to questions of poetic form by Shams-i Qays, who uses the same descriptive terminology as ‘Awfī. Thus he stipulates that *ghazal* poetry must be composed in a pleasing, natural metre, using sweet, polished phrasing and delicate imagery (*banā-yi ān bar vaznī khūsh maṭbū‘ va alfāzī ‘aẓb ū salis ū ma‘ānī rā’iq furū nihand*).⁷⁵⁶ Shams-i Qays stipulates that the *rubā’ī*, a form favoured by ‘Awfī, must be well-constructed, its rhyme solid, its phrasing sweet (*alfāz ‘aẓb*) and its imagery pleasant (*ma‘ānī rā’iq*).⁷⁵⁷ It should also be free from ‘filler’ words (*kalimāt-i ḥashv*), repeated

⁷⁵² LA 1:27.

⁷⁵³ For the so-called ‘polarization’ of the two terms, see Ajami, *The Neckveins of Winter*, pp. 1-50. The issue of *ṭab* ‘ and *takalluf* in Persian literary criticism is addressed in Landau, *De rythme et de raison*, pp.121-5.

⁷⁵⁴ Shams-i Qays, *Al-Mu‘jam*, p. 368.

⁷⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁶ Shams-i Qays, *Al-Mu‘jam*, p. 358.

⁷⁵⁷ Shams-i Qays, *Al-Mu‘jam*, p. 359.

paronomasia, and displeasing syntax (*taqdīm ū ta'khīrāt-i nākhūsh*),⁷⁵⁸ but if a poet should employ fine crafted techniques and 'natural' rhetorical devices (*az ṣanā'āt-i mustaḥsan ū mustabda'āt-i maṭbū'*), such as pleasant antithesis (*muṭābaqa*), fitting simile (*tashbīh*), fine metaphor (*isti'arat*), balanced parallelism (*taqābil*), or sweet amphibology (*īhām*), the poem will come out better.⁷⁵⁹

Comparison between the criteria developed by Shams-i Qays and those employed by 'Awfī suggests a considerable overlap between the critical ideas of the two writers. Yet while Shams-i Qays was attempting to develop a practical guide to good style in the present, 'Awfī was presenting the tradition from its inception to his own time. This raises the question of whether he conceived of poetry in a diachronic or a synchronic sense. In other words, does he apply a consistent set of criteria to the poetry of all periods and regions, aiming to find models for 'contemporary' poetic style in the work of earlier generations, or does he account for shifts in taste and style over the ages? Close reading of the *Lubāb* suggests that 'Awfī thought of poetic temperament as a fixed state of being, with which good poets of every historical period had been endowed, and that he judged a poet's work by a common set of critical standards, regardless of when they had lived and what their profession was. This is despite the fact that the *Lubāb* is curated to display stylistic changes in the poetic corpus across time.

There do not appear to be any overarching patterns in the *Lubāb* to suggest that 'Awfī conceives of poetry through a paradigm of historical development. There is a general association between poetry that is 'sweet',⁷⁶⁰ 'mellifluous',⁷⁶¹ and 'innate' (*maṭbū'*).⁷⁶²

⁷⁵⁸ *Taqdīm* (preposition) and *ta'khīr* (postposition) describe the alteration of the natural syntactic order of words. They are most frequently encountered in discussions of the grammar of the Qur'ān.

⁷⁵⁹ Shams-i Qays, *Al-Mu'jam*, p. 359.

⁷⁶⁰ LA 1:190; 2:3; 2:15; 2:42; 2:46; 2:47; 2:88; 2:138; 2:181.

⁷⁶¹ LA 2: 2; 2:15; 2:88; 2:145; 2:181.

⁷⁶² LA 1:22; 2:68; 2:69; 2:99; 2:163; 2:174.

Poetry that is crafted (*maṣnūʿ* or any cognate term),⁷⁶³ is not unlike poetry based on ‘skill’ (*barāʿa*).⁷⁶⁴ The terms *maṭbūʿ* and *maṣnūʿ* cannot, however, be taken to define a poet’s character, since ʿAwfī explicitly states that the same poet can produce poetry that is either *maṭbūʿ* or *maṣnūʿ*.⁷⁶⁵

As al-Thaʿālibī edits the work of poets such as Abū Firās, so too ʿAwfī alters and condenses poems to explore specific technical aspects of poetry. In the entry on ʿUnṣurī, for example, ʿAwfī includes several extracts from *qaṣīda* poems. Poem 1, in praise of Maḥmūd of Ghazna, includes the poem’s *maṭlaʿ* and then condenses the descriptive *nasīb*, on the king’s encampment and war elephants, before ending with the first line of the *takhalluṣ* in praise of Maḥmūd, in the order: lines 1, 2, x, x, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, where x indicates a line absent from the print *dīvān*.⁷⁶⁶ The abridgement has a twofold effect. Firstly, it gives the reader an impression of how ʿUnṣurī begins a poem, engages in description and segues into praise. Secondly, it tells us of ʿUnṣurī’s connection to his patron Maḥmūd, information which would otherwise only have been revealed by extensive citation. While it could be argued that print editions may reflect alternative manuscript recensions of ʿUnṣurī’s poems that were available to ʿAwfī but not to modern editors, the fact that ʿAwfī omits many lines would tend to suggest that, in this case, we are dealing with a deliberate series of abridgements on the part of the compiler, instead of with textual variants in the manuscript tradition.

ʿAwfī’s additional editing in the entry on ʿUnṣurī would tend to support the view that he was interested in excerpting coherent sections exploring an individual generic sub-type. Thus poem 2 consists of lines 25, 26, 27 and 28 of another *qaṣīda* in praise of Maḥmūd,

⁷⁶³ LA 2:22; 2:47; 2:55; 2:69; 2:99; 2:104; 2:138; 2:145; 2:165; 2:181.

⁷⁶⁴ LA 2:53; 2:87; 2:117; 2:153; 2:199.

⁷⁶⁵ LA 2:181.

⁷⁶⁶ LA 2: 29. C.f. *Dīvān-i Abū l-Qāsim Ḥasan b. Aḥmad ʿUnṣurī*, pp. 23-5.

this time comprising an extended metaphor on the patron's qualities, in which his own attributes are swapped with those of the elements.⁷⁶⁷ Likewise, poem 10 consists of a focussed comparison between Maḥmūd and Jamshīd that makes up lines 19, 20 and 21 of a long *qaṣīda*.⁷⁶⁸ Poem five is a two-line extract in which the poet vaunts his own capabilities, which comprises lines 39 and 40 of a *qaṣīda*.⁷⁶⁹ When the beginning of a poem is given, it consists of a stand-alone image. Thus Poem 7 forms the two opening lines of an address to Maḥmūd, calling the attention of the court to the speaker,⁷⁷⁰ while Poem 9, an extended description of a sword, consists of the inverted lines 4, x, 3 and 2 from a *qaṣīda* to Maḥmūd.⁷⁷¹ It is worth noting that Poems 3, 4, 6, 8, 11 and 12, half of the poems ascribed to 'Unṣurī by 'Awfī, are only found in the *Lubāb*.⁷⁷²

The entry on 'Unṣurī suggests that, as in the *Yatīma*, the connection between form and genre was of interest to 'Awfī, since his selection of extracts focuses on individual strophes of polythematic praise poetry and their connection to one another. This gives the impression that 'Awfī was truly manipulating poems, as opposed to simply culling them from sources and reproducing them *ad hoc*. We find a similar trend in other entries.⁷⁷³ For example, 'Awfī's recension of a *qaṣīda* by Anvarī possesses about two thirds of the lines but has the same general structure as the version found in the edited print *dīvān*, moving between *vaṣf* and *madḥ*.⁷⁷⁴ A *qaṣīda* by Manūchihirī in praise of his peer 'Unṣurī is

⁷⁶⁷ LA 2:29-30. C.f. *Dīvān-i Abū l-Qāsim Ḥasan b. Aḥmad 'Unṣurī*, p. 59.

⁷⁶⁸ LA 2: 32. C.f. *Dīvān-i Abū l-Qāsim Ḥasan b. Aḥmad 'Unṣurī*, p. 121.

⁷⁶⁹ LA 2:30 C.f. *Dīvān-i Abū l-Qāsim Ḥasan b. Aḥmad 'Unṣurī*, p.17.

⁷⁷⁰ LA 2:31 C.f. *Dīvān-i Abū l-Qāsim Ḥasan b. Aḥmad 'Unṣurī*, p. 91.

⁷⁷¹ LA 2:31 C.f. *Dīvān-i Abū l-Qāsim Ḥasan b. Aḥmad 'Unṣurī*, p. 117.

⁷⁷² C.f. *Dīvān-i Abū l-Qāsim Ḥasan b. Aḥmad 'Unṣurī*, p. 164.

⁷⁷³ Miller observes an additional phenomenon, in which 'Awfī terms the *nasīb* sections of *qaṣā'id* by Mu'izzī and Abū l-Faraj Rūnī *ghazals*. See Miller, *Poetics of the Sufī Carnival*, p. 380 n.35. Miller suggests that these introits could have been circulating independently as lyric poems. While this is likely, the fact that 'Awfī used the *dīvāns* of both poets to compile their entries reinforces the thesis that he was editing their work down.

⁷⁷⁴ LA 2:132-3. Cf. Anvarī, *Dīvān*, Vol. 1, pp. 294-6.

trimmed down to just the descriptive *nasīb* and the *takhalluṣ*, preserving enough of the structure of the poem to inform us whom it concerns, but focusing on the genre of *vaṣf* poetry.⁷⁷⁵

Selection and Arrangement: ‘Awfī’s Use of Contextual Information

Another major issue connected to the use of source material is the extent to which contextual information is included or ignored by the anthologist. ‘Awfī is generally more explicit than al-Tha‘ālibī in tying a poem to a specific episode in the composer’s life.

Although poems are often introduced by a simple *va lahu* (‘also by him’), when ‘Awfī does introduce contextual information it often consists of a narrative. For example, in the entry on the Saljuq sultan Sanjar’s (d. 552/1157) vizier Niẓām al-Mulk Naṣīr al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Abī Tawba, ‘Awfī includes a *rubā‘ī* on the topic of being imprisoned in a well.⁷⁷⁶ The poem makes the obvious comparison between the speaker and the prophet Yūsuf, imprisoned in the well by his jealous brothers. While the poem could, in theory, stand alone, ‘Awfī includes it in a narrative that he heard from Sharaf Muḥammad b.

‘Umar al-Karkū’ī, judge of the town of Bātikrū, reporting his grandfather, who had been alive in the time of Ibn Abī Tawba. We learn from him that Ibn Abī Tawba had been imprisoned in the well at Bātikrū, and that al-Karkū’ī was allowed to walk to the lip of the well and speak to him. Al-Karkū’ī provides a short but vivid description of Ibn Abī Tawba weeping incessantly and repeating the *rubā‘ī*.

There are several, complementary reasons which help to explain why ‘Awfī includes al-Karkū’ī’s narrative. There is pre-modern ‘intellectual property’, in the sense that, if the information provided by al-Karkū’ī is correct, he is likely to be the only person ever to

⁷⁷⁵ LA 2:54-5; Manuchihrī, *Dīvān*, pp. 79-80.

⁷⁷⁶ LA 1: 77.

have heard the poem. Just as hadith can be kept in the family and transmitted across generations, so too, presumably, can poems. ‘Awfī’s transmission of the poem in the context of its *khavar* and *isnād* therefore acknowledges that the poem belongs, in some sense, to al-Karkū’ī. It also conveys information on how the poem was interpreted and appreciated by the family who preserved it, prompting the reader in turn to understand the poem as a personal lament. More significantly, it ties a fairly conventional poem into a particular biographical moment, telling the reader more about the subject and the particular nature of his life and work.

In the context of the anthology, contextual information not only reveals what is specific about a poem and how it pertains to the speaker’s life, but also what about it is generic, connecting it to other poems. The narrative therefore links the verses, which could be interpreted in several different ways were they given independently, to the corpus of ‘prison’ poetry scattered throughout the *Lubāb*. As in the *Yatīma*, contextualised information creates conceptual categories of poem, allowing us to compare the use of imagery on to the theme of imprisonment by Ibn Abī Tawba with that of poets such as the sultan Sulaymān b. Muḥammad the Saljuq,⁷⁷⁷ the vizier Naṣr Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd,⁷⁷⁸ Bahā’ al-Dīn Muḥammad b. al-Mu’ayyad al-Baghdādī,⁷⁷⁹ and ‘Alā’ al-Mulk Sharaf al-Dīn Mīrak.⁷⁸⁰

When such a comparison is made, the poets’ deployment of tropes is brought into sharper relief. Both Ibn Abī Tawba and Sulaymān b. Muḥammad use a form of *talmīḥ* to compare their own plight with that of historical and Qur’anic figures. While Ibn Abī Tawba likens himself to Yūsuf,⁷⁸¹ a comparison based on similarity of predicament, Sulaymān b.

⁷⁷⁷ LA 1 : 40.

⁷⁷⁸ LA 1: 93.

⁷⁷⁹ LA 1 : 142.

⁷⁸⁰ LA 1: 148.

⁷⁸¹ LA 1: 77.

Muḥammad uses a punning reference to his Qur’anic namesake, writing that Solomon is bound while the demons walk free.⁷⁸² The basis of the comparison is further strengthened by that fact that, like his Qur’anic counterpart, Sulaymān b. Muḥammad was a king.

The poems by the three viziers are closer to one another in form, reflecting the fact that they are excerpted from letters to rulers begging for the speaker’s release, but they contrast strongly in their arguments. The *rubāʿī* by Naṣr Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd admonishes its addressee, the Ghūrid king Khusraw Malik (d. 585/1190), urging him to exert his authority against the factions who had Naṣr Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd incarcerated in the first place.⁷⁸³ The extract by Bahā’ al-Dīn Muḥammad b. al-Mu’ayyad al-Baghdādī, however, sent home to Khwarazm when he was imprisoned on a diplomatic mission in Herat, plays on the topos of separation to depict its royal addressee as something between a patron and a beloved.⁷⁸⁴ Finally, the *rubāʿī* by ‘Alā’ al-Mulk Sharaf al-Dīn Mīrak, which appears, incidentally, to have been the only one to achieve its desired effect and get the composer released, is also admonitory, complaining of the speaker’s hunger and imploring the addressee to free him.⁷⁸⁵ A comparison between the three poems allows us to understand the conventions of the genre – the tone between servant and king is in all three cases intimate, the poem’s aim to reveal a state of affairs to which the addressee is blind – but in doing so it also emphasises the particular, biographical context in which the poems were written.

From Genre to Image: Literary Theory in the *Yatīma*

⁷⁸² LA 1 : 40.

⁷⁸³ LA 1: 93.

⁷⁸⁴ LA 1 : 142.

⁷⁸⁵ LA 1: 148.

Recent scholarship on pre-modern Arabic literature has paid attention to the critical value of certain collections of poetry that do not have an obviously theoretical agenda, but which arrange poems according to image or motif (*maʿnā*). Such practical works may not privilege explicit critical analysis, but they can nevertheless be structured by an implicit set of critical concerns, casting light on how individual images were perceived to connect with one another in the formation of whole poems, or shedding greater insight into the idea of what constitutes a motif. It is worth noting that four of the best-known Arabic *maʿnā* guides which have been examined to date come from the late tenth and eleventh centuries, at which time al-Thaʿālibī was active.

Thus, Gruendler has studied the different ways in which poems are linked in Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī's (d. after 395/1005) *Dīwān al-maʿnā*, identifying five major types of arrangement present in the anthology: the 'poetic-critical', the thematic, the chronological, the contrastive, and the contextual.⁷⁸⁶ Sadan focuses on al-Sarī al-Raffā's (d. c. 362/972) anthology of interconnected lyric motifs on wine-drinking, flowers and love, *Kitāb al-muḥibb wa-l-maḥbūb wa-l-mashmūm wa-l-mashrūb*, identifying how al-Sarī shows the evolution of linked sets of images from the work of one poet to another.⁷⁸⁷ A rhetoric-based approach is adopted by al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (fifth/eleventh century) in his *Majmaʿ al-balāgha*, which maps out fields of imagery on the basis of connections between the object of one metaphor and the subject of the next.⁷⁸⁸ Most recently, Sadan's research on al-Sarī's *Kitāb al-muḥibb wa l-maḥbūb* has been extended by Talib, who applies the term 'variation', designating "a subtle, inexplicit progression of thematic and rhetorical

⁷⁸⁶ Gruendler, "Motif vs. Genre", pp. 61-76.

⁷⁸⁷ Sadan, "Maiden's Hair and Starry Skies", pp. 74-84.

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 84-7.

movements”, to characterise the arrangement of poems in Book Four, Part One of that work.⁷⁸⁹

In the case of al-‘Askarī’s *Dīwān al-ma‘ānī*, connections between one poem and the next are facilitated by an explicit focus on motifs and their manipulation. Al-Sarī’s *Kitāb al-muḥibb wa l-maḥbūb* applies a similar set of techniques, restricting itself to interconnected motifs in the field of lyric poetry. Al-Rāghib’s *Majma‘ al-balāgha* is based on another set of organisational principles, since it is oriented towards the application of rhetorical devices.

To some extent, the *Yatīma* uses all of these overlapping critical frameworks. As we have seen, in both the longer and the shorter chapters in the anthology, poems are arranged according to generic type, which ensures a general continuity of theme between extracts. Al-Tha‘ālibī also links extracts using factors such as form, rhyme, rhetorical device and image. It is possible to connect almost every poem in the *Yatīma* with the preceding one and the following one through such continuities, a form of arrangement which implicitly argues that contemporary poetry forms an interwoven corpus.

In this respect the *Yatīma* is a complex work of criticism, akin to al-Āmidī’s (d. 371/987) *Muwāzana*, which pursues different approaches to the analysis of poetry in its separate parts. Al-Āmidī begins his work by studying the *sariqāt* shared between Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī, but then moves on to dissect their poems in different genres. As in the *Yatīma*, comparison is conducted through the juxtaposition of complementary fragments. Like al-Tha‘ālibī, al-Āmidī moves from one genre to another through a gradual series of shifts. For example, his section on poetry in praise of grey hair is followed by one on reproach of fate, which is normally instigated by the poet’s reflection on the ageing

⁷⁸⁹ Talib, “Woven Together as Though Randomly Strung”, pp. 24; 37ff.

process.⁷⁹⁰ Next comes poetry on the passage of time, and then ascetic and hortatory verse, again a theme connected to ageing.⁷⁹¹ The ascetic theme of contentment with one's lot then gives way to its opposite, the search for the patron's bounty, landing us in the *madh* section of *qaṣīda* poetry.⁷⁹²

Al-Tha'ālibī's connections between one poem and the next can be founded on factors such as the combination of two specific images, or the inversion of an image, or continuity of rhetorical device, or simply the use of the same rhyme scheme. For example, in the entry on Abū l-Ṭayyib al-Ṭāhirī, there is a poem on a *ghulām* who gave the poet a bunch of narcissi as an apology for spending his money.⁷⁹³ This is followed by a joking poem on the arrogance of al-Jabhānī, al-Ṭāhirī's acquaintance. There is a generic connection between the two poems in the sense that they are both satirical, but the most obvious link is their common rhyme scheme in the letter *ḍād*, something that is signalled by the anthologist.

Although al-Tha'ālibī generally pursues continuities in motif between one poem and the next, sometimes he arranges poems on the basis of thematic opposition, a 'contrastive' method similar to that adopted by al-ʿAskarī.⁷⁹⁴ Occasionally such oppositions are marked explicitly, as when al-Tha'ālibī presents one poem by al-Mīkālī, on being given a bouquet of pleasing violets, as the opposite (*ḍidd*) of another poem by the same poet, on being given a bouquet of ugly violets.⁷⁹⁵ Opposition can also go unmarked, as in two poems by Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān, one of which deals with evenings spent in company, and the other of which treats separation.⁷⁹⁶ In this case, however, the relationship between the two poems is more complicated than that of antithesis of theme; both share a common

⁷⁹⁰ See *al-Muwāzana* Vol. 2, pp. 227-30.

⁷⁹¹ Ibid. pp. 233-43.

⁷⁹² Ibid. pp. 243-63.

⁷⁹³ YD 4:83.

⁷⁹⁴ See Gruendler, "Motif vs. Image", p. 72.

⁷⁹⁵ YD 4:429-30.

⁷⁹⁶ YD 4:453.

dependence on extended similes, with the first likening the full moon set in the Pleiades to a ruler seated in a garden, and the second likening the parting beloved to the snake who hibernates and returns in spring.

Sometimes al-Tha‘ālibī makes the use of a rhetorical technique the most obvious connection between poems.⁷⁹⁷ In the entry on Abū Sa‘d ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Dūst, for example, two, two-line poems are juxtaposed that both use *tajnīs* at the end of each line.⁷⁹⁸ The first depends on a pun between *abārīqahu* (‘his wine jugs’) and *abārīqahu* (‘he denied me his saliva’), while the second makes use of a technically identical pun between *al-munādama* (‘serving as a boon-companion’) and *bi l-munā damah* (... ‘his blood with desire’). This punning technique is typical of the style pioneered by Abūl-Faṭḥ al-Bustī, and it is a feature of the work of many of the Khurasani poets selected by al-Tha‘ālibī.

The connections made by al-Tha‘ālibī are sufficiently fluid to allow for a gradual shift from one genre to another over the course of a section; a motif can be implied at the beginning of a section, developed more fully throughout it, and then taken in a different direction at the end. For example, in the chapter on al-Ṣāhib Ibn ‘Abbād, the section on love poetry and related types (*al-ghazal wa-mā yata‘allaqu bihi*) begins with an address to a beloved, which uses a form of complete graphic paronomasia to describe them as the light ‘morning’ (*ṣabāḥ*) which outshines the ‘night’ presented by all other beauties (*ṣibāḥ*).⁷⁹⁹ Wine-poetry and the context of wine-consumption are implied by the line: ‘I have no wine, so grant me the spirit of your saliva’ (*wa-ba‘da fa-laysa yaḥḍarunī sharāb / fa-an‘im min ruḍābik lī bi-rāḥ*).⁸⁰⁰

⁷⁹⁷ For more examples of al-Tha‘ālibī’s use of poems to highlight a particular rhetorical technique, see al-Jādir, *al-Tha‘ālibī nāqidan*, pp. 268-9.

⁷⁹⁸ YD 4:492.

⁷⁹⁹ YD 3:296.

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid.

The poem which follows also uses paronomasia, ensuring formal continuity, but it is concerned with the cruelty of the beloved, and therefore presents an image that is antithetical to the previous poem.⁸⁰¹ Skipping forward to the end of the section, the final poem picks up on motifs featured in the first one: the dark night of separation; the *tashbīh* between intoxicating wine and saliva; the pride of the beloved. We also have a partial form of paronomasia based on the root ‘-dh-r’: ‘Whenever he swaggers and takes pride in his looks / His beard rises to apologise for him’ (*wa-idhā takabbara wa-istiṭāla bi-ḥusnihi / fa-idhār ‘arīḍihi yaqūm bi-‘udhrihi*).⁸⁰² The next section then begins, consisting of Ibn ‘Abbād’s descriptions of locks of hair and the beard (*milḥ min shi‘rihi fī l-ṣudgh wa-l-khaṭṭ wa-l-‘idhār*).⁸⁰³ Aside from the common theme of the beard, the closing poem of the section on love poetry and the opening one of the section on hair share a topic: both describe beloveds characterised as ‘gazelle fawns’ (*rashā’*, *shādin*) The final poem of the section on love poetry and the first poem of the following section are therefore naturally linked to one another.

Occasionally al-Tha‘ālibī digresses to pursue the root of an image. Al-Jādir demonstrates that in one such digression, found in the entry on Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Raqqī in Part One of the *Tatimma*, the anthologist’s comparison of lines is based on an intuitive approach to the combination of motifs. The anthologist considers a line by al-Raqqī to be defective (*mu‘ayyab*), since it combines the common simile likening curls of hair to scorpions with a second image comparing tresses to snakes, and al-Tha‘ālibī argues that the listener’s innate poetic feeling (*al-ṭab‘*) shrinks from such things in lyric poetry.⁸⁰⁴ Al-Tha‘ālibī proceeds to unpack the images and their generic associations, citing a line by

⁸⁰¹ YD 3:296-7.

⁸⁰² YD 3:302.

⁸⁰³ YD 3:302.

⁸⁰⁴ YD 5:64; al-Jādir, *Al-Tha‘ālibī nāqidan*, p. 263.

Ibn al-Rūmī to demonstrate how the combination of scorpions and snakes to describe hair can be used effectively in *hijā*, and moving on to show how the *tashbīh* on scorpions can be particularly pleasing if it is executed with rhetorical craft (*idhā kānat fīhi ṣanʿa*).⁸⁰⁵ The *shawāhid* used to bolster this argument come from the work of Ibn al-Muʿtazz, al-Sarī al-Raffāʾ and Ibn ʿAbbād. Al-Jādir notes that all three lines deemed by al-Thaʿālibī to be successful are based on a *ṭibāq*, but a form of fantastic aetiology (*ḥusn al-taʿlīl*) seems to structure the first one, which argues that the scorpions of the beloved’s hair have been burnt by their blazing cheeks.⁸⁰⁶ The second poem is indeed based on an aesthetic antithesis between the scorpions of the beloved’s curls and the roses of their cheeks, while the third contrasts the scorpions of the beloved’s curls against the antidote provided by their saliva.

Al-Thaʿālibī pursues further digressions to get to the root of a motif, or a rhetorical device, at several points in the *Yatīma*. In the entry on Ibn Khālawayh, for example, a poem is given describing the coldness of Hamadan in winter, in contrast to its pleasant climate in summer.⁸⁰⁷ This poem is then followed by another on the same topic by an unnamed local poet (*baʿḍihim*).⁸⁰⁸ A third, ascribed to the scribe Abū ʿAlī, follows, continuing with the same theme, but introducing the idea of the ‘coldness’ of the local inhabitants.⁸⁰⁹ Al-Thaʿālibī then broadens the topic out to the coldness of cities in general, citing a *dūbayt* by

⁸⁰⁵ YD 5:64.

⁸⁰⁶ C.f. al-Jādir, *Al-Thaʿālibī nāqidan*, p. 264. Al-Jādir reasons that there is a second, implicit antithesis in all cases, between attraction to the beloved and revulsion at the thought of scorpions. The line by Ibn ʿAbbād is also given in the section of the *Yatīma* concerned with his *sariqāt* (YD 3:323-4). See also Naaman, “*Sariqa* in Practice”, pp. 280; 281 n. 32.

⁸⁰⁷ YD 1:136. Al-Thaʿālibī provides a similar series of poems by different authors, this time satirising the city of Bukhara, in the entry on Abū l-Ṭayib al-Ṭāhirī (YD 4:80-1).

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁹ Ibid.

Abū l-Rabī‘ al-Balkhī on the town of al-Shāsh in Transoxiana.⁸¹⁰ The poem is marked by its use of paronomasia:

الشاش في الصيف جنة * ومن أذى الحر جنة

لكنني تعتريني * بها لدى البرد جنة

Shash is Paradise in summer, protected from the fierce heat

But I go out of my mind there in the cold season

At this point al-Tha‘ālibī stops pursuing the *ma‘nā* of cities in winter and takes up the rhetorical device of half-lines ending in paronomasia, writing: “here is another poem that uses the same device (*ṣan‘a*), even if it is not on the same motif”:⁸¹¹

يا شادناً مت قبله * قد صار في الحسن قبلة

امنن عليّ بقبلة * تشفي فؤاداً مولّه

O gazelle before whom I die, and who has been a *qibla* in his beauty

Grant me a kiss, to give succour to a giddy heart

This kind of critical approach does not appear to have been unique to al-Tha‘ālibī. We find a similar, formal connection made between poems of disparate content in a discussion between al-Khwārizmī and Ibn ‘Abbād that is reported in Part Three of the *Yatīma*. The following poem by Ibn ‘Abbād is given:

بدا لنا كالبر في شروقه * يشكو غزالاً لج في عقوقه

يا عجباً والدهر في طروقه * من عاشق أحسن من معشوقه

⁸¹⁰ YD 1:137.

⁸¹¹ Ibid.

He appeared to us like the rising moon, complaining of a gazelle who had rebuffed him

How curious fate's decrees are, that one should find a lover more comely than his beloved

Al-Tha'ālibī then remarks: "I once heard al-Khwārizmī say: 'The Ṣāhib recited these rhymes to me one evening, and asked: 'Do you know a verse by one of the Moderns that uses a comparable motif?' I replied: 'I know only the line by al-Buḥturī:

ومن عجب الدهر أن الأم * ير أصبح أكتب من كاتبه

It is one of fate's curious twists that the amir / Is a better writer than his own scribe'

He said: 'Well done, you're right! exactly so; try and remember it.'"⁸¹²

The exchange between al-Khwārizmī and Ibn 'Abbād raises the question of exactly what constitutes a *ma'nā*. The similarity between the two verses appears to be largely formal, and while both refer to fate and use a comparative construction, the first engages with a field of lyric motifs, and the second derives from a more obviously panegyric context.

However, both lines work by giving the subject of praise – the lover and the patron – the qualities of the person who is supposed to epitomise a particular function – the beloved and the scribe. If the two poems share a *ma'nā*, as is implied, then it would appear to be a motif of praise through comparison, which is both semantic and syntactic.

A similar process is at work in another digression on a particular motif, also quoted in the entry on Ibn 'Abbād. Two short pieces are given on the topic of wine-drinking in the snow.⁸¹³ The first line of both calls on a male servant to hurry and bring wine, while the second of each gives a slightly different simile: the speaker describes a brazier scattering roses, a metaphor for sparks, and likens the surrounding world to camphor or a silver

⁸¹² YD 3 :300-301.

⁸¹³ YD 3 :306.

ingot. Al-Tha‘ālibī reports a statement by al-Khwārizmī, who opined that these snow poems were all dependent on a line by al-Ṣanawbarī:⁸¹⁴

ذهب كؤوسك يا غلا * م فإنه يوم مفضض

Gild your cups, my boy, for it’s a silvery day

Al-Tha‘ālibī, who heard al-Khwārizmī compare the verses, said at the time that the composer of the following line borrowed (*akhadha minhu*) the *ma‘nā*, but did not add anything to it by saying⁸¹⁵:

جاد الغمام بدمع كاللجين جرى * فجد لنا بالتني في اللون كالذهب

The clouds have cried tears that flow like silver * So pour for us that which looks like gold

A comparison between all four poems suggests that the notion of what constitutes the *ma‘nā* again extends beyond the purely semantic level. The ‘parent’ line by al-Ṣanawbarī includes the basic topic of a serving boy pouring wine on a wintry day, a theme which is expanded and explained in greater deal by Ibn ‘Abbād and the unnamed author of the fourth poem. However, each of the four poems also describes the colour of two objects; they all refer to the snow as silvery, but the two by Ibn ‘Abbād use an *isti‘āra* on sparks to suggest the colour red, the line by al-Ṣanawbarī uses an *isti‘āra* on white wine, and the line by the unnamed poet uses a *tashbīh* on white wine. The *ma‘nā* therefore appears to extend beyond the general topic of wine-drinking in the snow to include the use of colour-based comparisons. Al-Tha‘ālibī’s idea of building on the *ma‘nā* would again appear to reflect an intuitive standpoint: to develop the image would be to expand on the topic and the colour-comparison in a manner that was more appealing to the listener.

⁸¹⁴ YD 3 :307.

⁸¹⁵ YD 3 :307.

In this respect, the notion of ‘formal unity’ of the image, characterised by Heinrichs as a development of *muḥdath* poetry, may be helpful.⁸¹⁶ Heinrichs uses the term to designate the binding together of motifs through formal devices, a technique that is implied by al-Tha‘ālibī when he describes contemporary poets in the introduction to the *Yatīma* as more ordered in their use of pleasing aspects of innovative rhetoric (*anẓam li-laṭā’if al-badā’i*) than previous generations. When we interpret the term *ma’nā* as an idea or a set of ideas whose significance is subtly affected by the manner of their presentation, it becomes clear that the links forged by al-Tha‘ālibī between poems should not necessarily be bracketed off as either formal (*lafẓī*) or meaning-based (*ma’nawī*). For critics contemporary with al-Tha‘ālibī, and, I contend, for the anthologist himself, poetic innovation was based on the creation of novel *ma’ānī*, but this could only be achieved by using rhetoric to forge new connections between familiar images.⁸¹⁷ The *Yatīma* examines how these connections are made, and gives its readers the tools to be inventive themselves.

Literary Theory in the *Lubāb*

‘Awfī’s critical conception of the relationship between rhetoric and innate poetic talent was examined above, where I suggested that, like al-Tha‘ālibī, ‘Awfī conceived of ‘natural’ poetry as a style that made appropriate use of rhetorical craft. I also examined how, just as al-Tha‘ālibī renders the innovative aspects of contemporary poetry a central thesis of his introduction to the *Yatīma*, so too ‘Awfī implies that his selections in the *Lubāb* are intended to reflect innovative elements of poetry old and new. To what extent does ‘Awfī also perceive *ma’ānī* to be affected by rhetorical device? Does he too suggest that images should be connected to create a sense of formal unity? Are the styles that are championed by al-Tha‘ālibī also favoured by ‘Awfī? These questions are all linked to one

⁸¹⁶ Heinrichs, “Literary Theory”, pp. 63-4; Idem, “An Evaluation of *Sariqa*”, p. 366.

⁸¹⁷ See Key, *A Linguistic Frame of Mind*, p. 177.

another, since they are essentially concerned with the problem of what the anthologists considered the role of rhetoric to be, and the kind of influence they thought it exerted on the production of meaning.

Like the *Yatīma*, the *Lubāb* is also structured in a harmonised fashion which encourages the reader to connect one poem with the next through form, genre, motif and rhetorical device. While ‘Awfī is not always as explicit as al-Tha‘ālibī in highlighting his critical agenda, his characterisations of individual poets do nevertheless suggest a framework which helps the reader to interpret their work. One case-study which demonstrates this point is provided by the entry on the Ghaznavid poet Bahrāmī Sarakhsī. ‘Awfī refers to the ‘pleasantries’ produced by Bahrāmī Sarakhsī’s innate feeling for poetry (*laṭā’if-i ṭab ‘-i dil-navāz-i ū*), but he also writes of the poet’s talent for ornamenting images.⁸¹⁸ In addition, ‘Awfī notes that Bahrāmī Sarakhsī was the author of a work on prosody and possessed a profound knowledge of the ‘science’ of poetry (*‘ilm-i shi‘r*).⁸¹⁹ The author’s introductory sketch therefore prepares the reader for poetry that will be at once simple to grasp and easily memorised, but also well-structured and marked by the use of rhetorical devices.

The entry consists of seven short poems. The first is a praise poem based on the transfer of images from a literal to a figurative sense (*isti‘āra*), in which the poet uses martial *topoi* to describe intellectual prowess; we thus have the ‘horse of knowledge’ (*asp-i ‘ilm*) and the ‘battlefield of truth’ (*maydān-i ḥaqq*). The transferred images lead us into Poem Two, a love poem based on similes (*tashbīh*) between the beloved and the natural world, in which the former takes on the qualities of the latter. Poem Three keeps to the same field of imagery and the same rhetorical device, likening a narcissus to the eyes of the beloved. Poem Four maintains the comparison between the human world and the realm of plants,

⁸¹⁸ LA 2: p. 55.

⁸¹⁹ LA 2: p. 56.

comparing the lover and beloved to a variegated rose of two distinct colours. In Poem Five we move squarely away from love poetry into descriptive poetry, but continuity of topic is ensured, since the poem is on basil-royal, and an echo of the themes found in Poems Two to Four is provided when the plant is likened to a beloved in a green dress. Poem Six is another squarely descriptive poem, which uses the contrast of the colours black and white, provided by the image of jackdaw motionless in the snow, to cycle through a series of comparisons: with the black hair of the beloved on their white skin, and with the black of fox-fur against the white of pelican feathers. Poem Seven is a riddling piece on the name of a Turkic beloved; the rhetoric of the poem marks a distinct break with the previous poems, although we have been in the field of love-poetry and related genres since Poem Two.

Another example is provided by the entry on Daqīqī. ‘Awfī refers to the “subtlety of image and delicacy of phrasing” (*diqqat-i ma’ānī ū riqqat-i alfāz*) found in his work, suggesting that the poet is able to develop motifs through the application of formal devices.⁸²⁰ We see this assertion mirrored in ‘Awfī’s selections of Daqīqī’s writing; near the end of the entry, the following three poems are juxtaposed:⁸²¹

وهم اوراست:

من اینجا دیر ماندم خوار گشتم * عزیز از ماندن دایم شود خوار

چو آب اندر شمر بسیار ماند * ز هومت گیرد از آرام بسیار

وهم او گفته است:

ز آن تلخ می گزین که گرداند * نیروش روان تلخ را شیرین

⁸²⁰ LA 2: 11.

⁸²¹ LA 2: 13.

وز طلعت او هوا چنان پر رنگ * کز خون تذرو سینه شاهین

و هم در تشبیه شراب گفته:

ز آن مرکب که کالبد از نور * لیکن اورا روان و جان از نار

ز آن ستاره که مغربش دهندست * مشرق او را همیشه بر رخسار

He is also the author of the following:

I've stayed here too long and become wretched * The exalted are humbled when they tarry

If water pools in a cistern * The stillness makes it stagnate

He also composed:

Choose wine if you're bitter * since its strength sweetens a bitter soul

At its appearance the atmosphere takes on the colour * Of a hawk's chest speckled with
pheasant blood

He also composed these similes on wine:

From that mixture whose body is of light * But whose soul and spirit are of fire

From that star which sets in the mouth * And which rises on the cheek

These three poems provide a fine example of how 'Awfī is able to use continuities in rhetorical craft to cycle through motifs. Here the reader is given a relatively natural progression from one genre to another: the humbling of the speaker in the first poem is met in the second poem with the rejoinder to drink wine, the traditional consolation for sorrow, while the third picks up the topic of comparisons on wine. In terms of rhetoric, the first two poems follow an almost identical structure: an element is mentioned in the first *miṣrā'* of the first line, and it is placed into a *ṭibāq* in the second *miṣrā'* (*khwār* and *'azīz* in Poem One; *talkh* and *shīrīn* in Poem Two). The second line of the first two poems consists of a

tamṣīl, or extended analogy, which complements the thesis of the poem.⁸²² *Tamṣīl* is classed by different critics as a form of simile (*tashbīh*), or metaphor (*isti‘āra*).⁸²³ In his comment on Poem Three, ‘Awfī himself seems to use the word *tashbīh* to designate metaphorical language, creating a bridge between this and the preceding poem; Poem Three consists of two sets of *isti‘ārāt*, the first personifying wine, and the second its effects. As in Mannerist poetry, the meaning of the second line of Poem Three is defined by the internal logic of the metaphor; the rising of the ‘star’ refers to the flush of inebriation on the drinker’s cheek.

As in the *Yatīma*, the issue of whether such connections should be seen as based on either form or content has the potential to be overplayed, and ‘Awfī’s implicit argument seems to mirror al-Tha‘ālibī’s own interest in how motifs can be bound together. Sometimes connections are clearly based on both form and content. In the entry on the Sāmānid poet Bū Shakūr, the author of a narrative and moralising work entitled *Āfarīnnāma* (*The Book of Benediction*), ‘Awfī highlights that in one particular extract, the poet describes wine in two different states as the crescent moon and the full moon.⁸²⁴ In the next poem selected by the anthologist, the reader is also faced with a double set of similes; spilt wine is likened to the eye of a blind man or the soul of a dead man.⁸²⁵ The connection between the two poems is therefore made in terms of both rhetorical device and content. The reader is

⁸²² See van Gelder, “*Tamthīl*”.

⁸²³ G. J. van Gelder, “*Tamthīl*”; See also Shams-i Qays, *Al-Mu‘jam*, pp. 319-20, where *tamthīl* is classed as a form of metaphor (*isti‘āra*).

⁸²⁴ LA 2: 21. ‘Awfī describes the *Āfarīnnāma* as a work on wine, and gives its date of completion as 336/947. Scattered verses in the same metre as that in which the work was purportedly written (*mutaqārib*) appear in dictionaries such as Asadī’s *Lughat-i furs*, and suggest that it was a narrative and didactic poem. One of these lines speaks of a work begun in 333/944-5. Bertel’s therefore argued that ‘Awfī made a mistake with the date. See *Persidskaya poeziya v Bukare*, p. 409. Lazard contends that the work was probably begun in 333/944-5 and completed in 336/947. See Lazard, *Les premiers poètes*, Vol. 1 p. 28. Another possibility is that 336/947 represents the year in which the poem was copied, not composed. See also de Fouchécour, *Moralia*, pp. 102-3.

⁸²⁵ LA 2 :21.

presented with a similar case in the entry on Abū Sa‘d Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Manshūrī al-Samarqandī, where two poems describing fire are juxtaposed.⁸²⁶

In other cases, ‘Awfī highlights the use of a particular device to connect several images. In the entry on the poet Abū Manṣūr ‘Amāra b. Muḥammad al-Marvazī, for example, the link between one poem, describing a garden, and a second poem, describing wine and the wine-cup, is the use of simile. In Poem One, the ripples caused by the breeze on a pond are likened to scales on a fish, while in Poem Two wine in the cup is compared to fire in water.⁸²⁷ Such connections in the use of rhetorical device can also extend across genres. In the entry on the Ghaznavid poet Kisā’ī Marvazī, a poem mourning a leading figure of the city of Marv and another describing wine-drinking are linked by the use of *takhyīl*; Poem One argues that the tears of the inhabitants of Marv have created a flood which has caused the bier of the deceased to float away, while Poem Two argues that the sun’s rays have fallen on the wine-cup because the sun has seen itself reflected in the surface of the liquid.⁸²⁸

While al-Tha‘ālibī almost always abridges *qaṣīda* poetry to present one thematically coherent strophe at a time, ‘Awfī sometimes quotes multiple strophes of a given polythematic poem, a practice which becomes increasingly common in the entries on poets of the Saljuq period. In cases such as these, the relationships between one *qaṣīda* and the next are more complicated than the connections between short poems which employ only a limited number of rhetorical devices. Nevertheless, parallels are established between whole *qaṣā’id*. For example, two polythematic odes juxtaposed in the entry on Azraqī follow similar structures.⁸²⁹ The first begins with a description of the natural world, then

⁸²⁶ LA 2: 44-5.

⁸²⁷ LA 2: 24-5.

⁸²⁸ LA 2: 34.

⁸²⁹ LA 2:96-103.

moves into separate descriptions of the patron's qualities and their martial prowess, ending with a prayer for their continued rule. The second *qaṣīda* expands on the structure of first, also beginning with a description of the natural world and describing the patron's qualities and their martial prowess. The poem then returns to the topic of the patron's qualities and adds a section in which the poet vaunts his own creative capabilities, before closing with a prayer for the patron.

Beyond their comparable structures, the two poems apply the same rhetorical devices to similar images. Thus, in the sections on the patron's martial prowess we find the following images, both dependent on a form of *takhyīl*:

Poem One:⁸³⁰

ز رشک زین پلنگش ز چرخ بدر منیر * سیاه و زرد نماید همی چو موی پلنگ

Jealous of his leopard-fur saddle, the full moon appears black and yellow like the skin of a leopard⁸³¹

Poem Two:⁸³²

هلال شکل ز نعل سمنند او گیرد * ازین سبب ز خسوف ایمنست شکل هلال

The crescent moon takes its shape from his steed's shoes * It is for this reason that the crescent moon does not fear eclipse

To what extent may 'Awfī, or for that matter al-Tha'ālibī and Ibn 'Abbād, have considered these images to be essentially the same? Like the *ma'nā* discussed by Ibn 'Abbād and al-Khwārizmī, the two images use the same technique and share the same function, arguing

⁸³⁰ LA 2:97 ll. 13-14.

⁸³¹ The full implication of the colour comparison is difficult to translate in a fluent manner. The colour black implies melancholia or embarrassment, while yellow suggests a choleric state.

⁸³² LA 2:100 ll. 15-16.

that the patron astride his mount outdoes the moon, even if the objects of their comparison differ.

It is perhaps no accident that ‘Awfī’s description of the nature of poetry at the beginning of the *Lubāb* contains an anecdote set at the court of Ibn ‘Abbād. The anecdote places the well-known dictum that “the sweetest [poetry] is the most mendacious” (*a ‘dhabuhu akdhabuhu*) into the mouth of the poet and boon-companion Abū Muḥammad al-Khāzin, himself featured in the *Yatīma*.⁸³³ The *Lubāb* and the *Yatīma* cover a great deal of common ground: they use similar techniques to examine literary heritage, they contest the same geographical space, and claim writers whom they share in common for their own language. This section has suggested that they also share a similar critical framework, engaging with the question of how poetry responded to the Arabic ‘Moderns’. Both anthologists appear to conclude that the best poetry binds images together to create a more seamless effect. Such seamlessness attracts the listener in turn, allowing them to judge a poem as intuitively ‘sweet’, ‘refined’ and ‘good’.

Chapter Conclusion: The Effects of Editing

The foregoing has aimed to demonstrate that the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* are more than simply source books for literary history. In their use of oral, or aural, and written sources, al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī were continuing and expanding on a tradition in which both the spoken and the written word exerted an influence on compilations of texts. As we have seen, the fact that orality and literacy were inextricably linked even after paper became

⁸³³ LA 1:12; The entry on Abū Muḥammad al-Khāzin is found in YD 3:379.

widespread is also suggested by contextual evidence concerning textual reception, demonstrating that texts such as the *Yatīma* were read, not alone, but in group sessions.

The issue of how al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī collated and edited the material that they drew from written and oral sources is not only a practical one. The two anthologies are also intended to make sense of culture by demonstrating how literature is an interconnected and organised system. Instead of producing a definitive or authoritative recession of texts, the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* often arrange them into new formations, connecting the work of each writer with that of the next, with the practical intention of guiding the reader through the ways in which good poetry manipulates sets of images and rhetorical devices. In both cases, the anthologies are responding to critical ways of thinking that were developed with reference to ‘Modern’ Arabic poetry. However, unlike explicit criticism, which tended to focus on the individual line, or sets of lines, the anthologies offer us a different critical approach based on the organic connections in genre, theme and rhetoric between whole poems, generic sub-types and strophes. While it may be objected that this framework is both superficial and dependent on subjective taste, the anthologists’ aestheticism has a solid theoretical foundation. Indeed, as I have shown, al-Tha‘ālibī recognises that formal phrasings and meanings mirror one another, prefiguring the theories developed by ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī later in the eleventh century, and there is considerable overlap between ‘Awfī’s understanding of good poetry and the ideas of Shams-i Qays. The anthologists would not have arranged their two books in the way that they did unless they were pursuing a set of concepts concerning the perceived dichotomy between form and content which dominated ‘hard’ theory.

The anthologists’ gift to literary criticism was to introduce abstruse theoretical concepts into the practical discussion of poetry, and to present them to readers so that they could learn to understand ideas about poetic form, motifs and phrasing intuitively. This had an

eminently practical purpose, since budding poets needed to know how to connect motifs to one another, and to realise at what point their borrowings from the work of other poets became plagiarism. Since the approaches adopted by al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī were perpetuated in later anthologies that used their methods, the anthologists made an important contribution to the development of practical criticism.

Chapter Four: Language and Ideas

This chapter draws the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* together by studying the relationship that the anthologies construct between Arabic and Persian. It begins by providing an overview of the changing relationship between the two literary cultures from the late ninth century to the early thirteenth, using the idea of the market as a way into discussing the roles of circulation and linguistic exchange in fostering interaction between the two literary cultures. I pay particular attention to authors who functioned as ‘cultural brokers’, meaning that they translated material from one language into another or drew on elements of both Arabic and Persian culture in their writing, and I argue that both ‘Awfī and al-Tha‘ālibī should be seen as influential agents of exchange.

The second half of the chapter consists of a close reading of the anthologies and connected texts. I study the phenomenon of translation, and identify how al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī made critical connections between poetry produced in Arabic and Persian. The chapter concludes that a common approach to genre and rhetoric came to define the poetry in the two languages that was produced in Iran and Central Asia between the tenth and the thirteenth centuries. When it came to imagery, however, there are considerable differences in the corpora, and poets often displayed liberality of interpretation when transposing motifs from one language into another.

Reframing: Exchange between Arabic and Persian

Since the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* together cover a large geographical area and a period of some three hundred years, they do not represent the relationship between Arabic and Persian as stable. As one would expect, they document a changing dynamic, and the areas

over which the two languages were employed in the production of literature do not correspond uniformly to the regions in which they were spoken as a medium of quotidian communication. Significantly, although Persian may not have been the predominant language of courtly literature in tenth-century Iran and Central Asia, there was a market for poetry in Persian among the Arabic-speaking practitioners of high culture, as we shall see in the following sections. Similarly, the emergence of New Persian as a language of courtly literature in the tenth century did not mean that Arabic ceased to be employed as a language of high culture in the eastern Islamic world. Instead, its use became increasingly restricted to bureaucratic, legal and religious circles.

The question of reception is a complicated one, and it seems unlikely that the written record can help us to reconstruct in full the overlap between those audiences who consumed texts in Arabic and those who consumed them in Persian. Nevertheless, we can conclude that there were networks of people who read and wrote verse and literary prose in both languages. Texts and genres were reframed in Arabic from Persian,⁸³⁴ and in Persian from Arabic.⁸³⁵ Such forms of exchange meant that writers active in the two languages frequently engaged with a common fund of people and ideas. To give one pertinent example, Qābūs b. Wushmkīr (d. 403/1012-13), Ziyārid ruler of Gīlān, features in the *Yatīma* and in the *Lubāb* as a writer of *adab*, epistles and *fuṣūl qīṣār*, or short maxims, in Arabic. The fame of his grandson, Kaykāvūs b. Iskandar b. Qābūs b. Vushmgīr (b.

⁸³⁴ The reframing of aspects of Persian culture in Arabic was arguably of central importance to ‘Abbāsīd letters. One example of this phenomenon is presented in Zakerī, *Persian Wisdom in Arabic Garb*. Al-Tha‘ālibī’s *Mirror for Princes*, *Ādāb al-mulūk* (ed. J. ‘Aṭīyah), is another. For general comments on the absorption of Persian material in Arabic *adab*, see Kilpatrick, “A Genre in Classical Arabic Literature: The *Adab Encyclopaedia*”, p. 36, as well as the two entries “Persia, Culture and Literature”, and “Persian Literature, Relations with Arabic” by C.E. Bosworth, where the *shu‘ūbiyya* controversy is characterised as “essentially a *battle of books* [my emphasis] which ended in the tacit acceptance of the Persian strand within the fabric of Islamic civilization”. General surveys of the relationship between Arabic and Persian literature between the eighth and the eleventh centuries include Bosworth, “The Persian Impact on Arabic Literature”; idem, “The Interaction of Arabic and Persian Literature and Culture”; de Bruijn, “Arabic Influences on Persian Literature”.

⁸³⁵ Examples include Ḥamīdī’s (d. 1163/4) *Maqāmāt* (ed. R. Anzābīnizhād) and the translations of al-Tanūkhī made by Dihistānī in the thirteenth century: *Faraj ba’d az shiddat: mutūn-i adab-i fārsī*.

412/1021), who has an entry in the *Lubāb*, rests on the Persian *Qābūsnāma*, named in honour of his grandfather, which designates itself a *andarznāma*, or book of counsel, and which is cognate in its genre to Arabic ‘Mirrors for Princes’ such as al-Tha‘ālibī’s *Ādāb al-Mulūk* and Pseudo-Māwardī’s (lived tenth century) *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*.⁸³⁶ To abide rigidly by linguistic boundaries in studying the work of either grandfather or grandson is to ignore evident continuities in both ideas and textuality between their writing. Several *fuṣūl qiṣār* presented in al-Tha‘ālibī’s entry on Qābūs b. Wushmkīr find clear parallels in the material presented in *Qābūsnāma*, such as the idea that ‘It is an obligation of nobility to pardon the criminal’.⁸³⁷

Any attempt to argue that the writing of Qābūs b. Wushmkīr conforms to a normative ‘Arabic’ literary or ethical model, or that the work of his grandson is a pure reflection of ‘Persian’ statecraft, creates a false binary that ignores how individuals constructed dialogues between Arabic and Persian letters, accepting, rejecting and interrogating ideas about culture.⁸³⁸ This is particularly true of Mirrors for Princes, which drew heavily on two major sources: the preserved wisdom literature of Sasanian Iran, in both Middle Persian and Arabic transmission, and Arabic works of *adab*. As Louise Marlow notes, “articulations of wisdom and counsel reportedly formed a significant component in...intercultural exchange” in tenth-century Khurasan.⁸³⁹ Proverbs – both in prose and in verse – emerge as the major literary form through which such moralia were distilled. When they are transmitted in Arabic, many such proverbs are glossed as being the wisdom of the Persians (*al-furs*), or of Sāsānian kings such as Ardashīr I (d. c. 242 C.E.), whose supposed

⁸³⁶ On *Ādāb al-Mulūk*, see Bray, “al-Tha‘ālibī’s *Ādāb al-Mulūk*”; on Pseudo-Māwardī, see Marlow, *Counsel for Kings*.

⁸³⁷ YD 4: 67; *Qābūsnāma*. p. 152.

⁸³⁸ Cf. Dabashi, *The World of Persian Literary Humanism*, p.75.

⁸³⁹ Marlow, *Counsel for Kings*. Vol. 2, p. 41.

counsel to his son Shāpūr was preserved in Arabic as *The Testament of Ardashīr* (‘*Ahd Ardashīr*’).⁸⁴⁰

Beyond engaging with a common fund of material drawn from both Pre-Islamic Iranian sources and Arabic ones, writers could also be bilingual. I discuss the tenth and eleventh-century figures shared between the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* below, but it should be noted that quite a few of Ghaznavid and Saljuq poets catalogued in the *Lubāb* are also to be found in the section of ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī’s (d. 597/1201) Arabic *Kharīdat al-qaṣr* that deals with Khurasan and the surrounding regions. These include the poet and prose-stylist Rashīd al-Dīn Waṭwāṭ (d. 578/1182) who is famous for his Arabic epistles as well as his Persian work on poetics entitled *Ḥadā’iq al-siḥr fī daqā’iq al-shi’r* (*The Gardens of Magic on the Subtleties of Poetry*);⁸⁴¹ ‘Abd al-Wāsi’ al-Jabalī (d.550/1160), who was well-known for writing macaronic poems (*mulamma’āt*);⁸⁴² Niẓām al-Mulk (d. 485/1092), the Saljuq vizier and author of the political treatise *Siyāsatnāma*;⁸⁴³ his son, Mu’ayyad al-Mulk;⁸⁴⁴ Mas’ūd Sa’d Salmān (d. c. 515/1121-2), who supposedly had three *dawāwīn*, one in Arabic, one in Persian, and one in Hindavi.⁸⁴⁵

The *mulamma’* (‘piebald’), or ‘macaronic’ poem is perhaps the most obvious example of how Arabic and Persian literary cultures could be drawn together.⁸⁴⁶ In addition to ‘Abd al-Wāsi’ al-Jabalī, Rābi‘a b. Ka‘b produced one such poem, preserved in the *Lubāb*, which consists of an address by the lovelorn narrator to a bird sitting in a tree.⁸⁴⁷ As in other *mulamma’āt*, the lines of the poem alternate between the two languages. In this particular

⁸⁴⁰ See Marlow, *Counsel for Kings*. Vol. 2 pp. 46-9.

⁸⁴¹ LA 1: 80-86; *Kharīdat al-qaṣr* ed. ‘Adnān Muḥammad Āl Ṭu‘ma. 2:175. He also has an entry in Yāqūt’s *Mu‘jam al-udabā’*, pp. 2631-2636.

⁸⁴² LA 2: 104-110; *Kharīda* 2:27-31.

⁸⁴³ LA 1: 65 ; *Kharīda* 2:60.

⁸⁴⁴ LA 1: 67 ; *Kharīda* 2:61.

⁸⁴⁵ LA 2:246-252; *Kharīda* 2:151-3.

⁸⁴⁶ On the *mulamma’*, see Virani, “*Mulamma’* in Islamic Literatures”.

⁸⁴⁷ LA 2:62.

qit‘a, some of the Arabic and Persian lines present the same images, and essentially act as translations of one another. Other lines develop a continuous narrative. For example, in lines three and four of the poem in question, the narrator asks the bird in Arabic why it is warbling, and then proceeds to lament their own separation from their beloved in Persian. As Virani emphasises, poems such as these can only be designed for consumption by bilingual audiences. Since ‘Awfī includes both *mulamma‘āt* and a substantial number of Arabic poems in the *Lubāb*, we can infer that he expected his readers to have more than a superficial understanding of Arabic language and literature. Again, this is an active choice on the anthologist’s part.

The Anthologists as Cultural Brokers

Al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī did not only transmit material that drew Arabic and Persian together; they engaged in exchange themselves. The most obvious example of this tendency is the form of the *Lubāb*. Although he refers to unnamed collections of poetry and anthologies in Persian in the course of his main text, suggesting that there were alternatives to the *ṭabaqāt* form available to him, ‘Awfī only lists works in Arabic when discussing the models of his anthology.⁸⁴⁸ His decision to base the *Lubāb* on works such as the *Yatīma* can therefore be thought of as an active choice, designed to survey the Persian literary heritage in a way that purposefully presented it as the equal and the equivalent of Arabic.

⁸⁴⁸ LA 1 :10. The works in Arabic mentioned by ‘Awfī are the *Ṭabaqāt* by Ibn Sallām (d. 232/846-7); the *Ṭabaqāt* by Ibn Qutayba (d. 276/828-9), by which *Kitāb al-shi‘r wa-l-shu‘arā’* is presumably meant; the *Ṭabaqāt* by Ibn al-Mu‘tazz (d. 296/908) (presumably *Ṭabaqāt al-shu‘arā’ al-muḥdathīn*); *Yatīmat al-Dahr* by al-Tha‘ālibī (d. 429/1039); *Dumyat al-Qaṣr* by al-Bākhārī (d. 467/1075); and *Zīnat al-Zamān* by al-Andakhūdī.

‘Awfī also discusses the invention of poetry in his introduction, tracing its prophetic lineage from Adam, the first man, through his son Seth, to Ya‘rub b. Qaḥṭān, the legendary progenitor of the Arabs.⁸⁴⁹ Finally, he argues that the first poet to compose in Persian (*pārsī*) was the Sasanian king Bahrām V Gūr (r. 420-438 C.E.), who only did so, it is alleged, because he grew up among the Bedouin (*a‘rāb*),⁸⁵⁰ and wrote verse in Arabic before he took to composing it in Persian.⁸⁵¹ These narratives create a common genealogy for the two literatures, linking their history together.

Whatever we think of the historical veracity of these statements, ‘Awfī’s conception of literary history raises several questions that need to be addressed. What relationship did he think existed between Arabic and Persian literary cultures? Did he believe that they formed part of the same system, or did he view Persian as a distinct, modern heir to the Arabic literary tradition? In fact, ‘Awfī appears to have embarked on a lifetime’s project to make the Arabic high culture of al-Tha‘ālibī’s age accessible to readers of Persian. He translated Abū ‘Alī al-Muḥassin Ibn ‘Alī al-Tanūkhī’s (d.384/994) compendium of narratives on the theme of deliverance, *al-Faraj ba‘d al-shidda* (*Relief from Distress*), and used a wide variety of material translated from works of *adab*, historiography, geography and religion in his vast collection, *Jawāmi‘ al-ḥikāyāt*.⁸⁵² He also drew heavily, without acknowledgement, on Arabic sources in his introduction to the *Lubāb*. For example, as we

⁸⁴⁹ LA 1: 18-19. The verses that ‘Awfī ascribes to the Prophet Adam are also to be found in Dawlatshāh Samarqandī, *Taḥkirat al-shu‘arā*, p.20. ‘Awfī’s description of the origins of poetry is strikingly similar to that proposed by Shams-i Qays. It is unclear to me whether Shams-i Qays drew on ‘Awfī, or whether both writers used an earlier source.

⁸⁵⁰ Bahrām Gūr is supposed to have grown up at the court of the Lakhmid kings of Ḥīra in Iraq, who were indeed major patrons of Jāhilī poets such as Imru’ l-Qays (sixth century), Ṭarafa b. al-‘Abd (middle of the sixth century) and al-Nābigha al-Dhubayānī (sixth century), albeit at a later date than the life of Bahrām Gūr. See Conrad, “Lakhmids”. For literary sources concerning the youth of Bahrām Gūr, see Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma* Vol. 2, pp. 1174-6; Al-Tha‘ālibī, *Histoire des rois des Perses*, pp. 539-547.

⁸⁵¹ LA 1: 19. ‘Awfī uses the term *pārsī* in reference to the Persian language at all stages of its development. The anthologist does not employ the term *fārsī* in the *Lubāb*. It is therefore unclear whether he imagined Bahrām Gūr to have composed in Middle Persian or in New Persian.

⁸⁵² See Niẓāmu’D-Dīn, *Introduction to the Jawāmi‘ u’l-ḥikāyāt*.

saw in the previous chapter, the opening anecdote of the *Lubāb*, concerning the nature of poetry, represents the proceedings of a *munāẓara* on the nature of poetic truth held at the court of Ibn ‘Abbād.⁸⁵³ In addition, ‘Awfī was active as a poet and a prose stylistic in Arabic, exchanging Arabic verse with the imam Fakhr al-Dīn Razkhālī Sarakhsī,⁸⁵⁴ and composing a *khuṭba* that was read at ‘Īd in the year 617/1220.⁸⁵⁵ He was also praised in Arabic by the scribe Maṣṣūr b. ‘Alī al-Asfizārī.⁸⁵⁶ Although he made heavy use of Arabic material, ‘Awfī suggests in his works that Persian literary culture is as robust and as venerable as the Arabic tradition. Indeed, his large-scale translation project can be seen an attempt to disseminate information to audiences in a language that they would understand, much as writers active two hundred years before had used Arabic to publish the Middle Persian literary heritage.

Like ‘Awfī, al-Tha‘ālibī inhabited a world in which high culture was a cosmopolitan affair. He began to compile the *Yatīma* some half a century after New Persian had undergone its efflorescence as a language of high culture at the Sāmānid court in Bukhara. Since his own grandfather, Abū ‘Alī, appears to have had at least an informal connection with the Sāmānids, al-Tha‘ālibī may have had some personal insight into the Persian literature produced under their patronage.⁸⁵⁷ During the latter part of his life, the role of Arabic literature at the Ghaznavid court became increasingly circumscribed, and Persian began to be used as the principal language of professional poetic production in Khurasan.

Given the environment in which he lived, the received opinion that al-Tha‘ālibī had very little interest in Persian requires investigation and qualification.⁸⁵⁸ His authorship of

⁸⁵³ LA 1 : 11-12.

⁸⁵⁴ LA 1:218.

⁸⁵⁵ LA 1:115-6.

⁸⁵⁶ LA 1 :158.

⁸⁵⁷ See the introduction to this thesis, n.82.

⁸⁵⁸ See Bosworth, *The Book of Curious and Entertaining Information*, p. 11ff; Rowson, “al-Tha‘ālibī”, in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*; al-Samarrai, “Some Biographical Notes on al-Tha‘ālibī”, p.175.

Ghurar al-siyar (*The Best of Histories*), a universal history in Arabic which draws on *Shāhnāma* material by the Persian poet Mas‘ūdī Marvazī for its representation of the kings of pre-Islamic Iran,⁸⁵⁹ is somewhat problematic, since the manuscripts differ as to the identity of the work’s author, but it seems overwhelmingly likely, since Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān is named as a direct source by the author.⁸⁶⁰

The *Ghurar* was composed at the Ghaznavid court, and it was dedicated to the amir and general Abū l-Muẓaffar Naṣr b. Sebüktegin (d. 421/1021), brother of Maḥmūd of Ghazna. This is certainly the correct milieu for al-Tha‘ālibī, who is named in one manuscript as the author. However, another manuscript differs, ascribing the work to al-Ḥusayn b.

Muḥammad al-Marghanī. Scholars including Zotenberg, Rosenthal, Bosworth and Rowson have all argued that the work should be attributed to al-Tha‘ālibī on stylistic grounds.⁸⁶¹

There seems to be little justification for the view that the subject matter of the *Ghurar* is uncharacteristic for al-Tha‘ālibī, since he was, above all, a writer concerned with the connections between *adab* and the fields of enquiry, such as history, philology and lexicography, which informed it. It is also worth noting that the author of the *Ghurar* reminisces about his acquaintance Ma’mūn b. Ma’mūn the Khwārizmshāh, who was one

⁸⁵⁹ On Mas‘ūdī Marvazī, see Lazard, *Les premiers poètes* Vol. 1, pp. 22-3.

⁸⁶⁰ See Omidšalar, “*Ṣa‘ālibī Nīshāpūrī yā Ṣa‘ālibī Marghānī?*”.

⁸⁶¹ The earliest printed edition was produced by H. Zotenberg: *Histoire des rois des Perses*. See also *Ghurar al-siyar* ed., S. Zakkār, and *Shāhnāma-yi kuhan*. In the introduction to his edition, Zotenberg argued that the work should be attributed to al-Tha‘ālibī on the grounds of its content, repeated phrasings common to the *Ghurar* and al-Tha‘ālibī’s other works, and the poetry shared between the *Ghurar* and the *Yatīma*. This opinion was seconded by Franz Rosenthal in his notice “From Arabic Books and Manuscripts III: The Author of the *Ghurar al-siyar*”, but he subsequently appears to have repented of this view. See Bosworth, “al-Tha‘ālibī”. Rosenthal’s attribution was also based on similarities with phraseology found in al-Tha‘ālibī’s known works, such as his trademark ‘Satan made me forget’ (*ansānihi al-shayṭān*). This argument was extended by Rowson and Bonebakker, who noticed the use of the same phrase in the *Yatīma*. See Rowson and Bonebakker, *A Computerized Listing*, p. 23. Bosworth also accepted the validity of the attribution to al-Tha‘ālibī. See *The Book of Curious and Entertaining Information*, p.2. In addition, see ‘Abd Allāhī, “*Ghurar al-siyar: barrasī darbāra-yi nām-i aṣlī va mu‘allif-i ān*”, who adopts Zotenberg’s methods to produce a survey of repeated phrasings, some of which are more convincing than others. The most substantive finding has been made by Omidšalar, who notices that Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān is quoted as a direct source in *Ghurar al-siyar*, a fact which ties the work to al-Tha‘ālibī beyond reasonable doubt. See Omidšalar, “*Ṣa‘ālibī Nīshāpūrī yā Ṣa‘ālibī Marghānī?*”. Despite quoting Omidšalar’s research, Orfali hesitates in ascribing the work to al-Tha‘ālibī. See *The Anthologist’s Art*, pp. 68-9.

of al-Tha‘ālibī’s patrons. Thus, if al-Tha‘ālibī and the author of the *Ghurar* are not the same man, they nevertheless had at least two patrons in common, followed similar itineraries, and both knew Ibn al-Marzubān.

A number of al-Tha‘ālibī’s other works rely on material derived from Persian sources, including *Ādāb al-mulūk* (*The Customs of Kings*), a Mirror which draws on Islamic and Pre-Islamic Iranian advice literature.⁸⁶² A fragment of verse in Persian by the Sāmānid poet Abū l-‘Abbās Rabinjanī is preserved in his lexicon of phrases *Thimār al-qulūb*.⁸⁶³ The source who transmitted this line, Abū Ja‘far al-Mūsawī, was the son of a prominent Sāmānid functionary who often attended literary *majālis* in Bukhara.⁸⁶⁴ Al-Ṣafadī lists among al-Tha‘ālibī’s publications a (now lost) book entitled *al-fuṣūl al-fārisiyya*, which should probably be translated here as *Persian Aphorisms*.⁸⁶⁵ Al-Tha‘ālibī’s *al-Tamthīl wa l-muḥāḍara* and *al-Amthāl* also contain proverbs derived from Persian sources.⁸⁶⁶ His work on philology, *Fiqh al-lugha*, has a section devoted to Arabic words derived from Persian and Persian words derived from Arabic.⁸⁶⁷ Finally, as we shall see, al-Tha‘ālibī displays a more significant interest in Persian in the *Yatīma* than previously thought. While Arabic was the language in which he published, and *adab* was his metier, al-Tha‘ālibī nevertheless drew extensively on the weight of Persian material that was being revived and disseminated in Khurasan and Iran during his life.

Persian in the *Yatīma* and Arabic in the *Lubāb*

⁸⁶² On this work, see Bray, “Al-Tha‘ālibī’s *Ādāb al-mulūk*”; Sadan, “*Ādāb* – règles de conduit”.

⁸⁶³ *Thimār al-qulūb*, p. 188. Lazard, *Les premiers poètes*. Vol. 1, pp. 26-7. On him, see also LA 2:9.

⁸⁶⁴ See YD 4:155.

⁸⁶⁵ *Wāfi al-wafāyāt*, Vol. 19, p. 196. Bosworth, *The Book of Curious and Entertaining Information*, p.12.

⁸⁶⁶ See *al-Tamthīl wa l-muḥāḍara*. For a description of *al-Amthāl*, which remains in manuscript, see Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, pp. 80-1.

⁸⁶⁷ *Fiqh al-lugha*, pp. 337-40.

Despite the claims of previous scholarship, al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī do display a strong interest in Persian and Arabic respectively. It is possible to identify three broad trends in their treatment of the relationship between poetry in the two languages. The first is largely socio-cultural, and consists of discussions of bilingual poets. The second trend is concerned with the translation of poetry between Persian and Arabic, a phenomenon which appears to have been particularly common in bureaucratic circles in Iran and Transoxiana between the tenth and the thirteenth centuries. The third, and in some ways the most significant trend is the anthologists’ interest in thematic and generic connections. This topic is perhaps more important in the *Lubāb*, where ‘Awfī attempts to match the Persian corpus to the Arabic one, making them equivalent, but the *Yatīma* shows that al-Tha‘ālibī thought about the relationship between poetic images in Arabic and their Persian equivalents.

In a pioneering article on the rise of New Persian under the Sāmānids, Bertel’s went so far as to assert that any division between Arabic and Persian literature in tenth-century Khurasan and Transoxiana was linguistic alone: ‘In actual fact we are faced with one literature, for its themes, devices, formal conventions – all of these things are identical.’⁸⁶⁸ Bertel’s comparison between the genres employed in the tenth-century Arabic and Persian poetry of the region is heavily dependent on the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*, and identifies several predominant themes and forms that the Arabic and Persian literary systems shared in common: praise and elegy in the form of the *qaṣīda*;⁸⁶⁹ ‘wisdom’ poetry (including poems on the theme of ageing), satire and descriptive poetry in the form of the *qiṭ‘a*;⁸⁷⁰

⁸⁶⁸ Bertel’s, “Persidskaya poeziya v Bukare.” Bertel’s conflates forms with genres, which leads to some complication in his discussion of themes.

⁸⁶⁹ Bertel’s, “Persidskaya poeziya v Bukhare”, pp. 393-4.

⁸⁷⁰ Bertel’s, “Persidskaya poeziya v Bukhare”, pp. 394-9; 421-3.

lyricism (both erotic poetry and poetry on the theme of springtime) in the form of the *nasīb*.⁸⁷¹

My intention in the sections that follow is to complicate these conclusions. Rather than viewing Arabic and Persian as a single literary system, I prefer to argue that a common aesthetic framework came to define the genres and imagery of poetry composed in both languages in Khurasan and Transoxiana between the tenth to the thirteenth centuries. As Appendix One shows, it is possible to speak of a broad correspondence between the genres of the Arabic verse composed in Iran and Central Asia during the tenth and eleventh centuries and those of the Persian verse composed between the tenth and the thirteenth centuries. The style that scholars have come to call ‘Mannerism’, which was adopted by influential poets active in Arabic such as al-Ma’mūnī, became an important inspiration for poets active in Persian such as Manūchihrī, particularly in *vaṣf* poetry.⁸⁷² Poets like Manūchihrī, and later Sanā’ī, also speak of reading the work of the Arabic Contemporaries, such as al-Mutanabbī. However, there are also basic differences between the Arabic and Persian poetry of this period, such as the manner in which comparison is executed. I would therefore propose that the notion of aesthetic ‘equivalence’ is more appropriate for describing the relationship than the idea of direct correspondence.

Connections in Culture

Al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī often mention when a poet was bilingual (*dhū l-lisānayn* or *dhū l-balāghatayn*).⁸⁷³ For example, we find in the *Yatīma* that Muḥammad b. Ḥātim Abū l-Ṭayyib al-Muṣa‘bī, who worked as a boon companion and functionary at the Sāmānīd

⁸⁷¹ Bertel’s, “Persidskaya poeziya v Bukhare”, pp. 402-7; 417-9; 423-5.

⁸⁷² See Clinton, *The Divan*, pp. 114-6.

⁸⁷³ Bilingualism is discussed briefly in Orfali, *The Anthologist’s Art*, p. 174.

court under al-Saʿīd Naṣr b. Aḥmad (r. 301-31/914-43), wrote poetry in both languages that was the ‘product of excellence’.⁸⁷⁴ In order to evaluate al-Muṣaʿbī’s Persian poetry, al-Thaʿālibī had presumably read and understood it. Abū Maṣṣūr Qasīm b. Ibrāhīm al-Qāʾinī, known as Buzurjmīhr, is described as ‘a leading poet, innovative in both languages’ (*shāʿir muḥliq mubdiʿ bi-l lisānayn*), who was active at the Ghaznavid court.⁸⁷⁵ Abū l-Ḥasan al-Āghājī is characterised as being more famous as a poet in Persian than in Arabic, and as the ‘Sagittarius (*fursān*) in their galaxy’ (i.e. the galaxy of the Persian poets). Al-Thaʿālibī writes that al-Āghājī had a *dīwān* that circulated in Khurasan (*sāʿir fī bilād khurāsān*), and that he translated much of his own poetry himself.⁸⁷⁶ Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Ghawwāṣ, a member of the landed gentry (*dihqān*) from the village of Junayd in the vicinity of Nishapur, is described as ‘a poet in both languages who has many fine stylistic points’ (*shāʿir bi l-lisānayn kathīr al-maḥāsīn*).⁸⁷⁷

All of these men were from Khurasan, and all of them were bureaucrats or land-holders. The verse that they composed is often occasional, consisting of epigrams on the theme of praise, short satires, descriptions, lyric poems and *ikhwāniyyāt*. We can draw two major conclusions from this information. Firstly, these common characteristics suggest that the leading bilingual poets of al-Thaʿālibī’s era may not have been professionals. Secondly,

⁸⁷⁴ YD 4:90. For the biography of Muṣaʿbī, and a list of the works in which he is discussed, see Lazard, *Les premiers poètes*. Vol. 1, p. 23. ʿAwfī preserves a poem by Rūdakī praising al-Muṣaʿbī. LA 2:7.

⁸⁷⁵ YD 5:231.

⁸⁷⁶ YD 5:314. See also *Tarjūmān al-balāgha*, pp. 35, 85, 95, 128; Niẓāmī ʿArūzī Samarqandī, *Chahār Maqāla*, p.25.

⁸⁷⁷ YD 4:509-10. Al-Ghawwāṣ also has an entry in the *Lubāb*, where he is identified as one of the poets who praised Ibn ʿAbbād: LA 2:23. See also Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*. Vol. 1, p. 467. This identification appears to be a mistake: ʿAwfī makes it on the basis of a poem that al-Ghawwāṣ composed about the balconies of a mansion. The imagery is cognate with that of the well-known ‘Mansion’ poems produced for Ibn ʿAbbād. However, al-Thaʿālibī writes that this particular poem is a representation of the mansion of his acquaintance Abū Jaʿfar al-Mūsawī. Al-Thaʿālibī does not imply that al-Ghawwāṣ left Khurasan to find success in Iran. See also Naaman, *Literature and the Islamic Court*, Chapter 3, n.20.

we may infer that al-Tha‘ālibī did speak and read Persian, and that he had some critical awareness of what constituted ‘good’ poetry in that language.

The inference that al-Tha‘ālibī did, in fact, take an active interest in Persian literature is reinforced by comments found elsewhere in the *Yatīma*. The anthologist writes that Balkh had produced four great men of the age in the disciplines of Arabic poetry, Persian poetry, ‘ilm al-kalām (probably meaning ‘philology’ here rather than ‘speculative theology’), and composition and rhetoric.⁸⁷⁸ Sahl b. al-Ḥasan is the great Persian poet in the quartet.⁸⁷⁹ The comment suggests that al-Tha‘ālibī considered Persian poetry as much of a serious discipline as the other three. Elsewhere, in a poem by Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Zafar al-‘Alawī of Nishapur, we find a representation of a young man reciting the (Arabic) poetry of Abū Dhu‘ayb and the Persian poetry (*fārsiyyāt*) of Abū Shu‘ayb of Herat (lived around the middle of the tenth century), suggesting that there were bilingual social environments in Khurasan where poetry was performed in both languages.⁸⁸⁰ Al-Tha‘ālibī also writes that the amir Abū Ibrāhīm Naṣr b. Aḥmad al-Mīkālī was unique in his combination of Arabic and Persian *ādāb*, but this term should probably be taken here to mean ‘cultural etiquette’, rather than ‘literature’.⁸⁸¹

There are several other early Persian poets who feature in the *Yatīma*, but whose bilingualism al-Tha‘ālibī does not mention: Abū l-Ḥusayn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Murādī was poet of Bukhara who praised the Sāmānid al-Sa‘īd Naṣr b. Aḥmad.⁸⁸² Abū l-Ṭayyib al-Bākhazī (d. 467/1075), compiler of the *Dumya*, wrote in both Arabic and

⁸⁷⁸ YD 4:97.

⁸⁷⁹ Ibid. This figure is identified as Shahīd Balkhī (lived late ninth/early tenth century) in a Paris ms. of the *Yatīma*. See Lazard, *Les premiers poètes*, Vol. 1, p. 21 n.2. Shahīd Balkhī’s entry in the *Lubāb* is at 2 :3. While this is possible, the fact that al-Tha‘ālibī describes Abū l-Ḥasan as a man of the age may point to a poet active in the late tenth century.

⁸⁸⁰ YD 4:486-7. ‘Awfī gives Abū Shu‘ayb’s full name as Abū Shu‘ayb Ṣāliḥ b. Muḥammad al-Harawī. LA 2:5. For his biography, see Lazard, *Les premiers poètes*. Vol. 1, pp. 30-1.

⁸⁸¹ YD 5:138.

⁸⁸² YD 4:85-7; ‘Awfī preserves Rūdakī’s elegy for him. LA 2:8.

Persian, as did the Ghaznavid bureaucrat Abū l-Muẓaffar ‘Abd al-Jabbār b. al-Ḥasan al-Bayhaqī al-Jumaḥī,⁸⁸³ and al-Tha‘ālibī’s friend Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Bustī (d. 400/1009). It seems likely that many more figures mentioned in the *Yatīma* either composed poetry in both languages or moved in social circles where Arabic and Persian were used together. As Browne noted, Abū ‘Alī al-Sājī, a leading learned man and bureaucrat of Sāmānid Bukhara who was a contemporary of the bilingual poets al-Muṣa‘bī and al-Murādī, produced an epigram in praise of Marv which played on the fact that the city’s name could also be read as ‘Do not leave’ (*ma-raw*) in Persian.⁸⁸⁴ Since the point of poems like these would have been entirely lost on readers and auditors who spoke Arabic alone, we may infer that they were aimed at bilingual audiences. This evidence suggests that bureaucrats associated with the Sāmānid court, such as al-Muṣa‘bī, al-Sājī and al-Murādī, may have acted as some of the most prominent brokers between Arabic and Persian literature during the first half of the tenth century. The *Yatīma* is largely silent concerning the interplay of Arabic and Persian literature at the court of the House of Muḥtāj in Chaghāniān, where poets active in Persian, like Munjīk, Daqīqī, Labībī and Farrukhī, were patronised in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries.⁸⁸⁵

The *Lubāb* mirrors the *Yatīma* in the fact that the major linguistic brokers tend to be bureaucrats and rulers rather than professional poets. As one would expect, there is a greater amount of poetry in Arabic in those sections of the anthology that deal with the tenth and eleventh centuries than in those which treat the twelfth and the beginning of the

⁸⁸³ YD 5:286. See Radwan, *al-Tha‘ālibī’s Tatimmat al-Yatīma*, p. 150 for references to Ibn Funduq.

⁸⁸⁴ YD 4:91. See Browne, *Literary History of Persia*, Vol. 1, p.475. Browne’s other example (Ibid. n.2), concerning the use of the word *dihkhudā* in a satirical epigram by Abū l-Qāsim al-‘Alawī al-Uṭrūsh, is less convincing proof of bilingualism. See YD 4:55. The poem is comprehensible without a knowledge of Persian. Al-Sājī’s line is also discussed briefly in Bosworth, “The Interaction between Arabic and Persian”, p. 72, and in Virani, “*Mulamma‘āt* in Islamic Literatures”, p. 316.

⁸⁸⁵ See Bosworth, “Āl-e Mohtāj”. Although see also YD 4:108 for Abū ‘Alī al-Salāmī, a scribe in the service of Abū Bakr b. Muḥtāj (became governor of Khurasan in 321/933) and his son Abū ‘Alī (became governor of Khurasan in 327/939).

thirteenth. Of the different ‘classes’ of people featured in ‘Awfī’s anthology, only the bureaucrats and the ‘*ulamā*’ continue to produce a considerable amount of poetry in Arabic into the Saljuq period. They include Ṣadr al-Dīn Nayshābūrī, head of tax collection in Nishapur under the Khwārizmshāhs, who purportedly wrote more in Arabic than in Persian.⁸⁸⁶ Other linguistic brokers were important because they adapted Arabic works for audiences who were more familiar with Persian. The most prominent representative of this group is perhaps the Ghaznavid scribe Naṣr Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, whose translation of *Kalīla wa-Dimna* (completed in c.1144) ‘Awfī describes as a ‘point of reference for all secretaries’.⁸⁸⁷ Indeed, it may be possible to speak of a translation ‘movement’ in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, in which men of letters attempted to create an apparatus for bureaucrats in Persian that would dispense with the need to master Arabic. Authors began to compile stylistic guides to writing chancellery prose in Persian: Muḥammad b. Mu’ayyad al-Baghdādī wrote the work *al-Tawassul ilā al-tarassul* (*The Aid to Correspondence*),⁸⁸⁸ while Badī‘ Atabag al-Khū‘ī authored *‘Atabat al-kataba* (*The Bureaucrats’ Threshold*).⁸⁸⁹ ‘Awfī speaks of figures like these men as modern-day replacements for their Arabic-speaking ‘Abbāsīd forefathers. He writes that Naṣr Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd left Ibn al-‘Amīd (d. 360/970) and Ibn ‘Abbād (d. 385/995) in his wake,⁸⁹⁰ and that Ṣadr al-Dīn Nayshābūrī’s history of the Khwārizmshāhs embarrassed the soul of the Ghaznavid historian al-‘Utbī (d.413/1022).⁸⁹¹

Comments like these suggest a desire to make the Persian literary tradition a modern equivalent to the Arabic one, but they also highlight how thoroughly familiar ‘Awfī and

⁸⁸⁶ LA 1:142-4.

⁸⁸⁷ LA 1:92. On the Persian versions of *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, see van Ruymbeke, *Kashefī’s Anvar-e Sohayli*.

⁸⁸⁸ LA 1:139. See *al-Tawassul ilā al-tarassul*, ed. A. Bahmanyār.

⁸⁸⁹ LA 1:78. See Badī‘ Atabag al-Khū‘ī, *Stupenii sovershenstvovaniya katibov*.

⁸⁹⁰ LA 1:92.

⁸⁹¹ LA 1:142.

his contemporaries were with ‘Abbāsīd Arabic letters. One of the major differences between the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* is that ‘Awfī liberally cites from works in Arabic, whereas al-Tha‘ālibī gives no distinct impression of whether he encountered Persian material in books, in *majālis*, or through talking to fellow men of letters. ‘Awfī often writes that a poet had two *dīvāns*, one in Arabic and the other in Persian.⁸⁹² He also refers to anthologies in Arabic which exhibit continuities with the material that he cites. For example, he reports that some poetry in Arabic by Shahīd Balkhī is preserved in al-Zawzanī’s anthology *Ḥamāsāt al-ẓurafā’*,⁸⁹³ and records consulting an anthology containing poetry in Arabic by al-Bākhārī.⁸⁹⁴ He cites the *Yatīma* itself, as a source for his entries on the Ghaznavid poets Abū Maṣṣūr Qasīm b. Ibrāhīm al-Qā’inī, known as Buzurjmihr, Abū l-Ḥasan al-Āghājī, and the Ghaznavid vizier al-Maymandī.⁸⁹⁵ Lastly, he also quotes from bilingual works, such as al-Andakhūdī’s *Zīnat al-zamān*, a prosimetric anthology in Arabic and Persian.⁸⁹⁶

Translation from Persian into Arabic

Together, the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* imply that translation from Persian into Arabic was mostly practiced by the bureaucratic classes. Like the techniques of turning verse into

⁸⁹² LA 1:64 ; 1 : 74 ; 1:93; 1:94; 1 :96.

⁸⁹³ LA 2:4. See *Ḥamāsāt al-ẓurafā’*, pp. 295-6. The poem, ascribed to Shahīd b. al-Ḥusayn al-Balkhī, is as follows [*al-kāmil*]:

يا من رأى حرجا عليه رعايتي * لما استبان له عظيم كفايتي
أيقنت أني في مدحك كاذب * فلذاك يعجبك حسن روايتي
سخي بنفسي أنني لا ألتقي * إلا بمن يشكوك مثل شكائتي

O you who found my praise constricting * When the magnitude of my talent became clear
You have become convinced that I am lying in my praise for you * And admire only the beauty of my
recitation

But I am sincere in my praise, for everyone I meet * Complains of you as I do

⁸⁹⁴ LA 1:68.

⁸⁹⁵ LA 1:31; LA 1:33; 1:63.

⁸⁹⁶ LA 1:208.

prose (*ḥall*) and prose into verse (*‘aqd*), translation appears to have been an exercise for improving linguistic control. In the *Lubāb* we are told that ‘all the learned men’ (*jumlagī-yi fuṣṣalā*) tried to translate a *dūbayt* (*sic.*) by Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ṣālīḥ into Arabic during the reign of Maḥmūd of Ghazna, but that only Abū l-Qāsim, the son of the vizier Abū l-Faḍl al-Isfarā’inī, succeeded.⁸⁹⁷ The Persian original, and its Arabic response, are given thus:

سیم دندانک و بس دانک و خندانک و شوخ

که جهان آنک بر ما لب او زندان کرد

لب او بینی و گویی که کس زیر عقیق

با میان دو لب اندر شکری پنهان کرد

One silver-toothed, intelligent, laughing and flirtatious

Whose lips the world has made a prison for us

If you saw his lips, you would say that someone

Had hidden sugar between those two lips, under a carnelian

فضی ثغر لیبب ضاحک عرم * من عشق مبسمه قد أصبحت مسجوناً

بسکر قد رأیت الیوم مبسمه * تحت العقیق بذاك الورد مکنوناً

One silver-mouthed, intelligent, laughing and stubborn * Out of love for his smile I have
become imprisoned

In sugar. Today I saw his smile * Hidden in the rose beneath that carnelian

⁸⁹⁷ LA 2:22. The *Yatīma* contains an entry on the vizier Abū l-Faḍl al-Isfarā’inī. See YD 4:505. Strictly speaking, this poem is neither a *dūbayt* nor a *rubā’ī*.

Although the field of imagery on which the two poems depend is entirely conventional to both the Persian and the Arabic corpora of the period, al-Isfarā'inī's version of the poem is not a literal translation. Rather, it attempts to find equivalent techniques in Arabic for the rhetorical devices employed in the Persian version. The opening string of adjectives is relatively unusual in both languages, and is retained in the Arabic. The two versions differ chiefly in their execution of comparison. The Persian version depends on an extended simile of the type 'you would say that...' (*gū'ī ki*), while the Arabic version compresses the comparison into a metaphor, so that the beloved's lips are compared both to carnelians and to a rose bud. Generally speaking, extended or 'heroic' similes are a more common method of comparison in Persian, while metaphor is employed more often in Arabic, and the two poems reflect these different approaches.

While 'Awfī does not indicate precisely what about al-Isfarā'inī's version of the poem was deemed appropriate, we may infer that it was the execution of the comparison. Persian similes appear to have been an object of study by Arabic speakers. For example, al-Tha'ālibī's acquaintance Abū Sahl Naṣr b. Ya'qūb, a scribe employed by the Ghaznavid court, wrote a book on the subject of similes entitled *Thimār al-uns fī tashbīhāt al-furs* (*The Fruit of Companionship on the Similes of the Persians*).⁸⁹⁸ It is possible that this work was a thematic handbook of common comparisons found in Persian poetry, which may have appealed to Abū Sahl's fellow bureaucrats.

The association between translations from Persian into Arabic and 'scribal poetry' are developed more fully at other points in the *Yatīma*. Abū Maṣṣūr b. Abī 'Alī the scribe, who was a resident of Nishapur, is characterised as writing 'scribal poetry' (*shi'r kuttābī*), on the basis of his translation of a Persian poem by Ghazā'irī Rāzī, a professional poet

⁸⁹⁸ YD 4:450. On him, see Orfali, "al-Dīnawarī, Abū Sa'd Naṣr b. Ya'qūb".

from Iran who praised Maḥmūd of Ghazna.⁸⁹⁹ The poem is on an obviously ‘scribal’ topic, since it is concerned with penmanship. However, it is a proverb, and it essentially belongs to the genre of ‘advice’ or ‘wisdom’ poetry. In this respect, it shares much in common with the many Persian proverbs that Ghaznavid scribes translated into Arabic:⁹⁰⁰

ليس كل الذي انتضى من دواة * قلماً بالغ العلى بالأداة

إن حمل العصا لغير بديع * قلبها حية من المعجزات

Not every man who lifts a pen from an inkpot * Reaches the heights of penmanship

For it is nothing marvellous to carry a staff * Yet it is a miracle to turn it into a serpent

نه هر کو قلم بر گرفت از دوات * شفا کرد داند جهانرا ز داء

عصا بر گرفتن نه معجز بود * همی اژدها کرد باید عصا

Not every man who lifts a pen from an inkpot * Knows how to heal the world from
sickness

It is not a miracle to pick up a staff * One must turn it into a dragon

We find indications that translation could be a more artful affair when it was undertaken by more renowned poets. The most consummate practitioner of this skill appears to have been Badī‘ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī (d. 398/1008), whose ability to translate *ex tempore* is commented on by al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī. In his introductory remarks to the chapter on al-Hamadhānī, al-Tha‘ālibī writes that he could translate to order lines of Persian poetry that consisted of ‘wonderful images’ (*al-ma‘ānī al-gharība*).⁹⁰¹ Al-Tha‘ālibī mentions this skill after stating that al-Hamadhānī could repeat *qaṣā’id* word for word after hearing them

⁸⁹⁹ Ghazā’irī Rāzī’s entry in the *Lubāb* is given at LA 1:59-60.

⁹⁰⁰ YD 5:207. *Tatimmat yatīmat al-dahr*, ed. ‘A Iqbāl, 4:25. For the original Persian, see Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāt, *Sady volshebstva*, p.106; p. 244 n.23. The poem is a clear reference to Qur’ān 28:31, which narrates how God made the staff of Moses move like a snake.

⁹⁰¹ YD 4:294.

once, could skim read five pages of text that he had never seen before and then recite them without error, and could compose letters by beginning at the end and working back to the beginning.⁹⁰² The anthologist emphasises al-Hamadhānī's astonishing speed and improvisatory skill, implying that he was frequently asked to perform these tricks in *majālis*.⁹⁰³ We find confirmation of this in the *Lubāb*, and in 'Awfī's *Javāmi' al-ḥikāyāt*, both of which contain modified versions of a narrative concerning how al-Hamadhānī once attended the *majlis* of Ibn 'Abbād when he was a child, extemporising a translation of a lyric poem by the court poet Manṭiqī Rāzī into Arabic.⁹⁰⁴ The account in the *Lubāb* suggests that al-Hamadhānī asked Ibn 'Abbād to specify the metre and the rhyme that he should use in his translation.⁹⁰⁵

Just as the Sāmānid court in Bukhara appears to have been a major meeting place of Arabic and Persian literature, so too the later Ghaznavid courts in Khurasan fostered interaction between the two. The scribal classes, whom al-Tha'ālibī describes in the *Tatimma* as the 'tongues of the age', aided in this process.⁹⁰⁶ For example, the Ghaznavid judge Abū Aḥmad Maṣṣūr b. Muḥammad al-Azdī of Herat, who features in the *Tatimma*, translated a 'philosophical' epigram on the fondness of elderly men for wine,⁹⁰⁷ and the accountant Abū Ṣāliḥ Sahl b. Aḥmad al-Naysābūrī al-Mustawfī translated a proverb into Arabic.⁹⁰⁸ Their slightly older contemporary, the renowned secretary Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Bustī (d.400/1009) purportedly translated the following short poem from Bū Shakūr's (active middle of the tenth century) *Āfarīnnāma*.⁹⁰⁹

⁹⁰² YD 4:293-4.

⁹⁰³ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁴ LA 2 :17 ; Bodleian MS. Elliott 171, f.311a.

⁹⁰⁵ LA 2 :17.

⁹⁰⁶ YD 5:250.

⁹⁰⁷ YD 5:238.

⁹⁰⁸ YD 5:313.

⁹⁰⁹ LA 2:21.

از دور بیدار تو اندر نگرستم * مجروح شد آن چهره پر حسن و ملاح

وز غمزه تو خسته شد آزردہ دل من * وین حکم قضائست جراحت به جراحت

I gazed at you from afar * Your fine, elegant face was wounded

And my tortured heart was exhausted by your flirtation * Such is the law: 'An eye for an eye'

رمیت بحکم القضاء بنظرة * وما لي بحکم القصاص مناص

فلما جرحت الخد منكم بمقلتي * جرحت فؤادي والجراح قصاص

By Fate's decree I stole a glance * When I had no remedy against reprisal

When my eye wounded your cheek * My heart was wounded in return; wounds must be required⁹¹⁰

This example testifies to the fact that prominent authors active in Arabic did read the corpus of Persian literature and respond to it. There is also strong evidence to suggest that authors engaged with the Persian texts produced by their direct contemporaries. For example, the scribe and poet Abū l-Qāsim Ismā'īl b. Aḥmad al-Shajāri, a scribe and poet who had begun work under the Sāmānids and then entered the circle of al-Bustī, produced the following translation of two Persian lines of self-vaunting:⁹¹¹

إن شئت تعلم في الآداب منزلتي * وأنني قد عداني العز والنعم

فالطرف والسيف والأوهاق تشهد لي * والعود والنرد والشطرنج والقلم

⁹¹⁰ This is a joke on the legal principle of blood-vengeance (*qiṣāṣ*, *qawād*). See Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law*, p. 186.

⁹¹¹ YD 4:176.

If you wish to know my place among letters * And that glory and luxury have taken
against me

The steed, the sword and the lasso will bear witness to me * And the lute, the backgammon
and chess boards, and the pen

This is a translation of lines that are ascribed to al-Āghājī in the *Lubāb*:⁹¹²

ای آنک نداری خبری از هنر من * خواهی که بدانی که نیم نعمت پرورد
اسب آر و کمند آر و کتاب آر و کمان آر * شعر و قلم و بربط و شطرنج و می و نرد

You who are unacquainted with my skill * You wish to know that I have not been raised in
luxury

Bring a horse, a lasso, a book and a bow * Poetry, a pen, a lute, chess, wine and
backgammon

It should, however, be noted that these lines are most obviously a borrowing from al-Mutanabbī's proverbial line of self-vaunting: 'Horses, the night and the desert recognise me / the sword, the lance, paper and the pen' (*al-khaylu wa-l-laylu wa-l-baydā'u ta 'rifunī / wa-l-sayfu wa-l-rumḥu wa-l-qirṭāsu wa-l-qalamu*). Hence, al-Shajāri's poem is not simply a translation from Persian, but a reworking in Arabic of topoi derived from both Arabic and Persian.

Arabic Poems Incorporating 'Persian' Proverbs

⁹¹² LA 1:32, where it is pointed out that this is partially a borrowing from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. See also Radwan, *al-Tha 'ālibī's Tatimmat al-Yatīma*, p. 152.

At several points in the *Yatīma*, al-Tha‘ālibī presents Arabic poems which he claims derive from Persian proverbs.⁹¹³ There is a section on some thirty-five versified proverbs which were supposedly translated into Arabic from Persian in the chapter on Abū l-Faḍl Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Zayd al-Sukkarī al-Marwazī, who is described as the leading poet and refined man of Marv, and as a man obsessed by the translation of proverbs.⁹¹⁴ Al-Tha‘ālibī supplies us with a passage from a *muzdawija* “in which [al-Sukkarī al-Marwazī] translated (*tarjama*) proverbs of the Persians”, and with a selection of single-line proverbs which the poet had ‘transferred’ from Persian (*al-fārisiyya*) into Arabic. Al-Tha‘ālibī writes that these proverbs reminded him of a *qaṣīda* by a poet whose name he is unable to recall, and so at the end of the entry he includes eleven proverbs drawn from that poem which harmonise (*yaqtirna*) with what has been presented already. A short extract from a *qaṣīda* consisting of translated proverbs ‘of the Persians’ is also included in the entry immediately following, on Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḍarīr al-Abīwardī.⁹¹⁵

Arabic poems which presented so-called ‘Persian’ proverbs may have been quite common during al-Tha‘ālibī’s lifetime. In a section on translated proverbs in his work *al-Amthāl al-ṣādira ‘an buyūt al-shi‘r* (*Proverbs Drawn from Lines of Poetry*) Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī (d. 350/961 or 360/971) writes that he had been told that a man from the region of Samarqand named Abū l-Faḍl al-Kishī had composed an *urjūza* in which he had ‘transferred’ four hundred proverbs of the Persians into Arabic, and that Ibn Durayd (d. 312/933) had written

⁹¹³ In addition to those discussed here, see YD 5:142, which gives a poem by Abū l-Faḍl Yūsuf b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Julūdī of Rayy that claims to be based on a Persian proverb concerning camels and their riders.

⁹¹⁴ YD 4:100-102. These lines were studied by E.G. Browne, who identified translations of two current Persian proverbial phrases among them: ‘The night is pregnant: what will it bring forth?’, and ‘When the water surges over a drowning man, one fathom and a thousand are alike’. See Browne, *Literary History of Persia*, Vol. 1, p. 476. As it is always possible that some current Persian proverbs ultimately derive from Arabic sources, I have not attempted to find equivalents for those given in the *Yatīma* in modern collections. Indeed, the first of these proverbs is also found incorporated into a piece by the Syrian poet Abū l-‘Abbās al-Badī‘ī in the *Tatīmna*: YD 5:42.

⁹¹⁵ YD 4:103.

a *qaṣīda* containing [Persian] proverbs which was forty-lines long.⁹¹⁶ Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (active ca. 1018) included a section in his *Muḥāḍarāt al-udabā'* on seventeen proverbs translated from Persian.⁹¹⁷ It is possible that such gnomic poems reflect material that circulated in the Middle Persian sources which were still being produced in the tenth century, or that they represent direct translations from New Persian. As Marlow and Fouchécour both argue, the content of some of the earliest New Persian poetry produced during the late ninth and early tenth centuries is aphoristic in tone. In the *Lubāb*, there are poems by Shahīd Balkhī and Rūdakī which conform to this genre. There is even a poet of the Sāmānid era named Bū l-Mathal ('The Father of the Proverb') Bukhārī, whose poetry does appear to have consisted of proverbs.⁹¹⁸ Maysarī's *Dānishnāma*, the earliest preserved Persian *masnavī*, is a work of medicine, but contains a section that consists of aphorisms.⁹¹⁹ However, it should also be borne in mind that a considerable corpus of material had accumulated in Arabic by al-Tha'ālibī's lifetime, which had either been translated from Middle Persian or which claimed to preserve the wisdom literature of Pre-Islamic Iran. Such material was included in Ibn al-Muqaffa's *al-Adab al-kabīr*, and in the *Ādāb* of Ibn al-Mu'tazz. These Arabic works tied aphorisms to Iranian and Indian culture so insistently that al-Tha'ālibī's near-contemporary Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Umar al-Yamanī (d. 400/1010) felt compelled to produce a volume in which he found equivalents for the ideas expressed in *Kalīla wa-Dimna* in early Arabic poetry.⁹²⁰

What exactly did al-Tha'ālibī mean when he stated that al-Sukkarī al-Marwazī and the unknown poet had translated and transferred Persian proverbs? My comparison between

⁹¹⁶ *Al-amthāl al-ṣādira 'an buyūt al-shi'r*, p. 695. Hamza does not state that the proverbs given in Ibn Durayd's *qaṣīda* were translated from Persian, but since the chapter is on translation from Persian to Arabic we may infer that this was the case. See also Key, "Moving from Persian to Arabic", p. 116.

⁹¹⁷ These lines are the main subject of Key, "Moving from Persian to Arabic".

⁹¹⁸ LA 2:26.

⁹¹⁹ See Lazard, *Les premiers poètes*, Vol. 2, pp. 186-8.

⁹²⁰ See al-Yamanī, *Kitāb muḍāhāt amthāl kitāb Kalīla wa-Dimna bi-mā ashbahahā min ash'ār al-'arab*.

the proverbs featured in the *Yatīma* and in Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī's *al-Amthāl al-ṣādira* 'an *buyūt al-shi'r* suggests that, when it came to aphorisms, translation was largely based around paraphrase, and that poets could exercise considerable liberality of interpretation. For example, this line, found in the *Yatīma*:⁹²¹

طلب الأعظم من بيت الكلاب * كطلاب الماء في لمع السراب

To seek bones in a kennel * Is like seeking water in the glimmer of a mirage

is essentially the same as the following four lines, which are found scattered throughout the chapter of *al-Amthāl al-ṣādira* that is devoted to 'Persian' proverbs:

Ḥamza no. 4646:⁹²²

من التمس الحوائج من بخيل * كمن طلب العظام من الكلاب

Whoever petitions a miser from their daily bread * Is like the one who seeks bones from dogs

Ḥamza, no. 4690⁹²³

وإني في طلابي ما لديكم * كملتمس العراق من الكلاب

In requesting what is yours, I am * Like one who seeks bones from dogs

Ḥamza no. 4706⁹²⁴

أمن دار الكلاب أردت عظماً * لقد حدثت نفسك بالمحال

You have duped yourself * If you try to get a bone from a kennel

⁹²¹ YD 4:101.

⁹²² *Al-amthāl al-ṣādira*, p. 685, no.4646.

⁹²³ *Al-amthāl al-ṣādira*, p.690, no. 4690.

⁹²⁴ *Al-amthāl al-ṣādira*, p. 692 no. 4706.

This kind of duplication is common between al-Tha‘ālibī’s selections of al-Sukkarī al-Marwazī’s poetry and Ḥamza’s *al-Amthāl al-ṣādira ‘an buyūt al-shi‘r*. Of the limited corpus, paraphrases of the following six proverbs are shared between the two works: 1) ‘How many tricksters have been hoisted by their own petard * and have stepped into a pit that they themselves have dug’;⁹²⁵ 2) ‘If you come across one-eyed men, pretend to be one-eyed yourself * And say ‘A one-eyed man has come to you’;⁹²⁶ 3) ‘I fled from a trickle into a downpour * The flood overcomes me’;⁹²⁷ 4) ‘The fig tree is watered for the sake of the sweet myrtle’;⁹²⁸ 5) ‘The sea fills springs with water * And the dog laps from them with his tongue’;⁹²⁹ 6) ‘The crafty fox follows a method in its undertakings * It uses a

⁹²⁵ YD 4: 102:

كم مكر حاق به مكره * وواقع في بعض ما يحفر

C.f. *Al-amthāl al-ṣādira*, p. 686 no. 4655

إذا لأخ حفرت حفير سوء * وقعت بغير شك في الحفير

Whenever you dig an evil pit for your brother * There is no doubt that you will fall into the pit
And *Al-amthāl al-ṣādira*, p. 694 no.4729

قل للذي يحفر بئر الردى * هيء لرجليك مراقبها

Say to whoever digs the well of death * ‘Its steps are destined for your feet’

⁹²⁶ YD 4:102:

إن تأت عوراً فتعاور لهم * وقل أتاكم رجل أعور

C.f. *Al-amthāl al-ṣādira*, p. 686, no. 4658

إذا كنت بين العور والعرج فالتمس * عصاً ثم غمض فرى عينيك للغنز

If you find yourself between a one-eyed man and a lame man * Ask for a staff and wink an eye

⁹²⁷ YD 4:102

فررت من قطر إلى مثعب * علي بالوابل يتعنجر

C.f. *Al-amthāl al-ṣādira* p. 687 no. 4673

كالذي فر يوم غيث من القط * ر حذار الندى إلى الميزاب

Like one who fled the raindrops on a wet day * Wary against the downpour, and ran into a cistern
Also *Al-amthāl al-ṣādira* p. 688 no. 4681

وكننت كهارب من بل قطر * فصرت لشفوتي تحت المسيل

I was like one who fled raindrops * And to my chagrin I have been submerged by the flood
Also *Al-amthāl al-ṣādira* p. 689 no. 4682

هربت من الأمطار كي لا تبلني * فصرت غريقاً تحت سيل المئاعب

I fled the rains so they would not wet me * I have started to drown beneath a flood

⁹²⁸ YD 4:102

من مثل الفرس سار في الناس * التين يسقى بعلقة الأس

C.f. *Al-amthāl al-ṣādira* p. 688 no. 4679

صرت كالنتين يشرب الماء فيما * قال كسرى بعلقة الريحان

I have become like the fig tree that is watered * - As Chosroes said – for the sake of the sweet myrtle

⁹²⁹ YD 4: 100

البحر غمر الماء في العيان * والكلب يروى منه باللسان

C.f. *Al-amthāl al-ṣādira* p. 692, no. 4710

كثير الماء بطن النهر يجري * ومنه الكلب يلحس باللسان

Much water flows in the swell of the river * And the dog laps from it with his tongue

strand of rope in them and not a snare'.⁹³⁰ The following proverb given in the *Yatīma* is inverted in *al-Amthāl al-ṣādira* 'an buyūt al-shi'r: 'Seize the opportunity in its moment * And gather walnuts when they fall'.⁹³¹ It should be noted that several more proverbs given in *al-Amthāl al-ṣādira* 'an buyūt al-shi'r are essentially synonymous and paraphrase the same general idea.⁹³²

The relatively high number of correspondences between the poetry of al-Sukkarī al-Marwazī and the unknown poet on the one hand, and Ḥamza's selection on the other, suggest that there is a common textual source behind these sets of proverbs, and that the corpus from which they are drawn is quite limited in scope. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that there are close connections in phrasing between the two collections. For example, Proverb Four in the list above runs: 'A proverb of the Persians in circulation among the people is: 'The fig is watered for the sake of the sweet myrtle'' in the *Yatīma*, and: 'You have become like a fig tree that is watered – as Chosroes said – for the sake of the sweet myrtle' in Ḥamza's recension. The fact that an ascription to a (Middle) Persian source is worked into both lines may imply that both respond to a versified source which also incorporated a similar ascription into the proverb. Such a source could have been in Arabic, in Middle Persian or in New Persian.

Translation from Arabic into Persian

⁹³⁰ YD 4:101

هو الثعلب الرواغ في مهمه سلك * يرى التوفيه وما إن يرى الشبك

C.f. *Al-amthāl al-ṣādira* p. 694, no. 4736

ترى الثعلب الرواغ يحيي بوثة * إلى حين زهر من مبین على أمن

See how the crafty fox escapes in a bound * From where it was visible to where it is safe

⁹³¹ YD 4:102

أنتهز الفرصة في وقتها * وألقط الجوز إذا ينثر

This is the inverse of *Al-amthāl al-ṣādira* p. 691, no. 4699

يا قاطف الجوز أفكر في عواقبه * هل أنت تسلم عند القطف أم تقع

You who gather walnuts: think of the consequences! * Will you be safe as you gather them, or will you fall?

⁹³² Ḥamza's Nos. 4661 and 4666 are synonymous, as are 4668 and 4671; 4690 and 4648; 4715 and 4716.

Since there already existed a venerable tradition of Arabic letters when poetry was first being written in New Persian, and since this Arabic literary culture had active proponents in Iran, Khurasan and Transoxiana in the tenth century, one might expect the *Lubāb* to document many examples of direct translation from Arabic into Persian. However, this is not the case.⁹³³ There are indications that poets active in Persian read the work of their Arabic forebears. For example, ‘Awfī transmits a *qaṣīda* by Adīb Ṣābir in which the poet writes that his patron’s speech would put [Abū Ishāq] al-Ṣābī and al-‘Utbī to shame.⁹³⁴ Rūhī Valvālī, whose verse often tends towards ribaldry and *mujūn*, styles himself as a follower of Abū Nuwās (d. c. 198/813).⁹³⁵

One of the few examples of direct translation comes in the entry on the amir Abū l-Muẓaffar Ṭāhir b. al-Faḍl b. Muḥammad Muḥtāj al-Chaghānī (d. 381/990-1), who belonged to the House of Muḥtāj. The amir Abū l-Muẓaffar was the patron of the poet Munjīk Tirmizī, and hence we can infer that he took an active interest in Persian literature.⁹³⁶ This poem, which is a translation of an Arabic *qīṭ‘a* on a rainbow by Sayf al-Dawla, provides evidence to suggest that he also had a broad interest in Arabic literature. It is worth noting that Sayf al-Dawla’s poem can only have been composed a couple of decades before it was translated, suggesting that, in the late tenth century, the demand for recently ‘published’ Arabic works in Khurasan must have been high.⁹³⁷

وساق صبيح للصبح دعوته * فقام وفي أجفانه سنة الغمض

⁹³³ In addition to the translation discussed here, see also LA 1:69, which gives a *qīṭ‘a* moved ‘from Arabic to Persian’ by al-Bākhārī. ‘Awfī’s phrasing obscures whether this is a direct translation or a reworking of imagery.

⁹³⁴ LA 2:122.

⁹³⁵ LA 2:169.

⁹³⁶ See Bosworth, “Āl-e Moḥtāj”; Nafīsī, *Lubāb al-albāb*, pp. 566-7.

⁹³⁷ LA 1:27-8; the original by Sayf al-Dawla is also given at YD 1:53.

يطوف بكاسات العقار كأنجم * فمن بين منقض علينا ومنقض

وقد نشرت أيدي الجنوب مطارفاً * على الجو دكناً والحواشي على الأرض

يطررها قوس الغمام بأصفر * على أحمر في أخضر تحت مبيض

كأذيال خود أقبلت في غلائل * مصبغة والبعض أقصر من بعض

I called a young *sāqī* for a morning draught * And he arose and his eyelids were hung with
sleep

He passes around with wine goblets like stars * Some of them rise before us and others fall

The South wind's hands have spread a black shawl * On the wind and the hem of its
garment lies on the earth

The arch of the clouds embroiders it with yellow * On red [against a background of] green
under white

Like the panels of a maiden's dress, some shorter than others * As she approaches in dyed
garments

آن ساقی مه روی صبحی بر من خورد * وز خواب دو چشمش چو دوتا نرگس خورم

وآن جام می اندر دو کف او همچو ستاره * نا خورده یکی جام و دگر داده دمام

وآن میغ جنوبی چو یکی مطرب خور بود * دامن بزمین بر زده همچون شب ادهم

بر بسته هوا چون کمری قوس قزح را * از اصفر و از احمر واز مبيض معلم

گویى دو سه پیرهن است از دو سه گونه * وز دامن هر یک ز دگر تار یکی کم

That moon-faced *sāqī* gave me a morning draught to drink * And his sleepy eyes appeared
to me like two narcissi

The goblet in his hands was like the sun * One goblet was undrunk, the other - sipped from
time to time

The southern clouds were like a minstrel in his finery * The hem of their skirts spread out
like the black night

The sky had arrayed a rainbow like a belt * made of green and red and striped with white

You would say that it was two or three shirts of two or three colours * The hem of each
shorter than the other

As in Abū l-Qāsim al-Isfarā'īnī's translation of the poem by Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Šālih, the Persian version of Sayf al-Dawla's text displays some basic differences in relation to the Arabic original. Descriptions are replaced with familiar tropes; the *sāqī*'s eyes are no longer sleepy, but are instead narcissi. Similarly, the goblets no longer rise and fall like stars in the hands that hold them, and the wine-cup becomes an index for the sun. Metaphors are expanded into similes, as in Lines Three and Four, and similes are developed into heroic similes using the formula *gū'ī ki* (Line Five). In other respects, however, Abū l-Muẓaffar attempts to replicate the rhetorical effects of the Arabic as closely as possible. For example, the paronomasia of *ṣabīḥ li-l-ṣubūḥ* in Arabic finds an equivalent in *mah-rūyī ṣubūḥī* in Persian (Line One). The control that the translator exhibits here demonstrates that it was a deliberate choice to alter the comparisons and to make them fit a more familiar imagery system.

Formal and Generic Connections

The issue of translation brings us to a more fundamental question, which is germane to comparison between the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*: from the perspective of contemporary

literary criticism, how did poetic images and forms in Arabic relate to those in Persian, and vice versa? When theorists in eleventh and twelfth-century Khurasan examined a topical *waṣf* poem in Persian likening narcissi to eyes, or a *qitʿa* in Arabic on a goldsmith's boy, did they see an exact correspondence in genre between the imagery of the former and Mannerist Arabic *waṣf* poetry, and between that of the latter and the *Shahrāshūb* genre of poetry in Persian? In other words, did readers think that the themes and forms of post-*muḥdath* poetry in the two languages were in dialogue, or did they believe that they formed a single system, or did they consider Arabic and Persian to be entirely separate?

Some may argue that critics delight in establishing connections which do not exist in the mind of authors, and hence that attempts to reconstruct critical perspectives cannot bring us any closer to understanding the dynamics of how poetry was actually composed in the medieval period. Others may contend that we already have the answer: early critical volumes in Persian, such as Rādūyānī's *Tarjumān al-balāgha* (*The Translator of Eloquence*) and *al-Muʿjam fī maʿāyīr ashʿār al-ʿajam* (*The Compendium on Evaluating the Poetry of the Persians*) by Shams-i Qays depend on Arabic works on poetics, and contain *shawāhid* in Arabic. Early critics in Persian therefore appear to have worked on the principle that the theoretical background to Persian poetry was dependent on Arabic. The *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* provide us with a unique window onto the debate, and not only because they document the changing poetic landscape in Iran and Central Asia from the tenth century onwards. Whereas formal criticism occasionally connected individual lines of poetry in the two languages, the anthologists' method of linked reading affords us an opportunity to examine how they connected images with generic systems. The study of the two anthologies also allows us to explore generic borrowings into Arabic from Persian, and not just borrowings into Persian from Arabic.

In the *Yatīma*'s entry on Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Badīhī, a poet of Shahrzūr who gained renown at the court of Ibn ʿAbbād in Isfahan, al-Thaʿālibī cites the following string of poems on the theme of tears:⁹³⁸

This is by [al-Badīhī], from the *tashbīb* of a *qaṣīda* [*Tawīl*]:

ولم أر لي يوم الرحيل مساعداً * على الوجد حتى أقبل الدمع مسعدا
وكان دماً فالبيض منه احمراره * بنار التصابي حين فاض مصعدا

On the day of departure I saw no aid * to my love-longing until I gladly gave in to tears

They were of blood, yet their red was white * Distilled by the fire of love when they fell

He took this image from the poet who said [*Tawīl*]:

أراك دمعي إذ جرى فحملتني * من الضر والبلوى من مركب صعب
فلا تتكرن تلك الدموع فإنما * يبيضها تصعيدها من دم القلب

My tears fell for you when they flowed, and hence they relived me * Of the vexation and
suffering caused by a difficult journey

Do not deny these tears, for only * Their distillation from my heart's blood makes them
white

Maʿrūfī has the following in Persian on these images:⁹³⁹

خون سپید بارم بر دو رخان زردم * آری سپید باشد خون دل مصعد

I cry white blood onto my two yellow cheeks * Indeed the distilled blood of my heart is
white

⁹³⁸ YD 3:401. On al-Badīhī, see ʿA. ʿAbd al-Raḥman, *Muʿjam al-shuʿarāʾ al-ʿabbāsiyyin*, p. 70.

⁹³⁹ The end of this line is garbled in the Qumayḥa edition of YD. I have emended it using Lazard, *Les premiers poètes*. Vol. 2, p. 132.

This case is intriguing because it is the only occasion in the *Yatīma* where al-Tha‘ālibī cites poetry in Persian in his discussion of a field of imagery. Why did he bother to quote the line at all? Firstly, perhaps, because the connection between the poems is particularly clear. All three evoke the topos of tears of blood, already an overused image in the tenth century, and subvert it by claiming that clear tears are in fact made of distilled blood. Secondly, al-Tha‘ālibī may have quoted the Persian line because he considered it to be the ‘root’ image, and the antecedent, of the Arabic ones. Ma‘rūfī praised the Sāmānīd amir ‘Abd al-Malik b. Nūḥ b. Naṣr (r. 343-50/954-61), and hence almost certainly preceded al-Badīhī.⁹⁴⁰ As al-Tha‘ālibī does not establish the composer of the second Arabic set of lines, it is possible that he considered Ma‘rūfī a surer origin for the motif. This case demonstrates that al-Tha‘ālibī did, in fact, think about connections in motif and genre between Arabic and Persian literature. It may simply be that there was a very limited corpus of images that he considered to have been applied in Persian before they were ever used in Arabic.

The uses to which lyric images drawn from Persian could be put in Arabic are further demonstrated by another poem which is cited in al-Tha‘ālibī’s anthology, and which also draws on Ma‘rūfī’s line. In the *Tatīmna*, there is an extract from a poem by Abū ‘Alī Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Fuwarraja al-Burūjirdī, a man of Isfahan who lived in Rayy.⁹⁴¹ Al-Tha‘ālibī states that the extract is a translation (*tarjama*) of a single Persian line by Ma‘rūfī.⁹⁴²

يظنون ما تذري جفوني أدمعاً * بل الدم يستحيل فيقطر
تعيد بياضاً حمرة الدم لوعتي * كما أبيض ماء الورد والورد أحمر

⁹⁴⁰ For Ma‘rūfī’s patronage, see LA 2:16.

⁹⁴¹ The biographical details are given at YD 5:143.

⁹⁴² YD 5:145.

They suppose that tears flow from my eyes * But it is blood that is transformed and falls

My longing makes the red blood white * Just as rosewater is white but roses red.

Al-Tha‘ālibī does not state that Line Two of this poem responds to the *bayt* by Ma‘rūfī quoted above, but it does, both formally and logically. Al-Burūjirdī preserves the *ṭibāq* between red and white seen in the original, and the basic image of clear tears as distilled blood. The idea of longing as the fire which distils the liquid, first made explicit by al-Badīhī, is developed and extended here. Al-Burūjirdī’s poem demonstrates to how great an extent a poet working in Arabic could alter the phrasing of a line that derived from Persian and still be seen to be working within its field of imagery. It also suggests that poets active in Arabic in Iran and Central Asia during the tenth and early eleventh centuries did read or listen to poetry in Persian and make active borrowings from it.

In terms of genre, there is an interesting interplay between the four poems quoted above. Even outside the *Yatīma*, the line by Ma‘rūfī is preserved as an isolated *bayt*, which prevents us from establishing the kind of poem from which it is derived. Two obvious possibilities present themselves. The line could be from the erotic introit (*nasīb/tashbīb*) to a *qaṣīda*, or from an independent lyric or descriptive *qit‘a*. Common themes in the corpus of *nasīb* sections of early Persian *qaṣā’id* include descriptions of beloveds, both explicitly female and explicitly male, and of the poet-narrator’s longing for them. A lyric or descriptive *qit‘a* built around a comparison might have used the theme of tears as distilled blood as its central metaphor. The three Arabic extracts are drawn from *qaṣā’id*, and employ the image within the context of the characteristic opening section, in which the poet-narrator recalls the departure of his loved ones and his longing for them. Together, the examples go to show that, despite differences in the common *aghrāḍ* of tenth-century Arabic and Persian lyric and panegyric poetry, it was possible to translate images by transposing them into a generic context that was deemed equivalent to the one in which

they had been used first. The fact that all three Arabic poems use the image within the same context suggests that there were (unspoken) conventions which underpinned such transpositions. They also reinforce the point that poets exercised liberality of interpretation in their translations.

We see further evidence for the conventions that underpinned generic transpositions in the *Yatīma*'s entry on the scribe Abū l-Ḥasan Aḥmad b. al-Mu'ammil, a scribe of Bukhara.⁹⁴³ Here al-Tha'ālibī juxtaposes three poems, two of which are described as Arabic reworkings of Persian poems by Rūdakī and Ma'rūfī. The sequence is of particular interest because it shows how the anthologist connected the motifs of poetry in Persian with those of Arabic verse. The first extract is drawn from a *qaṣīda* addressed to a certain Naṣr b. Zayd:⁹⁴⁴

له قلم سوق القضاء إذا جرت * به يده في النهي والأمر كاسده
ويملي فيصغي الكاتبان تطرباً * إلى مبدعات هن والسحر واحده
ولولا خلال يحظر الدين ذكرها * لقلت الذي يملئ قران على حده

He has a pen, which, when his hand moves to command and prohibit * Makes Fate's
market listless

He dictates and his two scribes joyfully forge * Creations that are one with magic
Were it not for qualities whose mention the faith prohibits * I would declare him the one
who dictated the Qur'an alone

This poem is by him. He transferred its images from two lines by Rūdakī:⁹⁴⁵

⁹⁴³ Ibn al-Mu'ammil worked for a certain Abū l-Ḥasan [al-Sīmjūrī?].

⁹⁴⁴ YD 4:169-70.

⁹⁴⁵ Rūdakī's original Persian runs as follows. See Rūdakī, *Dīvān*, p. 48

این جهان را نگر بچشم خرد * نی بدان چشم کاندراو نگری
همچو دریاست وز نکوکاری * کشتی ساز تا بدان گذری

Behold the world through the eyes of wisdom * Not through those with which you see

تصور الدنيا بعين الحجي * لا بالتي أنت بها تنظر
الدهر بحر فاتخذ زورقاً * من عمل الخير به تعبر

Behold the world through the eyes of wisdom * Not through those with which you see

It is like a sea, so build a craft * Of charity on which to cross it

This poem is by him. He transferred its images from two lines by Ma'rūfī:

إذا لم تكن لي من لدنك مبرة * وزال رجائي عن نوالك في نفسي
فأنت إذاً مثلي أنيس مصور * فلم أعبد الشيء المصور من جنسي

If you will give me no reward * And my hope for gifts from you has faded

Then you, like me, are a painted friend * And I cannot worship a painted thing of my own
kind

Here, al-Tha'ālibī's arrangement of the poems suggests that Ibn al-Mu'ammil's translations should be read as appeals from poet to patron. The first poem in the sequence is a description of the patron's qualities drawn from the *madḥ* section of a *qaṣīda*. The Persian original of the second fragment is generally considered to be more of a wisdom and advice poem than a praise poem, but since it is sandwiched between two extracts of praise poetry here it reads more as an appeal for the patron to act charitably towards the poet-narrator. The third poem reads as one of reproach to the patron for their lack of generosity. Its imagery casts the patron as a beloved, recalling the common comparison in Persian between the beloved and a graven idol. These examples demonstrate that images drawn from Persian lyric and advice poetry could be transposed with relative ease into the context of Arabic eulogy.

While the *Yatīma* contains few explicit references to Persian literature beyond those which I have surveyed here, it should be emphasised that there are many more poems which

It is like a sea, so build a craft * Of charity on which to cross it

testify to the interaction between Arabic and Persian. As continuities in genre between the Arabic and Persian corpora can be explored through the catalogues to this thesis, it will suffice here to highlight two topics that are common to poetry in the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*. Al-Tha‘ālibī’s selections include praise poems composed on the occasion of Iranian festivals such as Nawrūz, Mihrajān and Sada. These poems treat a similar set of topoi to their later Persian equivalents, and order them in a cognate fashion. For example, there is a Nawrūz *qaṣīda* by al-Za‘farānī which treats the theme of wine-drinking at the new year, which compares the regeneration of life caused by spring showers to the bountiful hand of the patron, and which evokes the chorus of spring birds.⁹⁴⁶ Cognate themes are found in the Nawrūz *qaṣā’id* of Persian poets such as Manūchihri and Farrukhi.⁹⁴⁷

Another common kind of poem found in the *Yatīma* consists of a vignette describing a tradesman-beloved. The *Tatīmna* contains a string of two-line epigrams by Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥasan b. Abī al-Ṭayyib al-Bākhari, himself a bilingual poet, on a tailor’s boy, a barber’s boy, a young man whose beard had sprouted, a young calligrapher with newly-grown facial hair and a young man with russet moustaches.⁹⁴⁸ It also features a two-line epigram by Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Dilshādhī on a young soldier,⁹⁴⁹ and a two-line epigram by the jurist Abū l-Qāsim Hibbat Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Isfarā’inī on a pharmacist’s boy.⁹⁵⁰ Scholarship has long recognised distinct genres of poetry in Persian, Urdu and Turkish called the *Shahrāshūb* and the *Shahrangīz*, in which lyric epigrams on tradesman are joined together in lengthy poems, yet no attempt appears to have been made

⁹⁴⁶ YD 3:406.

⁹⁴⁷ See, for example, *Dīvān-i Manūchihri Dāmghānī*, ed. M. Dabīr Siyāqī, pp. 18-19, a Nawrūz *qaṣīda* in praise of Abū l-Ḥasan Maymandī. Manūchihri’s Nawrūz *qaṣā’id* are discussed in Clinton, *The Divan*, pp. 100-125.

⁹⁴⁸ YD 5:222-224.

⁹⁴⁹ YD 5:306.

⁹⁵⁰ YD 5:309.

to look for Arabic antecedents and equivalents for this kind of verse.⁹⁵¹ While it is true that these Arabic epigrams are not formed into compound poems in al-Tha‘ālibī’s recension, we may speculate that the *Shahrāshūb* genre itself came about because individual epigrams such as these were grouped together to form longer strings.⁹⁵² Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān, one of the best-known practitioners of *Shahrāshūb* poetry, had acquaintances in common with al-Bākhazī, and hence it is possible that there was a degree of mutual influence.⁹⁵³ It is not my intention to imply that the origin of the genre is in fact Arabic, but it should be emphasised that Arabic epigrams on tradesmen were in circulation soon after the earliest extant *Shahrāshūb* poems began to be composed in the late ninth century, and are found throughout the *Yatīma*.⁹⁵⁴

Formal and Generic Connections: The *Lubāb*

While the *Lubāb* provides considerable scope for analysing generic connections between Arabic and Persian, I have limited my enquiry here to cases where ‘Awfī, like al-Tha‘ālibī, juxtaposes Arabic and Persian poems, and hence develops connections between them. ‘Awfī’s willingness to cite poetry in Arabic means that he often includes Arabic poems by bilingual poets alongside specimens of their verse in Persian, and hence shows how a single author could apply similar images and rhetorical devices in both languages. In the entry on the bilingual amir Abū l-Faṭḥ ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Ḥātimī al-Harawī, we find a case

⁹⁵¹ On this genre, see Sharma, *Persian Poetry at the Indian Frontier*, pp. 107-116; Idem, “The City of Beauties in Indo-Persian Poetic Landscape”, pp. 73-81.

⁹⁵² See Sharma, *Persian Poetry at the Indian Frontier*, p.109.

⁹⁵³ See Nafīsī, *Lubāb al-albāb*, p.576. For the text of Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān’s *Shahrāshūb*, see his *Dīvān*, pp. 636-653.

⁹⁵⁴ Sharma argues that Sāmānid poets active in Persian, such as Rūdakī, composed single epigrams that conform to what would later be thought of as the *Shahrāshūb* genre. *Persian Poetry at the Indian Frontier*, p.110. This material is directly contemporaneous with Arabic epigrams on the same themes that are featured in the *Yatīma*.

which highlights the use of common rhetorical devices. 'Awfī gives the following extracts:⁹⁵⁵

He composed this Arabic *dūbayt* describing wine:

أما ترى الخمر كالشمس في قدح * كالبدر فوق يد كالغيث إذ صابت
فالكأس كافورة لكنها جمدت * والخمر ياقوتة لكنه ذابت

Do you not see the wine, which shines like the sun, in a cup * Like the full moon, above a
hand akin to the [silver] rain when it falls?

Hence the goblet is frozen camphor * And the wine a liquid ruby

I can recall the following lines from a Spring *qaṣīda* by him which is concerned with the natural world:

آمد بهار و فرخنده روزگار * و آراست مشک باد جهان را بهشت وار
باران بهمنی همه یاقوت گشت و در * و آزار ابر گشت همه در آبدار
صحرا ز لاله و گل زرد و سپید و سرخ * گویی بر آب عکس ستاره است بی شمار
صلصل بغلغل اندر با بلبل از نشاط * قمری سرود گویی شده بر سر چنار
من یار فاخته شده اندر فراق دوست * او نزد یار خویش مرا هجر یار یار

Spring and the days of fortune have come * And the musky breeze has arrayed the world
like Paradise

The March rain has turned into rubies and pearls * And the Spring clouds have become
lustrous pearls

⁹⁵⁵ LA 1:34. Al-Ḥātimī al-Harawī also has an entry in *Dumyat al-qaṣr* Vol. 2, pp. 724-733.

You might say that the plain, covered in tulips and yellow, white * and red roses, is the
reflection of countless stars on the water

Warbling along with the nightingale in joy, the wood-pigeon * Has become a tuneful moon
atop the plane tree

Separated from my beloved, I have become the ring-dove's companion * Now that he is
with his beloved, he is my beloved, in the absence of my own

The two poems that are juxtaposed in this sequence share more than they appear to at first. Both are *wasf* poems, consisting of expanded descriptions which turn on simile and metaphor. Both also juxtapose expanded similes (*tashbīh*) with metaphor (*isti'āra*). Line One of the Arabic poem consists of a lengthy string of similes introduced by *ka-* (like). This technique can be compared with the use of the extended simile introduced by the phrase *gū' ī ki* in Line Three of the Persian poem. Line Two of the Arabic poem depends on condensed metaphors, a device found in Line Two of the Persian poem. These examples show how al-Ḥātimī al-Harawī alternated rhetorical devices in similar ways in both Arabic and Persian, applying them to descriptive poetry. Such continuities are significant because they suggest that there was a degree of convergence in rhetorical techniques between the two literary systems in Ghaznavid Khurasan, even if their common *topoi* and imagery differed. We gain a similar impression from another two poems that 'Awfī juxtaposes in his entry on the Saljuq amir Mas'ūd b. Abī l-Yaman al-Kirmānī:⁹⁵⁶

تنبيه فالحان الحمام المطوق * تحت على شرب المدام المروق

يقول اصتبج واشرب وأعتق من الجوى * رقيق الفؤاد بالرحيق المعتق

⁹⁵⁶ LA 1:59.

You awake, and the song of the collared doves * Urges you to drink limped wine

It says: 'Rise, drink and free your enslaved heart * From ardour with aged nectar

ای بر تن من نهاده باری غم تو * وی در دل من فگنده ناری غم تو

گفتی که مگر غم منت چونین کرد * آری غم تو غم تو آری غم تو

Longing for you has placed a burden on my body * And longing for you has lit a fire in my
heart

You said, 'Surely love for me did not do this to you?' * Yes, longing for you, longing for
you, longing for you.

As with the poems by al-Ḥātimī al-Harawī, these poems share formal features rather than imagery. Both are *rubā'īs* or *dūbayts*, a term which 'Awfī uses interchangeably, and both make use of direct speech in their second lines. In juxtaposing them, 'Awfī emphasises the independence of imagery systems in Arabic and Persian, but highlights how poets used similar forms and rhetorical devices in the two languages. In some ways, this is the inverse of the trends that al-Tha'ālibī documents, where poets active in Arabic borrowed conceits from Persian and transposed them into an 'endemic' generic context.

Conclusion

Throughout this section, I have aimed to demonstrate that the story of Arabic and Persian poetry between the tenth and the thirteenth centuries is not one of divergence from a common root so much as one of constant engagement in rhetoric and poetic technique. Literary networks were created across the two languages, because authors active in Arabic read and listened to poetry in Persian, and poets active in Persian read and listened to verse

in Arabic. Initially, the bureaucratic classes, active as writers in Arabic but often of Iranian stock, seem to have been the major brokers of this cultural exchange, perhaps prompted by their interest in the intellectual heritage of Pre-Islamic Iran. During the tenth century, the Sāmānid court at Bukhara appears to have been the major centre for interaction between the two literatures, to be replaced by the Ghaznavid courts of Khurasan in the early eleventh century. However, the evidence leaves little doubt that exchange was also carried out in cities such as Nishapur and Herat, and in locales further west, like Isfahan, Rayy and Jurjan.

If we can speak of a translation ‘movement’ during the tenth century, in which a Persian cultural freight was made accessible to speakers of Arabic, we can also speak of a translation ‘movement’ in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, when bureaucrats and men of letters attempted to create a literary apparatus in Persian that provided readers with equivalents to the manuals of philology and rhetoric and the guides to literary style that existed in Arabic already. The *Lubāb* is very much part of this phenomenon. In borrowing the *ṭabaqāt* model, ‘Awfī suggested that he belonged to a literary heritage held in common with compilers of Arabic anthologies such as al-Tha‘ālibī. This kind of engagement could only be undertaken because the Arabic and Persian poetry of Iran, Khurasan and Transoxiana was in dialogue. While the common motifs used in the two literatures may have differed, this did not prevent the transposition and adaptation of images between the two systems, or the creation of a shared set of poetic forms and rhetorical devices.

General Conclusion

The impetus for undertaking this thesis was sparked by my sense that scholars have not attempted to answer, or indeed to pose, a series of basic questions about the practicalities of literary production in the medieval period: was it possible for poets to make a living outside the structures of patronage? Was there a real trade in manuscripts beyond the confines of courts, and, if so, who benefitted from it? Did individual courts and cities possess isolated and discrete literary scenes, or did the circulation of texts create a transregional, interconnected literary system?

These questions are timely because histories of the book business tend to assume that phenomena such as the publishing industry and middle-class literacy emerged at a particular historical moment, which is usually defined as the advent of 'Modernity'. While the forms of production presented here do differ substantially from those studied by scholars such as Hanna, Sajdi and Ayalon, they nevertheless suggest that the roots of the publishing industry in the Arabic- and Persian-speaking worlds should be sought in the medieval period, far earlier than was thought hitherto. This helps us to reassess the preconception that the Middle East was 'slow' to develop publishing culture, and to reconsider the models to which nineteenth-century publishers in the Arab World and Iran were responding.

One of the major issues that this thesis has addressed is the question of patronage. While it is true that poets could earn the most when they were sponsored by rulers who had access to large reserves of luxury goods and cold hard cash with which to reward them, we can now conclude that courts were not the only sites in which poets were active, and that patronage was not the only system through which they could earn a living. A market existed, extending from courts, into private residences in cities, village mosques and

landowners' country estates. Texts circulated between the different fora through channels of dissemination which included both the written word, in the form of manuscripts, and the spoken word, in the form of recitation and memorization. These two arms of the publishing industry lacked any form of centralised legal regulation, which spurred individuals to turn the dissemination of other people's texts into a profitable, controlled enterprise, whether through reciting texts to paying audiences or through copying books to order.

The fact that not only poets but their readers too could earn from the dissemination of texts was perhaps the most significant factor behind the creation of the market. Copyists and publishers attempted to be the first to buy manuscripts from authors, and then used them to produce abridged *dawāwīn* and anthologies from whose sale they could earn. Singers and their musicians purchased notebooks containing love lyrics, which they performed to paying audiences. Grammarians and rhetoricians required examples of how language had been used in the past and of how it was being used in contemporary poetry in order to teach their students, while men of letters and professional scribes were desperate to turn the most fashionable contemporary verse into prose, so as to demonstrate their aptitude for employment in state chanceries. Professional poets themselves, keen to keep abreast of literary fashions and to stimulate demand for their work among their potential audiences, also needed access to examples of how images and devices had been employed historically and of how they were being used in the present. All these groups paid to access texts, and then used them for their own advantage.

Finally, even though patrons did not earn a financial profit from purchasing verse, other forms of benefit did accrue to them. Praise poetry enshrined their authority, provided entertainment, and adorned their courts, just like representations of them in visual form

did. However, verse was regarded as a surer investment than other luxury commodities, because it was intangible. When it was memorised, it could not be burned, stolen, or eaten by rodents, and it was also inherently portable. The patronage of poetry may have been regarded as a kind of public service, which allowed rulers to spread wealth around, but it was also a form of transaction in which patrons purchased luxury objects that they actually wanted to enjoy. In order to perpetuate this state of affairs, all but the most informed patrons needed to be shown what constituted good poetry, so that they could ensure that the representations of themselves which they ordered from poets possessed two inextricably linked types of value: the aesthetic and the monetary. While patrons differed from audiences like scholars and grammarians, their tastes were also influenced by those of the market, and their collecting practices not only shaped it, but were shaped by it too.

Anthologies like the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* are designed to be flexible resources that could cater to the needs of varying audiences, from professional poets to patrons. In Chapter One, I examined how false attributions of poems were made in some manuscripts which circulated on the open market. This evidence suggests that readers would have been keen to find sources which presented texts in sound recensions, and which ascribed them to their real authors. In a book market that lacked any kind of legal regulation, accuracy could best be ensured by obtaining texts directly from their authors, but most readers would have possessed neither the time nor the resources to buy holograph manuscripts of the work of every poet in whom they were interested. The anthologists undertook this work on behalf of their readers. Sometimes they purchased manuscripts directly from authors, and sometimes authors gave them clean copies of their collected works, in the hope of finding a bigger market through publication. The anthologists also used their connections to gain access to private collections, or they trawled through rare volumes in public libraries on their travels.

Al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī were rewarded for their investment with works that they considered to be their own ‘stock’ and ‘capital’. These representations imply that they, and not the authors whom they transmitted, earned directly from the circulation of the anthologies. While their ownership of their works leaves the anthologists open to accusations of plagiarism, the reality may have been more akin to the situation today, where anthologies are governed by two forms of copyright: the contributing authors’ copyright over their own texts, and the publisher’s copyright over the anthology as a whole. While the anthologists’ biographical comments are partly designed to help readers analyse and interpret the literary texts contained in the entries, they are also representations that are aimed the market, enshrining authors’ characters and their ownership of their own work. It should be emphasised that al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī do acknowledge chains of ownership of poems, incorporating both authors and transmitters, by citing *isnāds* throughout their anthologies. On occasion, we also find cases where the anthologists state that authors asked them to include, or to exclude, specific poems, suggesting that some entries were authorised by the poets themselves. Curiously, the one group of people who do not appear to have had any controlling stake in the reproduction of poems are patrons. They are not automatically included in *isnāds*, and there is no particular implication in either anthology that patrons could control the dissemination of texts which they had purchased. The only way that patrons could control the diffusion of material was to keep manuscripts locked away from prying eyes and memories, as Ibn ‘Abbād attempted to do with his jealously-guarded *safīna*.

The anthologists’ ability to control the diffusion of their works – and hence to earn from them – is connected to the issue of how textual transmission operated in both written and oral forms. Ultimately, neither anthologist would have been able to restrict access to their works for long, and their publishing ventures can only have increased access to the corpus.

This is because they themselves would have been the victims of the same lack of regulation in the literary marketplace which they exploited in compiling their texts. They would have lost control over how their anthologies were reproduced when unauthorized copies were inevitably made and put into circulation, or when audiences memorized the contents and transmitted them orally. Neither orality nor the written word is an inherently uncontrollable medium. For example, it is possible for a transmitter to disseminate a text by word of mouth only when he or she is paid. Yet, it would only have been possible for the anthologists and the poets whom they transmitted to exert such control by continually reproducing their work. They either had to copy out manuscripts themselves repeatedly and sell them, or recite texts to paying audiences, or find an income through other means.

Even though the vast majority of the poets featured in the two anthologies did not receive copy money, they would have garnered renown, and possible offers of employment, from the kind of mass diffusion offered by the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*. We can imagine two, overlapping kinds of profit which accrued to the anthologists and the poets whom they transmitted. The first is material, and relates to what they could control directly. An example of this phenomenon might be al-Tha‘ālibī teaching the *Yatīma* to students who paid him a salary for his services, a case which highlights how the oral diffusion of a text can be a regulated affair. The second is immaterial, but offered the potential for material profit at some later stage. For example, if one of the anthology entries were to start circulating in a city as a kind of cheap ‘chap’ manuscript, or if a single lyric poem drawn from either anthology were to be performed repeatedly at concerts, increased market demand may have spurred audiences to buy their own copies of the anthologies, or to approach one of the poets cited in them for a holograph copy of his or her collected works.

It is true that the two anthologies were released to different primary audiences, and that we

see some reflection of this in the genres of poetry which they include. The *Yatīma*, begun under the patronage of a vizier but seemingly completed through popular subscription, is encyclopaedic in its scope, catering to the interests of everyone from singers, to scribes, to jurists. The *Lubāb*, dedicated to a patron who was a vizier, mostly contains texts that are directly connected to the genres of praise and lyric poetry, both of which would have appealed to courtly audiences. However, we should be cautious about assuming that the differences between the two works are directly connected to their primary readership. If that were the case, we might wonder why the *Lubāb* does not contain examples of the kinds of chancery prose which represent an important part of the *Yatīma*, and which would, presumably, have exerted some attraction for ‘Awfī’s patron. It also seems likely that ‘Awfī would have been inclined to diffuse his text more widely beyond the confines of the court at Uchcha, among audiences such as grammarians and scribes, particularly since the *Lubāb* is structured in a way which makes it easy for members of professions such as the bureaucratic classes to find the verse of their peers. Hence, it appears probable that both anthologists chose extracts which they thought would hold a broad appeal across the market.

The anthologists’ choice of material also reflected the influence of the market in shaping tastes. The examples of intertextuality that I studied in Chapter Two depended on authors reading texts which were popular, and whose circulation was fostered by demand. For example, Futūḥī would have chosen to use earlier poets such as Mu‘izzī and ‘Unṣurī as models because their styles of writing were popular among his own contemporaries. His choice also depended on the fact that he could access their texts, something which their popularity would have enabled. We found concrete evidence in support of the contention that poets accessed one another’s work in manuscript in Rashīdī’s apologia for Rūdakī. The market powered access to texts, and hence intertextuality itself.

Crucially, the examples cited in Chapter Two also show that patronage was informed by market taste. For example, when ‘Aḏud al-Dawla commissioned al-Salāmī to produce his *qaṣīda* on the Bawān Ravine in response to al-Mutanabbī, he was getting an old poem that he himself had purchased some years before ‘re-modelled’ in accordance with a popular aesthetic. Ibn ‘Abbād’s fondness for literature by and about the Banū Sāsān may have been shaped by popular literary currents in Baghdad. Al-Aḥnaf al-‘Ukbarī was not a court poet, but rather a poet of the city, and Ibn ‘Abbād’s positive reception of his poem of self-vaunting offers a clear case in which a courtly patron was influenced in his tastes by the street. Episodes such as these emphasise the need for modern scholars to re-assess conceptions like the perceived antithesis between ‘elite’ and ‘popular’ forms of consumption, even as early as the ‘Abbāsīd era. The anthologies provide ample evidence to demonstrate that stratified ideas about the street versus the court are untenable. Courts were often not closed but open spaces, and they held *majālis* at which poets from the city could participate, allowing court poetry to find its way onto the street. Similarly, patrons and poets could pick up ‘popular’ poetic forms and themes off the street and bring them into courts.

This kind of exchange facilitated the flow of motifs and techniques between different poetic forms and genres, and fostered the mutual appropriation of images between courts and the street. The fact that the most popular models for emulation in the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* are courtly poets demonstrates that poets in the city did not condemn verse as being elitist or stylistically abstruse simply because it came from courts. Indeed, the most vituperative condemnations of poets of all social strata tend to be composed by their own colleagues, with whom they were in competition for patronage or employment.

As I stated in Chapter Two, the anthologists’ emphasis on the circulation of texts and the

mutual appropriation of forms and motifs exists in tension with their slightly artificial attempts to argue that each geographical region and social stratum possesses its own approach to poetry. The former model is fluid, implying that poets drew on material from anywhere and everywhere, while the latter approach argues that each city and region is a discrete phenomenon. Whether this contradiction is intended to be deliberate or not, it nevertheless provides a productive way into thinking about the problem of the transregional trade in texts.

My surveys of the material presented in the appendices show that the supposed differences between regions and social strata are genuine. These differences are formal and generic, but there are sociological reasons behind this: different audiences demanded different kinds of poetry. For example, in areas where the literary scene was dominated by competing courts, the panegyric *qaṣīda* was understandably popular, while in cities which did not possess wealthy and active patrons, but which did have an energetic bureaucratic class or clergy, other genres, such as the *ikhwāniyya* and short descriptive poetry, predominate. However, intertextuality extends beyond form, and connections are developed in motif and rhetoric between poems in different genres. For example, phrasings found in a well-known praise poem could be extracted from their original context and be re-applied with slight variation in lyric poetry.

Verse also had an afterlife beyond the occasion of its composition and initial performance. For example, *qaṣā'id* and lyric poems produced at court might later be dissected in scholarly gatherings, as philologists critiqued and explored the imagery that they contained, while descriptive poetry produced in cities could become popular with courtly patrons. Several genres were sufficiently broad in their appeal to work between different contexts. Thus, poems exchanged between friends (*ikhwāniyyāt*) and invective verse

(*hijā* /*hajv*) were not only popular among bureaucrats and scholars but also at courts, meaning that such poems could enjoy widespread demand – in both courts and cities – when they entered circulation.

While the notion of distinct ‘schools’ would be undeniably artificial, it is important to understand the role played by regionalism in the anthologies. The extremely large geographical scope of the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* forced al-Tha‘ālibī and ‘Awfī to acknowledge that aesthetic practices – by which I mean not only tastes in genre and motif but also critical approaches to poetry – varied from place to place. The biographical and geographical approaches adopted by the anthologists can be considered ‘social’ in the sense that they emphasise the human contexts in which literary production occurred.

Groups of authors, patrons and critics, bound together by their proximity to one another in space or their similar interests, created literary communities. These communities were not isolated, and they could be permeated by people who came from other cities and regions, but they are treated by the anthologists as discrete entities. For example, in the *Yatīma*, the poets of the town of Bust in modern Afghanistan are represented as a community because they drew on the style of writing that was popularised by their compatriot Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Bustī, and because most of them knew him. Yet these men cannot be considered a ‘school’, because many of them emigrated from their hometown and worked for different employers, and because their writing is not homogenous in its concerns. In this case, as in many others, the biographical and geographical approach cannot fully encapsulate the complexity of literary production.

The material that the anthologies reveal concerning circulation, market demand and the publishing industry intersects with trends in current scholarship. Speaking comparatively, this study has shown that literary markets are not created by print. The ‘Abbāsīd Middle

East offers us a market which was no less robust or large in its scale than those of early modern China and Europe, but which was based on manuscript culture and the diffusion of texts in spoken form, rather than on the printed book. These findings invite us to explore how manuscript culture and orality functioned in other places and at other historical moments. At the same time, they indicate that much more work remains to be done on reconstructing why and how manuscript culture continued to predominate in the Middle East for centuries after print technology became available.

Translation is a fundamental aspect of circulation and adaption. While previous studies focused on the concept of the 'Republic of Letters' have begun to highlight the importance of translation to intellectual exchange in the pre-modern Middle East, there has been a prevailing assumption that Persian and Turkish literatures were either subsidiary to Arabic, or somehow existed in opposition to it. For example, al-Musawi proposes a medieval 'Islamic' Republic of Letters, yet subtitles his work *Arabic Knowledge Construction*, while Dabashi goes so far as to imply that Persian functioned as the antithesis of Arabic during the 'Abbāsid era. Chapter Four of this thesis revises such opinions by looking at movement between Arabic and Persian. I have emphasised that translation was not unidirectional, and that translations of texts were made almost constantly between the tenth and the thirteenth centuries, helping us to break down the idea that the Persian was dependent on Arabic, or that Arabic 'dominated' Persian. This was a system of variation and exchange.

Lastly, I hope that this study will encourage greater interest among scholars in connecting the material history of the book in the Islamic world with the information that can be mined from documentary and narrative sources. Time and space have prevented me from using extant manuscripts to reconstruct how the book business linked middle-class and

courtly forms of consumption. Again, there is room for future research which does not place courtly and middle-class audiences in opposition, but which sees the two as participants in a larger publishing system.

Appendix One

A Catalogue of the Poetry in the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*

The following catalogue classifies the poems that are contained in the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* according to genre. As far as possible, I have used the generic categories described by the anthologists themselves. Twenty-five such categories are mentioned, ranging from *waṣf/vaṣf* (descriptive or ekphrastic poetry), and *madḥ* (praise poetry), to the *uḥjīya/chīstān* (riddle). Wherever the anthologists designate the genre of a poem, I have respected their classification, even if this requires creating a category that is only employed once, as is the case with a series of poems by Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Bustī in the *Yatīma* which are classified using terms such as *nujūmiyyāt* ('astronomical' poems) and *fiqhiyyāt* ('legal' poems) (YD 4:355-62). There are cases where I categorise poems twice, descriptive love poetry being the most prevalent type. There are also cases where a poem could have been ascribed to multiple genres and I have only given it one tag, as with the *qaṣīda sāsāniyya* of Abū Dulaf al-Khazrajī (YD 3:416-36), which could be classed as a philological poem, or as a piece of *mujūn*, but which I term a poem on begging.

Since each number in the catalogue refers to a separate page of the print editions, rather than to a separate poem, there are many cases in which a single number covers more than one short poem. Conversely, there are also examples of polythematic *qaṣīda* poems which stretch across multiple pages, and whose strophes I have categorised individually.

The volume and page numbers given in the catalogue correspond to the paperback reprint of Qumayḥa's edition of the *Yatīma* and the *Tatimma*, and to the Browne/Qazvīnī edition of the *Lubāb*. While it would have been desirable to cross reference all the editions of the

two works and to incorporate manuscript material into the catalogue, the mass of text and the time constraints of the DPhil have regrettably rendered this impossible.

As the John Rylands manuscript of the *Lubāb* is divided into two volumes, one dedicated to non-professional poets and the other to professionals, I have found it convenient to split my catalogue of ‘Awfī’s anthology in a similar fashion. A more granular approach would have been to devote a separate index to each of ‘Awfī’s chapters, but my initial experiments with this method tended to obscure, rather than to magnify, the data. In my treatment of al-Tha‘ālibī’s anthology I have incorporated the material from each of the four main parts of the *Tatimma* into the indices to the *Yatīma*, so as to provide a clearer picture of the poetic character of each of the geographical regions. Material from the conclusion to the *Tatimma* is accorded its own index.

The indices demonstrate that there are genuine differences between al-Tha‘ālibī’s regions and between ‘Awfī’s social classes. The results of the analysis can be summarised as follows:

In the *Yatīma*, praise poetry predominates in Syria; short love poems are found in greater concentration in Egypt and points west, particularly Andalusia. Descriptive love poetry, wine poetry, poetry of reproach and complaint and prose predominate in Iraq, from where al-Tha‘ālibī cites comparatively little praise poetry. Descriptive poetry of both the lyric and ekphrastic kind, and praise, are more popular in Iran. Finally, poems swapped by friends, satires exchanged between enemies, ekphrastic epigrams, wisdom poems and prose of different types constitute the most distinctive genres of Khurasan and Transoxiana. These findings are consistent with the idea that poets wrote for radically different purposes depending on their environment. For example, while those active at the courts of Sayf al-Dawla and Ibn ‘Abbād may have favoured polythematic praise poetry,

some poets in Iraq wrote popular song lyrics, and the bureaucrats of Bukhara used poetry to cement their friendships and sink their rivals.

The primary difference between the two parts of the *Lubāb* is that the non-professional poets authored a greater number of explicitly occasional poems than their professional peers. Although Part One is significantly shorter, it contains more poems of complaint and elegy, and more self-representations, than Part Two. These findings support the thesis that the non-professional poets produced more verse connected to events in their private lives, such as the death of loved ones or their own imprisonment. By contrast, the genres of descriptive, love and praise poetry, kinds of writing with a commercial appeal, predominate overwhelmingly in Part Two.

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Appendix Two

The Sources of the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb*

This appendix lists the named sources of the *Yatīma* and the *Lubāb* and the material that they transmit, progressing page by page through the volumes. I have stated the topic of poetry or prose wherever a source transmits a limited amount of material, such as a letter or up to ten poems. I distinguish between poets and transmitters in the appendix by underlining the names of the poets. Wherever a source provides all of the material in an entry, as is frequently the case with *dīwāns/dīvāns*, I have stated as such without listing the topic of every poem. As in Appendix One, the volume and page numbers given here correspond to the paperback reprint of Qumayḥa's edition of the *Yatīma* and the *Tatimma*, and to the first printing of the Browne/Qazvīnī edition of the *Lubāb*. The names of the books and human sources given in the 'Abd al-Ḥamīd of the *Yatīma* and the Qumayḥa edition of the *Tatimma* are listed in Orfali, *The Anthologist's Art*, Appendices Two and Three (pp. 203-32).

The data presented below support the contention that the two anthologists relied on written sources to provide them with the bulk of their material. Many more human sources are listed than books, but they tend to transmit a limited number of poems. The findings also suggest that human sources had an overwhelming interest in two kinds of text: short lyric and descriptive poems, and *akhbār* derived from personal experiences, such as encounters with poets in *majālis*. When it comes to written sources, this appendix highlights the importance of holograph manuscripts to the anthologists, and particularly to al-Tha'ālibī. These findings reinforce the impression that the anthologists were genuinely publishing material, in the sense of making texts available to wider audiences.

The Sources of *Yatīmat al-dahr*.

Page references are to *Yatīmat al-dahr*, ed. M. M. Qumayḥa. First Printing. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2000

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Vol. 1

- 34 Source: a group of the companions of Ibn ‘Abbād. Material: a report that he enjoyed their use of al-Buḥturī’s style.
- 36 Oral and written source: al-Khwārizmī. Material: verse and *akhbār* concerning the poets of Syria and Aleppo that are cited throughout Part One.
- 42 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-‘Alawī al-Ḥusaynī al-Hamadānī al-Waṣī. Material: a *khbar* on panegyric verses performed in the presence of Sayf al-Dawla by a Bedouin.
- 42 Written source: Ibn Labīb, *ghulām* of al-Babbaghā’ (presumably in his book *al-ṭuraf wa l-ẓuraf*): verses by al-Babbaghā’ about dinars bearing the portrait of Sayf al-Dawla.
- 45 Written source: Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābī. Material: panegyric verses that he composed at the request of Sayf al-Dawla.
- 53 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ifriqī al-Mutayyam. Material: verses by Sayf al-Dawla on a rainbow.

- 54 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan al-‘Alawī al-Hamadānī. Material: a ‘youthful’ erotic poem related to him by Sayf al-Dawla.
- 55 Source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī, told by Ibn Khālawayh in Aleppo. Material: lyric lines by Sayf al-Dawla.
- 55 Source: Al-Mutayyam, told by Ibn Fāris. Material: lines on a beloved crying blood.
- 56 Multiple, unnamed sources attest the same lines by Sayf al-Dawla on a spat between him and his brother Nāṣir al-Dawla.
- 58 Source: Ibn Khālawayh. Material: an exchange of letters between Sayf al-Dawla and Abū Firās.
- 111 Source: Badī‘ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī. Material: lines mimicking the style of Abū Firās that he recited to Ibn ‘Abbād.
- 111 Written source: the fly-leaf (*ẓahr*)⁹⁵⁷ of a holograph volume containing one of Abū Firās’s hunting *muzdawijas*. Material: verses describing the *muzdawija*.
- 113 Source: Ibn Khālawayh. Material: the verses composed by Abū Firās on his deathbed.
- 115 Multiple unnamed sources: comments by Mutanabbī to the effect that his poetry had worsened since he left the Hamdanid court.
- 115 Source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī. Material: verses by an unnamed Hamdānīd on warhorses.

⁹⁵⁷ On this term, see A. Gacek, *The Arabic Manuscript Tradition: A Glossary of Technical Terms and Bibliography*, p. 96.

- 116 Source: An unidentified narrator. Material: a lyric poem on a beloved by Abū l-‘Ashā’ir.
- 117 Written source: notes in the hand of Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī. Material: a love poem ascribed to Abū Wā’il Taghlib b. Dāwud b. Hamdān; a love poem ascribed to Hamdān al-Mawsilī; verses ascribed to Abū Wā’il on being captured; a love poem ascribed to Abū Zuhayr.
- 117 Oral and Written Source: al-Mīkāli. Material: a short, erotic poem that al-Tha‘ālibī later found ascribed to one of the Hamdānids in some marginalia (*ta ‘līqāt*).⁹⁵⁸
- Source: Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Abī Mūsā al-Karkhī, told by al-Qāḍī ‘Alī b. al-Muḥassin al-Tanūkhī, told by the poet Abū l-Muṭā‘ Dhū l-Qarnayn b. Nāṣir al-Dawla Abī Muhammad himself. Material: five short poems: on envying the embrace of the letters *lām* and *alif*; a short homoerotic poem; on the visit of the phantom of the beloved; on a *jāriya* whose belt was being worn away by moonlight; on separation.
- The same *isnād* also supports lines by al-Ḥusayn b. Nāṣir al-Dawla: an epigram on separation.
- 129 Source: Al-Qāḍī Abū l-Nu‘mān al-Baṣrī. Material: a poem by Abū l-Faraj Salāma b. Bahr on separation.
- Source: Abū ‘Alī Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir, told by Abū l-Faraj himself in Beirut. Material: a poem of reproach to a friend.

⁹⁵⁸ On this term, see Gacek, *The Arabic Manuscript Tradition*, p. 101.

- 130 Written source: Al-Ṣābī's *Kitāb al-Tājī*. Material: a discussion of Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. 'Amr b. Muḥammad al-Fayyād.
- 131-2 Source: Abū 'Alī Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Zāhir, told by Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. 'Amr b. Muḥammad al-Fayyād himself in Aleppo. Material: two poems on his rupture with his favourite *ghulām*, named Iqbāl.
- 133 Source: Al-Khwārizmī, told by [Abū l-Faḥ] b. al-Kātib [al-Baktimurī] himself in al-Shām. Material: two poems: a mannerist epigram on giving thanks; on crying blood at the sight of a beautiful mouth.
- Source: Unnamed. Material: description of a beloved.
- 134 Written source: the fly-leaf (*ẓahr*)⁹⁵⁹ of a notebook written in an Iraqi hand. Material: two lines ascribed to Abū l-Faḥ al-Baktimurī on separation.
- Source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī. Material: a three-line jesting poem by an unnamed poet on Abū l-Faḥ b. al-Kātib.
- 135 Source: al-Khwārizmī, reporting Abū l-Faraj al-'Ijlī al-Kātib. Material: four short poems: two on being possessed by love; on love and the beloved's incipient beard; on the beard. The final poem was also related to al-Tha'ālibī independently by an unnamed source.
- 147 Written Source: Ibn Jinnī's *Faṣr*. Material: *akhbār* concerning the reception of al-Mutannabī's praise poetry Sayf al-Dawla.
- 147 Written Source: al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī's *Wasāṭa*. Material: comparison between a line of imperatives by al-Mutanabbī and one by Dīk al-Jinn.

⁹⁵⁹ On this term, see Gacek, *The Arabic Manuscript Tradition*, p. 96.

- 147-9 Written Source: Ibn Jinnī's *Faṣr*. Material: *khavar* related by al-Ṣanawbarī to Ibn Jinnī on meeting al-Mutanabbī on the road, who recited to him; on al-Mutanabbī's judgement of the poetry of al-Ṣanawbarī; on al-Ṣanawbarī's critical evaluation of the poetry of al-Mutanabbī; a *khavar* related by al-Mutanabbī demonstrating the popularity of his poetry in Ḥarrān, Egypt; on Sayf al-Dawla' evaluation of lines by al-Mutanabbī.
- 149-50 Oral source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī. Material: *akhbār* demonstrating al-Mutanabbī's regard for money.
- 150-152 Oral source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī. Material: *akhbār* on how the poets of Baghdad, including Ibn al-Ḥajjāj, Ibn Sukkara and al-Ḥātimī, turned al-Muhallabī against al-Mutanabbī, and how Ibn 'Abbād attempted to land al-Mutanabbī.
- 153-9 Written sources: a mixture of letters, epistles and *fuṣūl* by Ibn 'Abbād, Abū Ishāq al-Sābī, al-Dabbī and Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī in which they turned al-Mutanabbī's verse into prose.
- 161 Written Source: The *Dīwān* of al-Mutanabbī.
- 170 Written Source: Ibn Jinnī. Material: two *akhbār* concerning the inability of Kāfūr's vizier and his *udabā'* to find the half-line to which al-Mutanabbī had responded, and Ibn Jinnī's eventual discovery of it in the work of Ibn al-Mu'tazz.
- 181-202 Written source: Ibn 'Abbād's *Kashf 'an masāwī' shi'r al-Mutanabbī*. Material: a stylistic and technical evaluation of al-Mutanabbī's poetry.

- 202 Written source: al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī's *Wasāṭa*: a critique of repeated use of the particle *dhā* in al-Mutanabbī's verse.
- 209 Sources: critical comments made by al-Khwārizmī and Ibn 'Abbād on tasteless images used by al-Mutanabbī in elegiac poetry.
- 215 Written source: Ibn Jinnī: an ideological critique of two lines by al-Mutanabbī on the torments of the grave.
- 215 Written source: al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī's *Wasāṭa*. Material: the sole *takhalluṣ* by al-Mutanabbī that he considered to be poorly executed.
- 225 Written source: Ibn Jinnī: comparison between lines by al-Mutanabbī and by Bashshār.
- 225 Written source: al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī describes the lines discussed immediately above as a borrowing from al-Ṭaramī.
- 226 Written source: Ibn Jinnī on differing opinions concerning the flight of arrowheads.
- 229 Written source: Ibn Jinnī. Material: commendation of a line by al-Mutanabbī in praise of Sayf al-Dawla that uses 'bifocal' encomium.
- 241 Written source: Al-Āmidī's *Kitāb al-Muwāzana*. Material: a discussion of two lines by al-'Abbās b. al-Aḥnaf deemed to be the finest *distributio*.
- 244 Written source: Ibn Jinnī: comparison between one line by al-Mutanabbī that uses the technique of enumeration and one by al-Buḥturī.
- 259 Written source: Ibn Jinnī: praise for a single line by al-Mutanabbī.
- 274 Written source: Ibn Jinnī: critique of phrasing in a line by al-Mutanabbī.

- 276 Source: Abū l-Qāsim al-Muẓaffar b. ‘Alī al-Ṭabasī al-Kātib. Material: a four-line elegy for al-Mutanabbī.
- 279-88 Written source: the *Dīwān* of al-Nāmī. Material: all of the material in the entry.
- 288 Source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī, told by told by al-Nāshī himself in Aleppo. Material: two poems of rebuke and complaint.
- 289 Oral and written sources: al-Tha‘ālibī has not found the poetry of Abū l-Qāsim al-Zāhī gathered in a single source, but he has collected it from oral sources and marginalia (*ta‘līqāt*).⁹⁶⁰
- 289 Source: Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān. Material: poems by Abū l-Qāsim al-Zāhī were included in the material that he brought back from Baghdad, and which he presented to al-Tha‘ālibī: a two-line erotic description of a group of women.
- 291 Written source: Abū Sa‘d Naṣr b. Ya‘qūb’s *Rawāyi‘ al-tawjīhāt min badāyi‘ al-tashbihāt*. Material: a two-line simile by Abū l-Qāsim al-Zāhī on the night.
- 291 Written source: Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abdān, in his anthology *Ḥāṭib al-Layl*. Material: a two-line poem by Abū l-Qāsim al-Zāhī of self-vaunting.
- 293-331 Written source: An autograph copy of al-Babbaghā’s collected verse and prose. Material: all of the material in the entry.

⁹⁶⁰ On this term, see Gacek, *The Arabic Manuscript Tradition*, p. 101.

- 309-15 Written source: Excerpts from correspondence between al-Babbaghā and Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābī.
- 333 Oral source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī, who met the poet al-Khalī‘ al-Shāmī in Aleppo. Three short poems: on distancing himself from a *ghulām*; on describing wine; an address to Sayf al-Dawla.
- 334 Source: unnamed. Material: a poem on the theme of change attributed to al-Khalī‘ al-Shāmī.
- 334 Sources: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī on the life of Abū l-Faraj Muḥammad b. Ahmad al-Ghassānī al-Dimashqī, known as al-Wa’wa’, and Abū l-Ḥasan al-Maṣīṣī his on life and poetry.
- 334-45 Written source: Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān, who brought al-Wa’wa’s *dīwān* to Nishāpūr from Baghdad and presented a copy to al-Tha‘ālibī in a small notebook, to which he had added poems which he had heard and which pleased him. Material: all of the material in the entry.
- 335 Written Source: A statement by Ibn Ḥamdūn, seen by al-Tha‘ālibī in a book. Material: on al-Faṭḥ b. Khāqān, to whose prose Al-Tha‘ālibī compares lines by al-Wa’wa’.
- Sources: al-Khwārizmī and al-Maṣīṣī, backed up by the *dīwān* of al-Wa’wa’. Material: a five-line poem on separation and tears.
- Source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī. Material: a response to drinking poem by al-Wa’wa’.
- 346-7 Oral source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī. Material: a description of Abū Tālib al-Raqqī and six short poems by him: a simile on the night; a metaphorical

description of a face; description of a bearded face; description of a face;
simile on wine; simile on wine.

349-(2):133 Written and oral sources: al-Tha‘ālibī notes that the material in this chapter has been gathered for the most part from oral sources and notes (*ta‘līqāt*),⁹⁶¹ and that he has not been able to find collected works of poetry large enough to allow for anthologising. Rather, these are fragments that have been brought together and marginalia (*hawāshī*)⁹⁶² that have been collected.

349 Source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī: Material: a poem by al-Tall‘afarī decrying life in Aleppo.

On two different occasions, Al-Khwārizmī offered two different attributions for the same two-line lyric poem.

Written sources: Lines by al-Sarī and al-Salāmī: Material: *hijā’* on al-Tall‘afarī.

Source: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir, quoting al-Tall‘afarī, whom he met in Nisibis. Material: a poem on a sleepless night.

350 Source: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir, quoting al-Tall‘afarī on the authority of ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Shāshī, whom he met in Mayāfāraqīn. Material: a three-line poem on a Christian *ghulām*; a two-line poem on a sleepless night, with a simile on the Pleiades; a three-line poem on the glances of a beloved.

⁹⁶¹ On this term, see Gacek, *The Arabic Manuscript Tradition*, p. 101.

⁹⁶² On this term, see Gacek, *The Arabic Manuscript Tradition*, p.33.

- 350 Source: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir, quoting Abū Naṣr b. Abī al-Fath b. al-Kushājīm, whom he met in Sidon. Material: a six-line poem describing a book.
- 352 Source: Unnamed. Material: an extract from a *muzdawija* by Abū Naṣr b. Abī al-Fath b. al-Kushājīm, describing a platter of food.
- 354 Source: ‘Abd al-Ṣamad b. Wahb al-Maṣrī, quoting Abū Naṣr b. Abī al-Fath b. al-Kushājīm directly. Material: a two-line punning poem on the art of writing.
- 355 Source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī: a three-line poem by ‘Abd al-Rahman b. Ja‘far al-Nahwī al-Raqqī on repentance.
- 355 Oral source: Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Ma’mūn al-Maṣīṣī, quoting Abū l-‘Amīd Ḥāshim b. Muhammad al-Mutayyam al-Atrāblusī directly. Material: a four-line poem on past pleasures.
- 355 Written source: *Kitāb al-Tuḥaf wa l-ẓuraf* by Ibn Labīb, al-Babbaghā’s *ghulām*: a two-line poem by Abū ‘Amāra al-Ṣūfī on a disagreeable man.
- 356 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ifriqī al-Mutayyam in *Kitāb ash‘ār al-nudamā’*. Material: a two-line poem by Abū l-Ḥasan al-Mamshūq al-Shāmī on a loaf of bread.
- 357 Source: unnamed. A two-line poem by al-Mamshūq on the crooked promises of a beloved.
- 357 Source: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir. Material: a two-line simile on the night sky by al-Mamshūq.

- 357 Source: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir. Material: a praise poem by Abū l-Hasan ‘Alī b. Muhammad al-Antākī.
- 357 Source: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir. Material: a four-line poem by Al-Hasan b. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-Zalālī on the *ṭaylasān* of Ibn Ḥarb.
- 358 Sources: Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Ma’mūn al-Maṣīṣī and others, unnamed.
Material: a four-line poem, describing a face, by Tamīm b. al-Mu‘izz.
- 359 Source: Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān. Material : lines from an erotic poem by Tamīm b. al-Mu‘izz that had been ascribed to al-Wa’wa’.
- 359 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Ma’mūn al-Maṣīṣī. Material: a two-line poem on a cheek by Tamīm b. al-Mu‘izz.
- 359 Written source: unnamed. Material: a three-line poem on separation by Tamīm b. al-Mu‘izz.
- 359 Source: Abū Ḥafs ‘Umar b. ‘Alī al-Faqīh. Material a three-line elegy composed by Abū Mansūr Nizār b. Ma‘add Abī Tamīm for his son.
- 360 Source: al-Maṣīṣī, reporting the Amir Tamīm. Material: a six-line descriptive poem on the theme of wine-drinking.
- 360 Source: al-Maṣīṣī, reporting the words of the imam Abū l-Ṭayyib. Material: a *khabar* concerning correspondence between The Marwānīd [= the Umayyad Caliph of al-Andalus al-Hakam b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān] and the Ruler of Egypt [= al-Mu‘izz].
- 361 Source: Abū Sa‘īd b. Dūst, reporting Al-Walīd b. Bakr al-Andalusī al-Faqīh, reporting al-Hakam b. ‘Abd al-Raḥman al-Marwānī directly.

Material: two lines of self-vaunting excerpted from a *qaṣīda* addressed to the Ruler of Egypt [= al-Mu‘izz].

361 Source: Abū Sa‘īd b. Dūst, reporting Al-Walīd b. Bakr al-Andalusī al-Faqih, reporting Abū l-Hasan Ja‘far b. ‘Uthmān al-Maṣṣhafī, vizier of al-Mustansir. Material: three short poems: two on glances that inspire desire; a simile on the effects of wine.

362 Source: Abū Sa‘īd b. Dūst, reporting Al-Walīd b. Bakr al-Andalusī al-Faqih, reporting ‘Isā b. Watīs, al-Mustansir’s Scribe. Material a three-line lyric poem.

362 Source: Abū Sa‘īd b. Dūst, reporting Al-Walīd b. Bakr al-Andalusī al-Faqih, reporting Habīb b. Aḥmad al-Andalusī directly. Material a three-line poem on ageing.

363 Source: Abū Sa‘īd b. Dūst, reporting Al-Walīd b. Bakr al-Andalusī al-Faqih. Material: a two-line poem by Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Mutayyam the grammarian on a patron’s generosity.

465 Source: Ibn Wahb. Material: two poems by Al-Qādī Abū l-Hasan ‘Alī b. al-Nu‘mān: a three-line poem on separation; a three-line poem on the mores of a friend.

466 Source: Ibn Wahb for poems by Ishāq b. Aḥmad b. al-Mārdīnī. Material: a three-line poem describing the Pleiades and a two-line poem describing the night and the stars.

- 466 Source: ‘Abd al-Ṣamad b. Wahb. Material: a four-line poem by Al-Qādī Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muhammad b. al-Nu‘mān on sleepless nights caused by separation.
- 468 Source: Ibn Wahb for the poetry of Ṣāliḥ b. Mu’nis. Material: three short poems describing Ibn Rushdīn; one describing a *jāriya* called Khamra; on someone from the Euphrates region.
- 482 Source: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir. Material: a four-line poem of reproach by Abū ‘Alī Ṣāliḥ b. Rashdīn.
- 484 Source: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir. Material: three short poems by Aḥmad b. Muhammad al-‘Awfī: on distress; on distress in love; on lovesickness.
- 485 Source: Ibn Rushdīn. Material: a *khavar* concerning his attraction to Abū Tamīm Sulaymān b. Ja‘far’s *jāriya*, a poem that he composed on her, and Abū Tamīm’s response, which was to send her to him with an accompanying poem, and then to attend Ibn Rushdīn himself along with his singing girls and cook.
- 486 Source: Ibn Wahb for up to seven short poems by Abū Hurayra Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Abī al-‘Aṣṣām. Material: poems on past pleasures; mourning Ṣāliḥ; an address to a beloved; a metaphorical description of a rainstorm; describing a monastery and a Christian beloved; a second poem describing a monastery; describing a beloved.
- 488 Source: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir for the poetry of Abū l-Qāsim b. ‘Alī b. Bishr al-Kātib. Material: poems on: facial hair; looking at a *shāhid*; a night-time affair; self-reproach on account of his behaviour towards a

friend; a declaration of love; bidding farewell to wine; the description of a face; the obligations of good behaviour; separation.

- 490 Source: A *khavar* told directly to Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir by Ibn Bishr, concerning Ibn Bishr’s uncle, Kawlān and his attempt to write fifty *qaṣā’id* in praise of the Prophet’s family while on Hajj. Material: the text of the fiftieth poem, transmitted to Kawlān by ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib in a dream, is given by Ibn Bishr.
- 492 Source: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir. Material: poems by al-Hasan b. Khallād on: a comparison between a man and the moon; a love poem depending on repetition; youth and ageing; the beginning of a *qaṣīda* likening a patron to a sword.
- 493 Source: Ibn Wahb. Material: the poetry of Abū l-Hasan al-Laṭīm: on the growth of facial hair and ageing; a poem on being given a ring as a memento.
- 493 Source: Ibn Wahb. Material: the poetry of Sulaymān b. Hasān al-Naṣabī: a description of early morning; a description of fried fish; a description of a candle; a description of a garden; description of a bathhouse; description of a waterwheel.
- 496 Source: a letter sent by Al-Hasan b. ‘Alī al-Asadī Kātib al-Sirr to Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl al-Rassī, accompanying the first volume of his work *al-Anīs*, describing the contents of the book, and the poem of response written by al-Rassī on the back of the letter.
- 497 Source: Ibn Wahb for the poetry of Abū l-Qāsim Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl b. Ibn Ṭabāṭabā al-Hasanī al-Rassī. Material: a love poem addressed

to a *sāqī*; a comparison between rainclouds and parting lovers; on dyeing one's beard; on the phantom of the beloved; a contrast between the seven stars of the Pleiades and the lonely speaker; on the phantom of the beloved; on reproach.

- 499 Source: Ibn Wahb for the poetry of Abū Muhammad al-Qāsim b. Ahmad al-Rassī, son of the previous entry. Material: a description of wine-drinking and the inevitability of parting; a description of the natural world and wine-drinking; a satire on Ibn Kalis the quack.
- 500 Source: Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Zāhir for the poetry of Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Husayn b. Ibrāhīm b. Ahmad, son of Abū Ismā'īl Ibrāhīm b. Ahmad al-Rassī; a poem urging the listener to seize the day; a dialogue between the speaker and a woman named Nuwwār.
- 501 Source: Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Zāhir for the poetry of Abū l-Ḥasan al-'Uqaylī. Material: a description of a friend; a description of drinking on a stormy morning in the spring; description of wine; description of the spring; description of drinking in a garden; description of an orange tree; description of a wine vessel; a polythematic descriptive poem; a poem on the generosity of the speaker and his companions.
- 505 Source: Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Zāhir for the poetry of Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Kahhāl. Material: two poems describing and asking for wine.
- 513-7 Source: Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Zāhir for the poetry of Muḥammad b. 'Āsim al-Mawqifī on: blood-letting; a comparison between saliva and wine; a poem urging the listener to drink wine at Giza; a description of night

leading in to day; a description of wine and the night; a description of drinking at dusk; a description of drinking at dawn; a description of kissing a tattooed *sāqī*; two extracts from a *qaṣīda* on the monastery of al-Qaṣīr, recalling the place and its paintings; a poem in memory of days at *Shāṭā al-birkatayn*; a second poem describing former days of drinking by the Nile.

518 Source: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir. Material: the poetry of Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Bustī al-Kātib: a single line combining five similes on a candle; similes on taking up weapons; on separation and meeting; a narrative description of an affair with a ‘daughter of Ham’ [i.e. a non-Arab African girl].

524 Source: Ibn Wahb for the poetry of Abū l-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Marwān b. Hammād al-Nahwī. Material: on sleepless dreams of a beloved.

525 Source: ‘Alī al-Ma’mūn al-Maṣṣī for the poetry of Abū ‘Alī Tamīm b. Ma‘add, Ruler of Egypt: on the vicissitudes of Fate; a description of wine-drinking at a monastery; a descriptive address to a beloved; a description of a bed-fellow; a description of separation; on harbouring a secret; on heartbreak induced by separation; description of a beloved; a description of drinking by the Nile in stormy weather; description of a night-time affair, likening the beloved to wine; on swapping the characteristics of wine and a beloved; similes on the manners of a beloved; speech of a beloved who denies her resemblance to the full moon; a dialogue between the speaker and the beloved, likening her to wine; on separation; a poem of self-vaunting; a description of wine-drinking at night; a description of drinking at dawn; a comparison between nature and a face; similes on a cheek; a descriptive *mukhammisa* on love; a descriptive poem on fried fish.

- 14 Source: Sa'īd b. Muḥammad b. Faraj. Material: his own poetry: on crying in separation; on lovesickness; on crying in separation.
- 15 Source: Sa'īd b. Muḥammad b. Faraj. Material: a lyric epigram by an unnamed poet.
- 15 Source: Yahyā b. 'Abd al-Malik b. Hudhayl. Material: his own poetry: a description of a beloved; on the phantom of the beloved; a simile on the Pleiades; metaphors on a stormy day; on dyeing his hair.
- 17 Source: Qāsim b. 'Abd al-Rahman al-'Ijlī. Material: his own lyric poetry.
- 17 Source: Muḥammad b. Hishām b. Sa'd al-Khayr. Material: his own poetry: a description of lovesickness
- 18 Source: 'Abbās b. Qarmās. Material: his own poetry: a description of a beloved and separation from him.
- 20 Source: Abū l-Ṣakhr 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad. Material: a poem by an unnamed local poet: a description of the speaker and his lover as opposites.
- 20 Source: Zakariyā b. Yahyā, known as Ibn Tanjiyya. Material: his own poetry: on separation; a description of abandoned dwelling places.
- 30 Source: 'Abd Allāh b. Bakr. Material: a poem by al-Kalbī describing a beloved and the effect of separation from him, as well as a *khavar* on a letter sent by al-Kalbī to al-Ḥakam.

- 41 Source: Abū Saʿīd b. Dūst on the authority of al-Walīd b. Bakr al-Faqīh.
Material: the poetry of The Vizier Abū ʿĀmir Ahmad b. ʿAbd al-Malik b. Shuhayd: extracts from a panegyric *qaṣīda*.
- 57 Source: Abū Saʿīd b. Dūst on the authority of al-Walīd b. Bakr al-Faqīh.
Material: the poetry of The Vizier Abū ʿĀmir Ahmad b. ʿAbd al-Malik b. Shuhayd: a reproach to a friend; on suffering in love.
- 59 Source: Manṣūr b. Abī al-Hawl. Material: verse by an unnamed local poet: a poem on the ‘slavery’ of love, describing a beloved.
- 59 Source: Gharīb b. Saʿīd. Material: his own poetry: an appeal not to be reproached for his love; on separation; on separation from loved ones in Cordoba.
- 61 Source: Muhammad b. Saʿīd b. Mukhāriq al-Asadī. Material: his own poetry: on tears inspired by separation.
- 80 Written sources: Books composed by Abū Bakr Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Zabīdī the Linguist and Grammarian: his own abridgement of *Kitāb al-ʿayn*, his book of the classes of grammarians and linguists in Andalus and the east from the era of Abū l-Aswad al-Duʿalī to that of ʿAbd Allāh al-Riyāḥī the grammarian, and a book on grammar.
- 84 Source: Ibn Dūst on the authority of al-Walīd b. Bakr al-Faqīh, reporting Yahyā b. Hudhayl the poet, who was the student of Ibn Qūtiyya. Material: a *khabar* concerning an exchange between the two men when Yahyā b. Hudhayl came to greet his master, and a poem describing riders travelling through a wadi and the narrator’s separation from them.

- 85 Source: Ibn Dūst on the authority of al-Walīd b. Bakr al-Faqīh, reporting the poetry of Ahmad b. Muhammad b. ‘Abd Rabbih: description of the addressee’s steadfastness in the face of the enemy. All of the poetry in the entry may be drawn from the same source.
- 138-214 Source: a holograph manuscript of al-Sarī al-Raffā’s collected works, including contextual rubrics, which was brought to Nishapur by Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān. This is the source for all of al-Sarī al-Raffā’s poetry.
- 138 Source: a holograph manuscript of the collected works of the Khālīdī brothers, written in the hand of Abū ‘Uthmān Sa‘īd b. Hāshim al- Khālīdī, which was given to Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān by the copyist and bookman al-Ṭarsūsī in Baghdad. Material: all of the poetry in the entry on the Khālīdī brothers (2: 214-44).
- 138 Written sources: a number of copies of the *Dīwān* of Kushājīm.
- 140 Oral and written source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī, who both recited and sent extracts of al-Sarī al-Raffā’s verse to al-Tha‘ālibī on the basis of a *dīwān* sent to him from Baghdad by Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ḥāmid al-Khwārizmī. Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān’s volume had a much greater amount of poetry than the ordinary *dīwān*.
- 140 Written source: al-Jurjānī’s *Wasāṭa*, in which a number of extracts from al-Sarī al-Raffā’ are cited.
- 140 Written source: *Tafsīr Ibn Jinnī*, in which a number of extracts from al-Sarī al-Raffā’ are cited.

- 156 Written source: a philological joke related by al-Mubarrad concerning breakers of oaths.
- 257 Written source: *fuṣūl* by Ibn ‘Abbād. Material: descriptions of Adud al-Dawla.
- 258 Written source: *Kitāb al-Tājī* by al-Šābī. Material: information concerning Adud al-Dawla and his good qualities.
- 258 Oral Source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārazmī on Adud al-Dawla’s love of topical waṣf poetry. Material: verses extemporised when an unnamed *adīb* failed to describe a rice dish.
- Source: Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir, told by Abū l-Qāsim ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Yūsuf, told by Adud al-Dawla himself: a poem on Abū Taghlib, apologising for when he paid court to Bakhtiyār instead of to him and requested a letter of safe conduct from him.
- 259 Source: verses reported by Abū Sa‘īd Naṣr b. Ya‘qūb. Material: a three-line extract on the *khayrī* rose by Adud al-Dawla.
- 260 Source: *Ḥadīqat al-ḥadaq* by Harūn b. Aḥmad al-Šaymarī. Material: verses on a garden by ‘Izz al-Dawla Abū Mansūr Bakhtiyār.
- Using the same *isnād*: a similar drinking poem about a garden.
- 260 Source: Abū Sa‘īd, told by Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī, the doctor of the Buyids, told by Bakhtiyār himself. Material: a two-line poem describing a friend or beloved.
- 261 Oral source: Abū Sa‘īd b. Dūst, reporting Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. al-Muẓaffar al-‘Alawī al-Naysabūrī, reporting Abū l-‘Abbās al-Milḥī al-

- Qawwāl at Sūq al-Ahwāz, reporting Tāj al-Dawla. Material: description of a meeting with a beloved.
- Oral source: Badī' al-Zamān. Material: a two-line prison lament by Tāj al-Dawla.
- Written source: a *majmū'* of Tāj al-Dawla's poetry in the hand of Abū l-Ḥusayn 'Alī b. Aḥmad b. 'Abdān. Material: an *urjūza* of self-vaunting on his political ambition, extracts from two *qaṣīdas* of self-vaunting, describing himself and his martial prowess; one *ṭardiyya*, a *ghazal* describing a sāqī; an extract on the vicissitudes of Fate.
- 265 Oral sources treated as one: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī, Abū Naṣr b. Sahl b. al-Marzubān, and Abū l-Ḥasan al-Maṣīṣī. Material: on al-Muhallabī's early difficulties and verses he composed on the misery of poverty when travelling with a friend.
- 267 Written source: al-Ṣābī's *K. al-Tājī*. Material: a narrative concerning the Turkic ghulām of Mu'izz al-Dawla. Al-Muhallabī's half-jesting lines on him.
- 269 Source: Ibn 'Abbād's *Rūznāmja*, to Ibn al-'Amīd. Material: extracts concerning al-Muhallabī. On drinking session between Ibn 'Abbād and al-Muhallabī. Line on a ghulām called Sullāf. His fondness for Ṣanawbarī and his ilk. Lines quoted to Ibn 'Abbād on a ghulām.
- Ibn 'Abbād's lines to al-Muhallabī on a garden.
- 271 Source: Ibn 'Abbād's *Rūznāmja*. Material: description of a *majlis* held in a loggia overlooking the Tigris.

- 272 Source: Ibn ‘Abbād’s *Rūznāmja*. Material: description of a drinking session held in a tavern at ‘Ukbarā. Ibn ‘Abbād’s lines composed to commemorate the day.
- 273 Source: Ibn ‘Abbād’s *Rūznāmja*. Material: a narrative concerning a party held in a loggia overlooking the Tigris with its doors open onto orchards. Lyric lines by al-Muhallabī.
- 288 Source: Abū Manṣūr Sa‘īd b. Aḥmad al-Barīdī, whom al-Tha‘ālibī heard speak in Bukhara. Material: a *khavar* concerning the piety and asceticism of al-Ṣābī, and a four-line poem by al-Ṣābī testifying to this claim.
- 288 Source: Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān. Material: a *khavar* concerning al-Ṣābī’s asceticism and his relationship with al-Muhallabī.
- 290 Sources: Abū Manṣūr Sa‘īd b. Aḥmad al-Barīdī and Abū Ṭāhir Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Ṣamad al-Kātib. Material: information concerning al-Ṣābī’s imprisonment by Bakhtiyār.
- 292 Sources: multiple, including Abū l-Qāsim ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Karkhī, who had been close to Ibn ‘Abbād. Material: Ibn ‘Abbād’s comment that there were four great *kuttāb* – Ibn al-‘Amīd, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Yūsuf, al-Ṣābī and himself.
- 293-367 Implied source: the collected works of al-Ṣābī. Material: all of the material in the entry.
- 404 Source: the *dīwān* of Abū l-Qāsim ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Tanūkhī. Material: all of the material in the entry (2:393-404).

- 405 Source: Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān, who attempted to buy the *dīwān* Abū ‘Alī al-Muḥassin b. al-Qāḍī al-Tanūkhī (which was larger than his father’s) in Baghdad but failed to do so. Material: a verse that he remembered on the novel theme of a party broken up by a rain storm. Also recounted is a verse on a relationship frustrated by the neighbours.
- 406 Source: Abū ‘Alī al-Muḥassin b. al-Qāḍī al-Tanūkhī’s *al-Faraj ba’d al-shidda*. Material: a two-line poem on fate, styled in the manner of al-Mutanabbī.
- 407 Unnamed source. Material: Ibn ‘Abbād’s verses written on the fly-leaf of his copy of Ibn Lankak’s *Dīwān*, describing the poetry that the volume contained.
- 412 Source: Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ḥāmid al-Khwārizmī, reporting Ibn ‘Abbād. Material: a two-line satire by Ibn Lankak on Abū Riyāsh.
- 422 Source: Abū Sa‘īd b. Dūst. Material : extracts from two *qaṣā’id* by Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Husayn b. ‘Alī al-Namarī: the *nasīb* and *madḥ* sections from a *qaṣīda* in praise of Ibn al-‘Amīd; the *nasīb* and *madḥ* sections from a *qaṣīda*.
- 425 Source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī, reporting al-Laḥḥām, reporting al-Mufajja‘ himself. Material: a poem on his impotence.
- 425 Source: Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Shahrzūrī al-Ḥanḍalī, reporting al-Mufajja‘ himself. Material: a poem on his Turkic ghulām.
- 426 Source: Abū Naṣr al-Rūdhbādhī al-Ṭūsī. Material: a satire by al-Mufajja‘ on the inhabitants of Basra.

- 427 Written source: an anthology called *Ḥātib al-layl* in the hand of Abū l-Ḥusayn ‘Alī b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abdān. Material: lines by al-Mufajja‘ on drinking as the night recedes.
- 431 Source: Abū l-Qāsim al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb, reporting ‘Abd al-Samī‘ b. Muḥammad al-Hāshimī, reporting al-Khubza’aruzzi himself. Material: a lyric poem.
- 431 Source: Abū Ḥafs ‘Umar b. ‘Alī al-Faqīh reporting two lines from *qaṣīda* by al-Khubza’aruzzi. Material: a poem on his preferences in love.
- 432 Source: Abū Sa‘īd Naṣr b. Ya‘qūb. Material: a poem by Abū ‘Āsim al-Baṣrī on the conjunction of the crescent moon, the Pleiades and Venus.
- 432 Source: Abū ‘Alī Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir. Material: a poem by Abū l-Husayn al-Zāhir al-Baṣrī on parting and meeting.
- 436 Sources: Abū Ṭāhir Maymūn b. Sahl al-Wāsiṭī al-faqīh, Abū l-Ḥasan al-Maṣīṣī and Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Zāhir. Material: a poem by Saydūk; the finest that al-Tha‘ālibī has heard on the length of the night.
- Source: Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān. Material: a poem by Saydūk asking God to release the speaker for release from his passion for a slave-girl.
- Source: Maymūn al-Wāsiṭī, told by Saydūk himself. Material: a poem on the affliction of love for a ‘gazelle’.
- 437 Same source: A poem on obsession for the beloved.
- Same source: A poem on the Feast of Immolation.

- Source: a manuscript note (*ta'liq*). Material: a poem ascribed to Saydūk, inviting a beloved to play inn-keeper to his *sāqī*.
- 442 Source: Abū Naṣr Sahl al-Marzubān, told by Abū Sulaymān al-Mantiqī in Baghdad, told by Abū Muḥammad b. Zurayq al-Kūfī al-Kātib himself. Material: lines on Baghdad.
- Source: another, unnamed. Material: lines by Ibn Zurayq on the poetry of al-Ṣūlī.
- 443 Source: Abū Naṣr b. al-Marzubān. Material: a poem by Ibn Zurayq addressed to Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Kūfī when he took over the post of Abū Ja'far b. Shīrẓād and moved into his office.
- 447-66 Source: the works of Ibn Nubāta al-Sa'dī, which were first brought to Khurasan in written form by Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān, and who let al-Tha'libī go over the volume first, the minute he arrived in Nishapur. Material: all of the material in the entry.
- Vol. 3
- 3 Source: Abū Ṭāhir Maymūn b. Sahl al-Wāsiṭī. Material: a narrative concerning Ibn Sukkara's divorce of his own wife, due to the time that spent in composing *hijā'* on the singing girl Khamra.
- 40 Source: Maymūn b. Sahl al-Wāsiṭī. Material: a narrative concerning how Ibn 'Abbād used the first miṣra' of verses by Ibn al-Hajjāj to break up a *majlis*.
- 137 Source: a *faṣl* by Ibn 'Abbād describing al-Aḥnaf al-'Ukbarī, and an extract from his *qaṣīda sāsāniyya*.

- 138 Source: ‘Alī b. Ma’mūn al-Maṣīṣī, told by al-Ahnaf al-‘Ukbarī himself.
Material: lines on his poverty and want.
- 142 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan al-Karkhī, reporting Al-Shaykh Abū Muhammad
‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Nāmī al-Khwārizmī himself. Material: a love
poem.
- 143 Source: the same *isnad*. Material: satire on a man.
- 143 Source: [Abū l-Ḥasan al-Karkhī], told Abū Muhammad al-Hāmidī.
Material: satire on Sābūr.
- 143 Source: Abū Ḥafṣ ‘Umar b. ‘Alī al-Faqih, told by Abū ‘Alī al-Wāsiṭī, told
by al-Nāmī himself. Material: lyric lines on a tattooed face.
- 143 Source: Abū ‘Alī al-Kindī, told by al-Nāmī himself. Material: lines on a
Mihrajan present that he had given to a chief.
- 184 Source: Ibn al-‘Amīd’s epistles are available in book form in Khurasan.
- 184 Source: al-Ṣābī’s *K. al-tājī*. Material: the opinion that Ibn al-‘Amīd’s
writing is not inferior to his son’s.
- 195 Source: Abū l-Ḥusayn Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn al-Fārisī, at the home of the
chief of Isfarain, Abū l-‘Abbās al-Faḍl b. ‘Alī. Material: a letter by Ibn al-
‘Amīd on ‘Aḍud al-Dawla’s justice.
- 196 Source: al-Mīkālī. Material: selections of Ibn al-‘Amīd’s proverbial *fuṣūl*
qiṣār.
- 197-201 Source: a manuscript. Material: poems on food exchanged by Ibn al-‘Amīd
and Ibn Khallād.

- 215 Source: Abū Jaʿfar al-Kātib. Material: a narrative concerning the eloquence of Abū l-Faṭḥ, son of Ibn al-ʿAmīd.
- 216 Source: Abū l-Ḥusayn b. Fāris, for a story concerning the eloquence of Abū l-Faṭḥ.
- 221 Source: Abū Maṣṣūr Saʿīd b. Aḥmad al-Barīdī. Material: information concerning the death of Abū l-Faṭḥ.
- 221 Source: Abū Jaʿfar [al-Kātib]. Material: lines of doubtful attribution, much liked by Abū l-Faṭḥ, on each generation as custodians for the next.
- 226 Source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī. Material: information concerning how Ibn ʿAbbād was born into the vizierate and inherited it from his father.
- 227 Source: ʿAwn b. al-Ḥusain al-Hamadhānī al-Tamīmī. Material: a narrative concerning how al-Zaʿfarānī asked Ibn ʿAbbād for silk clothing.
- 228 Source: Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ḥāmid al-Ḥāmidī. Material: a narrative concerning Ibn ʿAbbād’s response to the performance of a *qaṣīda* in praise of him by Abū Muḥammad al-Khāzin.
- 229 Oral source: Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ḥāmid al-Ḥāmidī. Material: Ibn ʿAbbād was given a gift that he passed on to Abū Saʿīd al-Shabībī along with a letter which began with a line on gifts being shared among brothers.
- 230 Source: Abū l-Ḥusayn Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Fārisī al-Naḥwī. Material: a narrative concerning how Ibn ʿAbbād was once asked in secret to become the vizier of the Samanids, but he made his excuses by saying that it would take four hundred camels to move his books to Khurasan.

By the same *isnād*: comments made by Ibn ‘Abbād on his desire to be generous.

- 230 Source: Badī al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī, for how, when he was first brought to Ibn ‘Abbād by his father, he said to him ‘sit, you’re bobbing like a hoopoe’.

By the same *isnād*: examples of word capping that Ibn ‘Abbād extemporised.

- 231 Oral Source: al-Mīkālī. Material: an example of *tajnīs* that caused embarrassment.

Source: Abū Maṣṣūr al-Bī‘. Material: a similar case of word play causing embarrassment.

Source: Abū Maṣṣūr al-Lajīmī al-Dīnawarī. Material: comments made by Ibn ‘Abbād that it was his habit to bestow gifts, not to receive them.

Same source: one of the Alawites asked Ibn ‘Abbād in a letter to name his son.

- 232 Same source: a poetic exchange between Abū Maṣṣūr al-Jurjānī and Ibn ‘Abbād, again on naming a son.

Source: a note by Abū Ḥafṣ al-Warrāq al-Iṣbahānī asking for wheat, with a sign-off by Ibn ‘Abbād.

- 233 Source: Abū Naṣr Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-‘Utbī. Material: examples of Ibn ‘Abbād’s inventive play with signatory notes.

Source: al-Mīkālī. Material: another anecdote concerning the written forms of words.

Source: Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥimyarī. Material: a narrative concerning word play written on a petition from the minters.

Source: Abū Naṣr b. Ya‘qūb. Material: a line that was repeated by Ibn ‘Abbād whenever he wanted to relax his companions.

Same source: a narrative concerning Ibn ‘Abbād’s attempts to give medical advice to al-Badīhī.

Source: Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān. Material: verses that Ibn ‘Abbād always used to repeat on the crack of ice in fresh water.

Source: Abū l-Ḥasan al-Dulafī al-Maṣīṣī. Material: Ibn ‘Abbād’s response to a man who practiced *sariqa* at his court.

234 Unnamed source. Material: Ibn ‘Abbād’s responses to *sariqa*.

Source: Abū l-Ḥasan al-Shaqīqī al-Balkhī. Material: a letter by Ibn ‘Abbād.

235 Source: Abū l-Ḥusayn the grammarian. Material: a narrative concerning *iqtibās* used by Makkī the reciter when he was imprisoned, and which amused Ibn ‘Abbād.

Source: Abū l-Naṣr al-‘Utbī, reporting Abū Ja‘far Dihqān b. Dhay l-Qarnayn. Material: a joke about a gift.

Source: al-Hamadhānī. Material: lines pronounced by Ibn ‘Abbād when the lawyer Ibn al-Khaḍīrī farted in his presence.

- Source: Abū Naṣr al-Namarī in Jurjan, reporting the judge Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. Material: a poem by Ibn ‘Abbād on perfume.
- 236 Same source: lines by Ibn ‘Abbād on being generous to friends in their homeland.
- Source: Abū Ḥanīfa al-Dihishtānī. Material: lines by Ibn ‘Abbād sent to Abū Hāshim al-‘Alawī along with the gift of some perfume.
- Source: ‘Awn b. al-Ḥusayn al-Hamadhānī, reporting Abū ‘Īsā b. al-Munajjim. Material: a narrative concerning Ibn ‘Abbād and his relationship with Fakhr al-Dawla.
- Source: Abū l-Ḥasan al-‘Alawī al-Hamadhānī al-Waṣī. Material: an exchange of *iqtibās* with Ibn ‘Abbād.
- 237 Source: Abū l-Ḥusayn the grammarian on the relationship between Ibn ‘Abbād and Ibn Fāris, whom he disliked because of his allegiance to Ibn al-‘Amīd.
- Source: Abū l-Qāsim al-Karkhī. Material: the first line of a panegyric extemporised by al-Rustamī when he entered Ibn ‘Abbād’s court and saw people lining up to receive gifts.
- Source: Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī the doctor, known as al-Balādhurī. Material: a narrative concerning an epistle on medicine by Ibn ‘Abbād.
- 238 Source: a manuscript of Ibn ‘Abbād letters, divided into chapters. Material: the aforementioned epistle on medicine.
- 240 Source: ‘Awn al-Hamadhānī. Material: a poem by Ibn ‘Abbād describing a fencer who was performing for him.

- Source: Abū Saʿīd b. Dūst the jurist, reporting Abū ʿAlī al-ʿIrāqī al-ʿAwāmī al-Rāzī, reporting Ibn ʿAbbād. Material: lines on his own generosity.
- 240-52 Source: a letter by Abū Muḥammad al-Khāzin that was sent to al-Khwārizmī. Material: the mansion poems composed by Ibn ʿAbbād’s court poets, at his suggestion.
- 252 Source: al-Khwārizmī. Material: a poem that he produced to rival the mansion poem by al-Rustamī, and another, short one.
- 281 Source: al-Mīkālī’s book *Mulaḥ al-khawāṭir wa subaḥ al-jawāhir*. Material: proverbs composed by Ibn ʿAbbād.
- 292 Source: al-Mīkālī. Material: a letter that Ibn ʿAbbād wrote to Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad about Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ḥāmid.
- 295 Source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī. Material: a letter by Ibn ʿAbbād responding to Ibn al-ʿAmīd, describing the sea.
- 300 Source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī. Material: a discussion of poetic imagery conducted between al-Khwārizmī and Ibn ʿAbbād.
- 306-7 Source: al-Khwārizmī. Material: a series of mannerist poems describing snow.
- 310 Source: Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Bustī. Material: a line on sending halva to friends composed by Ibn ʿAbbād.
- 319 Source: al-Mīkālī. Material: two satirical poems by Ibn ʿAbbād.
- 319 Source: unnamed. Material: a satirical poem by Ibn ʿAbbād.

- 323 Source: al-Khwārizmī. Material: a line that Ibn ‘Abbād stole from al-Mutanabbī.
- Oral source: al-Khwārizmī. Material: a line by Ibn ‘Abbād describing hair.
- Oral source: al-Mīkālī. Material: a discussion of the same line.
- 328 Source: autograph material by Ibn ‘Abbād. material: lines written in his hand at the advent of the year for which his death had been foretold.
- 336 Source: Abū l-‘Abbās al-‘Alawī al-Hamadhānī al-Waṣī. Material: his own poem mourning Ibn ‘Abbād.
- 345 Source: *Rawāyi ‘al-tashbīhāt* by Abū Sa‘īd Naṣr b. Ya‘qūb. Lines of description and a simile written in the hand of al-Dabbī.
- 349 Source: *K. Iṣbahān* by Abū ‘Abd Allāh Ḥamza b. al-Ḥusayn al-Iṣbahānī, which records the local poets, and those of Karkh.
- 352 Source: al-Khwārizmī. Material: lines on drinking wine at night, composed by al-Khawzī.
- 356 Source: a letter by Ibn ‘Abbād. Material: a description of al-Rustamī.
- 376 Source: Three short poems related by al-Khwārizmī. On the appearance of Ṣāliḥ and his son; description of poetry as a waste of time; satire on the proverbs of Abū l-Ḥasan al-Ghuwayrī.
- 377 Source: al-Tha‘ālibī did not have access to the *dīwān* of Abū l-Qāsim Ghānim b. Abī l-‘Alā’, and instead gathered a small amount of his poetry from the mouths of reciters, when he was convinced that he would not find

a written copy. He also found some of the poems among the collected *ṣāhibiyyāt*. Material: the poetry of Abū l-Qāsim Ghānim b. Abī l-‘Alā’.

Source: al-Qāḍī al-Imām al-Iṣfahānī, told by Abū l-‘Alā himself. Material: a two-line poem on lovesickness.

By the same *isnād*: two lyric poems.

378 A one-line address to a beloved.

By the same *isnād*: a satire on character of al-Quwayḍī.

Source: Abū l-Qāsim ‘Alī b. al-Karkhī. Material: a poem on divorce.

Source: al-Mīkālī. Material: a poem reproaching Ibn ‘Abbād for his slowness.

Source: al-‘Utbī. Material: an extract from a *qaṣīda* on good news.

379 Source: al-Khwārizmī. Material: a letter that Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Ahmad al-Khāzin had written to him, in which he laments his state.

383 Source: al-Khwārizmī. Material for a short poem by al-Khāzin describing the trail of dust left by horses.

384-93 Source: the collected work of al-Khāzin. Material: all of the material in this section.

394 Source: al-Khwārizmī. Material: a short wisdom poem by al-Asadī on generosity.

395 Source: another, unknown. A poem by al-Asadī on news of friends.

- 395-7 Source: a holograph volume of al-Ghuwayrī's poetry in the library of al-Mīkālī, which al-Tha'ālibī consulted along with Ibn al-Marzubān. Material: all the material in the entry.
- 399 Source: al-Khwārizmī. Material: a narrative concerning how Ibn 'Abbād asked why al-Badīhī had given himself his sobriquet when he was a poor improviser.
- 402 Source: a letter by Ibn 'Abbād describing al-Za'farānī's character.
- 413 Source: al-Khwārizmī. Material: a poem by al-Za'farānī on his love for a friend.
- Same source. Material: a poem on the seasons.
- 414 Source: Abū l-Faḍl al-Hamadhānī. Material: a poem by Abū Dulaf al-Khazrajī al-Yanbū'ī on the joys of travel.
- 415 Source: 'Awn b. al-Ḥusain al-Hamadhānī. Material: for Abū Dulaf's satire of Abū 'Abd Allāh al-'Alawī.
- Source: Abū 'Alī Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Balkhī. Material: satire on a scribe from Dinavar by Abū Dulaf.
- Source: Badī' al-Zamān. Material: a satirical advice poem by Abū Dulaf that he ascribed to Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Iskandarī in a *maqāma*.
- 437 Source: a prose passage by by Ibn 'Abbād describing Ibn Bābak's character.
- 437-45 Source: a holograph copy of the works of Ibn Bābak, ordered by Ibn al-Marzubān from Baghdad. Material: all of the material in this section.

- 455 Source: al-Bustī. Material: lines on avarice by one of the Banū al-Munajjim.
- 459 Source: Abū l-Ḥafṣ ‘Amr b. ‘Alī al-Muṭṭawwi‘ī, told by Ibn Hindū himself in Rayy. Material: a wisdom poem on nobility.
- Same source: On the nature of the age.
- 471 Source: Badī‘ al-Zamān. Material: a poem on fate and ageing by Barākawayh al-Zanjānī, known as al-Thalūl.
- Source: Abū Naṣr al-Maghliṣī. Material: a poem by Barākawayh al-Zanjānī, known as al-Thalūl on his Ghulam, Yūsuf, who went out to change money and returned with a third of the sum.
- Source: unnamed. Lyric description of beloved by Barākawayh al-Zanjānī.
- 472 Source: ‘Awn b. al-Ḥusayn al-Hamadhānī. Material: a poem by Abū l-Hasan ‘Alī b. Muhammad b. Ma’mūn al-Abharī on a friend who did not allow him to be admitted.
- Same source: on a friend who turned away from him.
- 477 Source: Abū Ḥafṣ ‘Umar b. ‘Alī. Material : a poem by Abū Sa’d ‘Alī b. Muhammad b. Khalaf al-Hamadhānī on love-longing.
- 478 Several unnamed sources. Material: a poem on separation by Abū ‘Alī al-Husayn b. Abī l-Qāsim al-Qāshānī.
- Source: Abū Manṣūr al-Lajīmī al-Dīnawarī, told by Abū ‘Alī himself.
- Material: a description of grapes.
- Same source: a lyric poem on wine-drinking.
- Source: unknown. Material: a poem on love-longing by Abū ‘Alī.

- 479 Source: Abū Ḥafṣ ‘Umar b. ‘Alī. Material : a satire by Abū ‘Alī on someone for whom he wrote.
- 479 Source: al-Mīkālī. Material: a poem by Abū l-Qāsim ‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Harandī on trying to steal a kiss in the wind.
- Same source. Material: a description of the beloved.
- Source: Harūn b. Ja‘far al-Ṣaymarī. Material: a poem by Abū ‘Alī al-Harandī on a *sāqī*.
- 487 Source: Source: a *saḥḥa* in the hand Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Isma‘īl al-Mīkālī. Material: a poem by Abū Bakr b. Shawdhaba al-Fārisī on his want of stationary.
- 489 Source: Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān. Material: a satire on a man who came to visit and then left by al-Ma‘rūf al-Munbasiṭ al-Shīrāzī.
- 496 Source: Abū l-Ḥusayn Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Fārisī the Grammarian, Material: a narrative concerning Abū l-Hasan b. Ghassān’s practice of medicine and poetry.
- Vol. 4
- 4 Source: Abū Naṣr al-Muṣa‘bī. Material: a letter in Ibn ‘Abbād’s hand, describing al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī.
- 4-5 Source: the *Wasāṭa* by al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī. Material: extracts.
- 55 Source: Abū Naṣr Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-‘Utbī, transmitting the content of notes in the hand of Abū Naṣr ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Jabalī

- al-Astarābādhī. Material: a panegyric poem in praise of Shams al-Ma‘ālī Qābūs b. Wushmkīr.
- 56 Source: unnamed. Material: description of a beloved by al-Jabalī al-Astarābādhī.
- 79 Source: Abū Zakariyā Yaḥyā b. Ismā‘īl al-Ḥarbī, reporting Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb al-Fārisī. Material: a narrative concerning how Abū l-Tayyib al-Tāhirī was set upon in the presence of the Sāmānid Naṣr b. Aḥmad.
- Source: Abū Zakariyā. Material: Comments made by Naṣr b. Aḥmad on al-Tāhirī ‘s manners.
- 82 Source: an unnamed anthology. Material: a poem on joy and anguish by Abū l-Tayyib al-Tāhirī.
- 85 Source: a copy of the collected works of Abū l-Husayn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Murādī. Material: all of the poetry in the entry (4:85-7).
- 89 Source: Abū Sa‘īd, one of the shaykhs of the Samanids. Material: a narrative concerning how al-‘Abdūnī satirised a man named Yashkūr in a *majlis*.
- 93 Source: Abū Zakariyā Yaḥyā b. Ismā‘īl al-Ḥarbī. Material: a poem of complaint by Abū Maṣṣūr al-Khazrajī.
- 96 Source: a holograph volume by Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. ‘Uthmān al-Naysābūrī al-Khāzin. Material: two satirical poems, and one on ageing.
- 104 Sources: multiple unnamed men of letters. Material: a praise poem by Abū Muḥammad al-Salmī.

- 108 Source: an unidentified manuscript. Material: a poem by Abū ‘Alī al-Salāmī on editing texts.
- 110 Source: the collected letters of al-Iskāfī. Material: choice examples of his *fuṣūl*.
- 112 Source: Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Fārisī. Material: the narrative of the death of al-Iskāfī.
- 115 Source: Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Mūsawī. Material: a narrative concerning the splendour of the literary scene in Sāmānid Bukhara.
- 116 Source: Al-Khwārizmī. Material: a satire on al-Lahhām.
- Source: fragments of poetry of al-Lahhām, which al-Tha‘ālibī collected in the absence of a *dīwān*. Material: all of the material in the entry (4:116-131).
- 125 Source: Abū l-Qāsim al-Alīmānī. Material: a satire by al-Lahhām on the palace that Abū l-Faḍl al-Qāshānī built.
- Same source, reporting al-Lahhām directly. Material: a satire on ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn.
- 126 Source: unnamed. Material: a satire by al-Lahhām on the Sāmānids.
- 132-9 Source: the *dīwān* of Ibn Matrān. Material: all of the material in the entry.
- 132 Source: Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Mūsawī. Material: verbal portrait of Ibn Matrān.
- 140 Source: unnamed. Material a circulating *qaṣīda* by Abū l-Ja‘far Muḥammad b. al-‘Abbās b. al-Hasan describing his wanderings.

- 143 Source: Abū l-Faraj Ya‘qūb b. Ibrāhīm, told by Abū Ja‘far himself.
Material: a poem on his preference for veiled women over beardless men.
- 143 Source: Abū l-Qāsim al-Alīmānī, told by Abū Ja‘far himself. Material: a poem on al-‘Utbi.
- 144 Source: Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Mūsawī. Material: a satire by Ibn Abī al-Thayyāb Abū Muḥammad.

Source: Ḥāḍir b. Muḥammad al-Ṭūsī. Material: a satire by Ibn Abī al-Thayyāb Abū Muḥammad of a book.
- 145 Source: notes in the hand of Abū Muḥammad al-Mīkālī. Material: a praise poem by Ibn Abī al-Thayyāb Abū Muḥammad.

Source: Badī‘ al-Zamān. Material: the *nasīb* of a *qaṣīda* by Ibn Abī al-Thayyāb Abū Muḥammad.

Source: Abū Sa‘d Ya‘qūb. Material: a description of a candle by Ibn Abī al-Thayyāb Abū Muḥammad.
- 147-52 Source: the collected poetry of Abū l-Naṣr al-Hazīmī al-Ma‘āfi b. Hazīm.
Material: all of the material in the entry.

Source: Abū l-Qāsim al-Alīmānī: a narrative concerning a poem of elegy and congratulation by al-Hazīmī.
- 150 Source: Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Mūsawī, told by al-Hazīmī himself. Material: a poem of rebuke.
- 151 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan al-Ḥamdūnī. Material: a satire by al-Hazīmī on his friend’s name.

- 152 Source: Abū l-Qāsim Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Muẓaffarī. Material: a poem on ageing by al-Hazīmī.
- 153 Source: Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Mūsawī. Material: a verbal portrait of Abū Naṣr al-Zarīfī al-Abīwardī.
- 155 Source: Abū Naṣr Sa‘d b. Ya‘qūb. Material: descriptive verses by Abū Sa‘d Rijā’ b. al-Walīd al-Isbahānī.
- 155 Source: Maṣṣūr b. Abī l-Qāsim al-Dīnawarī. Material: a verbal portrait of his father, Abū l-Qāsim al-Dīnawarī.
- 158 Same source. Material: a description of quinces, apples, pomegranates and marigolds by Abū l-Qāsim al-Dīnawarī.
- 163 Source: Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Mūsawī, told by Abū Maṣṣūr Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Baghawī himself. Material: description of beloved.
- 163 Source: Abū ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Sarī al-Rāmī. Material: address to beloved by Abū ‘Alī Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Dāmghānī.
- 164 Source: Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Mūsawī, told by Abū ‘Alī Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Dāmghānī, who did not name the composer. Material: a love poem using chess images. One of his books informed al-Mūsawī that the line was by him.
- Same source. Material: poem on a scribe who could not write.
- Source: Abū l-Qāsim al-Alīmānī. Material: on Abū ‘Alī Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Dāmghānī’s name.

- 164 Source: unnamed. Material: a verbal portrait of Abū ‘Alī al-Zawzanī l-Kātib.
- 165 Source: notes in the hand of Abū Muḥammad al-Mīkāli. Material: a poem by al-Zawzanī on his son, claiming that he wished for his father’s death.
- Source: Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abdān. Material a poem by al-Zawzanī decrying sons.
- 166 Source: Ḥaḍir b. Muḥammad. Material: a poem by al-Zawzanī on an Alawite.
- 168-71 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan Aḥmad b. al-Mu’ammil. Material: his own poetry.
- 170 Source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī. Material: a line from a poem by al-Āmilī on missing Aḥmad b. Ḥajr.
- 171 Source: Ḥaḍir b. Muḥammad. Material: a poem by Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Alī l-Fārisī on asking for a new white silk shirt.
- 175 Source: Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Mūsawī, told by Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Jurjānī, known as Taramtarāq himself.
- Material: a satire on the men whom he served; a lyric poem on a young nobleman.
- Source: Abū Sa‘d Naṣr b. Ya‘qūb. Material: a descriptive poem by Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Jurjānī, known as Taramtarāq.
- 178 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ifriqī al-Mutayyam himself.
- Material: a description of a gathering of men of letters; a poem on why he did not pray.

- 179-80 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abdān. Material: a poem by al-Ifriqī al-Mutayyam composed when he was given a robe by a man from a leading family; *mujūn*; two descriptions of Turkic ghulāms.
- 180 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abdān. Material: poems by Abū l-Hasan Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Thābit al-Baghdādī, on sickness and being visited, and on relief from distress.
- 182 Source: Abū l-Naṣr al-‘Utbī. Material : an elegy for Abū l-Ḥasan al-‘Utbī by Abū Mansūr al-Būshanī.
- 195-219 Source: a holograph manuscript of the works of al-Ma’ mūnī, presented to al-Tha‘ālibī by the author in the year 382. Material: all of the poetry in the entry (4: 4:183-219).
- 220-2 Source: holograph material by Abū Muhammad ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Uthmān al-Wāthiqī. Material: a description of the cold, a fire and coals; an explicit description of a beloved; a poem composed in Kashgar, describing snow and ice; a poem in praise of youth.
- 223-77 Source: the collected verse and prose of Abū Bakr Muhammad b. al-‘Abbās al-Khwārizmī. Material: all of the material in the entry.
- 277 Source: Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī. Material: comments concerning the character of Abū Sa‘īd Aḥmad b. Shabīb al-Shabībī, and a poem that al-Shabībī sent to him, asking to meet.
- Source: Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ḥāmid, reporting al-Shabībī.
Material: a poem praising al-Khwārizmī’s learning, but censuring his short-lived friendship.

- 277-8 Source: other, unknown. Material: a poem by al-Shabībī in praise of the character of Abū Naṣr al-Mikālī.
- 286 Source: Abū Saʿīd Muḥammad b. Maṣṣūr. A narrative concerning how Shams al-Maʿālī attempted to keep Ibn Ḥāmid at his court.
- 286-91 Source: written notes. Material: all of the poetry of Ibn Ḥāmid.
- 296-344 Source: the collected verse and prose of Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī. Material: all of the material in the entry.
- 334 Source: Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī himself. Material: two extracts of praise poetry.
- 345-82 Source: material transmitted in person and in writing by Abū l-Faṭḥ ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Kātib al-Bustī. Material: all of the material in the entry.
- Source: Abū l-Naṣr al-ʿUtbī, reporting al-Bustī. Material: a narrative concerning how al-Bustī exiled himself to a quiet corner of the empire in difficult times.
- 383 Source: unnamed. Material: a poem on being a stranger by Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm.
- Source: Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Bustī, told by Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī himself. Material: two wisdom poems.
- 385 Source: Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Bustī, reporting Abū Muḥammad Shuʿba b. ʿAbd al-Malik al-Bustī. Material: a poem in praise of a visitor. Al-Bustī adds that he modelled his own writing after these verses.
- 386 Same source: Material: a poem on separation by al-Malik al-Bustī.

- Source: other. Unnamed. A poem in praise of a friend by al-Malik al-Bustī.
- 389-90 Source: holograph notes in the hand of Abū l-Qāsim Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Jubayr al-Sajzī. Material: a description of beloved; description of beloved and garden; on the passage of time; a reproach to a friend.
- 390-1 Source: Abū l-‘Abbās Ahmad b. Ishāq al-Jarmaqī in person. Material: poems on travel and on the sincerity of his friendship.
- 391 Source: a letter by Abū l-‘Abbās Ahmad b. Ishāq al-Jarmaqī. Material: a *qaṣīda* to Abū l-Faṭḥ Bishr b. ‘Alī.
- 395 Source: Yaḥyā b. ‘Alī al-Bukhārī. Material: a poem by Abū l-Qāsim al-Dā’ūdī on being mild-mannered.
- Source: other, unnamed. Material: a proverbial poem by Abū l-Qāsim al-Dā’ūdī.
- 396 Source: Abū Sa‘d Naṣr b. Ya‘qūb. Material : three descriptive poems by Abū Muhammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Muhammad b. Yahyā al-Dā’ūdī al-Harawī al-Faqīh.
- 398 Source: the collected poetry of Abū Rūh Zafar b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Harawī. Material: poems on his ambition; in praise of uninvited guests; in praise of a friend’s writing; to somebody who was unlike him.
- 399-401 Source: the collected poetry of Manṣūr b. al-Hākim Abī Manṣūr al-Harawī. Material: all of the material in the entry.
- 410-25 Source: *al-Makhzūn*, by al-Mīkālī. Material: al-Mīkālī’s fuṣūl.

- 443 Source: The Dihkhudā Abū Saʿīd Muḥammad b. Maṣṣūr, reporting al-Nāhī himself. Material: a poem on bedbugs and fleas; a poem on using calendars and astronomical tables.
- 445-9 Source: Abū l-Husayn Muḥammad b. al-Husayn al-Fārisī, the grammarian. Material: all of the poetry in the entry.
- 450-2 Source: notes containing extracts from the poetry of Abū Saʿd Naṣr b. Yaʿqūb. Material: all the poetry in the entry.
- 453 Source: a book on *akhbār* concerning Abū l-ʿAynāʾ compiled by Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzuban. Material: a description of the book.
- 455-8 Source: the collected writing of Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad al-Burūjardī. Material: all the poetry in the entry.
- 469 Sources: Abū Saʿd b. Dūst and Ismāʿīl b. Muḥammad. Material: four poems by al-Jawharī: on sociability; a description of his dark house in Nishapur; a satire on the appearance of a blond, blue-eyed man; a poem addressed to the host of a banquet.
- 470-2 Source: Abū Maṣṣūr Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Lajīmī. Material: all the poetry in the entry.
- 475 Source: Abū l-Ghaṭārīf ʿAmlāq b. Ghaydāq al-ʿUthmānī. Material: a description of winter clothing.
- 475-6 Source: Abū l-Muʿallā Mājid b. al-Ṣalt, Nāqid al-Kalām al-Yamānī. Material: all the poetry in the entry.

- 478 Source: Abū ‘Alī Muhammad b. ‘Umar al-Balkhī al-Zāhir. Material: a poem on leaving Baghdad for Khurasan, and a satire on the people whom he praised in Nishapur.
- 478 Source: Abū l-Qāsim Yahyā b. ‘Alī al-Bukhārī al-Faqīh. Material: a satire on his impotence.
- 483 Source: the son of Abū Sahl Muhammad b. Sulaymān al-Sa‘lūkī. Material: a poem by his father on fate.
- 483 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan al-Fārisī al-Māwardā al-Faqīh. Material: an ascetic poem by al-Sa‘lūkī.
- 484 Source: Abū Ibrāhīm, brother of ‘Alī b. ‘Alī al-‘Alawī. Material: two proverbial poems.
- 484 Source: Abū Ibrāhīm al-‘Alawī. Material : a poem inviting a guest.
- 489-91 Source: holograph notes and material recited by the Judge Abū Bakr ‘Abd Allāh b. Muhammad al-Bustī. Material: all the poetry in the entry.
- 505-6 Source: notes containing poems by Abū l-‘Abbās al-Faḍl b. ‘Alī al-Isfārā’īnī. Material: poems on ageing; on visiting a friend; describing a candle that fell into a pond; describing an apple in a fountain.
- 506-8 Source: an autograph manuscript containing the poetry of Abū l-Faḥ Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Yūsuf al-Kātib. Material: all the poetry in the entry.
- 509-10 Source: the *dīwān* of Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Ghawwās. Material: all the poetry in the entry.

- 515 Source: Abū Naṣr Sahl b. al-Marzubān. Material : a poem asking for wine, drawn from a letter which Abū Naṣr Ahmad b. ‘Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Zawzanī asked Ibn al-Marzubān to forward on to his father.
- 517 Source: Abū l-‘Abbās Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ma’mūnī. Material: a poem on an apple, and another on reliance on God.
- 517 Source: Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-‘Abdalkānī in the house of Abū l-Faḍl al-Mīkālī. Material: a satire on the character of a leading figure in Nishapur.
- 519 Source: Abū l-Faḍl al-Mīkālī. Material : satires by Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-‘Abdalkānī.
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- 9 Source: Abū Muḥammad Khalaf b. Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb al-Sharmaqānī, reporting Abū l-Mutā‘. Material: a short poem comparing the glances of the patron to that of the beloved.
- 9 Source: Abū Muḥammad Khalaf b. Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb al-Sharmaqānī, told by al-Jawharī, told by Abū l-Mutā‘ himself. Material: a poem on meeting the beloved at night.
- Source: same *isnad*. Material: on lovesickness.
- 10 Source: same *isnād*. Material: a comparison between a beloved and the moon, based on the conceit that the moon frays clothing.

- 11 Source: Abū Ya‘lā Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṣūfī, told by Abū l-Mutā‘ himself. Material: two poems on parting.
- 11-13 Source: the *dīwān* of Abū l-Mutā‘, copied by Abū Bakr ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan, from the author’s own hand. Material: two further poems on tears and separation; a description of the sky; a section from a *qaṣīda*, describing separation; a description of a beloved and lovesickness; on visiting a monastery at Damascus; on drinking wine when Venus had risen in the sky before dawn; a description of himself from a *qaṣīda*.
- 14 Source: Abū Ya‘lā Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. Material: poems by Abū l-Husayn Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Ma‘arrī: one describing his worries at night; a love poem describing the beloved; describing the reflection of courtiers in a pool; a satire on the faith of men who built a mosque next door to him; a satire on the faith of a man.
- 16 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan al-Dulafī al-Maṣīṣī the poet. Material: a poem by Abū l-‘Alā al-Ma‘arrī describing correspondence.
- 17 Source: Abū Ya‘lā. Material: a poem by Abū l-Qāsim al-Muḥassin b. ‘Amr b. al-Ma‘lā on stealing poetry.
- Source: Abū Ya‘lā, told by al-Ma‘lā himself. Material: a poem on fate.
- Source: al-Maṣīṣī. Material: an address to the beloved on the pleasure of nights spent with her. al-Maṣīṣī ascribed the lines to al-Ma‘lā on one occasion, and to someone else on another.
- 18 Source: Abū Ya‘lā. Material: several lines describing amirs by Abū l-Husayn al-Mustahām al-Halabī.

- 19 Source: Abū Ya‘lā. Material: lines on wine by al-Mustahām al-Halabī.
- 21 Source: al-Maṣīṣī. Material: lines ascribed to Abū l-Fath al-Mawāzīnī al-Halabī on a blushing beloved whose eyes had become bloodshot.
- Same source: on visiting the beloved.
- Source: Abū Sa‘d b. Abī l-Faraj’s book of similes. Material: lines by al-Mawāzīnī al-Halabī comparing the eclipse of the moon to the growth of hair on the face of the beloved.
- 22 Source: Abū l-Qāsim Yaḥyā b. ‘Alā’ al-Bukhārī al-Faqīh, told by Ibn Hammād al-Baṣrī himself. Material: a complaint against the people of the age.
- Source: the ‘aforementioned’ (*hādhā*) Abū l-Faḍl. Material: complementary prose cappings made by Ibn Hammād al-Baṣrī.
- 23 Source: al-Tamīmī. Material: Abū l-Hasan Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Wāhid al-Qaṣṣār’s ‘Bedouin poem’ describing a banquet.
- 27 Source: a chief. Material: characterisations of Abū l-Makārim al-Mutahhar b. Muhammad al-Baṣrī by two unnamed people, and a third, by the Dihqan Abū ‘Alī al-Qūmisī, who reported that al-Baṣrī attended him in Damghan and extemporised some satirical verses.
- 27 Source: comments made by an unknown friend of al-Aylī. Material: a verbal portrait of the poet.

- 28 Source: lines that al-Tha‘ālibī found in his notes (*ta‘liqātī*) after the completion of the *Yatīma*. Material: a poem by al-Aylī on having two houses in Mecca.
- Source: Abū Ya‘lā. Material: a poem by al-Aylī on God’s forgiveness of sin.
- 30 Source: Abū Ghānim al-Qaṣrī. Material: a description of a mulberry tree by Abū Muḥammad Tāhir b. al-Husayn b. Yahyā al-Makhzūmī al-Baṣrī, with a second line related by another unnamed source.
- 33 Source: Abū Ya‘lā al-Baṣrī, told by Ibn Hashīsha himself. Material: description of a beloved.
- Source: Abū l-Ḥasan al-Qazwīnī. Material : a poem by Ibn Hashīsha on beards as a mark of distinction.
- 34 Source: Abū Suwayd al-Sūfī. Material: a poem on Sufism; a wisdom poem.
- 34 Source: Shaykh Abū l-Ḥasan Musāfir b. al-Ḥasan, told by Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusain al-‘Uthmānī, told by Abū l-Qāsim al-Husain b. ‘Alī al-Wazīr al-Maghribī himself. Material: lines on gaining one’s desire after consoling oneself.
- Same source: on separation.
- 35 Source: Abū Ṭālib Maḥmūd b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭabarī, told by al-Maghribī when he moved to Baghdad. Material: on the advent of grey hair.

- 36 Source: Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Hurmuzdān al-Fārisī. Material: information on a poet in Jerusalem called Abū Sa‘īd al-‘Ifayrī, who was practically an infidel, and who had a brother called Ramāda, who was extremely devout and an ascetic. Ramāda heard a poem by his brother in which he denied the afterlife, the torment of the grave, and the existence of God, and he became so angry that he eventually throttled al-‘Ifayrī in his sleep.
- 36 Source: the shaykh Abū Bakr, reporting Abū Naṣr al-Himsī, the scribe of Ibn Qaṭṭān, ruler of Yemen, on Muḥammad Ibn Ḥawsab. Praise of him when he was not generous during Ramadan.
- 37 Source: Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥāmidī, told by Abū Muḥammad al-Khāzin. Material: lines that he stole from Ibn ‘Abbād’s *saftna*, to which nobody was allowed access. Material: by Abū al-Diyā’ al-Himsī on a chief. Description of patron.
- 38 Source: an unnamed traveller. Material: a poem ascribed to Abū al-Diyā’ al-Himsī on his relationship with a friend.
- 38 Source: Abū Ṭālib Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd Allāh (al-Baghdādī), who was from Wāsiṭ. Material: a prose passage that Abū Mansūr al-Sūrī, brother to Abū ‘Umāra wrote to a friend when he was a young student.
- Same source: on tears inspired by love-longing.
- Same source: advice on keeping one’s distance from the proud and the obnoxious.

- 40 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan Musāfir b. al-Ḥasan, told by Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-‘Uthmānī, told by the judge Ibn al-Basāṭ al-Baghdādī.
Material: lines in praise of travel by Ibn Wakī‘ al-Tinnīsī.
- Source: the shaykh Abū Bakr, told by Abū Ya‘lā Sa‘īd b. Aḥmad al-Shurūṭī in Ramla. Material: a poem on grammar and the contexts in which it should be discussed by Ibn Wakī‘ al-Tinnīsī.
- 41 Source: the shaykh Abū Bakr. Material: a mystical poem by Abū l-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Ja‘far al-Badī‘ī.
- 44 Source: al-Qazwīnī and one other: a *khavar* concerning Abū ‘Alī al-Husain b. Bishr al-Ramlī’s youth.
- 45 Source: the *dīwān* of Ibn Hindū. Material: a lyric poem otherwise attributed to Ibn Bishr al-Ramlī.
- 54 Source: al-Maṣṣīṣī, who relates a poem in which Al-Ḥasan al-Daqqāq asked for wine.
- 54 Sources: the epistles of Ishāq al-Ṣābī, and the *safīna* of Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥāmidī, quoting Abū Muḥammad al-Khāzin, who stole the material from the *safīna* of Ibn ‘Abbād. Material: a poem by Abū Muḥammad al-Būsirābādī on his ‘sick’ heart, and two satires.
- 56 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan al-Barmakī: a praise poem by Abū l-Faṭḥ b. Durdān al-Yahūdī al-Wazīr in an informal register.

Source: Abū l-Ḥasan al-Qazwīnī: A description of dawn after a night spent thinking of the beloved by Ibn Durdān

Same source: on loyalty, drawing a parallel between himself and Ibn ‘Ādiyā’ al-Yahūdī, who was known for his loyalty.

58 Source: Abū Naṣr ibn al-Marzubān. Material : three wisdom poems by Jarīh al-Muqal.

60 Source: Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥafṣ al-‘Umrawī al-Nawqānī, who says that the following lines are ascribed to al-Zāhī in *K. al-muḥibb*: on the spring and wine-drinking.

62 Source: the shaykh Abū Bakr. Material: a poem by Ibn al-Zamakdam al-Mawṣilī on someone who invited him to a feast and gave him sour wine to drink.

66 Source: Abū Ṭālib al-Shahrzūrī, told by al-Baladī himself: a poem on drinking after not touching alcohol for a year.

69 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan Muḥammad B. al-Ḥasan al-Barmakī al-Faqīh, told by al-Murtaḍa himself in Baghdad: a poem set to music on account of its delicacy and sweetness: a description of love-longing by al-Sharīf al-Murtadā Abū l-Qāsim ‘Alī bn al-Husain al-Mūsawī al-Naqīb.

73 Source: al-Tamīnī told by Ibn al-Mutarriz himself: a description of travel and the beloved.

Source: Abū Ya‘lā al-Baṣrī. Material : a description of a beloved by Ibn al-Mutarriz.

76 Source: al-Tamīmī. Material: poems by Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. al-Rayyān al-Jarhamī on separation, on concealing love, and on love-longing.

78 Source: Abū l-Qāsim ‘Abd al-Ṣamad b. ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī, reporting Makkī b. al-Baghdādī, reporting Abū l-Ḥasan al-Nu‘aymī: on fate.

Source: Makkī b. al-Baghdādī: al-Nu‘aymī used to sit in the eastern mosque in Baghdad on cold days. His prose description of the weather and various people.

Source: Makkī b. al-Baghdādī, reporting al-Nu‘aymī himself: on how to respond to censure.

78-9 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan al-Barmakī, reporting Abū l-Ḥasan al-Hāshimī al-Ma’mūnī himself: an address to noblemen demanding that they be generous.

79-81 Source: Abū l-Faḍl Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wāhid al-Tamīmī al-Baghdādī himself. Material: all the poetry in the entry.

82 Source: al-Maṣṣī. Material: a narrative concerning Ibn Kuwayrāt al-Ramlī, with whom he once attended a banquet.

Source: Abū Ya‘lā. Material: praise of an Egyptian doctor and a description of a beloved by Ibn Kuwayrāt.

- 83 Sources: al-Maṣīṣī and Abū Ya‘lā. Material: a poem by ‘Abd al-Mu‘nim b. ‘Abd al-Muḥsin al-Ṣūrī describing the night.
- 85 Source: al-Maṣīṣī. A ‘sweet and witty’ poem by Abū l-Fahm ‘Abd al-Salām al-Naṣībī.
- 86 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Fāris al-Qazwīnī. Material: poems by Abū al-Samt al-Rasa‘nī and his brother Abū Mālīk. A line on prophets; a line of *mujūn*; on drinking and playing backgammon; the beginning of a piece of *mujūn*.
- 86 Source: al-Maṣīṣī. Material: an anecdote concerning Abū Thurayyā al-Shamshātī’s constant buying and selling of slave girls, and a joke made by one of them, named *Zarīfa*.
- 87 Source: al-Maṣīṣī. Material: a description of a friend.
- Source: al-Ḥāmidī, quoting Ibn ‘Abbād’s *safīna*. Material: a line by Abū Thurayyā on a bearded young man.
- 89 Source: al-‘Alawī al-Waṣī. Material: a prose exchange of character descriptions with Abū Ma‘shar al-Kātib.
- 90 Source: an unnamed stranger. Material: a poem on tears by Abū Rummāḥ al-Fuṣṣī.
- 90 Source: al-Maṣīṣī. Material: a verbal portrait of Abū l-Ghawth b. Nahrīr al-Munīhī

- 102 Source: al-Qazwīnī. Material: a description of a beloved by Abū Hamza al-Dhuhālī.
- 102 Source : Abū Ṭālib al-Ṭabarī. Material : a description of a fever by Abū Hamza al-Dhuhālī.
- 106-7 Source: a holograph copy of the *dīwān* of Abū l-Khaṭṭāb Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Jabalī. Material: all the poetry in the entry.
- 108-9 Source: Notes made the scribes of al-Mīkālī from the work of Abū Ya‘lā Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, and material that he recited to al-Tha‘ālibī. Material: all the poetry in the entry.
- 109 Source: Abū l-Ḥusayn Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Fasawī the Grammarian. Material: a narrative concerning how Ibn Ghassān al-Baṣrī treated the governor of Ahvaz but was not rewarded sufficiently, and how the poet complained of this in verse
- 110 Same source: a riddle written to Ṭalḥa b. ‘Abd al-A‘lā.
- 113 Source: Abū Ghānim, known as Ibn Muḥammad al-Qaṣrī. Material: narratives concerning Abū l-‘Abbās and his quick wit.
- 113 Source: Abū l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dabbāwandī. Material: a description of tears by al-Uskī.
- 114 Source: Abū l-‘Alā b. Husūl. Material : a description of tresses of hair.

- 114 Source: Abū l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dabbāwandī. Material: a poem on Fate by al-Uskī.
- 118 Source: Abū l-‘Alā b. Ḥusūl. Material : a poem on Fate written to him by Miskawayh.
- 120 Source: *Nathr al-Durr* by al-Ābī. Material: a description of the natural world.
- 122 Source: A letter that al-Ābī sent to Abū l-‘Alā in which he described the coldness of Fīrūzkūh.
- 126 Source: Abū l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dabbāwandī. Material: *mujūn* by al-Ābī.
- 126 Source: Abū l-‘Alā ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn. Material: a narrative concerning his father’s imprisonment.
- 127 Source: Abū l-‘Alā ‘Alī b. al-Husayn, whom al-Tha‘ālibī met in Nishapur. Material: a lyric poem; a poem describing poetry.
- 127 Source: Abū l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dabbāwandī. Material: a love poem by Abū l-‘Alā’ Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. al-Husayn.
- 132-8 Source: material drawn from meeting Abū l-Qāsim al-Iṣbahānī . Material: all of the material in the entry.
- 139 Source: Abū Bakr al-Marjī. Material: extracts from poems by Abū l-Qāsim Ghānim b. Muḥammad b. Abī l-‘Alā al-Iṣbahānī in praise of Ibn ‘Abbād, on

- a ghulām holding a hawk, and a description of Ibn ‘Abbād sitting on a horse.
- 141 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Abd al-Raḥman b. Abī ‘Ubayd al-Shīrāzī: on ageing; description of the natural world; description of separation from his beloved; a proverb translated from Persian.
- 143-5 Source: the jurist Abū l-Ḥasan b. Abī l-‘Ubayd. Material: the poetry of Abū ‘Alī Muhammad b. Hamd b. Fuwarraja al-Burūjirdī.
- 145 Source: Abū l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dabbāwandī. Material: a love poem by Abū l-Ḥasan Muhammad b. Aḥmad b. Rāmīn.
- 146 Source: Abū l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dabbāwandī. Material: a poem by Abū Muḥammad al-Nazzām al-Khazrajī to Abū l-‘Alā on a reward that had been granted to him.
- 146 Source: Abū l-Yaqzān ‘Ammār b. al-Ḥusayn. Material: a love poem on a ghulām and a description of wine by Abū Sa‘d ‘Alī b. Muhammad b. Khalaf al-Hamadhānī.
- 150 Source: Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī. Material: a poem by Abū Sa‘d ‘Alī b. Muhammad b. Khalaf al-Hamadhānī describing poetry.
- 150-1 Source: Abū Ghānim, known as Ibn Muhammad al-Qasrī, who met al-Tha‘ālibī in Nishapur and copied out books for him. Material: a poem describing beloved; on grey hair; on his horse; on the crescent moon; on his enemies; on the features of the beloved; consoling the amir Abū Aḥmad Muḥammad.

- 154 Source: Abū l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dabbāwandī, who met al-Tha‘ālibī in Nishapur. Material: a description of beloved; on a *ra’īs* who was subjected to tribulations; an invitation; satire on a *qawwāl* named Abū l-Khaṭṭāb.
- 166-7 Source: a letter that Abū l-Maḥāsīn Sa‘d b. Mansūr sent to one of the intimates of Shams al-Kufāt al-Maymandī, containing a poem in praise of him.
- 167-70 Source: a holograph collection of Abū l-Maḥāsīn Sa‘d b. Mansūr’s poetry. Material: a praise poem; a description of tears; a description of a scribe; a poem in celebration of Nawrūz.
- 170-1 Source: Abū l-Muzaffar al-Jurjānī, who recited to al-Tha‘ālibī directly. Material: a description of tears; on fate; to a friend; a description of beauty.
- 171 Source: Abū l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dabbāwandī. Material: a poem by Sā‘id b. Muḥammad al-Jurjānī satirising al-Makhzūmī.
- 184-6 Source: all the poetry in the entry on Abū Ibrāhīm Naṣr b. Aḥmad al-Mīkālī is drawn from al-Tha‘ālibī’s meetings with him.
- 189 Source: a letter sent by Abū l-Qāsim ‘Abd al-Samad b. ‘Alī al-Tabarī to Abū ‘Alī al-Marwarūdhī containing *fuṣūl*.

- 202 Source: a poem praising al-Tha‘ālibī that Abū Yūsuf Ya‘qūb b. Muhammad wrote on the back of his copy of *Siḥr al-balāgha*.
- 205 Source: Abū l-Faḍl Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-‘Arūdī himself for a poem describing the seven planets; a poem on silver gifts.
- 216 Source: Abū l-Qāsim b. Abī Maṣṣūr for a poem by Abū ‘Alī b. Abī Bakr b. Habshuwayh al-Zawzanī on ageing.
- 218: Source: Abū l-Qāsim ‘Alī b. al-Faḍl al-Qā’inī. Material: a praise poem by Abū l-‘Abbās al-Bākhazī.
- 219-20 Source: Abū ‘Alī al-Hasan b. Abī al-Tayyib. Material: an exchange of fraternal poems that he had with Abū l-‘Abbās al-Bākhazī; a satire.
- 232 Poems that Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh recited to al-Tha‘ālibī: on a rose; two poems professing his devotion to a friend; on grey hair; praising God.
- 241 Source: Abū l-Qāsim Tāhir b. Aḥmad al-Harawī for his own poetry: reproach of a friend; an advice poem.
- 241 Source: one of Abū l-Qāsim Tāhir b. Aḥmad al-Harawī’s townsmen, for a poem supposedly by him on the theme of praise.
- 242 Source: Abū Mas‘ūd ‘Uṣm b. Yahyā al-Harawī. Material: one of his own poems, making light of himself.

- 242 Source: Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Kātib al-Nasafī. Material: a poem by Ibn Abī al-Faḍl al-Dabbāgh al-Harawī satirising Būshanj and its inhabitants.
- 253 Source: Abū l-Qāsim ‘Abd al-Ṣamad b. ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī. Material: a poem by Abū Manṣūr Ibn Mushkān on nobility.
- 254 Source: Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Ishāq al-Baḥḥāthī. Material: a poem by Abū Mansūr Ibn Mushkān in praise of Maḥmūd of Ghazna.
- 267 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan al-Mu‘ammal b. al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad al-Bustī. Material: an advice poem by himself.
- 269 Source: Abū l-Faḍl Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Rashīdī al-Lawkarī: a poem by himself on fate.
- 270-2 Source: the poems in the entry on Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Arbā‘ī were dictated by the poet himself. Genres: praise, and complaint against fate.
- 279 Source: Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Muzaḥḥār b. al-Ḥasan al-Dalighānī. Material: a poem describing a young male beloved; a poem in praise of al-Maymandī.
- 287 Source: Abū Manṣūr ‘Alī b. Aḥmad al-Hallāb. Material: a poem by him describing the beard.
- 288 Source: Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Ishāq al-Baḥḥāthī. Material: poetry by Abū Sahl al-Junabadhī: on the cruelty of the beloved; on drinking wine

- 288-9 Source: al-Baghdādī al-Mustawfī for his own poetry: to a friend; two satires.
- 289 Source: the *dīwān* of Abū ‘Adī al-Shahrazūrī. Material: a poem to a friend; wisdom poem; a description of a friend.
- 290-1 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥājibī in Jurjāniyya. Material: poems by al-Muhallabī al-‘Ammānī satirising a man’s facial hair; a poem with which al-Muhallabī al-‘Ammānī praised the Sāmānid vizier Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Azīz.
- 291 Source: Abū l-Ḥasan Musāfir b. al-Ḥasan: an advice poem by Abū Mansūr Nasr b. Ahmad b. Sa‘d al-Sa‘dī.
- 292 Source: the Shaykh Abū Bakr for a poem on ageing by Abū l-Faraj Ahmad b. ‘Alī b. Khalaf al-Hamadhānī.
- 298 Source: The Shaykh Abū Bakr, reporting Ibn Abī ‘Allān al-Ahwāzī, reporting Abū l-Husayn al-Ahwāzī: a poem on the value of small objects.
- 299 Source: The Shaykh Abū Bakr, reporting a poem by Abū Dirham al-Bandanījī in which he describes himself.
- 300 Source: Abū l-Faḍl al-Tamīmī : a wine poem that Abū Muhammad Yahyā b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Arzanī improvised in front of him in Baghdad.
- 302 Source: Ibn Dūst: two short poems by Abū ‘Alī al-Wahhāb describing beloveds.

- 306 Source: The Shaykh Abū Bakr: a short poem to a friend or loved one by
Abū Mansūr ‘Abd al-Rahman b. Sa‘īd al-Qā’inī.
- 314 Source: the *Dīwān* of al-Āghājī for a poem of self-vaunting and one
satirising Balkh.

The Sources of *Lubāb al-albāb*

Page references are to *Lubāb al-albāb*, eds. E.G. Browne and M. Qazvīnī. London: Luzac, 1903 and 1906

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- 19 Source: notes and memorised poems drawn from a copy of a bilingual *Dīwān* attributed to Bahrām Gūr, which ‘Awfī consulted at the Sar-i Pul Library in Bukhara. Material: in Arabic: two poems of self-vaunting in Arabic; a line of self-vaunting in Persian.
- 23 Source: Al-‘Utbī’s *al-Tārīkh al-yamīnī*. The source is not quoted directly.
Source: Firdawsī’s *Shāhnāma*. The source is not quoted directly.
- 27 Source: *Tārīkh-i nāṣirī*. The source is not quoted directly.
- 29 Source: *Yatīmat al-dahr*. The source is not quoted directly.
- 30 Source: *Kamāl al-Balāgha*. The source is not quoted directly.
- 31 Source: *Tatimmat yatīmat al-dahr* Material: a poem of self-vaunting by the Amīr Abū l-Hasan ‘Alī b. Ilyās al-Aghājī al-Bukhārī.
- 33 Source: *Tatimmat yatīmat al-dahr*. Material: an Arabic poem by the Amīr Buzurjmīhr Qasīm b. Ibrahīm Abū Mansūr al-Qāyīnī on the addressee’s arrogance.

- 34 Source: Zakī al-Dīn b. Aḥmad al-Lahūrī. Material: a *rubāʿī* by Malikshāh b. Alp Arslan describing eyes.
- 35 Unacknowledged source: *Dumyat al-qaṣr*. Material: a two-line poem in Arabic by the Amīr Abū l-Fath ʿAbd al-Karīm b. Aḥmad al-Hātimī al-Haravī, describing a glass of wine and the hand that held it
- 35 Oral source: ʿImād al-Dīn the secretary. Material: a narrative concerning a *majlis* held by Atsiz, at which Rashīd al-Dīn Vatvāt was present.
- 38 Source: a copy of the collected works of ʿAlā al-Dīn al-Husayn al-Ghūrī, bound with those of Atsiz, which ʿAwfī consulted in the Sar-i dū library in Samarqand. Material: the *dīvān* may be the source for: two extracts from a *qaṣīda* of self-vaunting; a *rubāʿī* extemporised when his execution was forestalled by Sanjar.
- Source: ʿAlā al-Dīn al-Husayn al-Ghūrī’s poetry is described as popular in India and the area around Ghazna, suggesting oral and written forms of transmission beyond the aforementioned manuscript.
- 39 Unnamed oral source. Material: a *khavar* concerning Saʿīd Sanjar’s incarceration, and a *rubāʿī* composed when his brother Sulaymān was incarcerated by the Turks.
- 40 Oral source: Shihāb al-Dīn Masʿūd at the court in Khwarazm. Material: a *khavar* concerning the youthful extravagance of ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Tekkesh b. Arslan, and a *rubāʿī* composed when he was told that he had emptied the treasury.

- 41 Source: *Rubāʿiyyāt* by Tughril, on his imprisonment, on the battlefield, and on conquering Armenia and Arran.
- 43 Source: a graffito in the garden of Malika Tarkān. Material: a *rubāʿī* on his sword attributed to al-Sultān al-aʿzam ʿAlā al-Dunyā wa-l-Dīn Iskandar al-Thānī Muhammad Sultān Tekkesh.
- 44 Source: al-Sultān al-Shahīd Nusrat al-Dunyā wa-l-Dīn Qilij Arslan Khāqān ʿUthmān b. Ibrāhīm in Rajab 597/1201. Material: a gnomic *rubāʿī* on love and a riddling *rubāʿī* on his Turkic ghulām.
- Written source: Awfī's comparison between the hand of Qilij Arslan and that of the two great calligraphers Ibn Muqla and Ibn al-Bawwāb suggests that he saw material in his hand.
- 46-7 Written source: the correspondence of Tughanshah b. Muhammad al-Muʿayyad and Tāj al-Dīn Tamrān.
- Source: a poem sent to Tughanshah b. Muhammad al-Muʿayyad by Kāfurak, asking for bread, and the response, written on the back (*ẓahr*) of the rough draft, which satirised Kāfurak's wife.
- 50 Oral source: Imam and *adīb* Rashīd al-Dīn Tāj al-Udabāʾ ʿAbd al-Majīd.
- Material: a *rubāʿī* in praise of a female minstrel in Herat called Zāhida, which was composed by Nāṣir al-Dīn ʿUthmān b. Harb al-Sajzī.
- 52-9 Written source: the *dīvān* of al-Malik al Muʿazzam Pighu Malik, which is described as smaller than the pupil of the eye, indicating that ʿAwfī saw it.
- This may be the source for:
- A long polythematic *qaṣīda* in praise of sultan Aḥmad Jalāl al-Dunyā.

A long polythematic *qaṣīda* in praise of his father in law, Tughakhan of Marghian, containing a discussion of poetic form.

A longer *qaṣīda*, also in praise Tughakhan, described as more formally conventional.

Rubā' iyyāt on the intellect; lost love; making divination from a book.

A *ghazal* on the cruelty of the beloved.

59 Unnamed oral source: a *rubā' ī* by the amir Sanā' al-Dīn Arqam al-Fārisī on the face and lips of the beloved.

59-60 Oral source: Imam Humām 'Ālim al-Dīn Kirmānī for poems by the amir Fakhr al-Dīn Mas'ūd b. Abī al-Yaman al-Kirmānī. Material: an Arabic *dūbayt* on wine drinking; Persian *rubā' iyyāt* on lovesickness and an infidel child.

61 Unnamed oral source. Material: a *rubā' ī* composed by Ikhtiyār al-Dīn Ruzbih al-Shaybānī when he was ill and the *malik* Bahā' al-Dīn came to visit him.

62 Source: The poetry of Ikhtiyār al-Dīn Ruzbih al-Shaybānī is described as unobtainable. 'Awfī has written what he memorised (1:60-63).

63 Written sources: *Yatīmat al-dahr* [5:176 where he is mourned; 5:270 where he is praised] and 'Utbī's *al-Tārīkh al-yamīnī*. Material: a three-line Arabic poem by Shams al-Kafāt Abū l-Qasam Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan on a *sāqī*.

64 Sources: the two *dīwāns* of Abū l-Fath al-Bustī, one in Arabic and the other in Persian. 'Awfī has seen both books, but since copies of his Persian work

are not available in Uchcha, he has had to rely on his memory. Material: a short advice poem.

- 65 Written source: *Dumyat al-Qaṣr*. Material: a poem in praise of Nizām al-Mulk.

Source: ‘Awfī has relied on his memory to reproduce the *rubā‘iyyāt* of Nizām al-Mulk. Material: a panegyric lyric poem; on lovesickness; on his ghulām’s beard; on dark and white hair.

- 68 Written source: ‘Awfī read the Arabic poetry of Abū l-Qāsim ‘Alī b. al-Hasan b. Abī Tayyib al-Bākhazī in the company of Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥasan. Material: ‘Awfī remembers a section from an Arabic *qasida* in praise of Tughril, and an erotic *qit’a*.

- 70-1 Written source: a collection of *rubā‘iyyāt* by Abū l-Qāsim ‘Alī b. al-Hasan b. Abī Tayyib al-Bākhazī called *Ṭarabnāma*, seen by ‘Awfī at Bukhara in the library of Sirindībī. ‘Awfī memorised poems. Material: a metaphorical description of face; two poems on love-longing; on wine; on a censor; on sacrificing himself for the honour of another; a poem composed when he lay dying.

- 72-5 Written source: the two *dīwāns*, one in Arabic and another in Persian, of Abū l-‘Alā’ ‘Atā’ b. Ya‘qūb the Kātib, known as Nākūk. These books form the probable sources for:

The beginning of an Arabic *qaṣīda* composed in the style of al-A‘shā; sections from Persian *qaṣā’id* that ‘Awfī claims to have seen and memorised haphazardly: the beginning of a poem written to celebrate Rīzā Ibrāhīm’s construction of a castle and the poet’s release from confinement

- in India; a personal account of his time in India; an Arabic *dūbayt* censuring jasmine; a *qaṣīda* composed for the arrival of Rizā Ibrāhīm in India, when the poet had been confined to Lahore for eight years; a short poem describing wheat; a *rubāʿī* on longing for a beloved.
- 76 Unnamed oral source: lyric lines by Abū Nuwās cited by one of the boon companions of Nizām al-Mulk Naṣīr al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Abī Tawba, and his Persian translation of it. Unnamed oral source testifying that these are indeed his lines, although they are ascribed to many.
- 77 Oral source: the judge Sharaf Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Karkavī, reporting the judge of Bātikrū, reporting his grandfather. Material: narrative concerning the incarceration of Naṣīr al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Abī Tawba.
- 77 Unnamed written sources in which the letter by Muʿīn al-Mulk al-Husayn b. ʿAlī al-Aṣamm al-Kātib to the Byzantines is recorded.
- 78 Written sources: the works of Muntajab al-Dīn Badīʿ Atabeg al-Khūʿī, including *Ruqyat al-qalam* and *ʿIbrāt al-kataba* [sic.] in which he makes the case for Nishapur over Jurjan [sic.]. ʿAwfī consulted *Ruqyat al-qalam* in Nishapur and copied autobiographical passages from the text.
- Oral source: al-Khūʿī's son, Saʿd al-Dīn Masʿūd b. al-Muntajab. Material: a poem describing a beloved.
- 90 Unnamed oral source. Material: a *khavar* describing ʿAmīd Kamālī, and his incarceration by Sanjar.
- 91 Written sources: the works of Zahīr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Samarqandī al-Kātib, including the versified Sindbad story, *Iʿrāz al-riyāsa*

fī ighrāz al-siyāsa and *Sam‘ al-Zahīr fī jam‘ al-ẓafīr*. These books may have been used as sources for: a panegyric on a patron’s power, and a description of patron.

92 Written source: the translation of *Kalīla va Dimna* by Naṣr Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Hamīd. The source is not quoted directly.

96-101 Written sources: the Arabic and Persian *dīwāns* of Jamāl al-Dīn Abū l-Maḥāsin Yūsuf b. Naṣr al-Kātib.

Oral source: Shaykh al-Islām Zakī for an innovative poem on Khusraw Malik in the metre that is normally reserved for *rubā‘iyyāt*.

The Persian *dīwān* may have formed the source for:

A response to Rashīd Vaṭvāṭ describing a beloved riding.

An extract from a *qaṣīda* praising and describing the sultan.

A *qaṣīda* in response to ‘Imādī, beginning with a description of a beloved, leading into praise of Khusraw Malik’s martial prowess.

A love poem to a *sāqī*.

102-5 Oral source: Shaykh al-Islām Rukn al-Dīn of Lahore. Material: a *rubā‘ī* improvised when a friend sent Shihāb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Rashīd al-Ra’īs a bunch of roses and narcissi.

Written source: the description of the hand of Shihāb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Rashīd al-Ra’īs implies that ‘Awfī saw material written by him. This may have included: a poem on Khusraw Malik beginning with *nasīb* to a *sāqī*, leading into a description of the patron drinking in a garden; a description

of wine drinking, leading into praise; a long poem on looking at the lover, who is also the patron.

- 109 Written source: Shihāb al-Dīn Sharaf al-Mulk the accountant compiled a handbook on accounting that is much consulted.
- 109-10 Written source: a letter from Shihāb al-Dīn Sharaf al-Mulk to his son, Badr al-Dīn the chief secretary, on being a stranger; a poem calling him back home in the same letter; another reply to a letter in which he was asked to account for himself.
- 110 Written source: a *dīvān* of praise poems compiled for Mu'ayyad al-Dīn Abū Bakr 'Umar al-Tirmizī reflecting the work of many poets in the anthology (*majmū'a*).
- Oral sources: a number of trustworthy sources, Muntajab al-Dīn Karīm.
- Material: two poems likening the addressee to a rain cloud.
- 111 Oral source: Abū Bakr al-Jamāī in Asfizār. This meeting may have provided the source for: two lyric *rubā'īyyāt*, the first composed on coming into the vizierate of Sistan, and a third *rubā'ī* on wanting to return to Asfizār.
- Unnamed oral source: a *rubā'ī* composed by Jamāī to make his excuses to Qavām al-Mulk
- Oral sources may also provide *akhbār* concerning: 1) the son of Rīzā al-Dīn Mustawfī from Bukhara, whom Jamāī entertained on the misunderstanding that he was from a clerical family and introduced to Quṭb al-Dīn Aybak; and 2) how Jamāī was given the vizierate of Ghur and Firuzkuh, and the

- emirate of Asfizar. Shams al-Dīn Rizā came from Sistan to join him and composed a *qaṣīda* celebrating his arrival in Asfizar. Shams al-Dīn never gave the transcript of his *qaṣā'id* to anyone and read the clean copy himself. Jamāī took the clean copy and wrote on the back a satire on Shams al-Dīn.
- 115 Written source: the transcript of 'Awfī's 'Īd *khuṭba* of 617/1220, calling on the populace to support Bahā' al-Dīn 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-Jamāī.
- 116 Oral source: 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-Jamāī. Material: a poem on his three Turkic ghulāms; another to Quṭb al-Dīn Aybak on the intelligence chief and the chamberlain who were conspiring against him.
- 116 Source: Hamīd Quhanduzī. Material: a *rubā'ī* that he recited in the presence of 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-Jamāī when he was drunk, in the hope of attaining some reward, and the satirical improvised reply.
- 117-20 Written sources: the writings of Iftikhār al-Mulk Jamāl al-Dīn Muhammad b. Naṣīr are widely available and used.
- Written source: the book *Majlis-Ārāy-i Shihābī*.
- These written sources may provide: a *ghazal* on the advent of spring; a poem on his patron's power; a poem in praise of patron; a description of a horse; two poems describing swords; lines on the immortal quality of speech; a *rubā'ī* on lovesickness; a *rubā'ī* on a child; a *rubā'ī* on separation; a *rubā'ī* consisting of a dialogue between eyes and hair.
- 120 Written source: a letter by Farīd Kāfī in the possession of the secretary Jamāl al-Dīn 'Alī Lāhūrī. Material: a poem describing his correspondent's letter.

- 133-7 Source: ‘Awfī’s comments on the hand of Amir Zahīr al-Dīn Nasr Simūrī al-Sajzī imply that he has seen source material written by him. Such material may have provided: a poem of thanks to Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārakshāh, leading into praise of own poetry, aggrandisement of Fakhr al-Dīn and self-abasement; the poem sent as a reply by Fakhr al-Dīn denying the qualities that had been imputed to him; a poem extracted from a letter asking for barley from the Malik Tāj al-Dīn; an advice *rubā’ī*; on the disappointment of his hopes; a short piece sent to a friend whom he had asked for straw but who failed to provide.
- 137 Unnamed oral source: a request for a virgin concubine by Zahīr al-Dīn al-Sarakhsī.
- 139 Written source: Bahā’ al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Mu’ayyad al-Baghdādī’s al-Tawassul ilā al-tarassul. The source is not cited directly.
- 142-3 Oral source: Sadr al-Dīn Nayshābūrī. Some of the poems cited were heard first-hand: a short Arabic poem incorporating a proverb; Arabic lines on a beloved’s teeth; a *rubā’ī* on the injustice of the age heard by ‘Awfī when the two men were travelling together to Isfarā’īn.
- 143 Oral source: an advice poem warning against grandiloquence, transmitted indirectly.
- 143 Oral source: Tāj al-Dīn Qāqumī. Material: a youthful poem by Sadr al-Dīn Nayshābūrī on separation from the beloved that ‘Awfī heard in Nishapur, and a second poem on the cruelty of a beloved.
- 144 Oral source: ‘Awfī composed and recited in the presence of Sadr al-Dīn Nayshābūrī a poem in Arabic on the injustice of the age, where he had

observed *tajnīs* in both halves of each line. The *ṣadr* recited a *ghazal* where he had undertaken a similar exercise with the same rhyme.

144 Unnamed oral sources: that he heard. *Rubā' iyyāt* by Zayn al-Dīn Sā'ad al-Khabūshānī on: the fleeting nature of earthly achievement; lovesickness; the patron as lover; lovesickness.

145 Sources: 'Awfī's comments on the hand of Tāj al-Dīn al-Ābī suggest that he has seen a specimen of his writing. 'Awfī also notes that the poems given here represent what he has memorised. These include: two poems written to a friend, on missing him; on accounting for his own misdemeanours; on generous men falling on hard times, incorporating a proverb on elephants; *rubā' iyyāt*: one in praise of someone's kindness, which is popular among those with gleeful natures; on the cruelty of a beloved; an elegy for a bureaucrat.

Written source: Lines in al-Ābī's hand in the *Safīna* of Najīb al-Dīn al-Abīvardī. Material: a reply to al-Abīvardī's request for al-Ābī to adorn his book.

147 Oral source: 'Awfī met the son of 'Imād al-Dīn Mu'ayyad b. Ahmad al-Isfarāyīnī al-Kātib in Isfarān when the son was teaching. Material: a *rubā' ī* on the injustice of fate; a description of patron.

Unnamed sources: a *rubā' ī* on separation from beloved.

149 Oral source: Nizām al-Dīn al-Jāmī al-Kātib at the Īnānj Madrasa in Nishapur. Material: an Arabic *qaṣīda* in praise of an army judge.

152 Oral source: Fakhr al-Dīn 'Azīz Farīd. Material: a *dūbayt* of reproach.

- 152 Unnamed oral source: a *rubāʿī* on the beloved as second soul.
- 154 Written sources: ʿAwfī’s comments on the hand of Shihāb al-Dīn Muhammad b. Humām indicate that he has seen material written by him
- Oral source: Imam Sharaf al-Dīn Anbarī in Asfīzār. Material: a poem by Shihāb al-Dīn Muhammad b. Humām on his relationship with his patron.
- 156 Oral source: Shams al-Dīn Muhammad Manūkih al-Nasavī. The meeting may have provided the source for: two *rubāʿīyyāt* on a tailor’s boy with whom he fell in love in Nishapur; an extract from a *qaṣīda* in praise of the Malik ʿImād al-Dīn, consisting of a description of the patron; a *ghazal* describing a beloved; on a Christian beloved; a *rubāʿī* on a beloved’s lips and speech.
- 158 Oral and written source: Muhaddhib al-Dīn Mansūr b. ʿAlī al-Asfīzārī Asfīzār. Material: an Arabic *qaṣīda* that the poet sent to ʿAwfī in praise of him.
- 159 Source: ʿAwfī’s comments on the hand of Majd al-Dīn Sharaf al-Kuttāb Ibn al-Rashīd al-ʿAzīzī indicate that he saw material written by him. This material may have provided: a *qaṣīda* in praise of ʿAlā al-Mulk, describing the poet’s thanks to his patron and his relationship with him, depicting the patron as lover and describing his martial prowess; a description of a patron; two *rubāʿīyyāt* on parting.
- 162 Sources: ʿAwfī writes that Chapter Six has focused on those whom he met.

- 164 Oral source: Sharaf al-Dīn M. b. Abī Bakr al-Nasafī at the house of Durr-i Yafīm Khānum in Samarqand. Material: a *rubāʿī* heard during preaching, on the hair of the beloved.
- 168 Unnamed oral source for a *khavar* on al-Nasafī, concerning his meeting with Khāqānī at Rayy.
- Written source: a letter in al-Nasafī's hand: in praise of God's handiwork in creating beloveds.
- 165 Oral source: Burhān al-Islām Tāj al-Dīn ʿUmar b. Masʿūd Aḥmad. Material: a poem on the relationship between him and the sultan.
- 175 Written source: a letter by Nizām al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿUmar Masʿūd. Material: a poem in which the poet apologises to his father.
- 177 Oral source: Nizām al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿUmar Masʿūd. Material: a *rubāʿī* on separation.
- 177 Oral source: Nizām al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿUmar Masʿūd. Material: a *khavar* concerning Faqīhī's satire of Masʿūd Dawlatyār.
- 178 Written source: a *saḥfina*. Material: a poem on ageing by The Judge and Imam Sharaf al-Dīn Abū Tāhir Yahyā b. Tāhir ʿUthmān al-ʿAwfī.
- 182 Oral source: Rukn al-Dīn Masʿūd b. Muḥammad Imāmzāda. Material: an advice *rubāʿī* warning against mistreating others; *rubāʿī* describing beloved; *rubāʿī* asking for love.
- 183 Oral source: Shams al-Dīn Dāʾī al-Husaynī al-Nasafī in Bukhara. Material: *rubāʿīyyāt* on lovesickness; on the purity of his heart; on a harelippled beloved; on the phantom of the beloved; a praise poem.

- 188 Oral source: Kamāl Muqrī Samarqandī, Shaykh al-Islām of Awsh. Material: a narrative concerning a joke that he made while preaching.
- 188 Oral source: Ḥamīd al-Dīn Sajzī brother of Naṣīr al-Dīn Asfizārī. Material: an extract from poem sent to Naṣīr by Kamāl Muqrī Samarqandī, describing him.
- 189-90 Sources: ‘Awfī writes that ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Uzgandī, known as Ziyādat did not share his poetry and wrote in such a way that others could not read it. Therefore his verse and prose are not well known.
- Oral source: *rubā’iyyāt* heard from him Ziyādat: On being ‘full’ of parting and ‘hungry’ for meeting; two on the on cruelty of beloved.
- 198 Written sources: the works of The Judge and Imam Ḥamīd al-Dīn ‘Umar b. Mahmūd al-Ḥamīdī al-Balkhī: *Maqāmāt*, *Wasīlat al-‘afāt ilā akfā al-kufāt*, *ḥanīn al-mustajīr ilā ḥaḍrat al-mujīr*, *Rawḍ al-riḍā fī madḥ Abī l-Riḍā*, *Qadaḥ al-mughannī fī madḥ al-ma’nī*, *Risālat al-istighātha ilā al-ikhwān al-thalātha*, *Munyat al-rājī fī jawhar al-tājī*.
- 199 Written source: *Rawḍ al-riḍā fī madḥ Abī l-Riḍā* may be the source for a panegyric in praise of Rizā al-Dīn Sharaf al-Mulk Abū l-Rizā Faḍl Allāh Riza.
- 201 Source: Sadr al-Dīn ‘Umar b. Muḥammad al-Khurāmābādī in Samarqand. This meeting may be the source for several *rubā’iyyāt*: a satire on his interlocutor’s wife; on tears; a poem composed when his Qur’ān readers turned up late; an extract from a *qaṣīda* in praise of sultan Sikandar’s military might; *rubā’iyyāt* on his love-longing; on defaming an enemy; on describing a patron; on love-longing.

- 203 Written source: a letter from The Judge and Imam Hamīd al-Dīn ‘Alī b. ‘Umar al-Mahmūdī to Sa‘d al-Dīn Mas‘ūd. Material: a poem describing the recipient’s lips and face.
- 205 Oral source: Imam Shams al-Dīn al-Bāqilānī al-Balkhī in Samarqand. The meeting may have provided the source for: a poem addressed to the vizier Nizām al-Mulk when he was afflicted with scrofula; *rubā’iyyāt* on his generosity, on consolation, on the night as a consoler, on love-longing.
- 207 Written source: Lines by ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Mas‘ūd b. Muhammad b. ‘Alī al-Andakhūdī beginning letter to a friend. Material: a poem on his power.
- 208 Written source: *Zīnat al-zamān*, a prosimetric anthology in Arabic and Persian by Imam Shams al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Mas‘ūd al-Andakhūdī. This book may be the source for: a *dūbayt* in Arabic, describing a beloved; a *ghazal* on a beloved; a *rubā’ī* in thanks to a patron.
- 209 Unnamed oral sources: a *rubā’ī* ascribed to ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Shaykh al-Islām al-Hārithī, asking God for the strength to endure.
- Written source: ‘Awfī claims to have seen, but does not cite, a poem in Arabic on the Prophet’s family written on the wall on a *Khāniqāh* outside Mashhad.
- 210 Oral source: an autobiographical dream narrative by the bookman Qutb al-Dīn Sarakhsī that ‘Awfī heard indirectly.
- 211 Written source: a letter from Sarakhsī to his son. Material: a *rubā’ī* on missing him.

- 212 Written sources: versions of *Bakhtiyār-nāma* and *Sindbad-nāma* by The Imam and Preacher Shams al-Dīn al-Daqa'iqī al-Marvazī.
- Oral source: Daqa'iqī Marvazī in Bukhara at the Shāfi'ī mosque on Bālū'ī street.
- Written source: 'Awfī has seen a *risāla* in Daqa'iqī Marvazī's hand on nostalgia (*ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān*). He writes in the style of Ḥamīdī's *Maqāmāt*
- 212-5 Sources: a *qaṣīda* that 'Awfī remembers on Fakhr al-Dīn 'Umdat al-Vuzarā', describing autumn, leading into description of patron; an extract from a *qaṣīda* on his relationship with his patron; an extracted love poem from a letter.
- 218 Written source: the correspondence in Persian and Arabic of 'Awfī and al-Sarakhsī. Material: a bilingual poem on loneliness.
- 219 Written source: a letter from Rizā al-Dīn Nayshāpūrī to Burhān al-Islām, and his reply. Material: poetry on their friendship.
- 230-1 Oral source: Majd al-Dīn Sharaf b. al-Mu'ayyad al-Baghdādī in Khwarazm. The meeting may have provided the source for *rubā' iyyāt* on: lovesickness; on describing a beloved; on lovesickness.
- Written source: a *saḥḥa* in the hand of al-Baghdādī: a *rubā' ī* on the hair of a beloved. The lines imply that al-Baghdādī compiled the *saḥḥa*.
- 231 Written sources: several unnamed compositions on Sufi orders by Ẓiyā' al-Dīn 'Umar b. Muhammad al-Bistāmī. One of these may provide the source for a poem on the nature of love.

- 232 Written sources: compositions on rational and tradition-based sciences by Khaṭīr al-Dīn Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Malik al-Jurjānī, which are well known.
- Unnamed oral source: a poem on the injustice of the age.
- 232 Oral source: Farīd al-Dīn al-Jāarmī in Bukhara. The meeting may have provided the source for: a *tarkībband* in praise of the virtue of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī – though addressed to one Shihāb al-Dīn; a *ghazal* on lovesickness.
- 239 Written source: the *saḥīfah* of Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd al-Zābī. Material: a *rubā‘ī* describing the fidelity of the imaginary beloveds contained in the book.
- 240 Oral source: al-Nasavī in Nisa. The meeting may have provided the source for: a *qaṣīdah* in praise of Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī; an elegy for Majd al-Dīn Baghdādī when he was martyred.
- 243 Oral source: Zahīr al-Dīn Valī al-Nasavī. Material: a *rubā‘ī* on the unjust nature of the age. The meeting may also have provided the source for a poem written to Shams al-Dīn Nasavī, describing his eloquence.
- 244 Oral source: the son of Majd al-Dīn al-Nasavī. Material: a *rubā‘ī* on his approaching death. The meeting may also have provided the source for: a *rubā‘ī* congratulating Shams al-Dīn Nasavī when he was made judge of the area; two ascetic *rubā‘īyyāt*; three extracts from a *qaṣīdah* in praise of a grandee of Khurasan, beginning with an ascetic section instead of an erotic one.

- 246 Oral source: Fakhr al-Dīn al-Khaṭṭāṭ in Herat. The meeting may have provided the source for: the first line of a *ghazal* in Arabic; a *ghazal* on a provocative beloved; three *ghazals* on a cruel beloved; *rubāʿiyyāt* on: lovesickness; a description of a beloved; on the cruelty of a beloved; an address to his heart; on a Turkic bodyguard.
- 248 Oral source: Shaykh Zakī of Lahore. Material: a praise poem by Farīd al-Dīn Bashshār that was composed to celebrate his departure from Herat on Hajj.
- 250 Oral source: Badr al-Dīn b. Nūr al-Dīn al-Haravī in Herat. Material: a *rubāʿī* and a *qitʿa* in praise of gifts given by Abū Bakr al-Jamājī; a *rubāʿī* consoling a beloved; a punning *rubāʿī* on silver and gold; a *rubāʿī* addressed to a harp player; a *rubāʿī* on a drunken, harp-playing beloved; a *rubāʿī* on love longing.
- 251 Written source: *Majmaʿ al-baḥrain*, by Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Naṣīr al-Sajzī.
- Oral source: Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Naṣīr al-Sajzī in Sistan. The meeting may have provided the source for: a *rubāʿī* on loneliness and love; a *rubāʿī* on the bad behaviour of a beloved; a *ghazal* on wanting to renounce asceticism for love; a *ghazal* on separation; a *rubāʿī* on Tāj al-Dīn Yildiz; a *rubāʿī* on secrets.
- 259 Written source: a record (*kārnāma*) on the theme of fidelity by Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Farāhī. Material: two poems on fidelity: a short piece, and a longer *qaṣīda* with which the workbook began.

- Oral source: Sharaf al-Dīn Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Farāhī. The meeting may have provided the source for: a *ghazal* on a beloved's kiss; a *rubāʿī* describing a beloved; a *rubāʿī* describing a beloved's eyes; a *rubāʿī* describing a beloved's cheek; a *rubāʿī* on separation; a *rubāʿī* on separation.
- 269 Sources: a copy of the *dīwān* of Sharaf al-Dīn Muhammad Shifrūh of more than a hundred folios that ʿAwfī saw in Nishapur. Material: a *qaṣīda* in praise of Arslan b. Tughril, consisting of a description of a beloved and the patron; a poem describing a horse; the *nasīb* from a *qaṣīda*; a description of a patron from a *qaṣīda*; a *ghazal* describing the wind as a go-between to the beloved; a *ghazal* describing the beloved and the narrator's love-longing; on a mirror; a *rubāʿī* on the cruelty of the beloved; a *rubāʿī* on parting; a *rubāʿī* on love-longing.
- 275 Unnamed oral source: a line on eloquence extemporised by ʿAlā al-Dīn al-Khvārī at a *majlis*.
- 278 Written source: a three-line poem extracted from a letter by Faḡl Allāh Khvārī to Shihāb al-Dīn Khayūqī: on the colour of the inks used in the letter.
- 281 Written sources: the works of Fakhr al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Nayshābūrī: a *tafsīr* on a single Qurʾanic *aya*; a *tafsīr* of *Al-Baṣāʾir al-yamīnī*; a Persian translation of *Al-Ghurar wa-l-siyar*; a *Rangestreidt* between the sword and the pen.
- 284 Written source: a *rubāʿī* written on the fly leaf of a friend's *safīna* by Ẓiyāʾ al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Abī Naṣr b. Abī Shahīd al-Ghaznavī after he had asked to borrow it: describing the book.

- 284 Oral source: Sharaf al-Din Aḥmad Damāvandī. Material: a *qaṣīda* by Abū Ja‘far ‘Umar b. Ishāq al-Vāshī that he composed when he was ordered to write a poem containing four complementary things in each line
- 286 Written source: a *saḡfina*. Material: a *dūbayt* in the hand of Fakhr al-Dīn Damrājī, describing a beloved.
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- 4 Written source: three lines of Arabic poetry by Shahīd Balkhī recorded in Zawzanī’s *Ḥamāsāt al-Ẓurafā’*: on his relationship with a patron
- 5 Written source: ‘Awfī writes that Muḥammad b. Mūsā Farālāwī is much mentioned in *ṭabaqāt* literature, but his poetry is extremely rare. ‘Awfī remembers a two line poem on the nobility of a friend
- 21 Written source: *Āfarīnnāma* of Abū Shakūr, completed in 336/947.
Material: a two line poem likening wine to the moon; a two line simile likening wine to eyes.
- 23 Written source: *Yatīmat al-Dahr*. Material: a two-line poem by Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Junaydī describing the mansion of Ibn ‘Abbād.
- 29-32 Written source: the *dīvān* of ‘Unṣurī. Material: all of the poetry in the entry.
- 30 Written source: an epitome of the *Shāhnāma* by Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān. The source is not cited.
- 63 Written source: unnamed books. Material: poetry by Mas‘ūd Rāzī: a description of the beloved’s face; a description of an apple; a description of pomegranates; a poem on separation from the beloved.

- 69-86 Written source: the *dīvān* of Mu‘izzī Nīshāpūrī. Material: description of beloved’s features and love longing; desc of beloved’s beard; four further lyric poems on the beloved’s features; on love-longing; description of the beloved’s features; a gnomic poem on love; three polythematic *qaṣīdas* given in their entirety.
- 86-104 Written source: the *dīvān* of Abū l-Mahāsīn Azraqī Haravī. Material: four polythematic *qaṣīdas* given in their entirety.
- 153-6 Unnamed oral sources. Material: the poetry of Shihāb al-Dīn Abū l-Hasan Talḥa, which consists entirely of short lyric pieces.
- 159 Written source: ‘*Ishqnāma*, a series of model letters between lovers and beloveds written by ‘Alī b. Aḥmad Sayfī Nīshāpūrī.
- 163 Oral source: ‘Awfī met the son of Fakhr al-Dīn Maṣ‘ūdī in Bukhara. Material: two *ghazals*.
- 176 Written source: *Zīnatnāma*, a book on the science of poetry by Rashīdī Samarqandī.
- 221-4 Source: the *dīvān* of Khāqānī, which may be the source for: an extract from a *qaṣīda* on the theme of wisdom; an extract of praise; [a *qaṣīda* in which Mujīr, not Khāqānī, vaunts his own poetry].
- 224-7 Source: the *dīvān* of Asīr Akhsikatī, which may be source for: a lyric *qīṭ‘a* praising a friend, beloved or patron; two *ghazals* addressed to beloveds; two devotional pieces addressed to God; a *ghazal* describing a beloved; a *ghazal* reproaching the beloved.

- 240 Source: *Vīs ū Rāmīn* by Fakhr al-Dīn As‘ad Gurgānī, which ‘Awfī does not cite. Unnamed written source for a *qīṭ‘a* by Gurgānī satirising his patron.
- 241-5 Source: the *dīvān* of Abū l-Faraj al-Rūnī. Material: a short description of a patron which is *tazmīn* from Anvarī; an extract of praise for the sultan Rīzā Ibrāhīm; an extract of praise for the vizier Muḥammad b. Bihrūz; a further extract of praise; a description of a patron’s qualities; an extract of *vaṣf* from a *qaṣīda*, describing a meadow; three gnomic *rubā‘īs*; two lyric *rubā‘īs*.
- 246 Source: ‘history books’ (*kutub-i tārīkh*), which categorise Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān as a poet of Lahore, even though he was born in Hamadan.
- Source: the three *dīwāns* of Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān, in Arabic, Persian and Hindavi.
- 257-67 Source: the *dīvān* of ‘Imād al-Dīn Ghaznavī. Material: three entire *qaṣīdas*, the first consisting of a lyric description of the natural world and praise, the second of praise only, and the third of a description of the patron’s martial prowess.
- 277-82 Source: the *dīvān* of Shihāb al-Dīn Shāh ‘Alī Abī Rijā’ al-Ghaznavī. Material: two entire *qaṣīdas*, both consisting of lyric descriptions and praise; a short lyric piece of *vaṣf* poetry describing flowers; three *qīṭ‘as* describing Bahrāmshāh’s bloodletting.
- 287 Source: a work by Muhammad b. ‘Uthmān al-‘Utbī entitled *Bazm-ārāy-i Fakhrī*. Material: a *qaṣīda* beginning with praise of God, leading into praise of Bahrāmshāh.

- 298 Unnamed oral source: a *rubāʿī* that Zahīr Fāryābī composed on the Atabeg Abū Bakr.
- 298-307 Source: the *dīvān* of Zahīr Fāryābī. Material: a *qaṣīda* beginning with an exordium on asceticism, and moving into praise; a *qaṣīda* with an exordium reproaching the beloved, followed by a section of praise; a *qaṣīda* beginning with a description of the beloved, moving into a lengthy description of Qizil Arslan.
- 334-6 Source: the *dīvān* of Abū l-Saharī al-Sandalī. Material: a *qaṣīda* in praise of Ziyāʾ al-Dīn Qāzī Tuluk.
- 339-45 Source: ʿAwfī attended *majālis* in Nishapur with Abū ʿAlī b. al-Husayn al-Marvazī, and collected from him: a *qaṣīda* describing the advent of Spring; a *qaṣīda* in praise of Sultan Iskandar; a series of lyric and gnomic *rubāʿīyyāt*.
- 345 Source: ʿAwfī met Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Pāʾizī al-Nasavī in Nisā in the year 600/1203, and transmitted from him a series of lyric *rubāʿīyyāt*.
- 346 Source: ʿAwfī met Abū l-Faḍl ʿUṣmān b. Ahmad al-Haravī in Nishapur, and transmitted from him a series of satirical and lyric *rubāʿīyyāt*.
- 347 Source: ʿAwfī met Farīd al-Dīn Sajzī in Nīmrūz, and transmitted from him a *qīṭʿa* and several *rubāʿīyyāt*.
- 348-9 Source: ʿAwfī met Mubārak Shāh al-Sajzī in Sīstān and transmitted from him: a *qaṣīda* in praise of the vizier Naṣīr al-Dīn; a satire on Kargas; a description of Bahrāmshāh; an elegy for Nāṣir al-Dīn ʿUṣmān; a complaint on the people of the age; a prison poem; two gnomic *rubāʿīyyāt*.

- 355 Unnamed oral source. a poem that Hamīd al-Dīn Dihistānī wrote to a friend.
- 357 Source: ‘Awfī met Qavvāmī Khvāfī in Nishapur and transmitted a satire on a doctor from him.
- 359 Source: the *dīvān* of Mu’ayyad al-Dīn Nasafī is described as harder to find than the philosopher’s stone.
- 378 Source: Kāfī Bukhārī worked alongside ‘Awfī’s uncle at the Qarakhanid court in Bukhara and wrote a jesting poem to him.
- 386 Source: a *qit‘a* celebrating the New Year that Fahīmī Bukhārī wrote to ‘Awfī.
- 388 Source: a *qit‘a* in praise of God that Mas‘ūd Dawlatyār sent to ‘Awfī.
- 388 Source: a *rubā‘ī* that Mas‘ūd Dawlatyār pronounced in ‘Awfī’s presence after an accident.
- 391 Source: a *rubā‘ī* on the theme of fate that Ashrafī Samarqandī pronounced in ‘Awfī’s presence in Bukhara in the Madrasa of Safīna in 597/1200.
- 392-3 Source: ‘Awfī met Shihābī Ghazzāl Khujandī and transmitted from him: a satirical poem in which Burhān-i Islām criticised his poetry, and another *qit‘a* in which he was rebuked for criticising the poetry of Durrī.
- 397 Source: ‘Awfī heard a lyric poem by Nizāmī Ganjavī from an unnamed man in Nishapur.

- 404-5 Source: ‘Awfī met Safī al-Dīn in Nisā and transmitted poetry from him: an exchange with a friend; three lyric *rubā’iyyāt*; an elegy for Fakhr al-Dīn Zangī.
- 405-7 Source: the *dīvān* of Mu‘izzī Ghaznavī. Material transmitted: three *qaṣīdas* in praise of Khusraw Malik.
- 411 Source: an unnamed man whom ‘Awfī met in Lahore. Material: a *qit‘a* by Hamīd al-Dīn Mas‘ūd b. Sa‘d Shālī Kūb describing a pen.
- 416 Source: Ziyā’ al-Dīn Maḥmūd Kābulī. Material: holograph papers containing a devotional *qit‘a* and several lyric *rubā’iyyāt* that the poet gave ‘Awfī as a memento.
- 418-28 Source: the *dīvān* of the scribe Majd al-Dīn. Material: all of the material in Chapter Twelve is drawn from this source. It consists almost entirely of panegyric *qaṣā’id*, with a couple of short, descriptive poems.

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